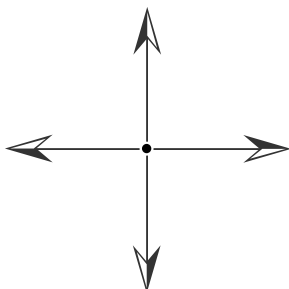


**Tarzan was an Eco-Tourist ...
and Other Tales in the Anthropology of Adventure**

Tarzan was an Eco-Tourist ... and Other Tales in the Anthropology of Adventure



Edited by

Luis A. Vivanco and Robert J. Gordon



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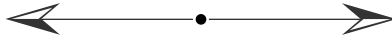
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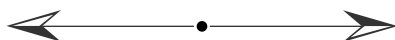
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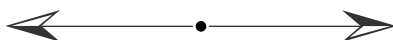
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Acknowledgements



This book has been an Adventure, in the Simmelian sense. That we deliberately set out on a trip of discovery is not what we, or Simmel, refer to here. For Simmel, the experience of adventure emerges in the unexpected and unplanned, the moments of dislocation where one can grasp the basic categories of existence. It is in this sense that putting together this volume has been adventuresome, because it has introduced us to new places and people that have encouraged us to rethink certain basic assumptions about the contemporary ubiquity of adventure, not to mention having altered some of the plans we laid out for this project.

The project was born of conversations, in the hallways between classes and in the hallways of conferences, about such things as television reality shows, the Ernest Shackleton craze on public television, the “extreme” content books and magazines one finds at the supermarket checkout counter, and our amazement that people actually buy such cars (and now cologne) as the HUMMER. All of it speaks to adventure’s omnipresence, or at least a desire for adventure and its stories. As we expanded our conversations, inviting more friends and interlocutors, we found a lot of our colleagues had been thinking about these things as well, perhaps quite naturally, because as anthropologists some of our professional *mana* comes from the appearance that we lead adventuresome lives.

The time seemed ripe to convene more formal conversations about the complex relationships between culture and adventure, and so we organized two panel sessions, one at the American Anthropological Association annual meetings and another at the Northeastern Anthropological Associa-

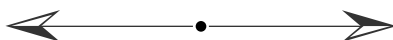
tion annual meetings. With the help of Rob Welsch, we also arranged a mini-conference in the Maori Room at the Field Museum in Chicago. Judging by attendance numbers and the animated conversations that continued as the rooms emptied, the topic struck a chord with a lot of people. We have seen a mixture of enthusiasm and disquietude, a sense that we have some things to work out as individuals and as a discipline about what this ubiquity of adventure tells us about the worlds in which we live and work.

Unfortunately, for reasons that can perhaps be explained only by Simmel's emphasis on the unexpected nature of adventure, a number of the friends who joined in these conversations could not join us in this volume. But we would like to express our deep gratitude to them, not only because of what they added to these conversations, but also because of the contributions they have made or are likely to make on this theme once they are able to publish the fascinating insights they shared with us. They include Ed Bruner, Quetzil Castañeda, Frederick Errington, Deborah Gewertz, Harald Prins, Mark Mosko, M. Estellie Smith, and Geoff White. Ute Luig, Lynn Meisch and John Middleton were also intellectually close to this project, although they did not in the end contribute to this volume. We also owe a gracious debt to the folks at Berghahn Books. Marion Berghahn has been supportive of the project from the very first moment we broached the topic with her. Catherine Kirby and Michael Dempsey have assisted expertly in the production phase.

At the University of Vermont, where this book finally came together, we have benefited from rich conversations with Guha Shankar and Glenn McRae while our Middlebury neighbor David Napier supplied enthusiasm and advice (but still owes us a few beers). We are also grateful to Ross Thomson, of our Economics Department, for providing us with background on the insurance industry, and Katie Weiss, a work-study student who impressed both of us with her editing skills.

We are especially grateful to our families, who consistently keep us in line but allow us to veer off on adventures of our own, often enough to keep us productively decentered.

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