

than structural solutions. "We need to *make wise personal choices and restore vital social institutions*," *RF&M* advises, "Slow down. Don't spend so much time and energy at work. Turn off the TV and computer. Interact with people. Encounter nature. Reflect" (p. 147, italics in original); insights from *Tuesdays with Morrie* soon follow. No matter the audience, however, the book would benefit from a narrower focus, providing more grounding for its sweeping claims and showing more precisely the mechanisms by which market logic has contributed to particular social ills. While one comes away with a new appreciation of the many ways in which the market may be affecting various aspects of our lives, the scattershot approach leaves the reader to ponder where and when its influence has been most decisive.

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*The Social after Gabriel Tarde: Debates and Assessments*, edited by **Matei Candea**. New York, NY: Routledge, 2010. 287pp. \$150.00 cloth. ISBN: 9780415543392.

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Gabriel Tarde is a society. *The Social after Gabriel Tarde* is a perfect illustration that Tarde's maxim "everything is a society" nicely applies to its author in the first place. Indeed, this edited book contains a wealth of insights into contemporary social science—in particular anthropology and sociology—that draw from the thought of the eclectic late nineteenth century French author. Although the rhetoric of the "fore-runner" or "predecessor"—as well as the

"rediscovery" of a "forgotten classic"—endorsed by the editor Matei Candea and some of the contributors, is not entirely convincing (insofar as it tends to function largely as a self-fulfilling prophecy: arguably, while Tarde may have not been preponderant in introductory textbooks, he has never disappeared from sociological thinking), several chapters in this book are enlightening in their use of Tarde's oeuvre to face twenty-first century puzzles in social theory. The fact that the provided interpretations are divergent, and may sometimes be said to even contradict each other, does not detract from but rather enrich the overall picture. Also, Candea has written a knowledgeable introduction to Tarde's oeuvre which readers unfamiliar with the whole of this author's production will find greatly beneficial.

The book, which is the outcome of a 2007 Cambridge conference organized by Candea, is strategically divided into two parts. Part I provides a series of historical and conceptual re-examinations of the Tarde/Durkheim debate. This section is opened by a reconstruction of the 1903 debate which took place at the Ecole des hautes études sociales in Paris. Contrary to received knowledge, the reconstructed debate—which is also performed as a theatre piece, a specialty in which Bruno Latour, who plays Tarde, excels—leaves twenty-first century social theorists with the impression that Tarde was by far the best (hence, incidentally, the section's title, "reconsideration"). It was, at any rate, the story of a *mauvaise rencontre* between two great men of intellect who were doomed not to understand each other, due to a combination of diverging worldviews, metaphysical pathos, and academic ambitions.

The first part of the book also hosts an excellent chapter by Bruno Karsenti which provides an historico-conceptual clarification of the notion of imitation. Tarde's idea of imitation, argues Karsenti, is extremely original and represents a break away from nineteenth-century crowd psychology (way ahead, one would say, considering that crowd psychology was still worked upon in the 1930s), insofar as imitation would be for Tarde an active rather than merely reactive or suggestive process. David Toews seems to endorse such a quest for the actor's activity and, in a non-intuitive yet persuasive way,

places the idea of unsociability as crucial to understand Tarde's endeavor (as well as Durkheim's). Unsociability is a moment of pause, an awakening from the "dogmatic slumber" of the everyday, whereby the actor actively suspends the striving for good social form and, possibly, clarifies his/her own *ubi consistam*—or, as Tarde himself wrote, cultivates the "right to spread his own particular faith."

Part II of the collection focuses on the possible applications of Tarde's method to contemporary social research. The success of Durkheim as a sociological founding figure was linked, as many have acknowledged, to the very simple and clear methodological rules which he theoretically outlined and consistently applied as a social researcher. Now, Tarde is both more rich in ideas and apparently less apt at formalization. But the chapters by Bruno Latour, Emmanuel Didier, and Andrew Barry concur in arguing that Tarde's theory in fact makes it possible to develop a more precise social science, that is, according to the authors, a wholly quantifiable one. While Durkheim considered only invariants, Tarde always focused on variations, all of which are—Latour and the others claim—measurable. Hence, a methodology inspired by Tarde enables today's social scientists to track the trajectories of imitative rays across the social space. From this perspective, phenomena such as enhanced digital traceability of people and things, which characterizes contemporary settings, represents, according to Latour, "Tarde's vindication."

Whereas Durkheim was a theorist of the discontinuity between the individual and the social (which he equated with the collective) Tarde was a deeply "continuist" theorist, who viewed all layers of psychic, organic and social life as prolonging into each other. This is also the reason why he was an anti-institutional thinker, one who deemed that institutions can never subsume, replace or "totalize" the parts they are made of. In the final chapter of the book, Nigel Thrift suggests that Tarde's way of thinking may help us to bridge the gulf between economy and biology, a gulf which, he argues, late capitalism has already bridged on the ground, but which social theory has still to catch up with. Thrift thus leaves us with the

suggestion that we are entering an age in which the "feeling of knowledge" is going to be increasingly worked upon and engineered. Gabriel Tarde, who was also a science fiction writer, might have mused on such a scene—although of course the political stakes that are implied in this type of social transformation are in bad need of an ample public debate. While addressed to a presumably restricted public of specialists, this book might contribute to set in motion a series of ideas capable of stirring it up.

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*Biomedicalization: Technoscience, Health, and Illness in the U.S.*, edited by **Adele E. Clarke, Laura Mamo, Jennifer Ruth Fosket, Jennifer R. Fishman, and Janet K. Shim**. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010. 498pp. \$28.95 paper. ISBN: 9780822345701.

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Several decades ago, medicalization theory was developed by scholars such as Irving Zola and Peter Conrad. Medicalization theory has played an important role in the sociological study of health and illness, establishing the extension of medical definitions of and control over an increasing array of human life and conditions. In 2003, a seminal theoretical article on biomedicalization theory was published in the *American Sociological Review* by the editors of this volume. This article expanded and challenged medicalization theory, particularly emphasizing the "technoscientific transformations" in the organization and practice of biomedicine (Clarke et al. 2003). Building on their 2003 essay, the editors of *Biomedicalization: Technoscience, Health, and Illness in the U.S.* further elaborate their theses about the technoscientific transformations in health, medicine, and illness that have occurred in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The specific goal of the volume is to provide the "missing link" (p. viii) to their earlier theoretical article—that is, empirical research that further specifies biomedicalization theory. Their illuminating case studies address many of the main health issues