



Cities From Scratch: Poverty and Informality in Urban Latin America

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This collection of essays challenges long-entrenched ideas about the history, nature, and significance of the informal neighborhoods that house the vast majority of Latin America's urban poor. Until recently, scholars have mainly viewed these settlements through the prisms of crime and drug-related violence, modernization and development theories, populist or revolutionary politics, or debates about the cultures of poverty. Yet shantytowns have proven both more durable and more multifaceted than any of these perspectives foresaw. Far from being accidental offshoots of more dynamic economic and political developments, they are now a permanent and integral part of Latin America's urban societies, critical to struggles over democratization, economic transformation, identity politics, and the drug and arms trades. Integrating historical, cultural, and social scientific methodologies, this collection brings together recent research from across Latin America, from the informal neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro and Mexico City, Managua and Buenos Aires. Amid alarmist exposés, Cities from Scratch intervenes by considering Latin American shantytowns at a new level of interdisciplinary complexity.

Contributors. Javier Auyero, Mariana Cavalcanti, Ratão Diniz, Emilio Duhau, Sujatha Fernandes, Brodwyn Fischer, Bryan McCann, Edward Murphy, Dennis Rodgers



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