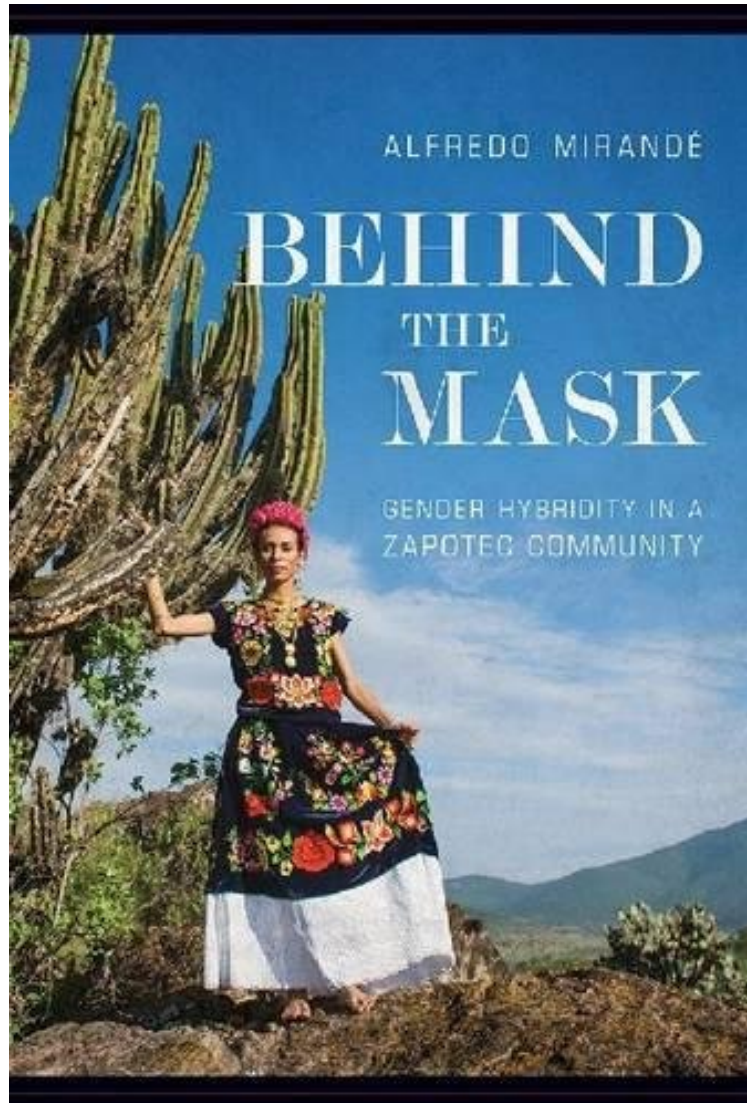


(Free and download) Behind the Mask: Gender Hybridity in a Zapotec Community

Behind the Mask: Gender Hybridity in a Zapotec Community

Alfredo Mirand

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Alfredo Mirand : Behind the Mask: Gender Hybridity in a Zapotec Community before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Behind the Mask: Gender Hybridity in a Zapotec Community:

The image of biologically male people dancing while dressed in the traditional, colorful attire of Zapotec, Juchiteca, females stands in sharp contrast to the prevailing view of Mexico as the land of charros, machismo, and unbridled

ranchero masculinity. These indigenous people are called los muxes, and they are neither man nor woman, but rather a hybrid third gender. After seeing a video of a muxe vela, or festival, sociologist Alfredo Mirand was intrigued by the contradiction between Mexico's patriarchal reputation and its warm acceptance of los muxes. Seeking to get past traditional Mexican masculinity, he presents us with *Behind the Mask*, which combines historical analysis, ethnographic field research, and interviews conducted with los muxes of Juchitán over a period of seven years. Mirand observed community events, attended muxe velas, and interviewed both muxes and other Juchitán residents. Prefaced by an overview of the study methods and sample, the book challenges the ideology of a male-dominated Mexican society driven by the cult of machismo, featuring photos alongside four appendixes. Delving into many aspects of their lives and culture, the author discusses how the muxes are perceived by others, how the muxes perceive themselves, and the acceptance of a third gender status among various North American indigenous groups. Mirand compares traditional Mexican/Latino conceptions of gender and sexuality to modern or Western object choice configurations. He concludes by proposing a new hybrid model for rethinking these seemingly contradictory and conflicting gender systems.

A highly original work, featuring vivid and compelling descriptions of a unique gender identity and its acceptance in a twenty-first-century Mexican setting, with the potential to broaden several current frameworks in the gender field. Maxine Baca Zinn, Michigan State University