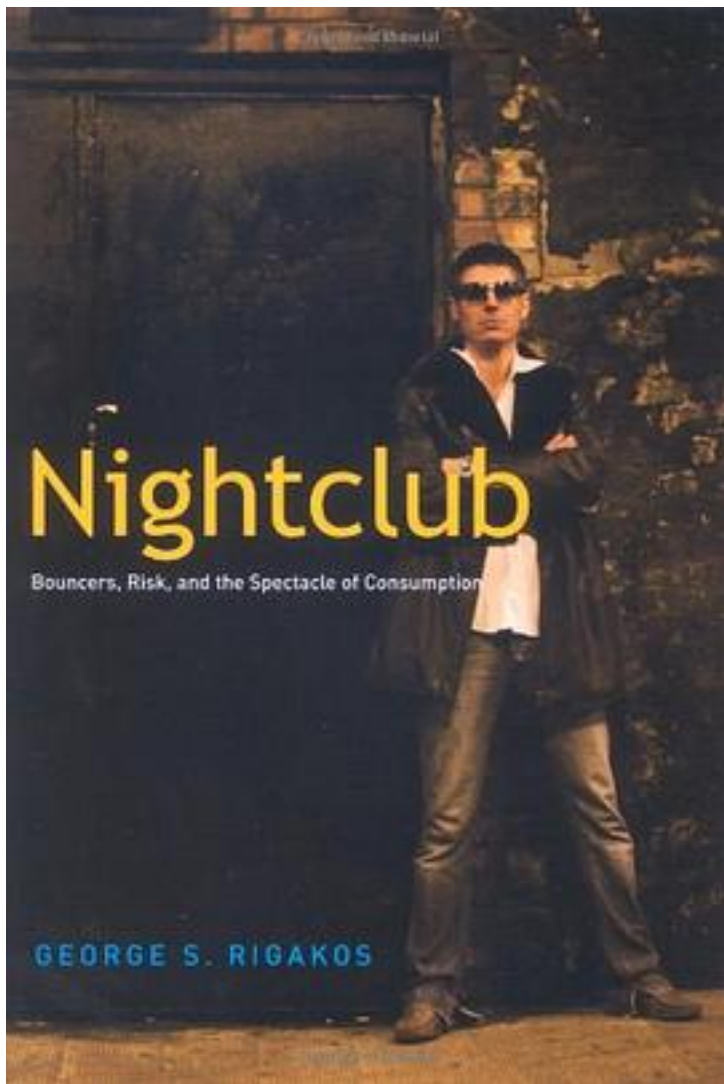


Nightclub



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In the last thirty years bouncers have emerged as iconic gatekeepers of contemporary cool, exclusivity, and social capital in urban centres around the world. In this groundbreaking empirical study, Rigakos critiques the supposed liberating and expressive potential of nightclubs by theorizing them within the linked themes of risk, consumption and security in late capitalism. People attend nightclubs to be seen and see others, to consume others as aesthetic objects of desire and to elicit desire in others - the desire to be desired. This 'synoptic frenzy', according to Rigakos, fuses surveillance and aesthetic consumption. It fetishizes bodies and amplifies social capitals, producing optic violence and crises of respect fuelled by alcohol. At closing time, populations flow out of the haze of the nightclub and onto city streets, from private spectacle to public nuisance. Mirroring the general late capitalist compulsion to binge and purge, the nightclub's spectacle of consumption produces a litany of unfulfilled courtiers of the night, staggering out of one spectacle and immediately into another. In this sense, bouncers are not only prime policing agents in the nighttime economy but are producers of an urban risk market - a site of circumscribed transgression and consumption that begins at the door.

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目录:

[Nightclub_ 下载链接1](#)

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