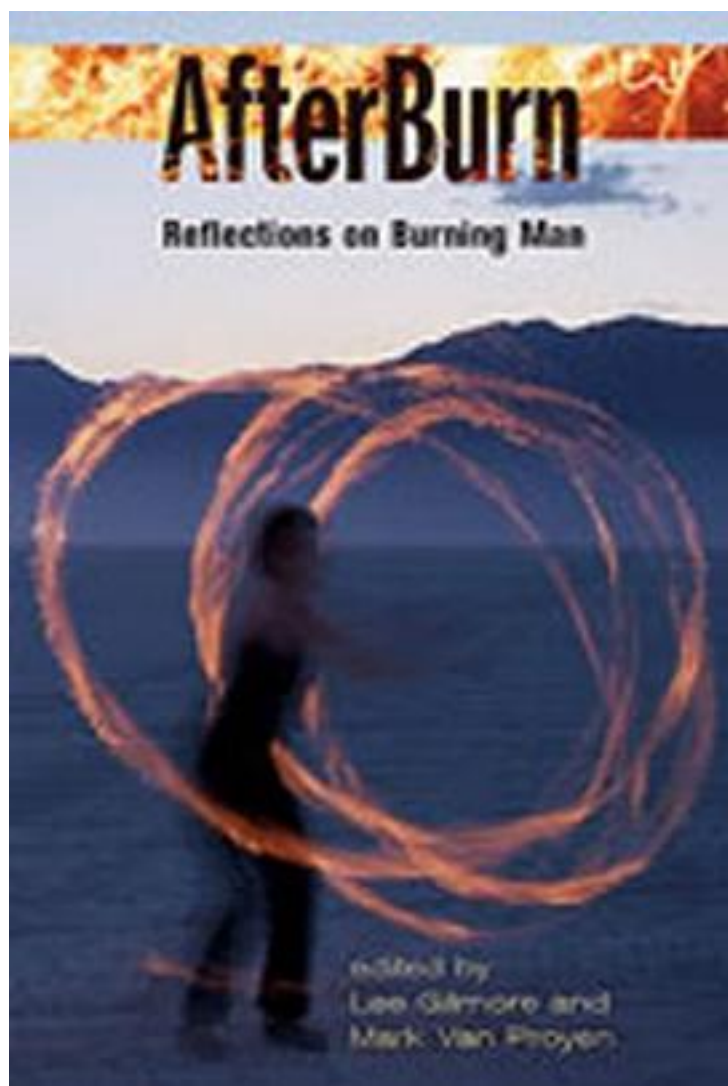


AfterBurn



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The Burning Man Festival is a weeklong spasm of radical self-expression held annually just before Labor Day since 1986. In late August 2003, more than 33,000 participants converged in Nevada's Black Rock Desert for this counterculture event staged as an experiment in temporary community. The participants gather to rid themselves of the conventional structures of their life and to "sample" the alternatives in hundreds of theme camps. The climax of the festival comes when attendees erupt into cheers and applause at the burning of a forty-foot-tall human effigy described as "part pre-technological idol and part post-technological puppet." "AfterBurn" contributor Erik Davis writes of the festival, "Irony and blasphemous, intoxicated and lewd, Burning Man's ADD theater of the absurd might even be said to embody the slap-happy nihilism of postmodern culture itself." CounterCulture series editor David Farber summarizes the significance of the event: " Burning Man is] spiritual discovery, utopian experiment, artistic spectacle, participatory democracy, do-it-yourself anarchism, and communitarian adventure." "AfterBurn" features ten essayists each addressing a specific aspect of the festival, from the recruitment and management of volunteers, to the artistic and cultural context of the modern conception of Utopia. Both Lee Gilmore and Mark Van Proyen have attended Burning Man annually since 1996. Contributors: Katherine Chen (Cambridge, MA) received a PhD in sociology from Harvard. Erik Davis (San Francisco, CA) is an author, journalist, and performance lecturer. Allegra Fortunati (San Francisco, CA) serves on the curatorial committee and board of the LAB. Jeremy Hockett (Ann Arbor, MI) received his PhD from the department of American studies, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. Robert V. Kozinets (Madison, WI) is assistant professor of marketing, University of Wisconsin-Madison's School of Business. JoAnne Northrup (San Jose, CA) is senior curator at the San Jose Museum of Art. Sarah M. Pike (Chico, CA) is associate professor of religious studies, California State University. John F. Sherry, Jr. (Evanston, IL) is an anthropologist at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University.

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