

The Housing Monster

Second Edition

prole.info

Preface by Lazo Ediciones • Preface by Ben Kritikos

Introduction by Sean KB

A house is more than four walls and a roof. From its design and production to the way it is sold, used, resold, and eventually demolished, it is crisscrossed by conflict.

The Housing Monster is a scathing illustrated essay that takes one seemingly simple, everyday thing—a house—and looks at the social relations that surround it. Moving from intensely personal thoughts and interactions to large-scale political and economic forces, it reads alternately like a worker's diary, a story, a psychology of everyday life, a historical account, an introduction to Marxist critique of political economy, and an angry flyer someone passed you on the street.

Starting with the construction site and the physical building of houses, the book slowly builds and links more and more issues together: from gentrification and city politics to gender roles and identity politics, from subcontracting and speculation to union contracts and negotiation, from individual belief, suffering, and resistance to structural division, necessity, and instability. What starts as a look at housing broadens into a critique of capitalism as a whole. The text is accompanied by clean black-and-white illustrations that are mocking, beautiful, and bleak.

This new edition includes analysis situating and exploring the text's impact around the world by Lazo Ediciones in Argentina, Ben Kritikos in Scotland, and Sean KB in the US.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

The anonymous author who posts manifestos on **prole.info** has lived in half a dozen different countries and has had a lot of different jobs—all of which were . . . shit. His texts are an attempt to bring this personal experience of living in capitalist society into contact with history and theory he's read. He writes anonymously for practical reasons but also on principle. Ideas are no one's property, and even original thinkers are only putting possibilities from the real world into words. The point is not to build up an authorial persona. Ideas or arguments shouldn't be judged on whether the author has or doesn't have academic, working-class, or militant credentials. The point is to try to learn from other people today and in the past, to recognize how things work today, so that we change them.

Lazo Ediciones is a group who write, translate, and publish communist, anarchist, and working-class texts in Spanish. Their members also participate in the Biblioteca y Archivo Alberto Ghirardo, Biblioteca La Caldera, the magazine *Cuadernos de Negación*, the newsletter *Oveja Negra*, the podcast *Temperamento*, and other projects. They are mainly located in the geographical region controlled by the Argentinian state.

Ben Kritikos is a writer, broadcaster, and worker based in Glasgow, UK. He cohosts the podcast *Spaghetti for Brains*, as well as writing and hosting the radio show *Red White Blues: An Anthology of America's Music* for Radio Buena Vida, a community radio station based in Glasgow. He's provided voiceover for film, radio, and audiobooks, including the audiobook version of *The Housing Monster*. He regularly publishes cultural histories through his newsletter *Spaghetti for Brains* and elsewhere.

Sean KB is a union construction worker in New York City and cohost of the popular communist podcast the *Antifada*.



SUBJECT CATEGORY

Communism, Labor Relations, Political Economy, Social Classes & Economic Disparity

PRICE

\$15.95

ISBN

979-8-88744-090-3

PAGE COUNT

176

SIZE

5.5 x 8.5

FORMAT

Paperback

PUBLICATION DATE

02/11/2025

US DISTRIBUTION

Publishers Group West

1-866-400-5351

www.pgw.com • ips@ingramcontent.com

CANADA DISTRIBUTION

Publishers Group Canada

1-800-663-5714

customerservice@raincoast.com

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