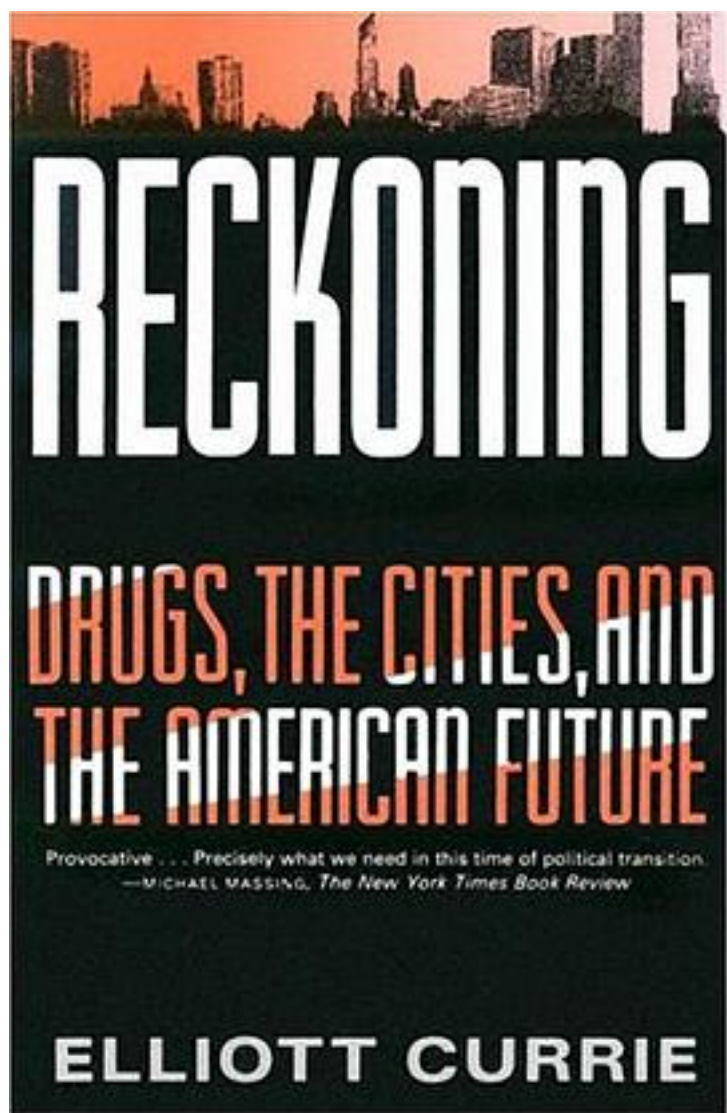


Reckoning



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Following the 1996 treaty ending decades of civil war, how are Guatemalans reckoning with genocide, especially since almost everyone collaborated in some way with the violence? Meaning 'to count, figure up' and 'to settle rewards and punishments,' reckoning promises accounting and accountability. Yet as Diane M. Nelson shows, the means by which the war was waged, especially as they related to race and gender, and unsettled the very premises of knowing and being. Symptomatic are the stories of duplicity and living with 'two faces' pervasive in post-war Guatemala and applied to the left, the Mayan people, and the state. Drawing on more than twenty years of research in Guatemala, Nelson explores how post-war struggles to reckon with traumatic experience illuminate the assumptions of identity more generally. Nelson brings stories of human rights activism, Mayan identity struggles, coerced participation in massacres, and popular entertainment - including traditional dances, horror films, and carnivals - together with analyses of mass-grave exhumations, official apologies, and reparations. She discusses the stereotype of the Two-Faced Indian as colonial discourse revived by anti-guerrilla counterinsurgency and by the claims of duplicity levelled against Nobel laureate Rigoberta Menchu, and she explores how duplicity may in turn function as a survival strategy for some. She examines suspicions that state power is also two-faced, from the left's fears of a clandestine para-state behind the democratic facade to the right's conviction that NGOs threaten Guatemalan sovereignty. Her comparison of anti-malaria and anti-subversive campaigns suggests bio-political ways that the state is two-faced, simultaneously taking and giving life. In "Reckoning", Nelson offers a ground-up take on political transition as Guatemalans find creative ways forward, turning ledger books, techno-science, and even gory horror movies into tools for making sense of violence, loss, and the future.

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