

"In a growing field of cultural and anthropological studies of children, a systematic cross-cultural investigation focusing on work has been missing. Fortunately, Lancy has now filled the void. In this new book, he has extracted some of the most important and compelling cross-cultural findings in recent memory. Theory, including the author's own brainwork on culture, learning, work, and play, is presented by means of manifold, pointed ethnographic studies. This is done in a way that smoothly integrates theory and empiricism into a brilliantly structured text. This book is surely a landmark in the social science of children."

—**Harald Beyer Broch**, Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology, University of Oslo, Norway

"Lancy is the master curator of global diversity in children's lives. His work expands our capacity to imagine what is possible and reminds us that Western middle-class ways should not be taken as the universal metric of how to raise children. In his indispensable new book, Lancy unfolds a dazzling panorama of children at work. Young workers take initiative, hone repertoires of complex skills, feel able and useful, and make vital contributions to their families' wellbeing. This book unsettles received wisdom in the study of child development and challenges us to reckon with a neglected dimension of children's lives."

—**Peggy J. Miller**, Professor Emerita of Psychology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

The study of childhood in academia has been dominated by a mono-cultural or WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) perspective. Within the field of anthropology, however, a contrasting and more varied view is emerging. While the phenomenon of children as workers is ephemeral in WEIRD society and in the literature on child development, there is ample cross-cultural and historical evidence of children making vital contributions to the family economy. Children's "labor" is of great interest to researchers, but widely treated as extra-cultural—an aberration that must be controlled. Work as a central component in children's lives, development, and identity goes unappreciated. *Anthropological Perspectives on Children as Helpers, Workers, Artisans, and Laborers* aims to rectify that omission by surveying and synthesizing a robust corpus of material, with particular emphasis on two prominent themes: the processes involved in learning to work and the interaction between ontogeny and children's roles as workers.

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