Endangered City: The Politics of Security and Risk in Bogotá (Global Insecurities)

By Austin Zeiderman

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Security and risk have become central to how cities are planned, built, governed, and inhabited in the twenty-first century. In *Endangered City*, Austin Zeiderman focuses on this new political imperative to govern the present in anticipation of future harm. Through ethnographic fieldwork and archival research in Bogotá, Colombia, he examines how state actors work to protect the lives of poor and vulnerable citizens from a range of threats, including environmental hazards and urban violence. By following both the governmental agencies charged with this mandate and the subjects governed by it, *Endangered City* reveals what happens when logics of endangerment shape the terrain of political engagement between citizens and the state. The self-built settlements of Bogotá's urban periphery prove a critical site from which to examine the rising effect of security and risk on contemporary cities and urban life.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Extraordinarily well-grounded in ethnographic research and urban and social theory, *Endangered City* makes a significant contribution to debate about the ways that contemporary urban governance is shaped by actual and discursive engagement with the notion of risk. It will appeal to a wide range of scholars who study the rapidly transforming cities of the global South and to urbanists concerned more broadly with citizenship and governance."
(Diane E. Davis, author of *Urban Leviathan: Mexico City in the Twentieth Century*)

"*Endangered City* offers a compelling and critical analysis of how concerns with security and risk have displaced other rationalities of government—such as development, democracy, and welfare—in contemporary Colombia, rearranging the field of political possibilities. Austin Zeiderman combines masterful ethnographic and archival research to reveal both the mundane practices and the various modalities of power that intersect in the management of life-at-risk. Taking us well beyond Colombia, Zeiderman's bold theorization considers the problems of framing urban and political life in terms of threat."
(Teresa Caldeira, author of *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo*)

"*Endangered City* offers crucial insights into the contingent and localized assemblage and deployment of security frameworks both as technologies of governance and as platforms for citizen claims. By exploring environmental risk, the book persuasively shows how security logics mutate and are hybridized, continually opening new fields for intervention and mobilization, but also reinscribing securitized conceptions of authority and citizenship."

(Federico Pérez *Anthropological Quarterly* 2016-09-01)

"A comprehensive book we have long owed Bogotá, *Endangered City* provides an interdisciplinary perspective that is historical, ethnographic, and spatially rich. Appealing to different audiences, including urban planners, risk experts, policy makers, students, and urban geographers, the book offers a de-centered view of urban theory and constitutes an important contribution to critical understandings of security. Moreover, I think this is a recommended reading in uncertain and frustrating times."
(Diana Ojeda *Society and Space* 2017-02-15)

"Zeiderman provides a vivid portrayal of everyday life in Bogota.... The depth of empirical detail is the strength of the book, which convincingly makes the case that more urban ethnographies are needed, especially in geography. Yet, this empirical specificity is also effortlessly interwoven with more general theoretical discussions, questions, and implications in critical urban studies and beyond."

(Matthew B. Anderson *Social and Cultural Geography* 2016-12-01)

"*Endangered City* is an important contribution to contemporary urban studies and risk management via its nuanced unpacking of critical theory and as a well-crafted ethnography of endangerment.... The text is well organized, eschewing excessive jargon and thus suitable for both undergraduates and graduates, as well as critical social theorists, Latin Americanists, and those concerned with urban policy, planning, and practice in the new millennium where the dominance of first world models can no longer be assumed for the global

South."
(Marilyn Gates *Population, Space, and Place* 2017-05-15)

"*Endangered City* is an original and valuable contribution to scholarship and should be consulted by all students of politics and security in Latin America."
(Eugene Carey *The Latin American Review of Books*)

About the Author

Austin Zeiderman is an anthropologist and Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and Environment at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

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