

Critical Beings: Law, Nation and the Global Subject

Peter Fitzpatrick and Patricia Tuitt (eds)
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***Critical Beings*: Sounding out a critical bearing**

The delights and challenges faced by a reader coming upon *Critical Beings: Law, Nation and the Global Subject*¹ are not unlike those confronted by a newcomer to a reading group of some longstanding. One has to familiarise oneself rapidly with the characters, try to decipher a tangle of intellectual lineages, and unearth embattlements old and new. All this, one must do while balancing a coffee cup on one's knee, nodding with interest, and trying to keep up one's engagement with a wide range of projects in which their respective writers are deeply immersed.

Taking up these challenges, this review will attempt to introduce readers of the *Australian Journal of Legal Philosophy* to the assemblage of eleven essays contained in *Critical Beings: Law, Nation and the Global Subject*. Written by scholars from North America, the United Kingdom and Australia, these essays have been drawn together by Professor Peter Fitzpatrick and Dr Patricia Tuitt of Birkbeck School of Law at the University of London. Together, they record an array of ongoing inquiries into law's role in both instantiating and challenging 'processes of national/global affirmation': inquiries collectively dedicated to acquiring a critical hook upon the ever more hyperbolic 'elevations of the global'.² This review will engage (albeit briefly) with some of these essays' respective and common questions, before asking some questions of its own.

Writing, being, critically

Critical Beings: Law, Nation and the Global Subject probes the 'being' of those occupying the margins of prevailing accounts of contemporary national/global dynamics: 'refugees, racial or ethnic minorities, and women in "developing" states'.³ These figures — configured as 'global subjects' by virtue of their tenuous, contested or peripheral status within national polities — are said to be 'disruptive... [of] both current critical thought and standard forms of political being' and it is for this reason that they are of interest to the contributors to *Critical Beings*.⁴

While the law's and the nation's exclusion of these 'global subjects' is part of the story told in *Critical Beings*, the book has more to say about

¹ Peter Fitzpatrick and Patricia Tuitt (eds), *Critical Beings: Law, Nation and the Global Subject* (2004).

² Ibid xi.

³ Ibid xvii (Fitzpatrick and Tuitt).

⁴ Ibid xix.

the formative and suggestive aspects of their politico-legal being than about their subjugation *per se*. *Critical Beings* is, above all, a book about possibilities. In attempting to circumvent 'the...closure...impoverishing many accounts of law, nation and the subject',⁵ it gestures irrepressibly towards the yet unthought and still unwritten, all by way of resisting the contemporary orientation of American and European nation-states towards the project of 'defending the civilized against the savage'.⁶ Instead, one is repeatedly impelled by *Critical Beings* towards a law that 'subsist[s] in its ability always to be other than what it is'.⁷

Divided into three parts under the themes of 'Introversion', 'Extroversion' and 'Formation', *Critical Beings* opens with four essays, in its first part, that examine strategies of nation making in legal and political theory. Of particular concern to these essays is the law's gathering up of refugees and other non-citizens into the stuff of nationhood and citizenship — a gathering always incomplete, such that the distinction of national from non-national is never quite consummated and thus always underway. Part II of *Critical Beings* then turns from the 'internal' machinations of nation-making to the nation's projection of or into its 'outside'; that is, law's usage of those universals by reference to which the nation acquires its particular resonance.⁸ Finally, Part III scrutinises the products — the 'critical beings' — that ensue from the operations of the first two parts and examines closely some particular discursive practices out of which the unfinished subjectivities of the national and the global are constituted.

Navigating these three sections, the sympathetic or approachable reader engaged with questions of national identity and citizenship will likely find much of interest. The book's particular strength is the rich detail in which it records the law's inscription both upon and against those excluded from or surpassed by the nation. Rigorous, critical accounts of nation-making are available elsewhere: Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* comes to mind.⁹ Yet relatively few such accounts attempt to track the particular role of *law* in this work, or demonstrate the extent to which the production of the nation (and the naming of nationals) entails the creation and structuring of the global. In *Critical Beings*, reciprocally entwined legal processes of national and global subject-formation are

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid 153 (Passavant).

⁷ Ibid 119 (Fitzpatrick).

⁸ According to the editors, the transition from Part I to Part II 'marks something of a shift to what is universal or what is "outside" the nation as particular', yet nonetheless 'integrally tied to the particular' such that it 'takes content from it'. See *ibid* xii (Fitzpatrick and Tuitt).

⁹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (revised ed, 1991).

rendered with care and precision. Moreover, each essay affords a differentiated account of these processes, even as critical techniques are shared. With all the grandiloquent yet surprisingly bland work circulating under the slogan of the global, the meticulousness of this collection is refreshing and its variegation exciting.

Those engaged with the practice and language of human rights have particular reason to read *Critical Beings*, reinscribing, as it does, disturbing links between human rights and racism, and between human rights and nationalism. It is, according to one contributor, Paul Passavant, a paradox of human rights practice that human rights operate simultaneously in opposition to and in reliance upon the (racialised) nation-state.¹⁰ Passavant's essay challenges the presumed association of liberal government with 'a conception of self that is "unencumbered" by ... cultural attachments'.¹¹ Rather, the practice of liberal rights, Passavant suggests, is deeply imbricated in the racial categorisation and ranking of peoples and their mobilisation towards the goals of 'civilisation'. Peter Fitzpatrick's essay further takes issue with the 'claim to an exclusive purchase on the world in the name of human rights', a claim articulated with particular shrillness in the work of Francis Fukuyama and Philip Bobbitt.¹² Presenting a provocative re-reading of these authors' recent works, Fitzpatrick tracks their production of 'a strangely bifurcated world, a world self-possessed of a completeness of immanent being ... [and] yet ... somehow still subject to risk or disruption from without'.¹³ Both essays sound notes of caution for those whose authority hinges upon the righteousness of rights, while recalling that the 'human' of human rights demands no 'fixity of position, exemplary or otherwise'.¹⁴

To some, accustomed to legal theory in an analytical vein, this language of 'risk [and] disruption' and resistance to fixity may sound alarm bells. Yet *Critical Beings* affords its readers many points of access and directions of inquiry. Some essays — Sarah Kyambi's and Catherine Dauvergne's contributions, for instance — scrutinise the regulatory efforts of 'recipient' states to name and place refugees and other 'illegals' in the course of affirming the national against both its own instability and an ambivalent globalism. Their essays will resonate particularly with those who come to this book via Patricia Tuitt's past work: *False Images: Law's Construction of the Refugee*,¹⁵ or those otherwise engaged, in an advocacy or activist role, with the legal and political plight of asylum-seekers. Some

¹⁰ Fitzpatrick and Tuitt, above n 1, 151.

¹¹ Ibid 137.

¹² Ibid 121.

¹³ Ibid 124.

¹⁴ Ibid 132.

¹⁵ Patricia Tuitt, *False Images: Law's Construction of the Refugee* (1996).

contributions — Roshan De Silva's, Patrick Hanafin's and Paul Passavant's — are more akin to cultural histories. They re-tell narratives of national foundation, revealing that which is merely spectral or peripheral in such accounts to be both vital to and defiant of the nation's claims to transcendent completeness.¹⁶ These pieces will invite engagement, in particular, from readers who are anthropologically or historically attuned.

Other essays — Sundhya Pahuja's and Kunal Parker's — adopt an institutional or project-specific focus and might, accordingly, be of interest to those of a pragmatic, reformist bent (even as these essays abstain, for the most part, from a pragmatic or reformist tone). While Pahuja charts the 'corrective' interventions of the International Monetary Fund in the formation of subjectivities in the South, Parker tracks the formative effects of an ultimately unrealised project to construct a United States-operated prison in Mexico in which 'criminal aliens' convicted in Arizona's courts were to be incarcerated, pending their formal deportation. A further set — Jill Stauffer's, Patricia Tuitt's, Peter Fitzpatrick's and Denise Derreira da Silva's essays — take a more pervasive symbolic order as the target of their critique, as manifest in a selection of representative writings. Their essays are concerned with the elisions, exertions and displacements of the liberal political lexicon, whether that liberalism is mobilised under the rubric of political theory (Stauffer and Tuitt), human rights (Fitzpatrick) or feminism (Silva). By their readings, the over-reaching, all-encompassing claims of the social contract, the 'territorial refugee', the 'human' (of human rights) and the oppositional commonality of 'women's social conditions' remain 'uncertain and vulnerable at [their] core'.¹⁷ Their efforts, and the 'vulnerab[ilities]' disclosed thereby, suggest rich ground for further research.

It is, however, an occupational hazard of any critical work concerned with probing vulnerabilities that it opens itself up to as many charges as it levies. One cannot read *Critical Beings* without being inspired to turn its critiques upon itself; indeed, this book promotes it: once again, the reader might recall the experience of joining a reading group, and with implicit encouragement, gradually finding one's voice in a new crowd. Prompted by the unsettling inquiries it launches, one may find oneself well and truly roused by the book's end. Of the concerns that may be so roused (both by and towards *Critical Beings*), the following section will present a small collection.

¹⁶ In De Silva's words, the figure or memory that is encompassed by exclusion (the Indian Tamil to the Sinhalese nation, in his essay) 'precludes the ... nation from ever having a self-constituting foundation' (Fitzpatrick and Tuitt, above n 1, 71(De Silva)).

¹⁷ Ibid 132 (Fitzpatrick).

Being critical of *Critical Beings*

Of all the work that is done throughout *Critical Beings*, some of the hardest work is done by so called ‘conventional’ accounts and scholarship.¹⁸ Frequently unattributed, or traced to a single quote or author, these accounts serve as a collective foil to all but a few of the essays in *Critical Beings*. Here, they meet with stern instruction (‘there is no pure origin’ being an example of one such directive).¹⁹ Sarah Kyambi, for example, contrasts her account of the relationship between refugees’ status and the ongoing process of national identity formation (in the essay ‘National Identity and Refugee Law’) with so-called ‘conventional accounts of national identity’.²⁰ The latter, Kyambi maintains, deny the ambivalence inherent in national identity’s formation.²¹ This denial, according to Kyambi, has the effect of deflecting ambivalence upon the refugee, and thereby legitimising or ‘de-ethicalizing’²² the decision to exclude the refugee from the nation to which s/he has sought admission. Yet the ‘conventional’ texts against which Kyambi is working are either unidentified or, in the case of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, given no more than a cursory reading.²³ Likewise, in Paul Passavant’s essay, the ‘conventional view’, attributed to Will Kymlicka, is afforded barely a paragraph.²⁴

The significance of the ‘conventional’ to the generation of critical energy in *Critical Beings*, combined with its relative obscurity in the book, raises the question once posed with delightful irreverence by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: ‘where does this undifferentiated, undocumented,

¹⁸ Ibid 19, 137–8, 151 (Kyambi and Passavant).

¹⁹ Ibid 21.

²⁰ Ibid 19.

²¹ Ibid 26.

²² This rather awkward term — ‘de-ethicalizing’ — recurs without explanation in Kyambi’s essay. One may infer that it is associated with the displacement of responsibility from the decision-maker (s/he who takes the admission/exclusion decision) onto the refugee and/or onto the hard ground of ‘fact’, and the ethical loss purportedly associated with that displacement (ibid 33–4). It seems related, too, to the decision-maker having sought, through deference to that which presents itself as ‘simple, existent reality’, to seal him/herself off from the dynamic, unfinished interaction with the refugee anticipated in Kyambi’s discussion of the ambivalence of identity (at 33). Beyond these suggestions, however, and those that might be extrapolated from the texts to which Kyambi refers, precisely what ethical element or relation is lost through this displacement, and from where that ethical component is derived at the outset, remains largely unexplored.

²³ Ibid 25–8.

²⁴ Ibid 137–8.

monolithic [conventionality] hang out’?²⁵ While ‘[t]he gesture of constituting such an object in order that it may be appropriated and then devalued’²⁶ is one to which the writers in *Critical Beings* are acutely attuned in other contexts, they pay relatively little attention to this gesture when directed towards that declared conventional or paradigmatic.

This occasional inattentiveness pertains, moreover, not only to that ‘before’ which is derided in *Critical Beings* (for essentialism,²⁷ simplicity,²⁸ ‘obscur[ing] difference’,²⁹ self-delusion,³⁰ reduction,³¹ and other crimes), but also to that ‘after’ which is entrusted with hope in the same collection, cautionary asides notwithstanding.³² Many of the book’s essays gesture to a ‘beyond’, being (in the words of Roshan De Silva) ‘something ... which interrupts the very idea of an *origin* and ... which renders both nation and law ... incapable of sustaining a self-generating foundation’.³³ Yet, ironically, it is in this hopeful, forward-looking posture that *Critical Beings* seems to elide many of the difficulties that its contributors are at pains to point out in other contexts.

Consider, for instance, the salvatory mode in which human rights appear in Jill Stauffer’s essay. Equated to obligation and justice (rather than to, say, power), human rights are read by Stauffer as a call to respond, to aid, to make oneself accountable. But what, I found myself asking, of the institutionalised violence of human rights? What of the civilising missions launched in their name? What of the will to dominate and entrain — alongside the will to be entrained — discernible within human rights? What relation do the human rights of Stauffer’s essay bear to those of Peter Fitzpatrick’s essay — those which can ‘neither [be] encompass[ed] ... nor fill[ed] ... with an enduring content’?³⁴ How, furthermore, does Stauffer’s account relate to the ‘hegemonic ... human rights text[s]’ with which Denise Ferreira da Silva takes issue in her essay?³⁵

²⁵ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, ‘The Politics of Interpretations’, in *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (1988) 118, 132 (Spivak posed this question of the feminist criticism ‘trash[ed]’ by Terry Eagleton in *Walter Benjamin; or, Towards a Revolutionary Criticism* (1981)).

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Fitzpatrick and Tuitt, above n 1, 19, 74–5.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 31.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 84.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 108.

³¹ *Ibid.* 38.

³² See, as an example of one such cautionary aside, the editors’ warning that the ‘global subject’ of the title is not ‘a fully formed entity’ standing ‘ready to engage directly the power of the global nations’: *ibid.* xx.

³³ *Ibid.* 57.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 120.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 209.

Sundhya Pahuja's liminal invocation of 'real difference' also provokes questions in so far as this difference seemingly predates the formative processes that her essay tracks. Once 'real difference' enters the discursive framework, Pahuja contends, it can only be represented in ways dictated by 'the epistemology of the system'.³⁶ In this way, the possibility of difference is 'preclude[d]' and only something lesser and commensurate with the 'system' — disruption — may be contemplated. In a curious way, this difference/disruption relation echoes the traditional/modern opposition that Pahuja seeks explicitly to unsettle: difference's privileged standing, combined with its remoteness, emulates 'the eternal presence of the spectre of Third World primordialism'; always feared/desired, yet always under elimination.³⁷ As Silva warns in the final essay of the book, the privileging of difference often 'pre-supposes a moment *before* and *after* the effects of power'.³⁸ This is a warning worth heeding in reading Pahuja's otherwise extremely effective essay.

This reader had worries too about the redemptive role of art in Patrick Hanafin's essay. 'Art', in Hanafin's account, 'becomes a space in which such traumas can be addressed and violent fantasies can be exorcised': a 'means of working through melancholia to mourning'.³⁹ Re-read as an 'in-between space' alongside the 'non-place[s]' of artistic creation, the Belfast Agreement of December 1999 comes to embody 'a space of becoming ... [a space in which] a therapeutic encounter may be staged with the other if those involved can be allowed to move from their traditional fears and suspicions'.⁴⁰ Reading the Belfast Agreement in this way is not, Hanafin insists, equivalent to reading it as 'a point at which a peaceful utopia was created': the sort of utopian project with which his essay takes issue.⁴¹ Presumably this is because Hanafin proposes a process of formation — 'forging more enabling narratives of identity' — rather than one of resolution or transcendence.⁴² Even so, a sense of circularity emerges in the essay as it struggles, at its end, to free itself of the 'shackles of "slow motion civil war"', echoing that utopian surpassing of which Hanafin is earlier so critical.⁴³ Then again, it could be that this circular quality is vital to Hanafin's enactment of what Pahuja calls the resilience of the 'colonial continuum', as much in cadence as in word.⁴⁴

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid 170.

³⁸ Ibid 208.

³⁹ Ibid 110.

⁴⁰ Ibid 114.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid 115.

⁴³ Ibid 102–3, 115.

⁴⁴ Ibid 177.

Perhaps most noteworthy, given its ramifications for contemporary identity and humanitarian politics, is the hope-bearing role played by the subject — or one or other version of subjectivity — in *Critical Beings*. Even as subjects are figured, consciously and with sophistication, as ‘temporary and unstable conjunctions of traces’,⁴⁵ they keep coalescing into anchorage points throughout the book, running up flags for tomorrow. Consider Patricia Tuitt’s claim that

[the internally displaced person] represents most acutely the person with no place to go ... He or she represents in an almost physical sense the line in which the territories of a state and its other forms or outer imaginings reveal their relation. In this particular figure, we see the futility of territorial representations of harm and violence.⁴⁶

At each such point, the subject tends to assume a stature that casts its openings and fissures into shadow. Subjects — specifically, ‘global subjects’ — ‘stand as possible precursors to new political consciousnesses’.⁴⁷ They offer ‘transformative potential’,⁴⁸ ‘intimations of other ways of being’,⁴⁹ and ‘new understandings of “us” and “them”’.⁵⁰ The effect of their being named as such is to rally the divergent readings in *Critical Beings* in the service of a more or less singular task (however multifariously described and conditioned). Gathering around the incipient subject, these readings prepare the way for the new, framed more or less as that which is already known or knowable. This generates a sense of entrapment in a sort of theoretical nuclear family and pretty soon one finds oneself longing for an Althusserian break!⁵¹

This rallying of subjectivity is associated with *Critical Beings*’ infrequently doctrinaire tone and the related loss of a sense, from time to time, of what is at stake in its various battles. Patricia Tuitt’s gripe, for instance, in the essay ‘Refugees, Nations, Laws and the Territorialization of Violence’, is with political theory’s ranking of the particular type of violence experienced by the legally qualified ‘refugee’ as above all other comparable forms of violence. The figure of the refugee has, Tuitt contends, ‘colonized’ the sympathies and attentions of political theorists. As a result, the suffering occasioned by other forms of violence tends to be

⁴⁵ Ibid 22.

⁴⁶ Ibid 50.

⁴⁷ Ibid xvii (Fitzpatrick and Tuitt).

⁴⁸ Ibid xi.

⁴⁹ Ibid xix.

⁵⁰ Ibid 95 (Dauvergne).

⁵¹ See Louis Althusser, *For Marx* (Ben Brewster trans, 1977 ed) 32–9, 249; Louis Althusser, ‘Elements of Self-Criticism’, in *Essays in Self-Criticism* (Graeme Lock trans, 1976 ed) 101.

‘downplay[ed]’.⁵² Among the forms of violence so diminished, Tuitt writes of that experienced by the internally displaced, the enslaved, those smuggled or conveyed via ‘organized transportation ... for profit or gain’ and other unspecified ‘practices that condition the traffic of human beings’.⁵³ Against this, Tuitt would have political theory recognise the symbolic potential of the ‘visa-holding, voucher-carrying, detained asylum-seeker’ as that figure that more potently ‘accords us a sense of the limits of the nation’.⁵⁴ This figure Tuitt regards as imbued with promise:

The internally displaced are able to weaken the nexus of state, territory and identity precisely because they are the model that best expresses what contemporary accounts of the nation perceive as its ‘imagined’, ‘fantastic’, ‘impossible’ nature.⁵⁵

Yet does it really matter that the refugee’s disenfranchisement is regarded as more acute than that of an internally displaced person? Should one quibble about degrees of suffering in this context? Moreover, should one focus as much attention as these authors seem to be doing upon ‘getting it right’ in the sense, say, of advancing that symbol or ‘model’ that can best ‘serve [the] purpose’ of bringing forth ‘new political ways of being’?⁵⁶ Isn’t there something presumptuous, indeed politically questionable, about subordinating this or that figure or text to one’s meticulously elaborated theoretical purpose? Might this not be particularly the case when the figure in question is — surprise, surprise — drawn from that line-up of ‘under-developed’ personages (under-elaborated theoretically, in this instance) in whose name one generation after another has launched its humanising missions?

Were one to ask them, would the ‘global subjects’ of this book (‘refugees, racial or ethnic minorities, and women in “developing” states’) *wish* to bear the standard for ‘new ... ways of being’?⁵⁷ Perhaps such a question smacks too much of liberal ‘choosing’ and ‘consenting’. Nevertheless, for all their talk of others, the essays in this book seemed, at times, to be undertaking work of rectification for the sake, primarily, of an essay’s own rectitude (ethical or otherwise). Against this, the authors might have made more of the potential for intra-textual jarring and sparring arising from the interaction of their respective essays — the sort of jarring alluded to above in the juxtaposition of Stauffer’s, Fitzpatrick’s and Silva’s accounts of ‘human rights’.

⁵² Fitzpatrick and Tuitt, above n 1, 42 (Tuitt).

⁵³ Ibid 40–3.

⁵⁴ Ibid 43.

⁵⁵ Ibid 51.

⁵⁶ Ibid 46.

⁵⁷ Ibid xvii (Fitzpatrick and Tuitt).

That the contributors to *Critical Beings* are open to precisely these sorts of engagements is evident from the range and rigour of their interrogations. These contributors share a language (the word ‘quiddity’, for example, appears in more than one essay), but it is not a language to which they claim priority. While readers would undoubtedly benefit from having read the works referenced in these essays (the work of Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas, Jean-Luc Nancy and Homi Bhabha, among others), the collection lacks an ‘in the know’ smugness that would preclude entry to the uninitiated. As a result, one could imagine a readership for *Critical Beings* comprised of legal scholars, non-legal scholars and activists alike (and unlike).

Roshan De Silva’s essay, for example, works hard to afford its readers access to an ‘account of the relation between the cosmology of Sinhalese Buddhism and the dynamics of nation and law in Sri Lanka’.⁵⁸ Indeed, so careful are De Silva’s rhetorical dance-steps and so concerned is De Silva to signpost every phenomenological-deconstructive move in its choreography, that there is something ever so slightly hollow about the non-absolute proximity that he would have his readers recognise between the practice of nationalism and the Buddhist cosmos.⁵⁹ Here, perhaps, the simultaneous dedication of *Critical Beings* to both learnedness and open-endedness backfires somewhat, even as De Silva’s essay retains an enthralling, suggestive quality. With barely a seventh of the essay’s 22 pages dedicated to its ostensible ‘focus’ (‘discriminatory legislation that sought to exclude a segment of the Indian Tamil population from the franchise’⁶⁰), it is hard for the reader to gain much sense of the forces that De Silva insists are discernible there. Instead, the recitation of illustrious names — Heidegger, Kapferer and Derrida — comes to exert a somewhat overbearing effect upon the essay itself. Perhaps because of the brevity of the piece, and all that it sets out to accomplish, one gains only the faintest sense of writing ‘which evades every assignable destination’.⁶¹ Instead, one finds oneself moving through De Silva’s essay as through a driving school — obediently: turn left here for aporia, watch out for metaphysics as you ‘pass through the cosmos “the truth of Being”’.⁶²

Nevertheless, for all the post-modern sign-posting and throat-clearing that goes on across its pages, *Critical Beings* retains a welcoming, unpredictable quality. It issues a generous invitation to reading. In particular, it brings into the room and the conversation (in the mode of

⁵⁸ Ibid 58 (De Silva).

⁵⁹ Ibid 77.

⁶⁰ Ibid 58.

⁶¹ Jacques Derrida, *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond* (Alan Bass trans, 1987 ed) 493.

⁶² Fitzpatrick and Tuitt, above n 1, 78.

‘critical beings’) those whose bodies and lives more commonly comprise a screen onto which one or other reformist endeavour is projected. If it projects its own array of hopes onto these figures, it nevertheless takes their political agency seriously — seriously enough to regard their actions and ‘being’ within the juridical order as both formative and critical. There is much more to be said, and many more questions to be asked, of the claims made for ‘critical being’ in this book. Suffice to say that it launches an exchange by which many readers will be provoked and engaged. Pull up a chair, it says to its readers, and join us. For this, and for the vibrancy of the conversation that ensues, *Critical Beings: Law, Nation and the Global Subject* is worthy of commendation to readers of the *Australian Journal of Legal Philosophy*.

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