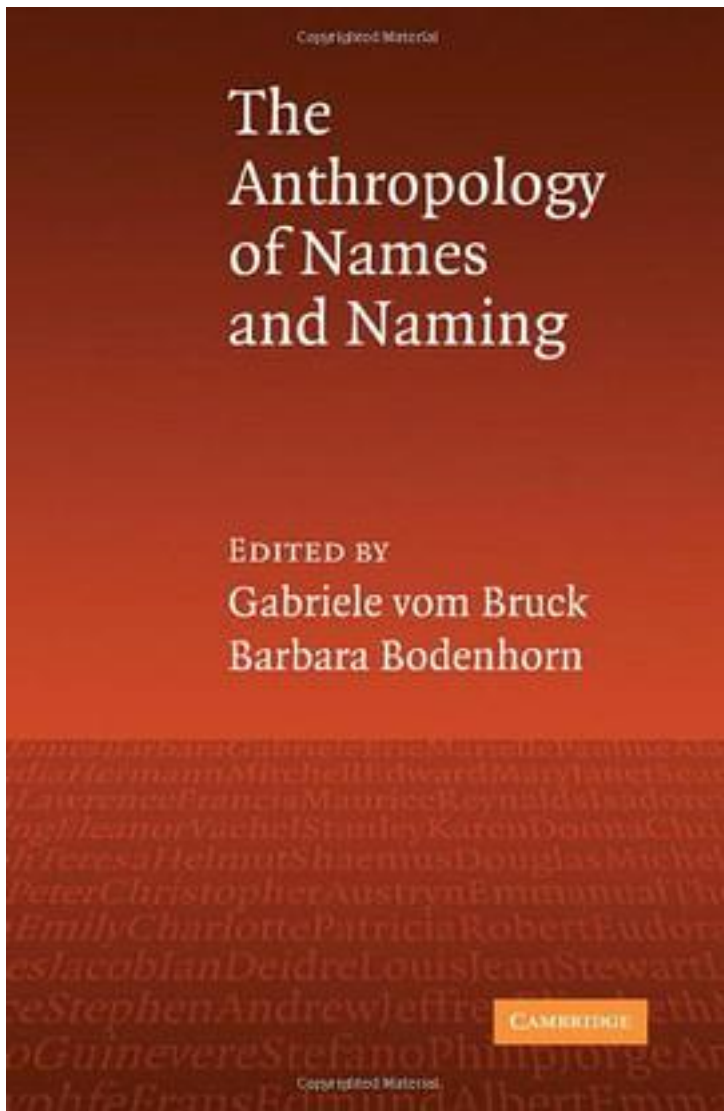


The Anthropology of Names and Naming



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著者:vom Bruck, Gabriele (EDT)/ Bodenhorn, Barbara (EDT)

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This book is about personal names, something of abiding interest to specialists and lay readers alike. Over a million people have checked the American Name Society website since 1996, for instance. Many philosophers and linguists suggest that names are 'just' labels, but parents internationally are determined to get their children's names 'right'. Personal names may be given, lost, traded, stolen and inherited. This collection of essays provides comparative ethnography through which we examine the politics of naming; the extent to which names may be property-like; and the power of names themselves, both to fix and to destabilize personal identity. Our purpose is not only to renew anthropological attention to names and naming, but to show how this intersects with current interests in political processes, the relation between bodies and personal identities, ritual and daily social life.

作者介绍:

Review

'This collection of thoughtful essays offers an anthropologically grounded discussion of how names are bestowed, changed, shared, coveted, rejected, used and sometimes abused in a wide range of ethnographic contexts. It provides an excellent array of case studies, from high-ranking Yemeni Imams to African American slaves who must not only relinquish their given names but also answer to demeaning or absurd monikers, and many illustrative examples in between. ... In an era when names act simultaneously as markers of identity and tools of surveillance, this edited volume provides much material for thought and comparison on the regional significance of names. Indeed this welcome set of essays will be of interest to both cultural and linguistic anthropologists in search of a deeper answer to the age-old question of what is in a name.' The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute

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