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Reviews

Collisions at the Crossroads: How Place and Mobility Make Race. By Genevieve Carpio. Oakland: University of California Press, 2019. 362 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. \$85 (cloth); \$29.95 (paper); \$29.95 (e-book).

In this book, Genevieve Carpio presents an innovative analysis that compels us to consider mobility as a pivotal part of how different groups of people and places have been racialized in Southern California. Carpio centers on the Inland Empire region between 1870 and 1970, with important connections to near-present conditions to demonstrate how racialization has been enforced spatially and upon the mobility of communities of color. Studying the Inland Empire permits Carpio to look at the legacies of settler colonialism in the construction of the region's racial identity and its built environment. In her work, Carpio creates a relational study that examines how Indigenous peoples, Latinx, Japanese Americans, and African Americans have experienced racialization through either the permission or prohibition of their mobility.

Carpio begins her study by examining how white migrants who arrived in the multi-racial region in the late nineteenth century began to follow the lead of ambitious white agriculturalists, declaring the Inland Empire as a mythological white region. White migrants from the East Coast and Midwest settling in the Inland Empire asserted themselves as the enterprising pioneers who transformed what they perceived as a hinterland into the bustling Inland Empire. They deployed what Carpio defines as an “Anglo Fantasy Past,” a concept that relied on settler-colonial logics to craft a selective narrative in which regional development was only possible through the arrival of white migrants implementing commercial agriculture.

Earlier studies written by Carey McWilliams, William Deverell, and Phoebe S. K. Young, among other Southern California specialists, have discussed the creation of Southern California as a “white spot” by claiming a European connection through a “Spanish fantasy past.” Carpio advances this analysis, exploring how a mythic Anglo past has become a potent and enduring force in regional heritage and city planning. She examines how the Inland Empire memorializes Route 66 as the region's founding myth, thus erasing the centuries-long Indigenous presence in the area. Furthermore, the white pioneer narrative has shaped the built environment in

the form of roads, architecture, and commercial centers such as Victoria Gardens, which celebrate a fictional past that reifies white migration as the workforce that built the region while erasing the Indigenous, Black, Latinx, and Asian labor that transformed the Inland Empire into a formidable citrus harvesting powerhouse.

Carpio's other significant contribution is to reveal how the region's public memory as a fictitious Anglo past is directly linked to the racialization of public space and, by extension, the transportation infrastructure. This carries everyday consequences for how the mobility and immobility of non-white groups is disciplined, constricted, and policed. In five chapters, Carpio delves into a relational study to examine how the control of movement took different and contradictory forms in the Inland Empire for non-whites. For instance, Carpio analyzes how in the first decades of the twentieth century, Japanese Americans took on bicycling—a perceived white middle-class sport—to claim cultural citizenship at a time when Asian Americans were immobilized spatially and socially due to the anti-Asian policies. In contrast, Carpio examines how Mexican farmworkers were hyper-mobilized as they were encouraged to cross national and state borders to work on the citrus fields. Their mobility was accepted and encouraged as long as they were mere “birds of passage,” without the intent of settling into the United States permanently. Carpio posits that ethnic Mexicans embraced car ownership in larger numbers than white motorists in the 1920s and 1930s out of practical needs to travel to their labor sites located throughout Southern California. Nonetheless, their role as motorists was often perceived as suspicious. This led to persistent police profiling that has continued into the near-present for undocumented Latinx motorists, who were until recently unable to obtain driver's licenses, thus being criminalized for lacking these documents and subjected to have their cars impounded under the guise of road safety.

Carpio also examines Latinxs' and African Americans' mobility and their residential relocation to exurbs located in the Inland Empire. Carpio argues that the rise of the warehousing and shipping industry has transformed the Inland Empire into a “chokepoint” for transnational flows between the Pacific Rim and Southern California. Yet, Carpio keenly examines how the movement to the suburbs results from the class immobility for Latinxs and African Americans. Pushed out of Central Los Angeles due to expensive housing costs and stagnant job opportunities, new residents of color have moved to the Inland Empire, confirming its status as a “chokepoint,” a juncture between global capitalism and structural racism.

The historical analysis and theoretical offerings presented by Carpio make this a generative study that opens new avenues of research on how to counter eschewed regional memories with relational and nuanced multi-racial, multi-ethnic historical accounts. Most significantly, Carpio's work provides us with the lens to examine how mobility is deeply imbricated in the racial formation process.

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