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A Sociocultural Analysis of a Midwestern American Flea Market

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Abstract

The ethnographic case study presented in this article illustrates the institutional complexity and sociocultural significance of a midwestern

American flea market. A conception of marketplace structure and function that incorporates informal and festive dimensions of consumer behavior is advanced. The article explores the relationship of primary and secondary economic activity. Buyer and seller behavior, marketplace ambience, the social embeddedness of consumption, and experiential aspects of consumption are considered at length.

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