

Acknowledgments

This book was made possible thanks to the cooperation of the people of Montelimar. Víctor Hernández taught me as much as anyone about the sugarcane zone and its history, and I am grateful to Edwin Cáceres, who provided hours of companionship, numerous introductions, and friendship. In the summer of 2015, very much by accident, I met Jean Silk in Managua. Jean helped open multiple doors, and she introduced me to Olivia Kaplan. I thank Jean and Olivia for showing trust and confidence in me, and for aiding me in getting my fledgling fieldwork off the ground. Kris Genovese provided key guidance, and she remained available even as the situation in Nicaragua became challenging. Additional thanks for practical support to Aurora Aragón, Marvin González-Quiroz, Juan José Amador, Daniel Brooks, Madeleine Scammell, Jason Glaser, Elyssa Noce, Emily Wright, Edipcia Roque, and Eréndira Vanegas.

During many of my field trips to Nicaragua for this project, I was involved in parallel research alongside Jae Fisher. Jae's intellectual dexterity and encyclopedic head for theory continue to inspire me. Through Jae, I became close to the members of the Jubilee House Community, where we spent many happy hours discussing Nicaraguan politics, telling good and bad jokes, and benefiting from Jae's mixology skills. Thanks as always to my oldest Nicaraguan collaborators and advisers, Haydée Abarca and María de Jesús Zepeda. Like all Nicaraguans, they have weathered a tumultuous political and social crisis since 2018, but they always made time to help me.

Research and writing require financial support, and the bulk of the funding for this book came from a Wenner Gren Foundation research grant. Additional research was carried out thanks to the support of the National Science Foundation project "A Political Ecology of Value" (award no. 1648667). Further funding was provided by the University of Edinburgh Munro Lectureship

Committee and Research Development Fund, as well as an Overseas Development Assistance grant from the UK Department for International Development. Faculty travel and research funds provided by Brown University and Cornell University were also essential to the project. A TOME grant provided by the Cornell University Library supported open access publication.

While researching and writing this book, I held three separate academic positions. At the outset, I was a faculty member at the University of Edinburgh. I conceptualized the project with the help of multiple colleagues and workshopped early written material with the “candlelit seminar” group. A special thanks is due to Lucy Lowe, with whom I coauthored an article in *Medical Anthropology* (“Social Justice as Epidemic Control”) featuring some preliminary research for this project. At the nearby University of Durham, Tom Widger was an enthusiastic co-thinker, and though the conversations we had back in 2015–16 did not materialize in the grant we had hoped for, they were transformational for me. Most especially, I wish to thank Jamie Cross and Alice Street, who both continue to be treasured colleagues and dear friends. In 2018, I moved to the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University. Watson provided me with space and support to complete the final stages of research. Ed Steinfeld, Patsy Lewis, Andrew Schrank, Nick Ziegler, Margaret Weir, Prerna Singh, Aarti Sethi, and Bhriгу Singh all provided advice and warm companionship during my two years in Providence. Cornell University, where I have now worked for five years (longer than in any of my previous institutions), has been a wonderful professional home. Faculty and staff in the Department of Anthropology and the Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies have been a huge source of support.

The writing for this book began during a School for Advanced Research seminar in 2016, organized by Alex Blanchette, Naisargi Dave, and Sarah Besky. Subsequently, I presented research related to this book at the University of Oxford, Brown University, the University of Stockholm, the University of Wisconsin-Madison (thanks to the Center for Culture, History, and Environment !), the University of Toronto (thanks to Kevin O’Neill), the University of Hong Kong (thanks to Robert Peckham), the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (thanks to Bryan Dougan), Rhode Island College, Bryant University, the University of Pennsylvania EnviroLab, University College London, the University of Pennsylvania Department of Anthropology, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Birmingham/Warwick Biocultural Diversity and Obesity Unit, the CERMES3 lab at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique in Paris, and, last but not least, the Agrarian Studio at Cornell University.

The 2022 “Alterlife” and 2024 “Multi-Elementalisms” workshops provided some of the most helpful feedback I received on the manuscript. Participants included Lochlann Jain, M. Murphy, Kristen Bos, Miriam Ticktin, Mel Chen, Hannah Landecker, Joe Masco, Cal Biruk, Nick Shapiro, Bishnupriya Ghosh, Cori Hayden, Nadia Gaber, Sheyda Aboii, Paras Arora, Rachael Healy, Nicole Mabry, Galen Joseph, Kelly Knight, Gabeba Baderoon, Joe Klein, and Victoria Nguyen. The “Future of Facts in Latin America” project, organized by Andrea Ballesterio, Eden Medina, and Gregg Hetherington, also merits special mention. Thanks to Emily Maguire, Pablo Gomez, Vivette García Deister, Gabriela Soto Laveaga, Diana Bocarejo, Ignacio Siles, Rosana Castro, Eduardo Dianteras, Melanie Ford, Javiera Araya, and Katie Ulrich.

The following individuals directly and indirectly made this book possible: Claire Wendland, Paul Nadasdy, Sharon Hutchinson, Poulomi Saha, Fábio Zuker, Emilia Sanabria, Marina Welker, Jean Segata, Towns Middleton, Kathleen Millar, Noah Tamarkin, Jamie Lorimer, Jenny Goldstein, Jason Cons, Jonathan Padwe, Juno Parreñas, Stacey Langwick, Amiel Bize, Zoë Wool, Paul Kohlbry, Sahana Ghosh, Wenfei Xu, Jonathan Boyarin, Ashley Carse, Noah Theriault, Nikhil Anand, Ramah McKay, Hannah Brown, Alex Blanchette, Peter Little, Abby Neely, Jason de León, Amelia Moore, Austin Zeiderman, Ann Kelly, and Javier Lezaun. Finally, an ultraspecial thanks to Vincanne Adams. Vincanne, I hope you see the imprint of your scholarly spirit in this book.

I am grateful to the editors and anonymous reviewers of the journals *Medicine Anthropology Theory* and *Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology, and Society*, as well as to the *Fieldsights* blog, the blog of *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, and the *Edge Effects* blog.

The series editors Vincanne Adams and João Biehl helped usher this project into Duke University Press, where Ken Wissoker, Kate Mullen, Courtney Leigh Richardson, and Michael Trudeau made the development process feel supportive and seamless during 2023 and 2024. Thanks to Susan Ecklund for copyediting so carefully. The manuscript was transformed by insightful readings from Gregg Hetherington and one anonymous reviewer. I am truly thankful for the years of support and conversation that Gregg has offered. He is a model of collegiality and generosity.

There were moments in the darkness of Ithaca winters and the depths of pandemic inertia when I did not think I would complete this book. The continued love and support of my extended family in Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina, as well as the companionship of Sidney, Momo, and

Chuck-D, helped me see it through. But no one is more deserving of appreciation than Sarah Besky. Wonky academic textbooks can't really double as love letters, but I hope this book is a reflection of both Sarah's inspiring intellect and her love and care through turbulent and tranquil times. This one's for you.