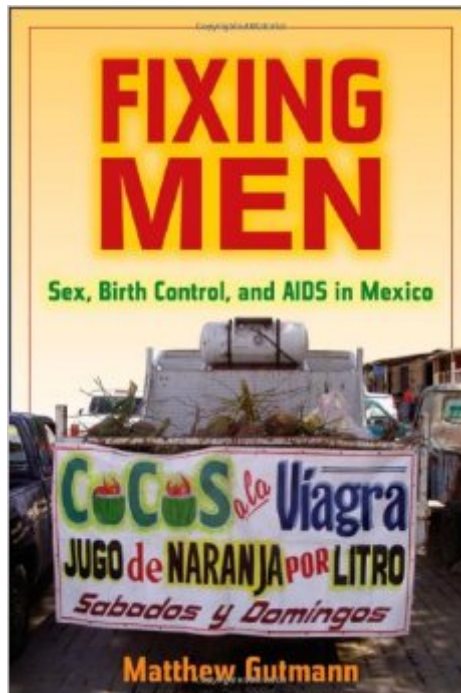


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Fixing Men: Sex, Birth Control, And AIDS In Mexico



Synopsis

Most studies on reproductive rights make women their focus, but in *Fixing Men*, Matthew Gutmann illuminates what men in the Mexican state of Oaxaca say and do about contraception, sex, and AIDS. Based on extensive fieldwork, this breakthrough study by a preeminent anthropologist of men and masculinities reveals how these men and the women in their lives make decisions about birth control, how they cope with the plague of AIDS, and the contradictory healing techniques biomedical and indigenous medical practitioners employ for infertility, impotence, and infidelity. Gutmann talks with men during and after their vasectomies and discovers why some opt for sterilization while so many others feel "planned out of family planning."

Book Information

Paperback: 280 pages

Publisher: University of California Press; 1 edition (November 6, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0520253302

ISBN-13: 978-0520253308

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.8 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (2 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #955,406 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #185 in [Books > Medical Books > Medicine > Internal Medicine > Pathology > Diseases > AIDS & HIV](#) #190 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Women's Studies > Abortion & Birth Control](#) #515 in [Books > Textbooks > Medicine & Health Sciences > Medicine > Clinical > Diseases](#)

Customer Reviews

This book made me think about a comment from Professor Robert Richmond Ellis. He stated that he was going to write a book about Spanish-speaking gay autobiographies, but he learned that Latin American works always brought up issues of race in ways that Spanish counterparts did not. I didn't read Professor Gutmann's book about masculinity in Mexico City, but I imagine that this book may be its diametrical opposite in that Oaxaca is presented as rural and having a large indigenous population. Professor Gutmann is very interested in the superstructure. Whereas other academics or laypeople would point to culture as the reason for most phenomena, this author points to governmental rules, global companies' profits, economies, and international migration as the cause of many items. For example, he stated that Chinese men don't choose to use condoms for fun; their

government's one-child policy forces them to use protection. With regard to Mexico, he notes that the Mexican government is complicit with global pill companies in not bringing the price of HIV meds down. He states that if family planning clinics only focus on women, then few men will know they have the option of getting a vasectomy. In the book, one chapter tends to speak about these superstructural matters and the following chapter would speak about the author's everyday conversations with Oaxacans. For readers that don't care for academic-speak, they can easily skip over the more complicated chapters. The penultimate chapter on indigenous healing is a bit extraneous. He begins by saying curanderos often don't employ rigid dichotomies between the sexes. The chapter only marginally speaks of men's sexual choices. It's kinda just a way to lengthen the book. Dr.

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