



**Ordered Estates: Welfare, Power and Maternalism on Zimbabwe's (Once White) Highveld**

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Weaver Press & UKZN Press

August 2016

There is a growing body of work on white farmers in Zimbabwe. Yet the role played by white women – so-called ‘farmers’ wives’ – on commercial farms has been almost completely ignored, if not forgotten. For all the public role and overt power ascribed to white male farmers, their wives played an equally important, although often more subtle, role in power and labour relations on white commercial farms. This ‘soft power’ took the form of maternalistic welfare initiatives such as clinics, schools, orphan programmes and women’s clubs, mostly overseen by a ‘farmer’s wife’. Before and after Zimbabwe’s 1980 independence these played an important role in attracting and keeping farm labourers, and governing their behaviour. After independence they also became crucial to the way white farmers justified their continued ownership of most of Zimbabwe’s prime farmland.

This book provides the first comprehensive analysis of the role that farm welfare initiatives played in Zimbabwe’s agrarian history. Having assessed what implications such endeavours had for the position and well-being of farmworkers before the onset of ‘fast-track’ land reform in the year 2000, Hartnack examines in vivid ethnographic detail the impact that the farm seizures had on the lives of farmworkers and the welfare programmes which had previously attempted to improve their lot.

- Provides the first comprehensive analysis of farm welfare initiatives and their gendered dynamics in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe.
- Traces how “fast-track” land reform impacted farm welfare initiatives on commercial farms and the work of farm-focussed NGOs.
- Provides rich ethnographic detail on the ways in which farmworkers were impacted by “fast-track” land reform and sought to respond to displacement, job losses and harsh economic conditions after 2000.