

Violence in Capitalism: Devaluing Life in an Age of Responsibility

James A. Tyner



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What, James Tyner asks, separates the murder of a runaway youth from the death of a father denied a bone-marrow transplant because of budget cuts? Moving beyond our culture's reductive emphasis on whether a given act of violence is intentional—and may therefore count as deliberate murder—Tyner interrogates the broader forces that produce violence. His uniquely geographic perspective considers where violence takes place (the workplace, the home, the prison, etc.) and how violence moves across space.

Approaching violence as one of several methods of constituting space, Tyner examines everything from the way police departments map crime to the emergence of "environmental criminology." Throughout, he casts violence in broad terms—as a realm that is not limited to criminal acts and one that can be divided into the categories of "killing" and "letting die." His framework extends the study of biopolitics by examining the state's role in producing (or failing to produce) a healthy citizenry. It also adds to the new literature on capitalism by articulating the interconnections between violence and political economy. Simply put, capitalism (especially its neoliberal and neoconservative variants) is structured around a valuation of life that fosters a particular abstraction of violence and crime.



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