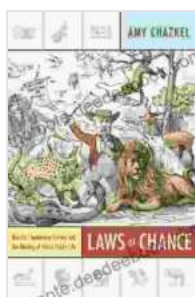


The Brazilian Clandestine Lottery: A Radical Force in Shaping Urban Public Life

In the vibrant and chaotic streets of Brazil's urban centers, there exists a clandestine lottery that has played a significant role in shaping the country's public life. Known as the jogo do bicho (literally "animal game"), this illegal betting system has permeated Brazilian society for over a century, leaving an enduring mark on its culture and politics.



Laws of Chance: Brazil's Clandestine Lottery and the Making of Urban Public Life (Radical Perspectives)

by Amy Chazkel

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The jogo do bicho was first introduced in the late 19th century by Italian immigrants who brought with them their own gambling traditions. The game quickly gained popularity among the working class and poor, who saw it as a chance to escape poverty and improve their lives. Over time, the jogo do bicho evolved into a complex and organized system with its own set of rules, betting shops, and street vendors.

The game is played by choosing one of 25 animals, each of which is assigned a number. Players can bet on a single animal, a combination of animals, or even the order in which the animals will be drawn. Drawings are held daily, and winners are paid out according to the odds of their bets.

While the jogo do bicho is illegal under Brazilian law, it has been tolerated by authorities for decades. This is due in part to the game's popularity and its deep roots in Brazilian society. The jogo do bicho has also been seen as a source of revenue for the government, which has been known to tax the game's profits.

The jogo do bicho has had a profound impact on Brazilian urban public life. The game's street vendors and betting shops have become a common sight in cities and towns across the country. These establishments serve as meeting places for people from all walks of life, creating a sense of community and belonging. The jogo do bicho has also been a source of financial support for local businesses, schools, and charities.

However, the jogo do bicho has also been associated with crime and violence. The game's profits have been used to fund drug trafficking and other illegal activities. In some cases, jogo do bicho operators have been known to use violence to intimidate or silence their rivals.

Despite its checkered history, the jogo do bicho remains a popular and influential force in Brazilian society. The game's unique blend of gambling, community, and criminality has made it a potent symbol of the country's cultural and political contradictions. The jogo do bicho is a reminder that even in the most modern and technologically advanced societies, there is still a place for tradition, superstition, and the rule of the streets.

In recent years, there have been growing calls to legalize the jogo do bicho. Proponents of legalization argue that it would bring the game under government control and regulation, reducing its association with crime and violence. Legalization would also generate tax revenue for the government, which could be used to fund social programs.

Opponents of legalization argue that it would send the wrong message to society, condoning gambling and other illegal activities. They also worry that legalization would lead to an increase in gambling addiction and other social problems.

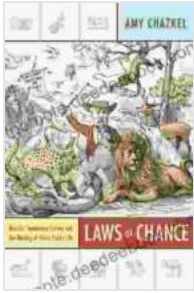
The debate over the legalization of the jogo do bicho is likely to continue for years to come. However, one thing is clear: the game has already left an indelible mark on Brazilian society. The jogo do bicho is a unique and dynamic form of popular culture that has shaped the country's urban public life in profound ways. Whether it is legalized or not, the jogo do bicho will continue to be a part of Brazilian life for many years to come.

The jogo do bicho is a complex and controversial phenomenon that has played a significant role in shaping Brazilian society. The game's unique blend of gambling, community, and criminality has made it a potent symbol of the country's cultural and political contradictions. The jogo do bicho is a reminder that even in the most modern and technologically advanced societies, there is still a place for tradition, superstition, and the rule of the streets.

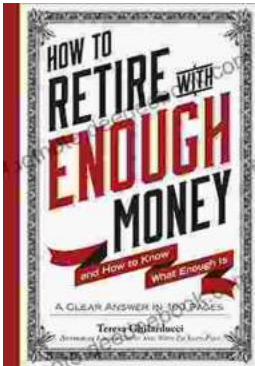
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