



## Fluent Selves: Autobiography, Person, and History in Lowland South America

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*Fluent Selves* examines narrative practices throughout lowland South America focusing on indigenous communities in Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, and Peru, illuminating the social and cultural processes that make the past as important as the present for these peoples. This collection brings together leading scholars in the fields of anthropology and linguistics to examine the intersection of these narratives of the past with the construction of personhood. The volume's exploration of autobiographical and biographical accounts raises questions about fieldwork, ethical practices, and cultural boundaries in the study of anthropology.

Rather than relying on a simple opposition between the “Western individual” and the non-Western rest, contributors to *Fluent Selves* explore the complex interplay of both individualizing as well as relational personhood in these practices. Transcending classic debates over the categorization of “myth” and “history,” the autobiographical and biographical narratives in *Fluent Selves* illustrate the very medium in which several modes of engaging with the past meet, are reconciled, and reemerge.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Highly recommended for all scholars of South American peoples, and its use cross-culturally is of equal value."—Norman E. Whitten, Jr., *Journal of Anthropological Research*  
(Norman E. Whitten, Jr. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 2015-07-08)

"*Fluent Selves* is undoubtedly an important landmark in the study of biographical and autobiographical narratives in Amazonia."—Juan Luis Rodriguez, *Anthropological Linguistics*  
(Juan Luis Rodriguez *Anthropological Linguistics*)

"[*Fluent Selves*]  
] is an astonishingly well-written collection of firsthand accounts of particular Native persons' experiences with 'colonialism,' 'development,' and 'civilizing practices.' It is a major contribution to several fields: the comparative ethnographic and social historical study of lowland South America, postcolonial studies of self/structural interaction, and the psychological study of Native American trauma passed down through generations."—Kathleen Fine-Dare, coeditor of *Border Crossings: Transnational Americanist Anthropology*  
(Kathleen Fine-Dare 2014-02-28)

#### About the Author

Suzanne Oakdale is an associate professor of anthropology at the University of New Mexico. She is the author of *I Foresee My Life: The Ritual Performance of Autobiography in an Amazonian Community* (Nebraska, 2005). Magnus Course is a senior lecturer in social anthropology at the University of Edinburgh. He is the author of *Becoming Mapuche: Person and Ritual in Indigenous Chile*.

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