

and other public flares), and to uncover precisely how ideas of solidarity and partnership are communicated, received, and acted upon.

Montana State University
Bozeman, Montana
molly.todd@montana.edu

MOLLY TODD

COMMUNITY-CONTROLLED MEDIA

Connected: How A Mexican Village Built Its Own Cell Phone Network. By Roberto J. González. Oakland: University of California Press, 2020. Pp. 259. \$85.00 cloth; \$29.95 paper; \$29.95 e-book.
 doi:10.1017/tam.2022.139

González's accessible ethnography contextualizes and recounts the recent history of how the village of Talea in the Rincón of northern Oaxaca created its own autonomous cell phone network. Commercial cell phone companies told the region it was too remote to have cell phone service in the early 2000s, so a network of local community radio organizers, a small NGO, and a few other activists and hackers created an inexpensive noncommercial cell phone network using a central Internet connection and donated equipment.

The ethnography contextualizes the primary narrative with a very approachable, concise, and compelling history of Oaxaca's Rincón region since the fifteenth century. Along the way, it weaves in important themes of the literature of indigenous peoples of Mexico, notably the concepts of *comunalidad*, egalitarianism, the *tequio* system, caciques, *usos y costumbres*, and the extraordinarily diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic heritage of Oaxaca. González postulates that this diversity has helped to stimulate innovation and creativity in many aspects of the region's social, political, and economic organization.

This regional history and context is then deepened as González describes three festivals that he participated in during his initial fieldwork there in the 1990s. These descriptions in part serve to broaden the central idea of "connectivity," from local people using cell phones to connectivity with supernatural realms. The supernatural connectivity is brought back to the earthly connectivity through the quite extensive diaspora of Talean emigrants throughout Mexico and the United States who are interested in celebrating major festivals with their relatives in Talea. In a subsequent chapter, González probes the life of these diasporic connections over Facebook.

The story of the autonomous cell phone network begins with an indigenous media conference in Talea in 2011 that brought together local community radio organizers Kendra Rodríguez and Abrám Fernández with US-born rural development organizer Peter Bloom and Erick Huerta, a Mexican lawyer with expertise in communications

law. Huerta and Bloom had formed a very small nonprofit called Rhizomática (an explicit reference to French philosopher Gilles Deleuze) the year before, to assist indigenous communities with access to cell phone services. With the help of a few international hackers and the donation of some hardware by Mexican culture-jamming artist Minerva Cuevas, the autonomous cell phone network was accepted, invested in by local governments, and launched in 2013, attracting a lot of national and international media attention.

González characterizes what happened next as backlash, but it is narrated as more of a deviously banal crushing orchestrated by the Spanish cell phone company Movistar and local PRI (institutional party) officials. In part, crushing the small network was successful because of forces I refer to in my own work as *protagonismo*: charges that local organizers were using the network for their own benefit rather than according to the selfless political principles of egalitarianism and comunalidad. The details seem too gossipy for González's interlocutors to have recounted to him in detail, and yet this tension between noncommercial indigenous community media practices and protagonistic commercial media conventions is possibly the most crucial aspect of the network's existence and subsequent downfall.

Talea has been the subject of a small series of ethnographies following on Laura Nader's work there in the 1950s, including a documentary film co-produced by González and Nader in 2013. *Connected* is written in the form of traditional ethnographies and the producers perhaps would have done well to bring more people (and their human complexity and messiness) to the forefront. However, the documentary is also extremely accessible and well placed to begin classroom conversations about indigenous politics, anti-capitalist media practice, concepts such as tequio, comunalidad, indigenous evasions that are at least partly successful, and challenges to colonialism and corporate capitalism.

Illinois State University
Normal, Illinois
lkstone@ilstu.edu

LIVIA K. STONE

SOCIAL IDENTITY AND ACTIVISM IN MAYA COMMUNITIES

Good Maya Women: Migration and Revitalization of Clothing and Language in Highland Guatemala. By Joyce N. Bennett. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama press, 2022. Pp. 146. \$49.95 cloth; \$49.95 e-book
 doi:10.1017/tam.2022.140

Do textiles speak? In 2012, I organized a workshop (subsequently published as a special issue of *Ethnohistory*) on Indigenous Mesoamerican literacy, supported by the Wenner-Gren Foundation and generously hosted and further supported by the John