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Autore	Morrissey Suzanne
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Sommario/riassunto	This urban ethnography examines the relationship between urban residence and endemic poverty and health inequalities, particularly racial disparities in infant mortality in the United States. Starting from the everyday lives of women struggling to make ends meet, it represents an institutional ethnography of the WIC Program that identifies and explores how bureaucratic rigidity and hierarchy relate to personal decision-making in a context of pregnancy, parenting, and poverty.