uncontested, “script ‘mother’” (93), on the other.

The volume is likely to achieve its aim of triggering questions from readers and encouraging debate. The reference to the project’s website is helpful for this purpose. The volume is, moreover, a timely reminder that the peace process in Bougainville is ongoing, requiring further attention and diplomacy.

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This unique exploration of madness in Papua New Guinea stands out for several reasons. While its central insight is not surprising—that in the mid-1980s the Kakoli people of the Upper Kaugel Valley lacked a concept of “mental illness” and, on the rare occasions when they used psychiatric services, saw them chiefly as a means of restraining destructive or violent madpeople—the data collected by Michael Goddard is both fascinating and sensitively presented. Though framed by the author as an anthropological critique of the premises and practice of transcultural psychiatry, I would suggest that this book’s strongest feature is its careful rendering of the unknowns of ethnographic fieldwork—those situations and circumstances in which the gap between ways of being in the world is so profound as to thwart efforts at interpretation. Having had a quarter century to reevaluate these materials (the book is based on his PhD thesis), the author remains uncertain of what, if anything, precipitated the madness of his informants. This radical uncertainty is an epistemologically positive posture in an increasingly “applied” scholarly context in which cultural explanations for disorder are both ready-to-hand and too often essentially vacant.

In his introduction, Goddard notes that the people among whom he lived in 1985–1986 found his research topic puzzling. For the Kakoli, there was nothing to learn about the mad. Not only were their problems nonmental in nature, they appeared to lack any knowable cause that could be generalized across cases. The madpeople known to the Kakoli were so different from one another that they did not comprise a social or natural “type.” Though all were described as kekelepa—an Umbu Ungu term Goddard translates roughly as “leaving a group or place” (70)—so were the intoxicated, the estranged, and the disobedient. To refurbish a phrase from Michel Foucault on homosexuality, kekelepa people were not a species. To the extent that they permit explanation, kekelepa episodes are for Goddard “part of the dialectics of Kakoli sociality” (6), collectively constructed “exercise[s] in moral iconography” (3) rather than forms of individual pathology or cultural disorder.

Chapter 1 outlines the history of psychiatry in Papua New Guinea, from early twentieth century concerns
about mentally deranged “natives” going “amok,” to the post–World War II shift toward institutional confinement, tranquilizing drugs, and electroshock therapy, to the “community-based care” framework of the ethnographic present. The history is much enriched by personal interviews with Dr B G Burton-Bradley, head of Papua New Guinea’s mental health services under Australian rule, and Dr Wilfred Moi, the assistant secretary for mental health at the time of Goddard’s fieldwork. Chapter 2 explores the basic contradiction belying this narrative of progress: despite changes in professional ideology and official policy, Goddard argues, psychiatric service provision has remained mostly unchanged since the 1960s. At the level of practice, psychiatry in Papua New Guinea is an apparatus of constraint and control, and patients usually have considerably more contact with law enforcement officers than with mental health professionals. In this context, “culturally sensitive” psychiatry does little more than provide an ideological justification for what is essentially incarceration—it is a “paper concept” (60) with no relevance for patients and their families or for health workers, whose foremost concern is controlling patients’ extreme behaviors. Goddard illustrates this point with seven case studies from the 1970s and 1980s of patients from the Kaugel Valley who received psychiatric treatment at hospitals in Mt Hagen, Mendi, and Goroka. In all cases, patients were hospitalized after acts of violence or property damage (or, in the case of one female patient, mood swings and aggression combined with promiscuity), and cultural factors were completely absent from both diagnostic and therapeutic efforts.

Chapter 3 describes the “ambivalent” use of psychiatric services by the Kakoli despite their non-subscription to, and lack of interest in, medical-scientific explanations for kekelepa behavior. The very nature of kekelepa—its lack of any tangible cause—meant that traditional healers and diviners (alaye) were rarely consulted; as one alaye informed Goddard, he could not cure kekelepa because there was nothing to cure. Confronted with violent outbursts and irrational talk or behavior, the kinsmen of kekelepa people sought out psychiatric treatment solely as a means of restraining the disruptive person. Once violent symptoms had abated, patients would be discharged and medication would cease. For Kakoli, psychiatry was an extra-local “social control resource” (85)—an extension, like law enforcement, of “government”—that could be drawn on to restore order.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 expand some of the cases outlined in chapter 3 by contextualizing each Kakoli madperson—and his or her ailment—in terms of the discursive role they held for the community at large. Though madpeople themselves were often unable or unwilling to narrate their experiences, this very fact emphasizes Goddard’s point that their “disorders” were not reflections of individual pathology but of social and historical praxis. Kekelepa people’s exclusion from social and productive activity made them “negative testimony” (144) to the moral fundamentals of Kakoli life. Goddard notes with some regret the futility of his own efforts at destigmatizing such people: their estrangement
was “an element of a social totality involved in a process of historical change” (108), holding both negative value as iconic inversions of proper moral conduct and positive value as sources of reflection on social change. Even the profoundly marginalized and nonverbal woman mentioned earlier had a discursive function for the Kakoli, for whom the causes of such troubles were far less important than their effects. It would be interesting to explore the extent to which Kakoli have taken up the pseudo-biological causal explanations for madness common in Papua New Guinea today—I am thinking of marijuana use, a topic Goddard brings up, briefly, in his account of only one patient—and whether such explanations articulate a more “modern” conception of the person. (Indeed, this book should prompt serious reconsideration of what exactly discourses about marijuana and other drugs accomplish in relation to mental health in the contemporary context.)

Goddard’s critique of the vacancy of the culture concept in psychiatric services highlights the fact that culture operates as something of a “black box” in many institutional contexts in Papua New Guinea. While cultural difference is almost always acknowledged as an essential feature of PNG life, it is rarely brought to bear in the actual delivery of services; it is indeed a “paper concept.” As a holdover from colonial governance strategies, culture appears also to serve a chiefly “discursive function” for the state and its medical appendages—justifying control here, rationalizing nonintervention there. Most provocatively, in the “current climate of aid and ‘capacity building’” (xi), Out of Place refuses to provide the epistemological comforts of treating Kakoli madness as a simple matter of cultural frameworks, systems, or beliefs. In light of the increasing constraints on researchers interested in health and illness in Papua New Guinea, this book has considerable value as a critical intervention that does not offer easy answers or development-ready insights.

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For roughly two decades, the gold mine on the island of Lihir in Papua New Guinea has been one of the most important mines in the Pacific in terms of its size, environmental and social impact, and the cultural significance of the area in which it is located. Despite this fact, very little has been published about the mine until now. Nicholas Bainton’s new book, The Lihir Destiny, is a welcome corrective, providing a broad and worthwhile overview of Lihir and its mine in a format that is clearly written and available free of charge through the ANU E Press.

Papua New Guinea is well known