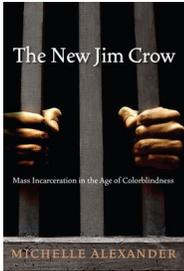


Books by the Stack



***The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander**

Challenging the notion that Barack Obama's election signaled an era of colorblindness, Michelle Alexander argues “we have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it.” By targeting black men through the War on Drugs, our criminal justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control.

Why you'll like it: *Prison-industrial complex. Well-researched. Concise.*

About the Author: A longtime civil rights advocate and litigator, Michelle Alexander won a 2005 Soros Justice Fellowship and now holds a joint appointment at the Moritz College of Law and the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at Ohio State University. Alexander served for several years as the director of the Racial Justice Project at the ACLU of Northern California, which spearheaded the national campaign against racial profiling. At the beginning of her career she served as a law clerk on the United States Supreme Court for Justice Harry Blackmun. She lives outside Columbus, Ohio.

Questions for Discussion

1. Why does the United States have the highest rate of incarceration in the world?
2. It costs \$55,000 a year to incarcerate a person for a year in New York State. Is this the way we want our society to allocate its resources?
3. Why are more African American males under the control of the criminal justice system now than were enslaved in 1850?
4. What is Michelle Alexander's main idea as expressed in the introduction?
5. What factors undermined the “Old” Jim Crow system?
6. Why have Civil Rights organizations not focused on or have been slow to focus on the issue of racial justice?
7. What are the myths and assumptions does the general public believe about the criminal justice system?

8. Compare the “Old Jim Crow” system to the “New Jim Crow” system. What similarities? What differences? Purposes? Methods?
9. What rights may be taken away as a result of a felony conviction?
10. What are the effects of mass incarceration on the communities which have high incarceration rates?
11. What aspects of the Drug War does Michelle Alexander say must be dismantled?
12. What prevents justice from being administered equally and fairly in the United States?



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