

Abstracts

Histories of Abolition, Critiques of Security

Brendan McQuade

The contemporary debate about abolition and its relation to wider anti-capitalist and anti-racist struggles can be read as reproducing the tired opposition between reform and revolution, between gradual incrementalism and immediate disruptive action. This false dichotomy can be resolved by returning the holistic and historical analysis of abolition democracy offered by W.E.B. Du Bois' in his classic work *Black Reconstruction*. Du Bois offers an alternative mandate for abolitionist praxis: one which highlights the interplay of disruptive direct action and incremental change within a historically informed understanding of a particular social struggle. Understood in these terms, abolition becomes a critically important and neglected component of the revolutionary tradition: Abolition is the foil of bourgeoisie security.

Rebranding Mass Incarceration: The Lippman Commission and Carceral Devolution in New York City

Zhandarka Kurti & Jarrod Shanahan

In 2017, after a yearlong study of the conditions on Rikers Island, the Independent Commission on New York City Criminal Justice and Incarceration Reform (the Lippman Commission) released its recommendations to close the last penal colony in the United States and replace it with a series of neighborhood-based jails and enhanced community supervision. The commission was spearheaded by former Court of Appeals Judge Jonathan Lippman in collaboration with nonprofits. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio pledged support to the plan. This article examines the Lippman Commission report and its recommendations to close Rikers Island as a contemporary case study in local decarceration and carceral devolution. We outline theories of decarceration and carceral devolution, highlight their centrality to the movement to close Rikers Island through a close reading of the Lippman Commission report, and conclude with reflections on what this change in New York City's carceral philosophy means for contemporary social justice movements.

Reproducing Disorder: The Effects of Broken Windows Policing on Homeless People with Mental Illness in San Francisco

Tony Sparks

In recent decades, cities have increasingly turned to law enforcement for the spatial management of the visibly poor. Commonly referred to as order-maintenance policing, this approach aims to remove undesirable or “disorderly” subjects from urban public space. Often understood as part of a broader punitive turn in urban governance, recent scholarship suggests that a purely punitive lens obscures how police may use the tactics of order maintenance to coerce the disordered and disorderly into rehabilitative programs. Using San Francisco as a case study, this article examines the impact of order-maintenance practices on the lives of unhoused people with mental illness and illustrates how these policing tactics reproduce the disorderly bodies they aim to remove.

You Have the Right to Remain Violent: Police Academy Curricula and the Facilitation of Police Overreach

Caitlin Lynch

State and municipal police academies in the United States are intended to provide cadets with the fundamental skills necessary for a career in law enforcement. However, an overwhelming amount of these instructional hours are devoted to preparing prospective police officers to wage war against the communities that they will soon serve, while neglecting topics that may help de-escalate or prevent a potentially violent encounter altogether. This emphasis on such strategies not only exaggerates the dangers associated with policing and contributes to a flawed understanding of the everyday happenings of police work, but it also normalizes the implementation of violent means to resolve conflict. This, in turn, attracts to the profession individuals with mentalities and skillsets consistent with causing harm and potentially discourages or outwardly excludes those who believe these procedures to be at odds with democratic policing.

“Do We Really Want to Go Down That Path?”: Abandoning Appalachia and the Elk River Chemical Spill

Stephen Young

The level of social exclusion in Appalachia continues to go unnoticed in the criminological literature. The West Virginia Elk River Chemical Spill symbolizes the extent of the broad, institutionalized classist and intra-racist structures existing in the region. Appalachia continues to face similar events as well as the continued use of the “white trash” label to ensure access to a cheap, exploitable labor force. This article contends that criminologists should think in terms of

the historical conditions and class structures of the internal colonialist model to understand how the continued discarding of this population perpetuates its exploitation and abandonment.

How Employers Steal from Employees: The Untold Story

Steven Bittle & Lauren Snider

This article critically examines wage theft by employers from employees. In addition to documenting how wage theft disproportionately affects marginalized workers, the article reveals how seldom these offenses are recognized as crimes and documents the normalization of wage theft through the neoliberal rhetoric that renders it unseen. Overall, we argue that wage theft extends far beyond the intentional, overt nonpayment of wages by atypical employers and encompasses many more insidious forms of stealing workers' time and wages. The article concludes with suggestions for approaching wage theft as an opportunity to actively resist neoliberal morality in all its (dis)guises.

Echoes of Empire: Excavating the Colonial Roots of Britain's "War on Gangs"

Jasbinder Nijjar

The entanglement between notions of Blackness and gangs in Britain suggests that Black people exhibit some supposed compulsion for criminality collectively, as well as individually. This commentary critiques the criminalization of (young) Black individuals as gang members and the corresponding racialization of antigang policing and punishment measures through Britain's history of colonial control and exploitation. I argue that the myth of collective Black criminality and the incorporation of clusters of Black individuals into an expanding prison labor market via joint enterprise relate to the criminalization and collective punishment of castes and tribes by the British colonial state in India. The resonance of Britain's destructive past in present-day antigang initiatives makes it even more necessary to abolish gang databases, to question the validity of the idea of "the gang," to review the convictions administered under joint enterprise, and to repeal the doctrine of common purpose itself.

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