

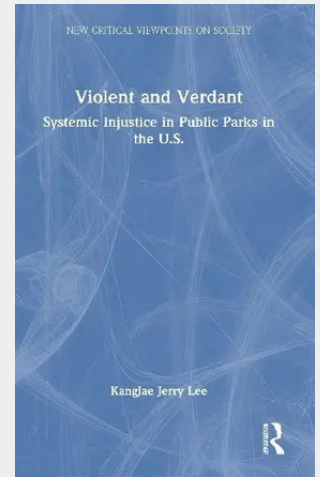
Lee

Violent and Verdant

Systemic Injustice in Public Parks in the U.S.

Winner of the 2026 Leisure Studies Association's Outstanding Book Prize Public parks in the U.S. are one of the most contentious and paradoxical places. Many Americans believe public parks are encapsulations of nature, promoters of health, and embodiments of egalitarianism and democracy, providing a wide range of health, economic, cultural, and social benefits to users. Yet, the historical reality of American public parks has been riddled with greed, hypocrisy, prejudice, and ulterior motives of the rich and powerful. Numerous people have been displaced, exploited, and even killed because of public parks. Drawing from multiple disciplines such as sociology, history, geography, urban planning, environmental science, and leisure studies, Violent and Verdant: Systemic Injustice in Public Parks in the U.S. takes a two-pronged approach to provide critical and fresh insights on public parks in the U.S. It looks back, illuminating how parks have been sites of enduring violence and oppression. But it also looks forward, offering practical strategies and philosophical reimaginings of parks' conception, development, and management.

Violent and Verdant: Systemic Injustice in Public Parks in the U.S. gives voice to the people who have been marginalized by public parks and rectify the centuries of environmental and social injustice surrounding public parks.



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