



# Life in and against the Odds: Debts of Freedom and the Speculative Roots of U.S. Culture

*Heidi Hoechst*

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**Life in and against the Odds: Debts of Freedom and the Speculative Roots of U.S. Culture** Heidi Hoechst

Somehow people continue to imagine a world of justice against the odds of a deck that has been stacked against them. In her urgent and perceptive book, *Life in and against the Odds*, Hoechst focuses on the particular circumstances and conditions of different phases of speculative expansion in the United States. She traces the roots of the nation-state to nineteenth-century land markets and slave exchanges. Hoechst also chronicles how these racial foundations extend through corporate capitalism from the 1920s and '30s to the present era of financialized capitalism and the recent housing bubble.

*Life in and against the Odds* identifies where and how speculative nationalism creates roadblocks to freedom. Hoechst retells the history of the United States with a perspective on how human lives are made, destroyed, reconfigured, and claimed under the systemic violence of a nation that is rooted in the racializing futurity of speculative capitalism.

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