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**Brooke Harrington. *Offshore: Stealth Wealth and the New Colonialism*. W.W. Norton, 2024. 176 pp. \$22, hardcover.**

Brooke Harrington's *Offshore: Stealth Wealth and the New Colonialism* is a remarkable contribution to the sociological literature on economic inequality and global finance. The book sheds light on the hidden world of offshore finance, illustrating its far-reaching consequences for democracy, economic stability, and social equity. In *Offshore*, Harrington combines immersive ethnography, rigorous analysis, and vivid storytelling to unveil the mechanics of a system that enables the ultra-wealthy to operate above and beyond the rules that govern ordinary citizens.

The book opens with an engaging introduction that situates Harrington's personal journey in the world of offshore finance. Drawing on her upbringing in Lake Forest, Illinois, a bastion of American wealth and privilege, Harrington traces how her early encounters with social stratification fueled her determination to study elite systems of power. This narrative provides an accessible entry point into the dense and often opaque subject matter of offshore finance, grounding her analysis in a compelling autobiographical framework.

Harrington's methodology is particularly noteworthy. Immersion ethnography, a method she employed by training as a wealth manager, allowed her to penetrate the inner sanctum of offshore finance. This approach, reminiscent of classic sociological fieldwork, enabled Harrington to gain the trust of practitioners and to gather insights that would otherwise be inaccessible. By embedding herself within this professional community, she collected data that illuminate the intricacies of wealth management and the legal, financial, and social mechanisms that sustain the offshore system.

The book is organized into five chapters, each addressing a different facet of offshore finance. Chapter 1, "The Unauthorized Biography of a Secretive System," provides an overview of the historical and structural dimensions of offshore finance. Harrington traces the system's roots to the colonial era, when free ports and other economic zones enabled empires to bypass regulations and to extract wealth. She argues convincingly that offshore finance is an extension of these colonial practices, perpetuating global inequalities under the guise of modern capitalism.

Chapter 2, "A Platform for Elite Insurgency," examines how offshore jurisdictions serve as platforms for the ultra-wealthy to evade taxes, bypass legal accountability, and undermine democratic governance. Harrington's analysis here is incisive, linking the rise of offshore finance to broader trends of deregulation and globalization. She demonstrates how this system erodes the fiscal and regulatory capacities of nation states, creating a parallel legal framework that benefits a privileged few at the expense of the many.

The third chapter, "Zombie Colonialism," delves into the neocolonial dynamics of offshore finance. Harrington highlights how postcolonial states have become key players in the offshore system, leveraging their legal and regulatory sovereignty to attract foreign capital. This chapter is particularly compelling in its exploration of the moral and political contradictions faced by these jurisdictions, which rely for their economic survival on the very system that perpetuates global inequalities.

Chapter 4, "The Paradox of Plenty," addresses the societal costs of offshore finance. Harrington demonstrates that the secrecy and impunity afforded by offshore jurisdictions exacerbate wealth inequality, undermine public trust, and distort markets. She illustrates these dynamics through vivid case studies that explore topics such as tax evasion schemes and environmental degradation financed through offshore accounts. The chapter's strength lies in its ability to connect abstract economic concepts to tangible societal impacts, making the stakes of offshore finance unmistakably clear.

The final chapter, "This Side of Fiscal Paradise," reflects on the potential for reform and resistance. Harrington acknowledges the formidable challenges of dismantling the offshore system given its entrenchment within global power structures. However, she also identifies avenues for change, such as international cooperation on tax enforcement and grassroots movements advocating for economic justice. This chapter is both sobering and hopeful, offering a nuanced perspective of the possibilities and limitations of reform.

One of the book's most impressive features is its ability to translate complex financial concepts into accessible language without sacrificing analytical depth. Harrington's prose is engaging and often witty, enlivening what could otherwise be a dry subject. Her use of anecdotes and interviews with wealth managers adds a human dimension to the analysis, making the book both informative and compelling.

*Offshore* is also distinguished by its interdisciplinary approach. Harrington draws on sociology, economics, history, and political science to provide a comprehensive account of offshore finance. This breadth of perspective enriches the book's analysis, situating offshore finance within broader social, economic, and historical contexts. By doing so, Harrington not only illuminates the workings of the offshore system but also contributes to ongoing debates about inequality, globalization, and governance.

*Offshore* is a tour de force and essential reading for anyone interested in understanding the hidden mechanisms of wealth and power in the twenty-first century. The book presents several compelling implications for organizational scholars. It invites them to explore how offshore finance reshapes the governance structures of nation states and organizations by eroding regulatory frameworks and facilitating elite rule. It raises critical questions about the intersections of power, secrecy, and accountability in organizational behavior and institutional dynamics. Harrington's work suggests new avenues for studying the organizational mechanisms that enable economic inequities and the global consequences of legal arbitrage. By embedding her analysis in historical and interdisciplinary contexts, she encourages scholars to investigate how organizations can mitigate the harm caused by these systems and promote equitable economic practices.

This book will appeal particularly to scholars of economic sociology, organizational studies, and political economy, as well as those interested in the

sociopolitical effects of globalization. The book's combination of rigorous scholarship, vivid storytelling, and critical insight makes it a standout contribution to the field. It not only exposes the moral and political failings of offshore finance but also challenges readers to envision a more just and equitable global economic order. For scholars, policymakers, and activists alike, *Offshore* is a clarion call to confront one of the most pressing issues of our time.

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