



Happy New Year from Allegra!

written by Judith Beyer
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After a well deserved break during the holiday season, Allegra is back and full of energy for yet another exciting year! We have lots of wonderful stuff – and some things – in store for you in 2017.

Our first week of the new year is all about reviews. We start with three commentaries on some very recent and stimulating work on [#race](#), [#state](#), [#kinship](#), and [#gender](#) followed by an interview with one of the founders of SciRev, a new database project for researchers and journal editors that promises to tackle the flaws in our peer review system bottom-up.



Subhashim Goswami opens the week tomorrow with his review of Nayanika Mathur's new book [*Paper Tiger: Law, Bureaucracy and the Developmental State in Himalayan India*](#), an ethnography of the everyday life of Indian law and bureaucracy. Mathur reveals the complexity of bureaucratic practice, focusing on its embodiment in the ordinary production of documents. The book thereby adds new material and perspectives to the expanding literature on the anthropology of bureaucracy.

On Wednesday, [Felix Girke](#) discusses Rogers Brubaker's new publication [*Trans*](#), critically commenting on Brubaker's findings on race and gender in relation to their apparent given-ness and chosen-ness. In his book, Brubaker draws attention to the differences and similarities in the case of Rachel Dolezal's "passing" as black and the highly mediatised case of Bruce Jenner becoming Caitlyn. Brubaker thus tackles the social negotiation of both race and gender in an age of what he calls "unsettled identities."

On Thursday, we feature a review written by Gabriela Torres on Srimati Basu's recent book [*The Trouble with Marriage: Feminist Confront Law and Violence in India*](#). In her work, Basu reevaluates feminist theories of law, applying them to the areas of marriage and violence and relating them to work on the state and property. She reveals that in the context of Indian lawyer-free family courts, ADR (alternative dispute resolution) has not "empowered" women, but rather reinforced oppressive norms directed against them.

Finally, we will introduce you to [SciRev](#), a website devoted to making the peer review process more efficient. The founders of SciRev, [Janine Huisman and Jeroen Smits](#), offer researchers the opportunity to share their experiences and select an efficient journal to submit their work. I have spoken with Janine about their database, which is accessible online and free to use for everyone. You can read my interview with her here on Friday.

This is to a fresh start – may 2017 be happy and healthy for everyone! We are glad to have you on board as our readers, writers, and commentators!



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