



# Electoral Guerrilla Theatre: Radical Ridicule and Social Movements

By L.M. Bogad



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Across the globe, in liberal democracies where the right to vote is framed as both civil right and civic duty, disillusioned creative activists run for public office on sarcastic, ironic and iconoclastic platforms. With little intention of 'winning' in the conventional sense, they use drag, camp and stand-up comedy to undermine the legitimacy of their opponents and sometimes the electoral system itself.

*Electoral Guerrilla Theatre* explores the recent phenomenon of the satirical election campaign, and questions:

- What is the purpose of such public political performances?
- What theatrical devices and aesthetic sensibilities do electoral guerrillas draw on to enhance their satire?
- How do electoral guerrillas create their public personas and platforms, and which audiences are they playing to and/or against?
- How do parodies and the 'respectable' political performances that they mock interact and how can this tactic backfire?

Drawing on extensive archival and ethnographic research this is entertaining, enlightening and informative read that will be invaluable to students working across a variety of disciplines, including performance studies, social science, cultural studies and politics.

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## **Electoral Guerrilla Theatre: Radical Ridicule and Social Movements By L.M. Bogad Bibliography**

- Rank: #7963955 in Books
- Published on: 2005-08-08
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.50" h x 5.50" w x .50" l, .91 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 248 pages



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#### Review

**'A compelling and urgent read.'** – *Theatre Journal*

**'A major contribution to performance studies.'** – *Modern Drama*

**'Delightfully written and wonderfully provocative ... Valuable reading for any scholar of social movements.'** – *Mobilization*

#### From the Back Cover

"Electoral Guerrilla Theatre deals a refreshing 'wild-card in the repertoire of resistance' -- libertarian legislative theatre for the MTV, hard-wired, chilled-out, anti-globalization generation."

--Baz Kershaw, University of Bristol

"As a guide to both theory and action, it is insightful, entertaining and indispensable."

--Andrew Boyd, Billionaires for Bush

"Beautifully contextualized within social movement theory, this book enlivens the debate about performative interventions into power."

--Jan Cohen-Cruz, New York University

#### About the Author

L.M. Bogad is Assistant Professor of Theatre and Dance at the University of California at Davis.

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