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Anthropology

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Krystal, Matthew. **Indigenous dance and dancing Indian: contested representation in the global era.** University Press of Colorado, 2012. 315p bibl index afp ISBN 9781607320968, \$70.00; ISBN 9781607320975 e-book, contact publisher for price

What contrasts could be more jarring? Powwow dancers in elaborate "Plains Indian" costumes perform vestiges of their own traditions mixed with those of other Indians otherwise unrelated to them, for an audience open to anyone but primarily composed of Native Americans. Through festive ritual theater, K'iche' Maya of highland Guatemala dramatize the courage of their ancestors and the demeaning consequences of Spanish conquest. In a highly controversial spectacle, "a carefully selected white college student" struts forth as "Chief Illiniwek" at University of Illinois sports events, much to the crowd's jubilation. To complicate matters further, sometimes "Native people 'imitate non-Indian imitations of Indians'" (citing Philip Deloria's important *Playing Indian*, CH, Nov'98, 36-1648). "Indianness" is constructed through such events both by and for Indians and non-Indian "hobbyists" seeking an "authenticity" not so readily found in their own heritages. Ethnic identity is composed and contested through such practices; but why is dance the idiom through which such important cultural work is so often undertaken? Anthropologist Krystal (North Central College, IL) broaches this central question with sensitivity and nuanced analysis, and his accessible prose will make this a valuable book for undergraduate collections across several humanistic disciplines. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. All levels/libraries. -- A. F. Roberts, *University of California, Los Angeles*