



Laughter Out of Place: Race, Class, Violence, and Sexuality in a Rio Shantytown (California Series in Public Anthropology)

Donna Goldstein

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Donna M. Goldstein presents a hard-hitting critique of urban poverty and violence and challenges much of what we think we know about the "culture of poverty" in this compelling read. Drawing on more than a decade of experience in Brazil, Goldstein provides an intimate portrait of everyday life among the women of the favelas, or urban shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro, who cope with unbearable suffering, violence and social abandonment. The book offers a clear-eyed view of socially conditioned misery while focusing on the creative responses—absurdist and black humor—that people generate amid daily conditions of humiliation, anger, and despair. Goldstein helps us to understand that such joking and laughter is part of an emotional aesthetic that defines the sense of frustration and anomie endemic to the political and economic desperation among residents of the shantytown.

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