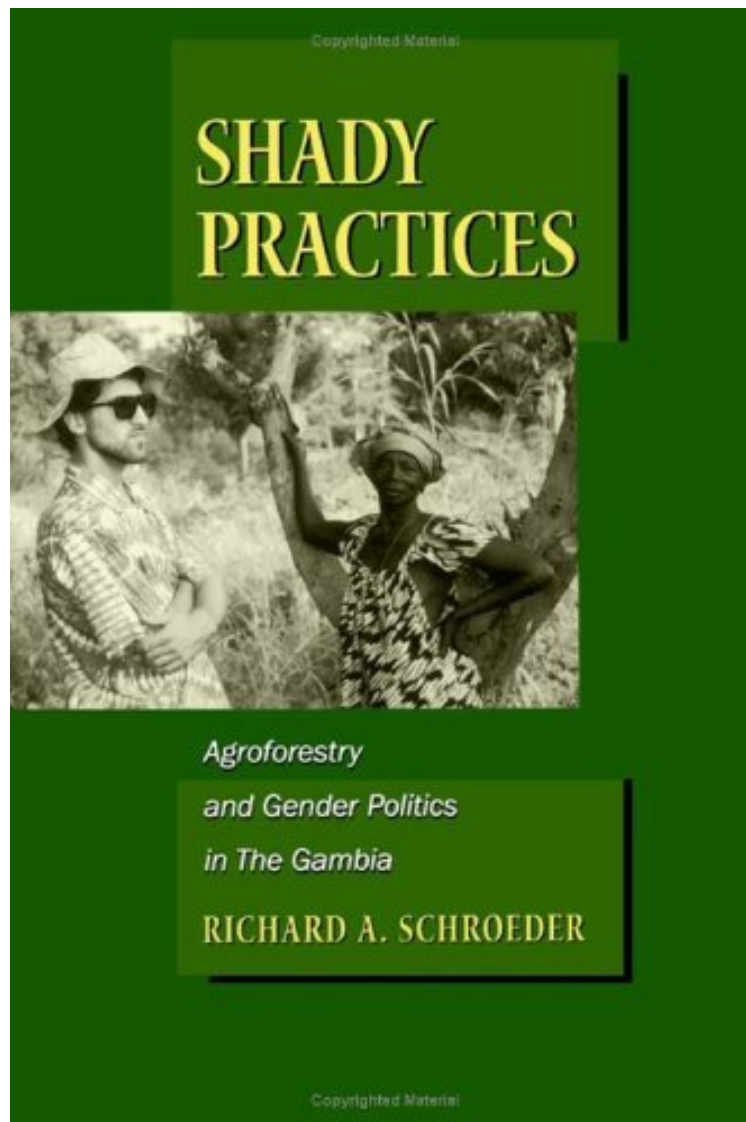


[E-BOOK] Shady Practices: Agroforestry and Gender Politics in The Gambia (California Studies in Critical Human Geography)

Shady Practices: Agroforestry and Gender Politics in The Gambia (California Studies in Critical Human Geography)

Richard A. Schroeder

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Richard A. Schroeder : Shady Practices: Agroforestry and Gender Politics in The Gambia (California Studies in Critical Human Geography) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shady Practices: Agroforestry and Gender Politics in The Gambia (California Studies in Critical Human Geography):

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. a gap filledBy BettinaShady Practices not only fills a gap in gender

research, it is also interesting to read. Schroeder describes the context in which he researched in detail including his personal motivation for the research, methods and ethical considerations. This is something far too little published yet useful and informative for both junior and senior researchers. Altogether the book provides a comprehensive description of the rise of female gardeners in the Gambia. Part of that description is an analysis of changing gender relations in the studied villages. It is here that the author reveals the care with which he embarked upon the project and the challenges he faced himself as a male researcher investigating the role of women in a traditionally male-oriented society. Although the theme remains in the foreground, carefully described, the role of the author in the research and the changes he experiences himself remain present. In particular for these reasons, i.e. the honesty of the researcher and the clarity of his writing, I recommend this book for gender researchers whose interest is in the theory of gender research and those who are concerned with feminist methodologies.

Shady Practices is a revealing analysis of the gendered political ecology brought about by conflicting local interests and changing developmental initiatives in a West African village. Between 1975 and 1985, while much of Africa suffered devastating drought conditions, Gambian women farmers succeeded in establishing hundreds of lucrative communal market gardens. In less than a decade, the women's incomes began outstripping their husbands' in many areas, until a shift in development policy away from gender equity and toward environmental concerns threatened to do away with the social and economic gains of the garden boom. Male landholders joined forestry personnel in attempts to displace the gardens and capture women's labor for the irrigation of male-controlled tree crops. This carefully documented microhistory draws on field experience spanning more than two decades and the insights of disciplines ranging from critical human geography to development studies. Schroeder combines the "success story" of the market gardens with a cautionary tale about the aggressive pursuit of natural resource management objectives, however well intentioned. He shows that questions of power and social justice at the community level need to enter the debates of policymakers and specialists in environment and development planning.

From the Inside Flap "In this engaging and exceptionally well-crafted case study, Schroeder shows clearly how local dynamics intersect with wider processes. . . . Changes in cropping patterns, land rights, work routines, and gender politics were shaped by multiple struggles and interactions among women and men, landholders and land users, farmers, government officials, and representatives of various international agencies." —Sara Berry, author of *No Condition Is Permanent*