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The stars in our eyes: the famous, infamous, and why we care too much about them, Julie Klam (book review)

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of sponsorship, and the way aspirational labor often contributes to narratives that render such contributions invisible and depoliticized. A lengthy bibliography provides avenues for further reading. **VERDICT** This insightful account will resonate with anyone who has ever sought to turn personal passions into wage-earning employment, juggled multiple part-time gigs, or struggled to fit pleasurable hobbies around a “real” job or jobs.—**Anna J. Clutterbuck-Cook, Massachusetts Historical Soc.**

Klam, Julie. *The Stars in Our Eyes: The Famous, the Infamous, and Why We Care Way Too Much About Them*. Riverhead. Jul. 2017. 240p. ISBN 9781594631368. \$26; ebk. ISBN 9781101611180. soc sci

What is it that makes celebrities famous—and why are ordinary people so fascinated with them? Author and memoirist Klam (*Please Excuse My Daughter*) explores these questions in bite-sized chapters covering topics such as child stars, scandals, and the lure and harmful effects of fame, usually in conversation with one or two people ranging from those in the industry (actor Timothy Hutton, agent Adam Schweitzer) to Klam’s own Aunt Mattie (a devotee of reality TV). Between chapters are

“intermissions” in which people describe their own encounters with celebrities, ranging from amusing, sweet, and sometimes cringingly awkward. While Klam has great verve for her subject, her treatment of its various facets unfortunately tends toward the shallow, and the already thin book is padded out a little too much with digressions on her own particular celebrity connections and interests. **VERDICT** There’s nothing new or particularly insightful here, but Klam’s breezy style and the variety of celebrity anecdotes might provide a fun indulgence for those looking for a quick, gossipy read. [See Prepub Alert, 2/6/17.]—**Kathleen McCallister, Tulane Univ., New Orleans**

★ **Klosterman, Chuck. *Chuck Klosterman X: A Highly Specific, Defiantly Incomplete History of the Early 21st Century*. Blue Rider: Penguin. May 2017. 464p. ISBN 9780399184154. \$27; ebk. ISBN 9780399184178. soc sci**

Klosterman (*Sex, Drugs, and Cocoa Puffs; But What If We’re Wrong*) has written nine books and a slew of articles for newspapers, magazines, and online publications. This collection features his best pieces from the last ten years. Although a majority of the articles focus on music or sports, Klosterman also ruminates on literature, pop culture, death, and much more. Filtered through his literary sensibility are honest, critical, profound, and compulsively readable interviews with Jimmy Page, Taylor Swift, Kobe Bryant, and Tom Brady (to name a few). Each piece is a polished stone of insightful reportage. But Klosterman’s work flirts closest with the sublime when he strays from the famous, including his retelling of an intense junior college basketball game in North Dakota, a conversation with a busboy in Tulsa, the infuriating demands of a forgotten NBA draft pick, and the evening of his father’s death. **VERDICT** A funny, thoughtful Greatest Hits album from a master of nonfiction, with standout tracks that will stand the test of time.—**Paul Stenis, Pepperdine Univ. Lib., Malibu, CA**

Petersen, Anne Helen. *Too Fat, Too Slutty, Too Loud: The Rise and Reign of the Unruly Woman*. Plume. Jun. 2017.

288p. ISBN 9780399576850. \$25; ebk. ISBN 9780399576867. soc sci

Media studies scholar Petersen (BuzzFeed News) offers a trenchant and intersectional analysis of the celebrity narratives we create around famous women who, in some way, defy the cultural scripts of classed and raced femininity. Across ten thematic chapters, Petersen considers what it means to be too strong (Serena Williams), too fat (Melissa McCarthy), too gross (Abbi Ja-

cobsen and Ilana Glazer), too slutty (Nicki Minaj), too old (Madonna), too pregnant (Kim Kardashian), too shrill (Hillary Clinton), too queer (Caitlyn Jenner), too loud (Jennifer Weiner), and too naked (Lena Dunham). Each chapter interrogates the sexism and other structural biases shaping media narratives around high-profile women and considers how we collectively punish those who are judged defiantly ungovernable. Throughout, Petersen also considers the limits of personal unruliness. For example, *Broad City* (Jacobsen and Glazer) celebrates a particular twentysomething freedom that may only come with privilege; Madonna’s insistence on her own continued sexual potency has done little to combat systemic ageism. **VERDICT** This work should be considered a post-2016 election sequel to Sady Doyle’s *Trainwreck*. It will be appreciated by anyone seeking to understand the vicious social judgement that women—particularly high-profile, successful women—continue to face in our era.—**Anna J. Clutterbuck-Cook, Massachusetts Historical Soc.**

TRAVEL & GEOGRAPHY

Esterhammer, Karin. *So Happiness To Meet You: Foolishly, Blissfully Stranded in Vietnam*. Prospect Park. Jul. 2017. 256p. ISBN 9781938849978. pap. \$16; ebk. ISBN 9781938849985. TRAV

When faced with the loss of her job during the U.S. recession, author Esterhammer and her husband decide on a get-rich-quick scheme to rent out their L.A. house and live in Vietnam for a year at a fraction of the price. Excited at the prospect of living luxuriously while saving money, they find upon arrival that the rent in Ho Chi Minh City has jumped and they can only afford property in one of the poorest districts. In their year—which stretches into almost three years—abroad, Esterhammer, her husband, and son are threatened with a lawsuit from their renters, battle massive cockroaches, confront heat and flooding, and fall in love with their quirky and uninhibited neighbors. From the little children that run into their house as soon as the door opens to the neighbor who sells heavenly iced coffee to the sounds of karaoke going till midnight, the people they meet prove to be unexpected and unforgettable. Esterhammer creates laugh-out-loud moments of at times daunting or utterly embarrassing experiences. **VERDICT** An energetic mix of wry humor and heartwarming moments, this engaging account will appeal to armchair travelers and memoir lovers alike in its representation of the people and culture of Vietnam and Esterhammer’s experience of a lifetime.—**Stacy Shaw, Orange, CA**



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