

under pressure than most — it illuminates the process of marginalization that serves to undervalue, and, perhaps because of this, to lose, the labour of women and children — to society's cost. Indeed the study makes abundantly clear that this price is already being paid, mostly by women and children. The conclusion, that people must be allowed to live and grow in families, is not a trite one. It follows a study which reveals starkly how easily family structures can be subverted by external factors, such as the law. As life becomes more difficult for women it becomes positively dire for their daughters. And yet many of their problems derive from one of the central problems faced by the men of the area: 'Ironically, they now have no guns nor the right to trap and hunt, although the population of game is higher and their lives are more directly threatened by game than in the last century'.

Perhaps is it too much to hope that, after such a splendid example, similar studies will now be undertaken for other societies. We can at least hope that it is the thin edge of a wedge: a firm opening has definitely been made here.

Dr Reynolds is very well served by her graphic designers and typesetters, though it is disappointing to see none of the promised photographs by the justly famous Alexander Joe. Editing does slip up sometimes: the elegant language and breadth of knowledge is marred, for instance, by reference to the language 'kwaNdebele'. And one enormous failing is the lack of an index. All the same this is a book that no library on African sociology can afford to be without.

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PETA JONES

**Poor, Harassed but Very Much Alive: An Account of Street People and their Organisation** By M. F. C. Bourdillon. Gweru, Mambo Press, 1991, 107 pp., ISBN 0-86922-500-6, Z\$16,00.

Bourdillon describes this book as being about one community of homeless people in Harare. He declares his own sympathies in the Introduction: the street people are 'a group of people who found they had nowhere to go to, and no-one to help them, and who learnt to support each other in their poverty. It is a group who tried to help themselves, and who were constantly frustrated by wider society' (p. 4). The book was written in order to try to correct the generally negative image of street people that exists in Zimbabwe by portraying them as resilient, creative people struggling to earn a living in an urban environment in which employment is difficult to find and in which housing, if it is available at all, is expensive.

To learn the true nature of the street people, particularly of the children who were seen as potential criminals, Bourdillon spent time with one particular homeless community which was moved several times by the authorities, sometimes brutally and frequently with little care for the people or their meagre possessions. He describes their attempts to develop a co-operative, the Street People's Organization, and focuses on the personal stories of individual members of the community. They were a

mixed bunch — different ages, sexes, levels of education and abilities, and with different experiences of employment, alcohol, drugs and petty crime.

The book is largely descriptive and includes a brief history of the Street People's Organization, which developed after one major eviction, and details of the various places where they settled. Bourdillon then focuses on the problems that face the community and suggests certain solutions, while making clear his own opinion on their causes.

One of the most compelling features of the book is the drive for survival that is implicit in the stories of the individuals who feature in it — in particular, their attempts to find ways to be independent and earn money, including by 'minding cars' — and the support that members of the community give each other. A number of key community characters, who are either formal or informal leaders, feature prominently throughout the book. In particular, Teddy Dende, a member with a disability who has had the longest experience of the city's streets, seems to have developed a mutually beneficial patron-client relationship with many members of the community.

Many of the various authorities who feature in the stories, particularly the police, the local council and the Department of Social Welfare, are described with disdain. They appear to have no appreciation of the lives of Harare's homeless, of the reasons why this group even exists, or of how to deal with the situation. Bourdillon notes that the frequent 'round-ups', the police harassment, the burning of homes and property, the treating of these homeless people as criminals and worse is totally out of keeping with the philosophy of a democratic and socialist government. While some appreciation is expressed for the work of officials in the lower echelons of various local and national government structures, the lack of communication with and sympathy from those in control is condemned.

*Poor, Harassed but Very Much Alive* is not intended to be an academic study of the homeless. Bourdillon has written a brief, easy-to-read account of the Street People's Organization and the life and trials of the members of one community of homeless people. He succeeds in presenting a sympathetic account of members of this group, a group of people in need and struggling for survival but able to cope if they are given minimal support.

Harare

BRIGID WILLMORE

**Stone Sculpture in Zimbabwe: Context, Content and Form** By Celia Winter-Irving. Harare, Roblaw Publishers, 1991, xviii, 210 pp., ISBN 0-908309-14-7, Z\$99,00.

Celia Winter-Irving's book is a major advance on the two books written so far on Zimbabwe's world-renowned sculpture, those by Marion Arnold and Ferdinand Mor.<sup>1</sup> As Winter-Irving points out, both of these works deal

<sup>1</sup> M. I. Arnold, *Zimbabwe Stone Sculpture* (Bulawayo, Books of Zimbabwe, 1981); F. Mor, *Shona Sculpture* (Harare, The Author, 1987). See the essay reviews 'Shona Sculpture', *Zambezia*