



# The Pastoral Clinic: Addiction and Dispossession along the Rio Grande

*Angela Garcia*

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## **The Pastoral Clinic: Addiction and Dispossession along the Rio Grande** Angela Garcia

*The Pastoral Clinic* takes us on a penetrating journey into an iconic Western landscape—northern New Mexico’s Española Valley, home to the highest rate of heroin addiction and fatal overdoses in the United States. In a luminous narrative, Angela Garcia chronicles the lives of several Hispano addicts, introducing us to the intimate, physical, and institutional dependencies in which they are entangled. We discover how history pervades this region that has endured centuries of material and cultural dispossession, and we come to see its heroin problem as a contemporary expression of these conditions, as well as a manifestation of the human desire to be released from them. Lyrically evoking the Española Valley and its residents through conversations, encounters, and recollections, *The Pastoral Clinic* is at once a devastating portrait of addiction, a rich ethnography of place, and an eloquent call for a new ethics of care.

## **The Pastoral Clinic: Addiction and Dispossession along the Rio Grande Details**

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Author : Angela Garcia

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## **From Reader Review The Pastoral Clinic: Addiction and Dispossession along the Rio Grande for online ebook**

### **Ignacia says**

One of the best ethnographies I've read.

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### **Brandon Moskun says**

best ethnography i've read in a long time

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### **Julia Sloane says**

Amazingly intense book. Inspired the most conversation among all the books my groups read. It's a stirring and at some points heartbreakingly moving story, made all the more moving by the true nature of the story. If you are interested in issues addressing the lower class especially in New Mexico or the hardships of Latino Americans or the issues of drug addicts, this is a must-read. Also great for upcoming anthropologists as an example of one form of ethnography.

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### **Themindbloweress says**

A beautifully written account of a tragic history and contexts of a region... I must admit that no other anthropological work has touched me so much, as a person, as a daughter and as a person with experience of depression

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### **Joana says**

"While it may be true that she and even I cannot conceive of a plan of care that could incorporate all the history, all the losses, this is precisely what families try to do for one another every day. They conceive of ways to care for one another in a context where their very relations, and the very struggle to maintain the everyday, are at stake. Of course, they often fail, and tragically so. But they keep trying to the very end."

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### **Ariele says**

This was one of the most interesting and moral books I've ever read, and shapes ethnography and the spirit/practice of anthropology in ways that belie the traditional conception of imperialistic voyeurism in the field. Everyone to whom I've spoken about this book was fascinated by it, even though I'm the absolute worst at explaining things, so you know it must be good. Readable enough to be a reread, but important enough to

still function as a crucial "scholarly" text.

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### **Jamie Niedecker says**

Written like a thesis. Reads like short stories.

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### **Prim says**

This is the book that made me want to be an anthropologist, and what made me decide to major in anthropology in college. It's stunning and written with so much care -- a reminder of what the discipline should be.

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### **Robert says**

Heartbreaking.

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### **Reesha says**

Read The Pastoral Clinic for a psychological anthropology class at UCLA. Garcia chronicles heroin addiction in the Espanola Valley through a thoughtful, well-constructed ethnography that explores the historical, regional, personal processes at play. The writing is self-aware and accessible and the information and perspectives are illuminating.

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### **Hdurany says**

This powerful book is a beautifully written account of the problem of heroin addiction in the Espanola valley of New Mexico. Garcia provides a humane and well-rounded account of people who became addicted through a variety of circumstances. She shows the structural problems that contribute to their continuing dependence on heroin. The account challenges our stereotypes of addicts and addiction.

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### **Kert Tandog says**

In the book, Garcia gives very detailed account of the lives of heroin users in New Mexico. She traces their experiences through material and cultural dispossession of the Hispano people living in the area. Furthermore, she relates their use to feelings of loss and grief; commensurability and reconfiguration of kinship ties; social vulnerabilities; as well as abandonment by the state through neoliberal policies

Garcia's work is in the same league as Bourgois' *In Search of Respect* and Biehl's *Vita*. In her ethnography,

readers are confronted by the realities of heroin use. Her work challenges our notions of the lives of those who are addicted, and shows us glimpse of care and humanity amidst suffering and state abandonment. Hers is a critical look in the nuances in the personal and social lives of people who are enmeshed in apparent endlessness of loss and addiction.

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### **Viv Ster says**

Waves of compassion, sorrow, and hope radiated outward with each page I turned--from Garcia, suffused into me.

Came into this completely ignorant, and especially ignorant of my own preconceived judgement and prejudices. Came out with a dire want and need to help, in some way shape or form.

Garcia's writing and anthropological work is infused with care and beauty. I am honored to have had the privilege to listen and learn from her.

Inspiring--I can only hope to do work that so genuinely, earnestly, and powerfully advocates.

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### **Anu Khosla says**

Angela Garcia was (is) my professor, and I read this book for her class at Stanford on the Anthropology of Drugs. Garcia has one of the most nuanced and informed views on drug use (particularly addiction in a Mexican/Chicano/Native American setting) I have ever seen. Her class opened up my eyes to a lot of aspects of (American) drug culture that I had previously overlooked.

This book could very easily have been extremely boring and hard to read. Rather, it was a pretty quick read for me, and enjoyable the whole way through. At times, the anthropological analysis could be hard for someone with no background in the field, but it is framed by personal narratives of the people she worked with that would be illuminating and poignant to anyone.

Before reading the book I was told by an Anthro-major friend of mine that other professors of hers had called the introduction to the book "one of the best pieces of Anthropological analysis ever written". I may have a limited background in the field, but I can see why this is the case.

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### **Hollie says**

As I write this review months after reading this work, I can still say this incredible ethnography shifted my way of thinking with regards to addiction; my changed perspective remains changed. Truly, Garcia presents a deeper understanding of heroin addiction through a perspective that encompasses the historical, personal, and cultural context of addiction. She sparks empathy, confusion, and hope within her audience as they are exposed to the harsh and complicated realities of heroin addiction. READ THIS and experience how Garcia brings humanity to life and forces us to confront some detrimental and misunderstood issues facing our society.

..... I LOVE THIS ETHNOGRAPHY.

