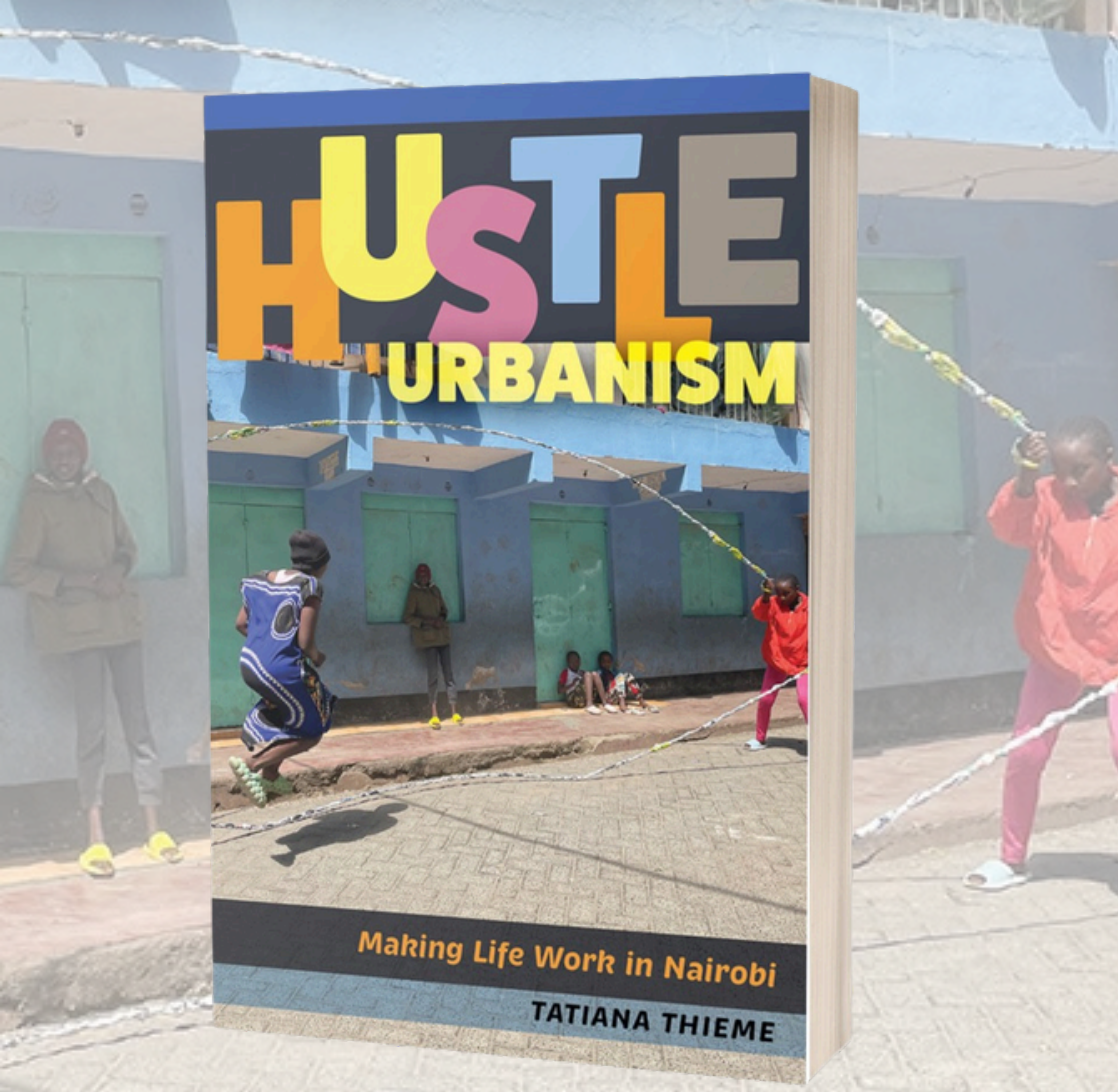


"This book is ethnography at its best: Tatiana Thieme writes from years of deep relationships, twisting and turning 'hustle' to frame and reframe celebrations, criticisms, joy, frustration, hope, and possibilities associated with the term."

—Mary Lawhon, author of *Making Urban Theory: Learning and Unlearning through Southern Cities*

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Hustle Urbanism

Making Life Work in Nairobi

Tatiana Thieme

In Nairobi's underserved neighborhoods, "hustle" has emerged as both a vital survival strategy and a way of life for youth. Exploring the multiple meanings and manifestations of the hustle economy across different scenarios of provisioning, distribution, exchange, learning, and mobilizing, *Hustle Urbanism* draws on more than a decade of ethnographic engagement to center the logics, perspectives, and inventive strategies of a group of youth who constantly navigate job scarcity, inadequate basic services, and climate-induced harms.

Tatiana Thieme shows how young people develop tools of resistance against the legacies of colonial violence and uneven urban development while carving out spaces of opportunity for themselves and their peers. The stories she includes bring thick ethnographic detail and longitudinal perspective to the lives and livelihoods of youth whose diverse skill sets and knowledges span from circular economies and eco-activism to hip hop and local leadership. Filling a significant gap in both existing scholarship and popular discussion, *Hustle Urbanism* offers critical theorization of precarious urban environments and the affirmative modes of making life work in the city against the odds.

While Thieme cautions against fetishizing hustle as a form of social and economic uplift, she calls for a greater recognition of the ingenuity and skill involved in hustle urbanism, arguing that studying hustle narratives and practices opens up timely empirical and theoretical questions about overlapping urban struggles and possibilities that coexist in the everyday city.

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Tatiana Thieme is associate professor of human geography at University College London.