



Glimpses into My Own Black Box: An Exercise in Self-Deconstruction (History of Anthropology)

George W. Stocking Jr.

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George W. Stocking, Jr., has spent a professional lifetime exploring the history of anthropology, and his findings have shaped anthropologists' understanding of their field for two generations. Through his meticulous research, Stocking has shown how such forces as politics, race, institutional affiliations, and personal relationships have influenced the discipline from its beginnings. In this autobiography, he turns his attention to a subject closer to home but no less challenging. Looking into his own "black box," he dissects his upbringing, his politics, even his motivations in writing about himself. The result is a book systematically, at times brutally, self-questioning.

An interesting question, Stocking says, is one that arouses just the right amount of anxiety. But that very anxiety may be the ultimate source of Stocking's remarkable intellectual energy and output. In the first two sections of the book, he traces the intersecting vectors of his professional and personal lives. The book concludes with a coda, "Octogenarian Afterthoughts," that offers glimpses of his life after retirement, when advancing age, cancer, and depression changed the tenor of his reflections about both his life and his work.

This book is the twelfth and final volume of the influential History of Anthropology series.

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