

Mayorga

Urban Specters

The Everyday Harms of Racial Capitalism

Racial capitalism, invisible but threaded throughout the world, shapes our lives. Focusing on the experiences of white, Black, and Latinx residents of Cincinnati, Sarah Mayorga argues that residents' interpretations of their circumstances, what she calls urban specters, are often partial recognitions of the exploitation and dehumanization produced by racial capitalism. Much scholarly work on racial capitalism has necessarily focused on historical, theoretical, and macro-level accounts. Mayorga takes these vital insights and applies them to two contemporary working-class neighborhoods, centering the lives of working-class and poor people. Using data from interviews with 117 residents, Mayorga maps how racial capitalism creates the everyday harms people know all too well. Chronic underdevelopment, private property, and policing, she shows, have produced these harms. In this enlightening book, Mayorga identifies small windows into abolitionist possibilities that create different types of relations, ones based on care and connection. This is a guide for anyone trying to understand urban inequality, but also more importantly, for how we might create a different world.

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