parenthood as women who have avoided unwed motherhood through abortion or later marriage. Although most Japanese mothers avoid out-of-wedlock birth in the sense that they are married when they have a child, it is likely that few women find themselves in the critical situation where they have to make the “tough choice.” By interviewing unwed mothers instead, Hertog shows what made their decision to be an unwed mother so difficult. It is also noteworthy that the interviewees told the author about very sensitive matters such as contraceptive use, their relationship with the child’s father, and his reaction to the pregnancy. Her success in designing the selection of interviewees is an inspiration for other scholars doing qualitative research into sensitive subjects.

This study of the persistence of the rarity of illegitimacy would have been more robust had it been complemented by research on couples in shotgun marriages, since it may have neglected unmarried and pregnant women in a good relationship with the father of their expected child. However, *Tough Choices* can be recommended for, among other things, providing a rare and graphic description of Japanese women’s decisions on marriage and birth.

Habits of the Heartland: Small-Town Life in Modern America. By Lyn C. MacGregor. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2010. Pp. xii+270. \$22.95 (paper).

Gabe Ignatow
University of North Texas

Based on Lyn C. MacGregor’s dissertation at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, *Habits of the Heartland* is an ethnographic study of Viroqua, a small town of approximately 4,000 residents in southwestern Wisconsin. MacGregor’s two years living in Viroqua was time well spent: she collected a great deal of ethnographic and interview data, and her arguments regarding the town’s social divisions are generally convincing and well supported as a result. MacGregor comes across as a trustworthy guide to Viroqua, and the book is well written and genuinely edifying.

Habits of the Heartland’s guiding argument is that Viroqua contained three main groups who lived in “parallel societies” (p. 26)—Regulars, Main Streeters, and Alternatives—and that members of each group had systematically different ideas and assumptions about what it means to be part of a community. The Regulars were generally the town’s working- and lower-middle class residents, almost all of whom had lived in Viroqua for several generations. For Regulars, community was something “natural” and spontaneous that required little conscious direction or effort, and they were suspicious of the motives of Viroquans who organized elaborate and time-consuming community projects. Main Streeters were members of the town’s civic elite. They were generally wealthier and more highly edu-

cated than were the Regulars, but like the Regulars, most Main Streeters had deep roots in the region. Main Streeters worked tirelessly, through a variety of formal civic organizations and informal social ties, to “improve” their town—for example by working with state officials to widen the town’s Main Street, renovate many of its buildings, and encourage downtown business owners to cooperate in promoting the town as a whole. Alternatives, a group whose presence and visibility initially surprised MacGregor (p. 15), were ex-suburbanites or urbanites from outside the region who were drawn to Viroqua mainly for its local Waldorf School (an alternative private high school). The Alternatives brought with them an urban culture, elements of which were resisted by many Regulars and even some Main Streeters. But the Alternatives’ commitment to community, though based on a search for self-expression and fulfillment (p. 54) rather than on tradition, resembled the Main Streeters’ commitment in that both groups professed belief in the almost “limitless possibilities for individual efficacy” (p. 51) available in the town.

The book begins with a slightly awkward introduction in which MacGregor discusses the reservations she had about moving to Viroqua, and her occasional desire to leave once she was there. She goes on to justify her ethnographic study as an antidote to “rural versus urban, *gemeinschaft* versus *gesellschaft*” oversimplifications (p. 7) that impede our ability to understand contemporary communities. In part 1, MacGregor examines the town’s three main social groups, and in part 2 she makes a number of theoretical points about how Viroquans’ patterns of consumption intersect with their ways of understanding community and morality. The numerous, if somewhat scattered, arguments she makes here regarding the work of Pierre Bourdieu, Sharon Zukin, David Brooks, and others are generally convincing, and can usefully inform sociological research on consumption, identity, morality, and small communities.

In my reading the book has two main weaknesses, the first of which is its stated justification. In the introduction, MacGregor takes aim not at debates among sociologists within one or another subfield (she covers these in part 2), but rather the widespread nostalgia for small town life that she finds in American popular culture. But her evidence for this nostalgia is weak: she cites the popularity of the writer and radio personality Garrison Keillor, the apparent “explosion of interest in the work of Norman Rockwell” (p. 6), and the fact that the magazine *Country Living* has over a million readers. Though there may be a current of small town nostalgia in America today, I for one don’t feel it, and I find it difficult to believe that this kind of nostalgia is particularly widespread or deeply felt. What’s more, in the end, the book doesn’t offer much in the way of a debunking or deconstruction of small town nostalgia, as its strengths lie elsewhere. The second weakness, closely related to the first, concerns the basic message of the book, because this really isn’t a book about the habits of the heartland per se, nor is it about small-town life in modern America (the subtitle). It is rather about the habits of a very unique (p.

11), entirely white, Democratic-leaning rural town that sports, in the hyperbole of one resident, “an herbalist on every corner” (p. 29). In 2004 Viroqua was profiled in the *Utne Reader*, an alternative lifestyle magazine, and it has a reputation in the Twin Cities and Madison as a center of community-sponsored agriculture, organic and family farms, and the slow food movement. For a book that purports to depict the realities of small town life in America as such, Viroqua’s crunchy weirdness is a major weakness. But if we accept Viroqua as an atypical small town, I think it becomes more interesting rather than less, because Viroqua is a real success story. MacGregor notes that Viroqua is “clearly a place where people were getting things done together” (p. 12), and unlike many towns in Wisconsin and the broader Midwest, Viroqua is not depopulating or suffering from economic stagnation or rural brain drain (see Patrick J. Carr and Maria Kefalas’s *Hollowing Out the Middle* [Beacon Press, 2009]). In its pragmatic accommodation of groups of citizens with starkly contrasting communal ideals, the town might serve as an instructive model for Main Streeters across America. For anyone interested in the future of small towns in America, and in the tensions that can result from recent changes in rural demographics, this book has much to offer. *Habits of the Heartland* is a solid piece of scholarship that is worthy of the attention of sociologists, regulars, alternatives, Main Streeters, and combinations thereof.

eTrust: Forming Relationships in the Online World. Edited by Karen S. Cook, Chris Snijders, Vincent Buskens, and Coye Cheshire. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2009. Pp. x+330. \$55.00.

Allison Cavanagh
University of Leeds

Public trust is one of the great issues of the modern age. We live, it is argued, in an era of cynicism and anxiety in which trust in public institutions, politicians, experts of all stripes, and increasingly in each other has suffered a decline. For sociology, the question of trust, from the beginning, has been at the heart of the problem of order and solidarity. Whereas philosophers since Hobbes had seen social order as guaranteed only by the enforcement of formal contractual relationships, for Durkheim, the existence of contracts, far from being a response to the need for order, demonstrates the analytic priority of order. Theories of trust tend to revert back from this idea, seeing the imposition of formal mechanisms of trust generation, such as contracts and reputation systems, as a way of managing vulnerability in a dislocated age.

These issues have been reframed in light of the affordances and pressing policy implications of the expansion and diversification of the range of services, interactions, and relationships that are mediated online. From