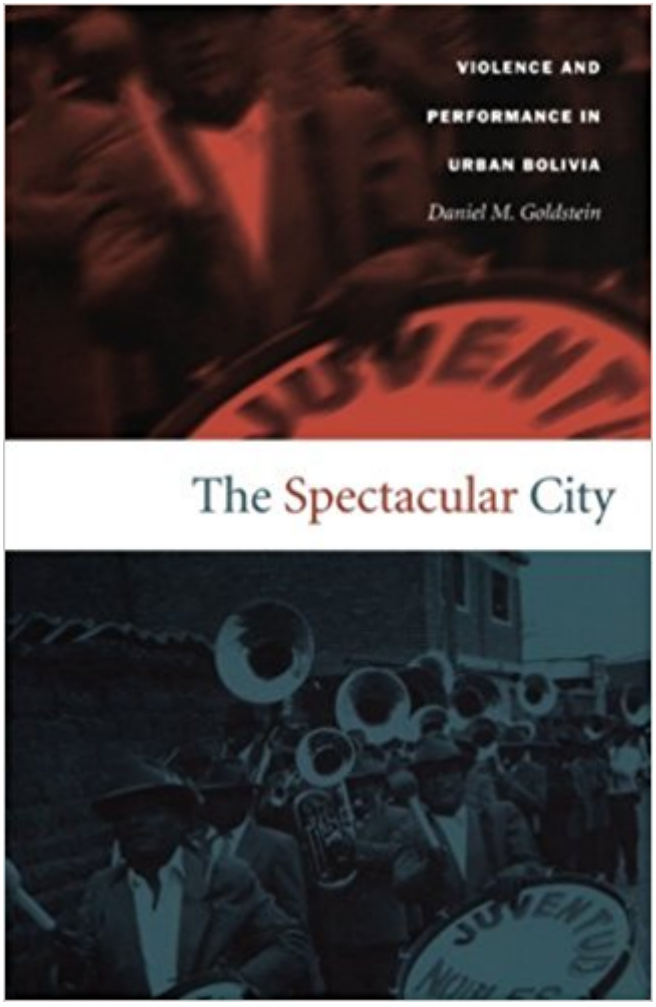
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The Spectacular City: Violence And Performance In Urban Bolivia (Latin America Otherwise)



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Synopsis

Since the Bolivian revolution in 1952, migrants have come to the city of Cochabamba, seeking opportunity and relief from rural poverty. They have settled in barrios on the cityÃ¢â ¬â„¢s outskirts only to find that the rights of citizensÃ¢â ¬â •basic rights of property and security, especially protection from crimeÃ¢â ¬â •are not available to them. In this ethnography, Daniel M. Goldstein considers the significance of and similarities between two kinds of spectaclesÃ¢â ¬â •street festivals and the vigilante lynching of criminalsÃ¢â ¬â •as they are performed in the Cochabamba barrio of Villa Pagador. By examining folkloric festivals and vigilante violence within the same analytical framework, Goldstein shows how marginalized urban migrants, shut out of the city and neglected by the state, use performance to assert their national belonging and to express their grievances against the inadequacies of the stateÃ¢â ¬â„¢s official legal order.During the period of GoldsteinÃ¢â ¬â„¢s fieldwork in Villa Pagador in the mid-1990s, residents attempted to lynch several thieves and attacked the police who tried to intervene. Since that time, there have been hundreds of lynchings in the poor barrios surrounding Cochabamba. Goldstein presents the lynchings of thieves as a form of horrific performance, with elements of critique and political action that echo those of local festivals. He explores the consequences and implications of extralegal violence for human rights and the rule of law in the contemporary Andes. In rich detail, he provides an in-depth look at the development of Villa Pagador and of the larger metropolitan area of Cochabamba, illuminating a contemporary Andean city from both microethnographic and macrohistorical perspectives. Focusing on indigenous peoplesÃ¢â ¬â„¢ experiences of urban life and their attempts to manage their sociopolitical status within the broader context of neoliberal capitalism and political decentralization, The Spectacular City highlights the deep connections between performance, law, violence, and the state.

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“The Spectacular City is a highly original contribution to the ethnography of law, violence, and the state. Goldstein explores the connections between localism and violence both as situated action and as genres of performance, resulting in a nuanced analysis of politics between state and nonstate forms.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Carol Greenhouse, coeditor of Ethnography in Unstable Places: Everyday Lives in Contexts of Dramatic Political ChangeÃ¢â ¬Å“Fascinating and rich in ethnographic detail, The Spectacular City is particularly important at this moment because it examines the increase in common crime that has accompanied the consolidation of neoliberal capitalism in Latin America. Although it is widely appreciated that crime has gotten worse, there are very few anthropological studies that explore this phenomenon at the local level.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Lesley Gill, author of The School of the Americas: Military Training and Political Violence in the Americas

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So in the last hour, three one star reviews by people who just assume the author is the man on the JetBlue flight who insulted Ivanka Trump. Unbelievable. The author has no connection whatsoever. Read the book. It’s worth your time.

I love this book! Well written and researched. And, on a side note, thank you for standing up for what’s right and just in this world. Bravo!

If you came here to be angry, you're looking for Daniel Goldstein, attorney. This is Daniel Goldstein, anthropologist. Good job messing that one up.

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Dear right-wing nutjobs, this is not the Daniel Goldstein you're looking to ruin. This one is merely a brilliant scholar who was nowhere near that Jet Blue flight. Back off.

I wish I could write like Daniel M. Goldstein. His prose is gorgeous!

A terrific window into 21st Century Bolivian culture, and by extension, into the perils facing much of Latin America as its indigenous peoples come into conflict with an ever-encroaching modernity. The author clearly knows his subject matter well and writes without condescension or judgment. An excellent read.

Worth the read

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