

Doubt, Conflict, Mediation: The Anthropology of Modern Time (Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute Special Issue Book Series)

By Laura Bear

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Doubt, Conflict, Mediation is an interdisciplinary examination and reassessment of standard assumptions in social theory about modern time.

- Rethinks capitalist and neo-liberal conceptions of time from both a sociological and anthropological perspective
- Blends innovative and rich ethnographic studies from around the world with clear theoretical approaches
- Examines the timescapes of a variety of institutions and social movements, such as biotech laboratories, civic organizations, planning offices, global sea-trade, urban squatting, and state bureaucracies

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

What is modern time? Reopening a question fundamental to the disciplines of anthropology and sociology, this volume challenges existing approaches to capitalist time. Through ethnographies of economic, bureaucratic, and political institutions across the world, it explores how they mediate representations, techniques, and rhythms of time. The timescapes of biotech laboratories, civic organizations, planning offices, global sea trade, social movements, urban squatting, and state bureaucracies are explored. New analytical tools derived from a wide range of authors, including Althusser, Deleuze, Gell, Marx, Munn, Negri, and Postone are offered. Overall the volume argues that time in modernity is characterized by doubt, conflict, and mediation. This makes it the most precious and contentious resource of our age.

About the Author

Laura Bear is Associate Professor of Social Anthropology at the London School of Economics, UK. For nineteen years, she has carried out archival and ethnographic research in India, especially West Bengal. She is the author of *Lines of the Nation: Indian Railway Workers, Bureaucracy and the Intimate Historical Self* (2007), the forthcoming *Navigating Austerity: State Debt and Speculation on a South Asian River* (2014), and the novel *The Jadu House* (2000). She is a member of the Core Editorial Board for *Economy and Society*. This volume developed from her leadership (with Professor Stephan Feuchtwang) of the Economic and Social Research Council-funded research network and seminar series ‘Conflicts in Time: Rethinking “Contemporary” Globalization’.

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