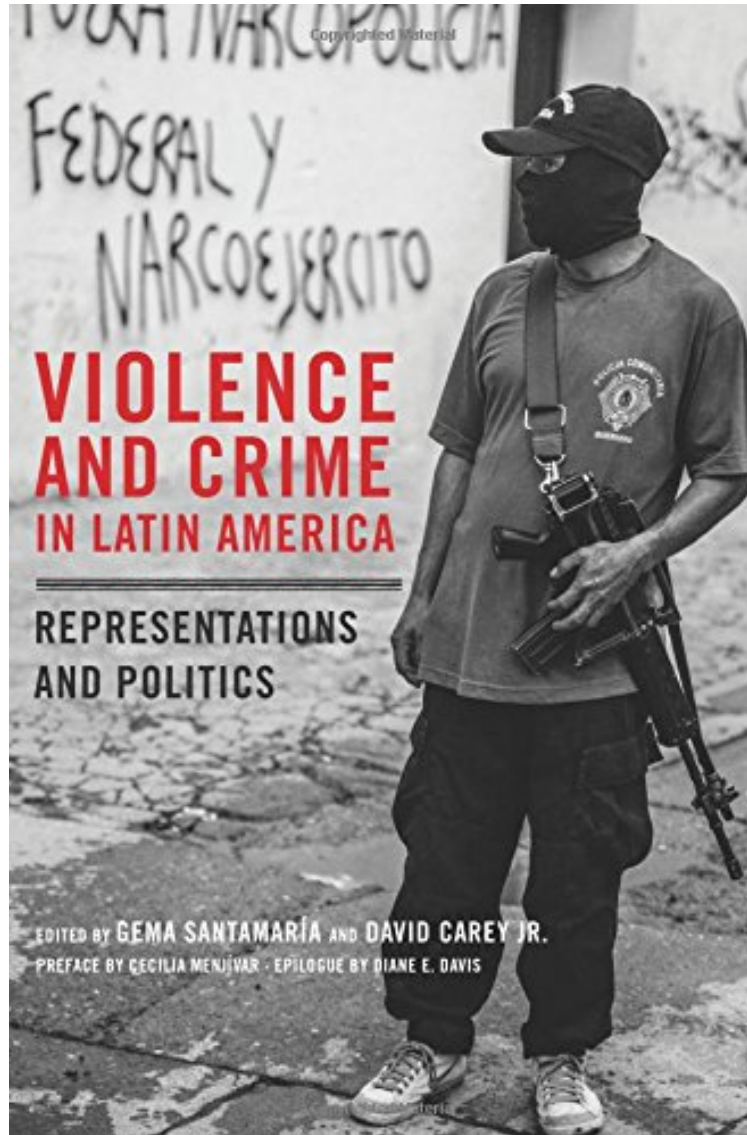


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According to media reports, Latin America is one of the most violent regions in the world a distinction it held throughout the twentieth century. The authors of *Violence and Crime in Latin America* contend that perceptions and representations of violence and crime directly impact such behaviors, creating profound consequences for the political and social fabric of Latin American nations. Written by distinguished scholars of Latin American history, sociology, anthropology, and political science, the essays in this volume range from Mexico and Argentina to Colombia and Brazil in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, addressing such issues as extralegal violence in Mexico, the myth of indigenous criminality in Guatemala, and governments selective blindness to violent crime in Brazil and Jamaica. The authors in this collection examine not only the social construction and political visibility of violence and crime in Latin America, but the justifications for them as well. Analytically and historically, these essays show how Latin American citizens have sanctioned criminal and violent practices and incorporated them into social relations, everyday practices, and institutional settings. At the same time, the authors explore the power struggles that inform distinctions between illegitimate versus legitimate violence. *Violence and Crime in Latin America* makes a substantive contribution to understanding a key problem facing Latin America today. In its historical depth and ethnographic reach, this original and thought-provoking volume enhances our understanding of crime and violence throughout the Western Hemisphere.

This book is a must-read for understanding crime and violence in Latin America. It challenges views of Latin American violence that either focus too much on regional particularities or univocally stress the role of the state as the overpowering site of violence and repression. Rather than denying these dimensions, the book recalibrates their significance by placing them in a larger, South-South geopolitical context. It will become a mandatory reference for studies of violence in Latin America and beyond. Federico Finchelstein, author of *Transatlantic Fascism: Ideology, Violence and the Sacred in Argentina and Italy, 1919-1945*