

to protect civilians, among others — define battlefields and combatants. But insurgent wars have no clear battlefields and no full-time, uniformed fighters. Combatants are the people listed as targets for drone strikes. The list, Gusterson writes, is “maintained by U.S. military and intelligence agencies”, and includes people not known to be terrorists but possessing that profile. A person is added after analysts balance their importance against the number of civilians likely also to be killed. Gusterson wonders about the line between legal targeted killing and illegal assassination.

Although 76 countries use drones, Gusterson mentions only the United Kingdom, Israel, Iran and the United States, focusing on the last. He writes that he doesn't intend this book as an argument for or against drones and that he wants only a debate on regulating their use, yet he is clearly against them.

A reader trying to decide whether drones are a more humane form of weaponry, a hunting party, a neocolonial ploy or all three at once, will want to look closely at the author's sources. Anthropologists have traditionally gone into the field, meeting, observing and listening to their sources. Gusterson's sources are predominantly journalists, memoirists and authors who report

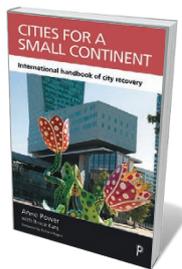


A drone operator in Nevada.

regularly on the field or are veterans of it. Some anthropologists do analyse a culture remotely, on the basis of others' experiences and impressions. As a journalist, I would rather do my own reporting and not hover drone-like over the field that others have defined. ■

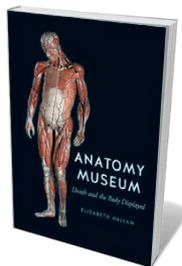
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## Books in brief



### **Cities for a Small Continent: International Handbook of City Recovery** *Anne Power* POLICY (2016)

Many of Europe's storied cities have seen more bust than boom for decades, writes urban-sustainability specialist Anne Power. Yet a number have risen reinvented, and in this brilliant analysis, Power shows how. She follows the march of seven “Phoenix cities” with strong industrial legacies, from Sheffield, UK, to Turin in Italy, as they weather upheavals and de-industrialize with the aid of major public investment. These conurbations should be seen, she argues, as the vanguard in the low-carbon transformation outlined by economist Nicholas Stern (M. Grubb *Nature* **520**, 614–615; 2015).



### **Anatomy Museum: Death and the Body Displayed**

*Elizabeth Hallam* REAKTION (2016)

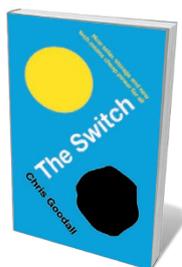
Pickled in formalin, stripped down to articulated skeletons or depicted in wax or plastic, human anatomical remains have educated generations of medics and fired the public imagination. Anthropologist Elizabeth Hallam uses the Anatomy Museum at the University of Aberdeen, UK, to anchor a history of such collections as “synoptic mazes” — labyrinthine summations of knowledge. Hallam charts their convoluted chronicles of acquisition, dissection and preservation, weaving in a narrative on the cultural display of death, from ancient ossuaries to plastinated bodies.



### **The Art of Flight**

*Fredrik Sjöberg* (Translated by Peter Graves) PARTICULAR (2016)

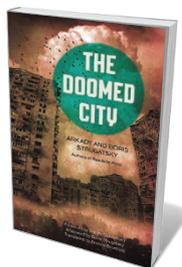
Entomologist Fredrik Sjöberg's best-selling memoir *The Fly Trap* (Particular, 2014) marked him as a maestro of the episodic. Here, he completes a trilogy with two books in one — “accidental journeys” by fellow Swedes whose omnivorous curiosity rivalled his own. *The Art of Flight* focuses on Gunnar Widforss, exalted in the United States for his haunting landscape paintings of national parks. *The Raisin King* tackles polymath Gustav Eisen, who studied earthworms, *Anopheles* mosquitoes and viticulture, brought avocados to California and sparked the founding of Sequoia National Park. A joy.



### **The Switch**

*Chris Goodall* PROFILE (2016)

The world is poised for the solar revolution, argues energy writer Chris Goodall in this nippy, number-crunched study of the science behind the “switch”. Noting that solar farms will have to cover 1% of Earth's surface by 2050 to meet global energy needs, he treads the road towards that goal. He examines readiness in industry and banking, research on new solar-collection materials such as perovskites, the state of back-up renewables and innovative batteries. With many governments and some utility companies primed for action, Goodall avers, the fossil century could be history within two decades.



### **The Doomed City**

*Arkady Strugatsky and Boris Strugatsky* (Translated by Andrew Bromfield) CHICAGO REVIEW PRESS (2016)

Doyens of Russian science fiction Arkady and Boris Strugatsky wrote this nihilistic ‘lost’ novel in the 1970s. In its English-language debut, we are dumped abruptly into the Experiment, a garbage-choked, baboon-infested city with an artificial sun and an eerily mismatched populace. Here, astronomer-turned-rubbish-collector Andrei begins a grim trek into the ideology of tyranny. A book that carries an Orwellian punch, and a crazed energy all its own. [Barbara Kiser](#)