Zachary Nelson takes a similar approach to the examination of the artifact inventory of various categories of excavated houses at Piedras Negras and Copán. Like Reed and Zeleznik he concludes that those presumed elites living near to the center consumed more goods than their rural counterparts in either polity. He also argues for a steady increase in quantity and diversity of goods consumed, peaking in the late classic.

Kirk Damon Straight's chapter "The production, exchange, and consumption of pottery vessels during the Classic Period at Tikal..." is an investigation of the usefulness of Instrumental Neutron Activation Analysis in revealing typological and spatial patterning in pottery in the periphery of Tikal. The results of this study do not really offer up much that is revelatory about pottery-making at Tikal. Few consistent groupings emerge, and it is not really possible to discriminate between alternative modes of exchange.

David Webster embarks on an overview and critique of evolutionary thinking of the 1950s and 1960s, and the pronouncements of more recent theoretical schools. These, echoing Flannery, he labels as "portentously trivial." His critical gaze is then directed on himself and the issues that he grappled with in the course of his career, such as the Maya classical period collapse. Webster's witty writing and his sage insights leave the reader with little doubt that his lofty reputation is very well deserved and that his steadying hand has resolutely pointed Mesoamerican archaeology in the right direction.

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Material Relations: The Marriage Figurines of Prehispanic Honduras.

Julia A. Hendon, Rosemary A. Joyce, and Jeanne Lopiparo.
Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2014. xiv + 200 pp. $70.00.
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Material Relations takes place over a thousand years ago, in the northwest part of what is now Honduras. An archaeological study, it uses broken ceramics and ruined buildings to imagine family-centric social relations in (and among) six specific settlements whose remains are now called Copán, Tenampua, Campo Dos, Currusté, Travesía, and Cerro Palenque. An application of materially engaged social theory, its key analytic categories include "household," "family members," "common understandings," "social networks," "memory," "identity," "relationships," and "community center." Although a book about the distant past, some of its framing arguments seem informed by the brutal 2009 military coup in Honduras, the effects of which (in terms of atrocities and human rights violations) are still ongoing. I will return to these issues at the end of my review, as well as to why it was not entirely inappropriate for the University Press of Colorado to send such a book (set so long before the 1500s, and in Central America) for review in *The Sixteenth Century Journal.*

Divided into seven chapters (plus an introduction and epilogue), the book offers a synthesis of research by its three authors since the 1980s. The introduction presents the book's theoretical concerns and then reviews the history of the region's ceramic production from 1500 BC to AD 1000. Chapter 1 gives a parallel history for figurines. The "marriage figurines" of the book's subtitle provide connective tissue for the six remaining chapters. Marriage figurines are ceramic images depicting a female-male pair, about 12 cm high. These ceramic objects have been called marriage figurines since the 1980s, when one nearly complete example (and a whistle to boot) was discovered at Copán.

Since a man and woman standing together are obviously a bride and groom, the name stuck (34).

Each chapter varies in its approach to understanding these objects, but all aim to connect figurines to site architecture and thus to vanished families who cultivated relations with neighbors near and far. Because the marriage figurines/fragments at Copán (chap. 2), as well as a mold for such images at Currusté (chap. 5), were uncovered in relatively recent excavations, we have detailed information about architectural-archaeological contexts. But for Tenampua (chap. 3) and Campo Dos (chap. 4), marriage figurines were collected in the first half of the twentieth century, and so museum documentation only indicates site of discovery. These two chapters therefore give an overview of what we know about Tenampua and Campo Dos in general and then imagine where figurines might have been used. Additional challenges are faced in the book's final two chapters; no marriage figurines were found at Travesía (chap. 6) or Cerro Palenque (chap. 7). Instead, the authors discuss ceramic analogies, which they argue were meaningful variations on the marriage-pair tradition. At Travesía, marriage figurines were intentionally avoided, in preference for other paired ceramic images: female/female "sister" pairs (wearing a shared huipil) and monkey-boy/monkey-boy "brother" pairs (sporting erect penises). At Cerro Palenque, no paired figurines of any kind were found. Instead, the authors point to individual male and female figurines buried in separate deposits within a masonry platform that together represent "the clear distinction between male and female who perform different but equally valued parts of the [ritual-social] process" (155). Linking all chapters stylistically is the use of you-are-there narrative descriptions, in the tradition of Linda Schele and David Friedel's *A Forest of Kings* (New York: William Morrow, 1991) and Janet Spector's *What This Awl Means* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1993): "As night came, the music surged around the people gathered in the open space in the midst of the platforms and the buildings on the platforms raised above the crowd. Different families moved forward, each with a ceramic sculpture to crown their vessel of burning resin ..." (92).

One of the book's repeated arguments for using figurines to talk about ancient family relations is that figurines were not just shaped like humans; like humans, they also had a life cycle in which they were created, "lived," and died (37–38, 137–38). Furthermore, figurine life cycles transformed human life cycles: "Figurines are person-like not only through their appearance but because of the events that they become part of and which they help commemorate. Their ability to represent significant aspects of changing social identities, experiences, and relationships enmeshes them in cycles of human experience." This "enmeshing" included facture. Evidence for ceramic production facilities (a space for processing clay, a kiln) is included in chapters 4 and 7. Rather than assuming that mold-made marriage figurines were mass produced, which clearly they were not (not many marriage figurines have been discovered, 146), the authors argue that, with molds, figurine making became something the whole family could enjoy: "The desire to create and exchange person-like objects helps us understand further the use of molds. Molds make it easier for people of different levels of skill or experience to be part of the process of making something. The intricacy of the design can be preserved even when children participate" (147). Since at least one marriage figurine was a whistle, the authors imagine the transformative effects its blowing would produce when used in human life-cycle ceremonies: "The conjunction of person and person-like object creates a new identity—a hybridized being—for the duration of the interaction between the two during which the

musician imbues the whistle with his or her breath, sharing a part of herself or himself with the object, animating it through this mingling and drawing the object into the realm of co-essence or extrasomatic essences" (146, 35).

Joyce has often drawn on sixteenth-century Aztec materials in her work; a common strategy for studying Mesoamerican antiquity is to use such Renaissance documents as a model for the prehispanic past. *Material Relations* avoids this, and this avoidance is part of the book's polemic. Too often, the authors argue, the regions of Honduras east of the Maya site of Copán are treated as too flawed to be truly Mesoamerican and "civilized," "civilization" being a code word for social inequality (2). Copán was clearly interacting with its eastern neighbors, but this book presents Copán as only one of several possible ways of organizing society in prehispanic Honduras, not an unavoidably desirable template. The shadow of Mesoamerican comparison (and of the imperialist Aztecs in particular) is thus avoided as much as possible. Avoidance of Mesoamerican modeling also connects to the authors' critiques of top-down nation-state-based assumptions for studying the past: "Many accounts of the fundamental binding relations in ancient societies take the perspective of government, of political relations, especially political strategies that are recognizable to people living in contemporary nation-states" (159). In contrast, archaeology generates materials with which to imagine other, bottom-up visions, alternative organizational pasts. These are not academic questions in today's Honduras, where murder and oppression uphold a regime in power since the 2009 coup (see www.quotha.net, a resource-filled website by anthropologist Adrienne Pine about ongoing violence against civilians). Another theme in *Material Relations* is the need to reanalyze already excavated materials held in museum collections. This is in keeping with the SAA's code of ethics, but it may also be the only way to study Honduras's material history as long as the present crisis continues. All of which helps to resolve one of the book's seeming paradoxes. Although it critiques nation-state visions, its analysis is focused within the boundaries of a nation state: boundaries that the category of Mesoamerica, for example, would avoid. But rather than as a contradiction, this paradox should be understood as an intentional strategy for the book's present-day political engagements.

It is on the level of theory that *Material Relations* most closely connects to the interests of this journal. One key model for the book's interpretation of households and their material legacies is a famous essay by Claude Lévi-Strauss from 1982: "The Social Organization of the Kwakiutl." According to this model, "social houses differ from lineages, since lineages ... emphasize descent through a particular genealogical line.... At the heart of a social house is a common investment in an estate ... [including] material wealth embodied in things, like the decorated serving ware and figurine-whistles found at Copán" (27–28). Although Lévi-Strauss begins with Northwest coast societies, he ends his essay with European noble house analogies from the Carolingians to Montaigne. Such a Carolingians-to-Renaissance framework also links two famous periods of European revivals of Classical antiquity, and antiquarianism is another theme in *Material Relations*. Like early modern Europeans, prehispanic householders curated centuries-old "statuettes" and their fragments; the sixth century even witnessed a revival of clay figurine making as a practice, inspired by models created a thousand years earlier (16, 129).