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**Michelle Alexander**

# **THE NEW JIM CROW**

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THE DRUG WAR AND BLACKS

**Douglas Olena • August 16, 2020**

ZOOM

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**WE WILL PROCEED BY  
READING A FEW QUOTES  
AND ASKING A QUESTION**

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**THE WAR ON DRUGS IS IN  
FACT NOT ABOUT DRUGS  
AT ALL. IT IS A WAR  
AGAINST PEOPLE.**

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**“PROHIBITION GOES  
BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF  
REASON IN THAT IT  
ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL A  
MAN’S APPETITE BY  
LEGISLATION AND MAKES  
CRIMES OUT OF THINGS  
THAT ARE NOT CRIMES.”**

**Abraham Lincoln**

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**“A PROHIBITION LAW  
STRIKES A BLOW AT  
THE VERY PRINCIPLES  
UPON WHICH OUR  
GOVERNMENT WAS  
FOUNDED.”**

*Abraham Lincoln in Why Our Drug Laws Have Failed and What We Can Do About It p. 122*

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**“THE NIXON CAMPAIGN  
IN 1968, AND THE  
NIXON WHITE HOUSE  
AFTER THAT, HAD TWO  
ENEMIES: THE  
ANTIWAR LEFT AND  
BLACK PEOPLE...”**

**John Erlichman speaking to Dan Baum • Harpers Magazine • April 26, 2016**

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**“WE KNEW WE COULDN’T MAKE IT  
ILLEGAL TO BE EITHER AGAINST  
THE WAR OR BLACK, BUT BY  
GETTING THE PUBLIC TO  
ASSOCIATE THE HIPPIES WITH  
MARIJUANA AND BLACKS WITH  
HEROIN, AND THEN  
CRIMINALIZING BOTH HEAVILY,  
WE COULD DISRUPT THOSE  
COMMUNITIES...”**

John Erlichman speaking to Dan Baum • Harpers Magazine • April 26, 2016

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**“WE COULD ARREST  
THEIR LEADERS, RAID  
THEIR HOMES, BREAK  
UP THEIR MEETINGS,  
AND VILIFY THEM  
NIGHT AFTER NIGHT ON  
THE EVENING NEWS...”**

**John Erlichman speaking to Dan Baum • Harpers Magazine • April 26, 2016**



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**“DID WE KNOW WE  
WERE LYING ABOUT  
THE DRUGS? OF  
COURSE WE DID.”**

**John Erlichman speaking to Dan Baum • Harpers Magazine • April 26, 2016**

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**WHY SHOULD A  
CHRISTIAN BE OPPOSED  
TO THE WAR ON DRUGS?**

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# THE NEW JIM CROW

**Mass Incarceration  
in the Age of Colorblindness**

**2010**

**Michelle Alexander**



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# **THE NEW JIM CROW**

## **Chapters**

### **Introduction**

### **The Rebirth of Caste**

### **The Lockdown**

### **The Color of Justice**

### **The Cruel Hand**

### **The New Jim Crow**

### **The Fire This Time**

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# INTRODUCTION

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**“SOCIOLOGISTS HAVE FREQUENTLY OBSERVED THAT GOVERNMENTS USE PUNISHMENT PRIMARILY AS A TOOL OF SOCIAL CONTROL, AND THUS THE EXTENT OR SEVERITY OF PUNISHMENT IS OFTEN UNRELATED TO ACTUAL CRIME PATTERNS.”**

Introduction p 7

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**“LIKE JIM CROW (AND SLAVERY),  
MASS INCARCERATION OPERATES  
AS A TIGHTLY NETWORKED SYSTEM  
OF LAWS, POLICIES, CUSTOMS,  
AND INSTITUTIONS THAT OPERATE  
COLLECTIVELY TO ENSURE THE  
SUBORDINATE STATUS OF A GROUP  
DEFINED LARGELY BY RACE.”**

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**“RACIAL CASTE  
SYSTEMS DO NOT  
REQUIRE RACIAL  
HOSTILITY OR OVERT  
BIGOTRY TO THRIVE.”**

**Introduction p 14**

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**WHY SHOULD A CHRISTIAN BE  
OPPOSED TO INCARCERATION  
AS A MODE OF SOCIAL  
CONTROL?**

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# **THE REBIRTH OF CASTE**

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**RACIAL BRIBE:**

**“DELIBERATELY AND STRATEGICALLY, THE PLANTER CLASS EXTENDED SPECIAL PRIVILEGES TO POOR WHITES IN AN EFFORT TO DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN THEM AND BLACK SLAVES.”**

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**IN JIM CROW “YOU ARE KEPT APART  
THAT YOU MAY BE SEPARATELY  
FLEECE OF YOUR EARNINGS. YOU  
ARE MADE TO HATE EACH OTHER  
BECAUSE UPON THAT HATRED IS  
RESTED THE KEYSTONE OF THE  
ARCH OF FINANCIAL DESPOTISM  
THAT ENSLAVES YOU BOTH.”**

**Tom Watson in The Rebirth of Caste p 33**

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**“SEGREGATION LAWS WERE  
PROPOSED AS PART OF A  
DELIBERATE EFFORT TO  
DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN  
POOR WHITES AND  
AFRICAN AMERICANS.”**

**The Rebirth of Caste p 34**

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**SHOULD OUR FOCUS BE ON  
THE REASONS FOR THE  
RACIAL BRIBE RATHER THAN  
THE BRIBE ITSELF?**

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**WITH THE DEATH OF JIM  
CROW, "CONSERVATIVE  
WHITES BEGAN ... TO SEARCH  
FOR A NEW RACIAL ORDER  
THAT WOULD CONFORM TO  
THE NEEDS AND  
CONSTRAINTS OF THE TIME."**

**The Rebirth of Caste p 40**

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**mid '50s to late '60s**

**“CONSERVATIVES SYSTEMATICALLY  
AND STRATEGICALLY LINKED  
OPPOSITION TO CIVIL RIGHTS  
LEGISLATION TO CALLS FOR  
LAW AND ORDER.**

**...**

**CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE [OF MLK WAS  
REINSCRIPTED AS] A LEADING  
CAUSE OF CRIME.”**

**The Rebirth of Caste p 40-41**

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**“PITTING OF WHITES AND BLACKS  
... AGAINST EACH OTHER INTENSIFIED  
THE VIEW AMONG MANY WHITES THAT  
THE CONDITION OF LIFE FOR THE  
DISADVANTAGED—PARTICULARLY ...  
BLACKS—IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF  
THOSE AFFLICTED, AND NOT THE  
RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LARGER  
SOCIETY.”**

**The Rebirth of Caste p 47**

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**ARE MODERN CALLS FOR LAW  
AND ORDER DIFFERENT FROM  
THOSE OF THE '60S AND '70S?**

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**“REAGAN MASTERED  
'THE EXCISION OF THE  
LANGUAGE OF RACE  
FROM CONSERVATIVE  
PUBLIC DISCOURSE'”.**

**The Rebirth of Caste p 48**

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**“NUMEROUS PATHS WERE  
AVAILABLE TO US, AS A  
NATION, IN THE WAKE OF THE  
CRACK CRISIS, YET FOR  
REASONS TRACEABLE LARGELY  
TO RACIAL POLITICS AND FEAR  
MONGERING WE CHOSE WAR.”**

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**“THE LEVEL OF PUBLIC CONCERN ABOUT CRIME AND DRUGS WAS ONLY WEAKLY CORRELATED WITH ACTUAL CRIME RATES, BUT HIGHLY CORRELATED WITH POLITICAL INITIATIVES, CAMPAIGNS, AND PARTISAN APPEALS.”**

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**IS IT TIME NOW TO REEVALUATE  
THE REASONS FOR THE WAR ON  
DRUGS AND ABANDON IT WITH  
ALL ITS SYSTEMS?**

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