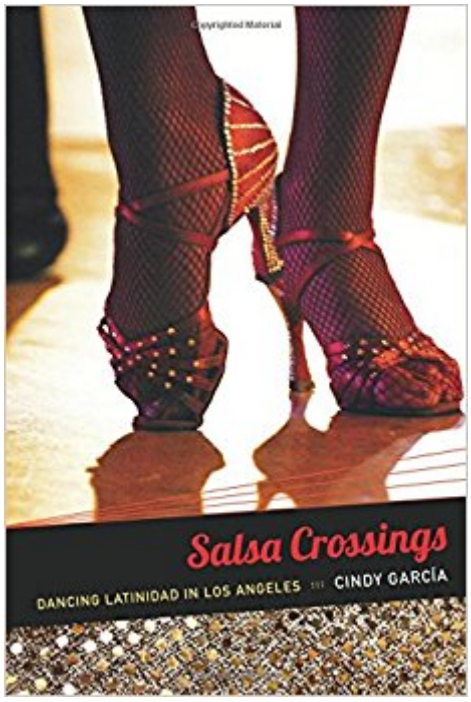
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Salsa Crossings: Dancing Latinidad In Los Angeles (Latin America Otherwise)



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Synopsis

In Los Angeles, night after night, the city’s salsa clubs become social arenas where hierarchies of gender, race, and class, and of nationality, citizenship, and belonging are enacted on and off the dance floor. In an ethnography filled with dramatic narratives, Cindy GarcÃƒÂ- a describes how local salseras/os gain social status by performing an exoticized L.A.Ã¢â ¬â œstyle salsa that distances them from club practices associated with Mexicanness. Many Latinos in Los Angeles try to avoid "dancing like a Mexican," attempting to rid their dancing of techniques that might suggest that they are migrants, poor, working-class, Mexican, or undocumented. In L.A. salsa clubs, social belonging and mobility depend on subtleties of technique and movement. With a well-timed dance-floor exit or the lift of a properly tweezed eyebrow, a dancer signals affiliation not only with a distinctive salsa style but also with a particular conceptualization of latinidad.

Book Information

Series: Latin America Otherwise

Paperback: 208 pages

Publisher: Duke University Press Books (June 18, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0822354977

ISBN-13: 978-0822354970

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #755,078 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #38 inÃ Â Books > Arts & Photography > Performing Arts > Dance > Popular #735 inÃ Â Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Specific Demographics > Hispanic American Studies #6415 inÃ Â Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Anthropology > Cultural

Customer Reviews

"Salsa Crossings is a nuanced ethnography of the embodied pleasures, struggles, and sociopolitical aspirations that Latinos enact in L.A. salsa clubs. Cindy GarcÃƒÂ- a analyzes the relationships among dancers, club promoters, wallflowers, and socializers as they negotiate the issues of belonging and exclusion that animate latinidad. She brilliantly positions the libidinal economies and stylistic hierarchies of salsa dancing in Los Angeles within the larger political economy of and among Latinos in the United States. This book makes important and illuminating contributions to the

fields of dance and Latino studies."Ã¢â ¬â •Deborah Paredez, author of Selenidad: Selena, Latinos, and the Performance of Memory"With her skilled recognition of the meanings and genealogies of dance styles, Cindy GarcÃƒÂ- a sets the record straight by illuminating the social hierarchies and conflicts emerging in the salsa clubs of Los Angeles. Scholars of salsa dancing who have focused on the Caribbean and New York until now will no longer be able to ignore California and the West Coast."Ã¢â ¬â •Frances Aparicio, author of Listening to Salsa: Gender, Latin Popular Music, and Puerto Rican CulturesÃ¢â ¬Å“Readers concerned with Latina/o studies, salsa dance, ethnography, cultural and national identity will be interested in this book. Through her wonderfully descriptive ethnographic storytelling, Garcia offers a cogent study of the power systems emerging from a particular cultureÃ¢â ¬â„¢s struggle to deal with contradictions and inequalities brought on by globalization, migration, and transnational labor practices.Ã¢â ¬Â• (James Moreno Dance Chronicle)Ã¢â ¬Å“In her introduction and title, GarcÃƒÂ- a promises a bold new approach to analyzing salsa danceÃ¢â ¬Â¦. GarcÃƒÂ- a is at her best when she is thick in everynight action and thick in description. This approach yields brilliant moments, such as when she meditates on the meaning of the preference for arm styling over hip movement in studio salsa, or eavesdrops on the conversations among girlfriends in a nightclub restroom.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Celeste Fraser Delgado Dance Research Journal)Ã¢â ¬Å“[GarciaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s] vibrant study extends well beyond a mere examination of an evolving art form...GarcÃƒÂ- aÃ¢â ¬â„¢s potent, lively text goes a long way to fill a void and to bring an art form dependent on movement into full flight in the readerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s imagination. For those interested in dance, Latino or otherwise, and complex issues of race, gender, and social hierarchies, this is an indispensible study on the richness of an evolving dance formÃ¢â ¬Â¦ Highly recommended.Ã¢â ¬Â• (J. Fisher Choice)Ã¢â ¬Å“Through her experience as a dance ethnographer in a heated urban performance space, Cindy GarcÃƒÂ- a is able to show Ã¢â ¬â œ in a highly detailed and refined fashion Ã¢â ¬â œ how the salsa environment is a prism of immigration and integration problems, globalization and its standardizations and codifications, and contested enactments of Ã¢â ¬ËœLatinidadÃ¢â ¬â„¢ in the US today.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Jonathan Skinner Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute)"[A]Ã Â valuable contribution to literature in dance and ethnic studies. Whether she is painting a vignette in one of the many loosely disguised L.A. clubs that figures prominently in the text or delving into theories of ethnic identity, GarciaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s prose is captivating and easily accessible to the nonspecialist. Her focus on how gender intersects with race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class on the dance floor continues to expand the work of scholars who are illuminating how dancing bodies construct and disrupt hierarchies of power." (Juliet McMains American Anthropologist 2015-06-01)Ã¢â ¬Å“Another of the

bookÃ¢â ¬â„¢s strengths is its readability. Rare is the scholarly monograph that genuinely speaks to the Ã¢â ¬Å“educated general readerÃ¢â ¬Â• while retaining the scholarly rigor necessary to make a significant contribution to academic debatesÃ¢â ¬Â¦. In summary, Salsa Crossings is an important look at a topic that until now has been neglected in scholarly investigations of dance and that also adds much to the broader field of Latina/o and Chicana/o cultural studies. It is a useful source for scholars researching questions of Latina/o embodiment that will also prove quite teachable.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Julie Avril Minich AztlÃƒÂ¡n)

Cindy GarcÃƒÂ- a is Assistant Professor in the Department of Theatre Arts and Dance at the University of Minnesota.

This book is in my view outstanding! Admitted I read it both as a Salsa dancer and a social scientist.As a social dancer I think this book is unique in describing and interpreting the style issue, and continuous discussions of style in the social dancing. As a social dancing it is seriously illuminating how the analysis debunk all claims to the universal right way of dancing and originality. This discussion speaks directly into the divide there are many places between on1 and on2 dancers the later often claiming "real, original and universal" salsa is danced on 2 and with a specific style. The divide is brilliantly shown to be a matter of "social scenes and arenas" and what kind of identity you want to display.As a social scientist - the book is both for social science, organizational studies and HRM very very important, because it in my view is one of the best empirically based approaches to studying the body and its significance in our social and work life, that most social scientists and organizational studies scholars are trying to conceptualize. Cindy Garcia is in a very positive sense a true scholar in this work as she does not overgeneralize her findings and studies, but she for sure opens this general field of study for a very broad field of social and organizational studies. Researching and living in a culture where "the body posture" is a key factor in determining peoples personality, ability to lead and manage in the workplace is the biggest inspiration for opening up the study of embodied people living in the real physical world, with real jobs and sorrows.Finally, the book is for an academic work very easy to read - and you cant really stop when you have started anyway.

a good study of so-called"LA salsa", really a corruption of the old cuban guaracha and a rather sad commentary about a people made to feel ashamed of their own heritage. mexican culture is vibrant and full of life; its music, dance, food,etc. but to a lot of mexican-americans in the cultural wasteland

called LA, being mexican is something to be ashamed of. truly sad. and having to try and adopt a foreign music and dance form and not to embrace their own heritage is an attempt to escape what they REALLY are: mexican, and a mexican can never become a cuban.

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