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If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, Then it probably is Contemporary Colonization

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Introduction

Mass incarceration in America has become a normalized entity within the fiber of our understanding of society. It is important to study sociologically because it presents various social injustices and themes rooted in American society that sociologists have spent decades unpacking and making sense of. It covers conflict, power dynamics, incarceration, punishment in society, critical race theory and many other concepts that explain the social phenomena and its marginalization of the minority community. Social theorists such as Michel Foucault and Franz Fanon provide classic statements about incarceration, punishment, colonization, and decolonization and as such become the starting points of my analysis. It helps give insight to how mass incarceration doesn't only affect minorities while they are locked up but outside of prison both before and after and how their families and communities are affected as well. The large increase in the amount of people being imprisoned over about the last forty years is what gives rise to the term mass incarceration. The racial component to it is that most of the incarcerated people are minorities. How is it that in a country where people of color are the minority they make up a majority of the prison population? This illustrates what C Wright Mills would say to be a public issue and not just a private issue. According to Mills in 1959 when he released his theory on the sociological imagination, a public issue he defines as being a trouble of some sort that occurs to at least 30 percent of the population. What this means is that the imprisonment system of America is an issue that the government and people at large are supposed to fix. It isn't a trouble that happens on an individual basis with a minor occurrence rate but a public issue that affects millions of people. The number boomed into the millions as the privatization of prisons took shape. As more private companies bought prisons the mass

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incarceration rate increased. This parallel happened as a result of cheaper labor being a huge component of prisons. Getting prisoners to make products at a fraction of the cost that it would be over seas plus no over sea shipping cost is a win for companies. Any capitalist bottom line thinker would see this as a no brainer, legally increasing your profit margin tenfold is incredibly enticing, and however it fails to take into consideration the humanity of this basis. The notion of how this affects other peoples lives as rules and laws are brought into place to help get more workers, which are actually prisoners. Using the labor of oppressed people to fuel and drive a capitalist economy strikes an eerie resemblance to Colonization. Mass incarceration is a social injustice in American society that a careful sociological analysis with purpose has the ability to help rectify. Mass incarceration is the new age colonization of America; it oppresses the lives of millions of minorities to fuel the capitalist engine that drives the country. It is contemporary colonization; it just uses mass incarceration as its dog whistle name. My task in this thesis is two-fold. First I bring together classical and contemporary analyses of colonization, decolonization, mass incarceration, and the prison industrial complex. My goal is to then isolate the several dimensions or aspects of marginalization and exploitation that comprise these systems. Secondly, after isolating these dimensions I map out the many similarities and few differences in marginalization between historical colonization and contemporary mas incarceration

Colonization

As ships left ports to discover new lands with the notion of colonization and “bringing Christ” to foreign lands, there was always one overarching theme or goal, discoveries that would be profitable to their nations of origin. As these ships landed and found indigenous people living on these lands with various resources that could be benefitted off of the focus quickly became to take

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control of it. Colonization of these islands and the people who already inhabited quickly took a dark turn as the colonizers sought to get profit under any means necessary. This meant enslavement, murder, torture, stealing, and destruction of the land as well overall culture of the people. This made it easy for the colonizers to take everything they wanted and fulfill the main component of capitalism. Their blind and self-interested motivations of profit may have demonstrated an early look at what how capitalism would function. This unnamed form of capitalism normalized their practices because which is seen by how it allowed immoral injustices to occur overtly and widely across the land because everybody understood it as a by-product of helping ones country of origin. Essentially, it was a, this is how it is suppose to be, type of justification. The letters and messages being sent back and forth to the colonizing nation often times spoke about savages and uncivilized people that the colonizers were introducing to modern civilization and religion. These letters would be used to rationalize the need to do the practices and they did and to further gain support, usually these letters were accompanied with goods and profitable merchandise from these lands so it quickly and easily became acceptable. Profit pacified and justified.

Colonization's roots can be found in a careful analysis of capitalism. Although Karl Marx coined the term during the 18th century, well after the start of colonization, it still offers adaptable insight to colonization. Many of the functions and characteristics of capitalism were similarly displayed during colonization. Karl Marx and his classical theories spoke mainly to the evils of capitalism in society and proclaimed how it would create a society where few stood on the shoulders of many to be successful. He wrote about how a system of class struggle that would be created by capitalism and how the prioritization of commodity and profit would create an unfair and inhumane dynamic in society. For example in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels's, *"The Manifesto of Class*

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Struggle”, they theorize how under system of capitalism, self interest will rule and the haves will oppress the have not’s. One particular quote from *The Manifesto of Class Struggle* on page 35, that exemplified that notion of the theory is, “It [capitalism] has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his natural superiors, and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous cash payment” (Karl Marx 1848). This is highlighting how capitalism creates a dynamic in society where profit is priority and how it affects or hurts people is an after thought. It furthers a notion that man will dehumanize others to make profit and fulfill self interest because it is taught through that system that nothing else matters but profit. Morality and pride that prior made people treat each other better was now gone. What was once held on high no longer holds the same value in a profit focused society. It is with this sort of mindset that a system such as colonization or mass incarceration can be born into existence and cause the damages they do without many questioning its moral code and fighting to prevent it.

During colonization we began to see what Karl Marx was talking about: A notable focus and increase on human labor and the profit it brings. The fact of the times was that human labor became a commodity which was integral to incurring and maximizing profits. The raw goods and materials these colonized lands had to offer were bountiful with plenty of potential to boost ones economy. These nations just needed a comparable labor force to cultivate the goods and make them as profitable as possible. The best way was to increase the labor force. As the commodification of human labor became more of a fact of society and what was believed to be needed to make more profit, the easier it became to dehumanize the colonized people and enslaved them. We see a form of capitalisms roots deep in the foundation of what colonization became. During colonization, the enslavement, torture and force used upon people was deemed ok in the name of profit. The, *Manifesto*

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization of *Class Struggle*, helps articulate the negatives of class struggles to the minorities, which runs parallel with who gets victimized in colonization. To reiterate the main point again, this is a society where prioritizing how well you reach the bottom line and maximize profits and the values of commodities is dangerous to people. Especially when it uses people as the labor, which then gets commoditized and used as a part of the number crunch. Labor is profitable and the push for profitability under capitalism unfortunately means somebody gets put and kept at the bottom. The trick here is that although capitalism prides itself on the “free labor contract” you are not a slave but you sell your labor power for a wage for a limited amount of time, most of these systems of “free labor” had a “coerced labor”.

Colonization started as nations sailed across the seas and they began to run into islands in what we now call the Caribbean, they would explore these islands and begin to observe and interact with the island and its indigenous people. The interaction was based on an idea of sharing their religion, culture, and goods with the people they would find while also discovering new lands and goods to bring back as well. However, as they spent more time realizing how profitable the goods were and how in their comparative eyes, “savage” or “uncivilized” the indigenous people were, an opportunity was seen to which they could just colonize the island in the name of their countries and enslave the indigenous people. The focus of getting and harvesting goods became keener and their need for human labor became more and more necessary as production rates were increased. Thus the commodification of labor started to take precedent and mass enslavement began to become rampant and necessary in their opinion. Colonizers began enslaving indigenous people under various pretenses, claiming the enslaved weren't civil anyway and that European decent had a special

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hierarchy over them because that is how god deemed it. We see what Albert Memmi calls in his book, *The Colonizer and The Colonized*, The introduction of paternalism. He says,

“A paternalist is one who wants to stretch racism and inequality father- once admitted. It is, if you like, a charitable racism-which is not thereby less skillful nor less profitable... If he increases his wages, if his wife looks after the colonized, these are gifts and never duties. If he recognized duties he would have to admit that the colonized have rights. But is clear from everything above that he has no duties and the colonized have no rights”(Memmi 1972 page 76).

This quote makes aware the dynamic of objectification and othering that the colonizers did to justify the callous practice of enslavement. This othering was done to make people accept that the Europeans had superiority over indigenoussness people that made enslavement acceptable. Colonization may have also been the first time we start to see early notions of manifest destiny although it wasn't officially coined until 1845. Manifest destiny is the belief that a group of people was destined by God to have dominion over all other racial groups and spread democracy and capitalism across the continent (History.com). Colonization now is a booming industry for profit at this point in history, and the notions of bringing religion and coexisting has rapidly faded. The only original purposes that remained at this point were those to civilize and profit.

The process of civilizing the indigenous people however wasn't an act to help advise them but instead to break them, destroy their culture, and for all intensive purposes, make sure they understood exactly what they were being forced to do. This period of colonization had a detrimental and horrid affect on the bodies of the millions of enslaved people as they endured various forms of torture, hard labor, punishment, rape and beatings as lessons. The use of these practices was to teach the enslaved that they had to be obedient and value the importance of their job or else there would be harsh

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization consequences to pay. This all played a role in the negative impact colonization also had to the psyche of the colonized. The colonized individuals were forced to psychologically accept the fact that they were slaves and that the value of their humanity was diminished. As Memmi put it, “In order for that legitimacy to be complete, it is not enough for the colonized to be a slave, he must also accept this role”(Memmi Page 89) which means legitimate colonization is predicated off the notion of acceptance by the oppressed. This means the colonized must learn the culture of his oppressor and adopt it because those who adopt it best were treated better or rather weren't treated as bad as those who fought it. The acceptance of a colonized fate helped create an accepting dynamic in many regards.

According to Tatum (1997), social psychology is important in explaining individual and group behavior in a social context, which reiterates the notion about the “colonized” accepting their fate. Human behavior is influenced by human interaction and the social contexts in which social interactions take place helps form human identity. Factors that make individuals and groups of people behave in certain ways in presence of others, their feelings, thoughts, beliefs, intentions, expectations, and ideals are important in understanding how society-group-individual nexus is structured. One social scientist named Charles Horton Cooley in 1902 wrote on what he called the looking glass self which was an explanation upon identity. Charles Cooley writes, “I am not who you think I am, I am not who I think I am, I am who I think you think I am”. This quote explains how our self-identity is infringed upon how those around us see us. Cultural superiority is another major reason for existence of racial inequality and this dynamic was bred all throughout colonization. In a society where the white community considers and perceives itself as superior to the black community, racial inequality may be unavoidable. The white community may relate with the black community on the basis of

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racial prejudices. The stigma that gets associated with race is problematic in what it creates for black identity in children. Adolescent children from the black community grappling with questions of self-identity found out that the white community perceives and thinks of them as being inferior members of the society. This structural racism in the society translates to racial inequality. The children from the black community assimilate the racial identity propagated to them. They start grouping themselves on the basis of race, and develop repulsive racial relations in contrast to white children. The existence of individual and group identity based on racial prejudices leads to differences in identity and moral careers.

The instigation of these differences set a goal for people of color to try to reach in order to assimilate into their colonized society. Many of the colonized were faced with a decision to either welcome wholeheartedly the change and assimilate to European culture or fight it. By choosing to assimilate to the other culture, one would be leaving behind their own culture and portion of their people who don't take to the change as easily while others struggle and are forcefully punished physically or killed. We begin to see code switching and other terms highlighted in Frantz Fanon's book, *Black Skin, White Masks*, which highlights the phenomenon of how black people are forced to change who they are during interactions with white people. Fundamentally, its about the oppressed having to follow the standard codes and norms created and policed by the oppressor, however in the case of colonization, its black people putting on a façade to assimilate normally with white people (Fanon 1968). The policing government of society reifies the need for black skin to wear this white mask. What that means is that the every day interactions of the colonized are under scrutiny of the colonizer and if at any point the colonized act different than expected they are subject to be treated poorly. The colonized are taught their way of life is wrong and if they adopt the colonizer's way life

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can be better. This theory ties in with Tatum and shows the psychological burden that existed on an everyday basis. The black is taught that in order for you to fit in or be happy you must be able to put on the white mask.

Even moving out of colonization, there was still a huge disparity in the treatment of the indigenous people and the damage to their culture and identity had already been done with no attempt to fix or restore it by the colonizers. First and foremost, Frantz Fanon defined colonization in his own words by describing it as the unconditional, absolute, total, and seamless substitution of one culture of man by another (Fanon 1961). This aspect of his findings is important because it gives a working definition of what colonization does and how it operates which as we will see is quite similar to one of the many functions of mass incarceration it. which is not too far off from, mass incarceration. The other aspect as Fanon points out is the complicated power dynamic of the colonizer over the colonized: "It is the colonist who fabricated and continues to fabricate the colonized subject. The colonist derives his validity, i.e., his wealth, from the colonial system"(Fanon 1961:283) This is another important part of his theory because it highlights the power dynamic that the colonizer has over the colonized. The ability of the colonizer to dictate what has meaning and give validity to what is important within a community gives them power over societal norms. This power is dangerous in its ability to destroy identity, community, and culture. Frantz Fanon's theories from his writing on decolonization highlight how in the aftermath of colonization it becomes the colonized's responsibility to fix the issues of colonization while at the same time navigating through the new world order created by the colonizing government. The colonizer gets to dictate the validity of what it means to be a part of the decolonized society. This is dangerous because it destroys communities and it puts the onus of the responsibility of 'repair' onto the colonize and deflects

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blame and attention on the colonizer. If people are clamoring to do what the colonizer sets as the norm although it may be destructive to their own communities it creates a cycle that leaves them to be oppressed and only live and work in the lower tier parts of their life. The cycle then becomes complete and self-fulfilling; as the elites continued to get rich from the resources while the people who were producing these commodities with their labor never stand to improve their own position. Frantz Fanon wrote one particular example of relevant research in his writing on colonization and the after affects titled, *Decolonizing, National Culture, and the Negro Intellectual*. His analysis is relevant and important because it specifically identifies the effects on the 'Negro,' which can be used to directly relate to the effects of mass incarceration has on the contemporary African American community. Frantz Fanon's writing was important because it focused on decolonization as well as colonization and details fully explained its affects. Jafari Sinclair Allen and Ryan Cecil Jobson's article, *The Decolonizing Generation: (Race and) Theory in Anthropology since the Eighties*, makes many of the same points of this paper. They write about what they call the decolonizing generation, the generation of colonized people tasked with finding their way after colonization. It focuses on the effects of colonization on black people in America and also writes about the effects of mass incarceration. Their analysis identifies that decolonization is a burden for people of color and that this burden puts at risk the retention of certain aspects of their culture or as they say in text the "African Diaspora"(Allen, Jobson 2016). Decolonization was a shift from the matter of fact oppressive state which existed under slavery and forceful physical practices to a more hidden into society and de jure type of oppression. After the years and years of oppression in the various islands and lands, systems of policing and managing were put in place that helped set up a government, society and infrastructure. The understood rules and norms of society that were created by the colonizer are now

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interpreted by the colonized. Now the colonized are forced to make sense of their own situation and what it now means to be a citizen in their native land although they have always been there. With this occurring, failure to fit in as a citizen of these colonized lands also mean that you would be subject to being punished with prison or be in a low caste of society with minimal benefits. This dynamic created fractures now within the colonized communities as individuals would have to make a choice again about them. In the book, *Political Theories of Decolonization*, Margaret Kohn and Keally McBride noted that,

“Many figures both internalized and resisted European values that described their people as having no value. Less widely understood is the political side of this paradox. Colonial ideas and institutions that were designed to enforce subordination and exploitation also structured the postcolonial state. This meant that the postcolonial state was a divided state”(Kohn and McBride 2011:5).

Kohn and McBride in their research and careful political analysis also identified the divisive dynamic that existed post-colonialism which made it hard for many prior colonized to fit in. The colonized now in often cases, needed to work the jobs prioritized by society in order for the colonized to live in their homes. They also had to pay taxes but for many colonized they had no other skills except those they learned during their enslavement so they were forced to resort back to some the same fields and places they had just left in order to make money to pay off land taxes and buy goods to support themselves and families.

This account has described several different dimensions of marginalization, power, exploitation, in a system typically thought to be “in the past.” Something that we have ‘overcome” something that can never happen again. Before we congratulate ourselves for our

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‘progress’ we need to take a close look at a contemporary system of confinement and subjugations and examine the extent to which the dimensions of ‘historical colonization’ exist in contemporary incarceration.

Mass Incarceration

Americans today live in a society bathed in the culture of meritocracy or the notion of the American Dream. The American dream commonly refers to this idea that no matter where you sit or stand on the ladder of socioeconomic status, if you work hard enough anything is truly possible. It is the belief that hard work will always pay dividends regardless of your background or beliefs. This very idea of meritocracy is socialized through the institutions of education and media, which frequently leads to families also reiterating this to their kids to perpetuate the dream as alive and true. It is perhaps because of the deep seated nature of this ‘dream’ that can look back in our past and denounce previous systems of injustice but see them as ‘long gone’ this belief also prevents us from seeing similar system of injustice in the present as also unacceptable. Instead we root them in individual level explanations and not systemic causes, it is perhaps because of the deep seated nature of this ‘dream’ that can look back in our past and denounce previous systems of injustice but see them as ‘long gone’ this belief also prevents us from seeing similar system of injustice in the present as also unacceptable. Instead we root them in individual level explanations and not systemic causes. It is built upon the notion that in the eyes of the law, media, and others, all races, religions, and income levels are equally respected and not discriminated against. This is a false assumption, equal opportunity and justice isn’t as clear-cut as the illusionist American Dream makes it out to be. In America there are various opportunity structures that load the dice for some groups of people, while

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization putting others at a disadvantage. An opportunity structure defines the features, components, and characteristics of organizations and large scale institutions that affect individuals' life chances. The disadvantages for minority people to navigate through these opportunity structures was compounded and further as the nation with through reconstruction then Jim Crow before moving into the formations of ghettos through redlining. Social scientist have come up with many explanations for the class standing of people who are in the current lower caste of the socio economic ladder and some explanations involve or allude to opportunity structures but not all do. There are countless opportunity structures that could be taken into account however; one of the most destructive one of present day is the current system of mass incarceration.

Mass incarceration hasn't always been the way in which punishment has worked in the United States. Incarceration in America has transformed into the beast it currently is start around the middle and end of the civil rights movement. Prior to the civil rights movement punishment America had a very different dynamic to it. Our current views of modern punishment came under the pretense of advancing humanity from what use to be barbaric practices. Prior to incarceration many enlightened societies practiced torture and execution as their idea of punishment. The idea of torture and execution was barbaric in practice. In the name of progress, it raised the question of is this sort of violence as a response to violence ethical? How different is the state from the criminal if this is how they respond to injustice (Foucault 81-82)? At the end of 18th century, we see a shift of how punishment is done by European nations. Countries began defining criminal deeds more illicitly to match the specific crimes better. This

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization strategy of penal practice began with an intention of reform. As Foucault states on the bottom of page 81 through 82, on his book, *Discipline & Punish*,

“Throughout the eighteenth century... one sees the emergence of a new strategy for the exercise of the power to punish. And ‘reform’, in the strict sense, as it was formulated in the theories of law or as it was outlined in the various projects, was the political or philosophical resumption of this strategy, with its primary objectives: to make of the punishment and repression of illegalities a regular function, coextensive with society; not to punish less, but to punish better; to punish with an attenuated severity perhaps, but in order to punish with more universality and necessity; to insert the power to punish more deeply into the social body”(Foucault 1995)

This quotation highlights the ideology behind Carceral punishment and its original purpose. The idea of punishments reform wasn't to punish the individual just for committing a crime but to punish an individual comparatively to the crime they commit. Simply put, the idea was to always ensure the punishment matched the crime. The Also it highlights an urge to punish in a way that reforms the individual, to punish in a way that affects the “social body” as Foucault said. The philosophical understanding of this redefining strategy is that punishment is what ideally laid the foundation of incarceration around the world. It is understood that as a citizen of society you have accepted the laws of the society and within those laws you agree to be punished if you break these agreed laws. What this does as Foucault outlines is makes it so that, “ The criminal appears a as juridical paradoxical being. He has broken the pact, he is therefore the enemy of society as a whole, but he participates in the punishment that is practiced upon him”(Foucault 90). The idea this invokes is that punishment in itself is now a civilized practice

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization and demonstration of society remaining civil and the perpetrator redeeming themselves by also participating in the punishment proposed by the state to prove eventually they can be back in society: The idea that law – the signifier of a civilized society – needs punishment to prove its civility. It is this idea of reform that is vital because it demonstrates humanity and progressiveness. Foucault notes another scholar's work on punishment to which he points out why punishment of death is bad but punishment similar to slavery is worst. Foucault's noted that, "Beccaria illustrated this paradox in the punishment that he proposed to replace the death sentence- perpetual slavery. Is this not a physically more cruel punishment than death? One must choose the means that will leave the most lasting impression on the minds of the people, and the least cruel on the body of the criminal" (Beccaria, 87)"(Foucault 95). Again, this is a reinforcement of the notion that the development of punishment in its modern sense is to ensure the safety of society but also to deter criminals without destroying their humanity or body. Nathaniel Hawthorne talked about prison as a necessary evil of civilized society, calling it "the black flower of civilized society" because he too like Michel Foucault and Cesare Beccaria recognized that crime helps define and shape society and progress of the society is illustrated in its punishment (Gottschalk 2016). Punishment in society is a necessary evil that we need to progress, however punishment must always be under the pretense of reform and education to better society and its people, never to take advantage of and manipulate the people who practice it.

Foucault also outlines what he says as several different rules and practices that must and should be upheld to ensure the sanctity of punishment within its new progressive ideas. The first one he notes is, "the rule of minimum quantity" which suggests creating a punishment that

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization makes the recognizable advantages of committing a crime belittled compared to the punishment of the crime (Foucault 94). Not so that the punishment greatly dwarfs the crime but makes committing it less desirable. Secondly he notes, “the rule of sufficient ideality”, which focuses on the perception the punishment leaves on the minds of the perpetrator and society (94). Essentially pointing out for punishment to be effective society must unilaterally understand and fear the repercussion of becoming criminals without needing to try to be a criminal. This shares parallel significance with rule three which is, “the rule of lateral effects”, ensuring that those who haven’t committed crimes are still affected by the punishment in a way that deters them from committing it (Foucault 95). Rule four is “the rule of perfect certainty” which dictates that crimes must have previously outlined and defined punishments so that somebody who breaks them knows what to expect and the punishment isn’t altered (Foucault 95). This means that regardless of class, race, sexuality, when a certain crime is committed by somebody, it should always have the same caliber/type of punishment so its perfectly clear what is expected. In order to further reinforce that rule and its motives, he outlines his final rule which he notes as “the rule of optimal specification”, which just reifies that all crimes must be defined, classified and collected into groups and categories that they are hard set to avoid confusion and or abuse of the enlightened punishment strategies (Foucault 98). The goal of these rules is to keep intact the idea of punishment being necessary but also must remain humane, ethical, and meaningful. These rules aim to help avoid the manipulation of people and hold together the original sense of what incarceration was created to do. It also works to normalize punishment because by normalization in society you can get most groups to agree with whatever practices the elites deem as common. Normalization helps in the function of social control for the elites of those

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who set the rules of society. Foucault notes in some of his earlier writing how normalization was used to refer to the changing nature of power and subjectivity in modern societies (Valocchi 2016). Recalling the idea that many societies borne of colonization have laws that purport freedom and equality but those societies ensure that the colonized subjects have little or no access to it.

Shifting years later into more recent history, incarceration in America had a very different tone and identity than it currently does. Currently United States holds 5% of the worlds population yet, America holds 25% of the worlds incarcerated population due to its rate of 714 imprisoned every 100,000 (Gottschalk 1). Another interesting dynamic to this is the facts that black men who make up 13% of the population in America make up 50% of the incarcerated population (DuVernay 2016). At the end of the 1960's and start of the 70's we see the early formation of what is today's mass incarceration state. The 60's were a time heavily riddled with the civil rights movement and a push for black men and women to be treated equally in the eyes of all. The movement that had its most historical moments during this decade helped shaped the landscape of America today. Keeping in mind the civil rights movement that often temporarily imprisoned thousands of blacks we see a shift in the political tone following the 1969 election. President Richard Nixon took office and began what he called his law and order campaign. President Nixon's push for bringing order to the streets of America by imposing what he felt to be necessary laws turned out to be the first step in the creation of mass incarceration. President began to shape public policy radically in his campaign to return order in the America through laws. One of the aspects of the laws he changed was how certain

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization crimes were punished and seen in the eyes of the law. We have seen harsher sentencing and a push for crimes that were once misdemeanors to now become felonies, which land people in prison (Gottschalk 2006). The new push for law and order polices was different than any other tough on crime campaigns ever witnessed before which is why this can be considered the birth of mass incarceration. Laws were being made that intensified how certain crimes looked in the eyes of the law, which is a contradiction to one of the rules Foucault pointed out. The rule of optimal specification was to make it so that laws couldn't be manipulating and changed in their consequences at one persons discretion. Another policy change we find that takes place during the Nixon campaign is the militarization of the police and their means of handling drug crimes. As Nixon saw it, the war on drugs was priority because it was public enemy number one. When Nixon delivered a speech to congress in 1970 siting his worries and concerns about drug abuse in America, it motivated congress to pass the laws he deemed necessary to ushering in his law and order state. The first law passed was the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970, which was used to outline what drugs could lead to addiction, and then created regulations around them (Gottschalk). We see soon after the creation of the Drug Enforcement Administration, which begins to penalize the use of marijuana and other drugs like crack with very severe penalties. Also much later, the development of the Comprehensive Crime Control (CCC) Act of 1984 which made getting bail and the process of getting arrested very different. When the CCC Act of 1984, pretrial detention for drug offenses were permitted, and if the judge felt that individual was a potential risk to the community they could send them straight to detention without bail or parole (Wisotsky 1990:120). Also this policy raised the punishment of drug possession to a maximum of 20 years for one kilo of cocaine or more and

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the fine and bail to have maximums of \$250,000 (Wisotsky). While these policies are being circulated and created, there is an undercurrent of racism going on in the Nixon campaign that actually fueled a lot of his motivation behind his law and order campaign. John Ehrlichman was one of President Nixon's assistants who worked on domestic affairs but had full access to briefings about policies being created. In an interview John Ehrlichman had with Dan Baum for Harper's magazine he said,

“The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people. You understand what I'm saying? 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. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we lying about the drugs? Of course we did.”(DuVernay 2015).

This quote is important because it shows again violations in the rules of punishment that were in mind when humanity developed Carceral punishment. These violations defile humanity and oppress very specific groups of people in a manner that does harm to the body and soul. This quote also identifies an aspect of mass incarceration that is similar to colonization. It highlights the deep-rooted racism and manipulation of a group of people. Going back to the policies being developed, we also begin to see the militarization of the police force across the country and their narcotic units. The police, under President Nixon's policy changes, started to become a very different force than ever before seen in America. As they were weaponized and given

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization armored with military grade technology it subtly created a dynamic and expectation of what President Nixon was asking for. By militarizing the police, it gives them the notion of that they are expected to use these tools to enforce the laws of the drug policies being enacted, but these weapons serve as means to strike fear in the hearts of society. The criminals being pursued would be afraid as well as the citizens who didn't partake in drugs but saw firsthand or on TV the mobilization of police in neighborhoods.

The war on drugs has been the primary source fueling mass incarceration's growth. The incarceration of drug offenders as outlined by the Nixon campaign and the Drug Enforcement Administration, criminalized drugs in a very particular manner. At the turn of the 70's we see the war on drugs begin to take a racial shape to it as more and more people of color began to get imprisoned. The War on drugs quickly made it clear as to the fact it was actually a war on minorities, as outlined in the quote earlier from John Ehrlichman. The heavy criminalization of drugs had a two-fold affect. It increased sentences for the offense and also altered the way society recognized drugs. Drugs not only became legally wrong but it morally took on a negative persona. This served to help dehumanize or strip away any empathy that citizens of society may feel for the people being afflicted or their families. This is relevant because the most notable drug policy that marginalized a group of people marginalized people of color in poor neighborhoods. The heavy criminalization of crack cocaine in the 80's was profound because punishment of crack in comparison to its pure form, cocaine, was astronomically disproportionate. The state made it a 100:1 ratio punishment although crack and cocaine or essentially the same drug. In fact the only drastic difference between the two is price and ability

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization to make it. Crack could be made easier and cheaper so it was found more predominately in minority and poor neighborhoods.

This was also compounded when during the Clinton campaign, he introduced laws that elongated sentences and further marginalized drug users. In 1994 he signed a crime bill that created the three strikes provision and mandated life sentences for criminals convicted of a violent felony after two or more prior convictions, even if its only a drug crime. This was detrimental to the community as this not only feed into increasing the rate of mass incarceration but it also increased the detainment rate of the incarcerated. People were getting longer sentences and a lot of the time simply for drug use. Years later Clinton recanted about his policy and said essentially that it was unjust. During an interview with CNN's Christiane Amanpour Clinton said,

“The problem is the way it was written and implemented is we cast too wide a net and we had too many people in prison. And we wound up...putting so many people in prison that there wasn't enough money left to educate them, train them for new jobs and increase the chances when they came out so they could live productive lives"(Diamond 2015).

This information paired with the quote draws out two important themes. One shows the expansion of an already marginalizing system by developing another layer to its systematic form of oppression. Two, this quote highlights how in retrospect President Clinton recognizes the negative and marginalizing impact the policy he signed off on created.

What makes the policies introduced by Nixon's campaign and Clinton's campaign discriminatory is that their practices meant that the people predominately being put away and

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization seen as moral deviants were black people in America. In fact Dimitri A. Bogazianos' book, *5 Grams: Crack Cocaine, Rap Music, and the War on Drugs*, He points out that in recent history we found this sentencing policy to be contradictory. He writes how, "the Sentencing Commission- the very body created by Congress to implement rational, empirically based sentencing guidelines- has detailed the irrational punishment of crack, stating, in the words of the 2007 report, that 'the 100-to-1 drug quantity ratio significantly undermines the various congressional objectives set forth in the Sentencing Reform Act'"(Bogazianos 2012:16). This part highlights how similarly to colonization, years later the governing power that put the injustice in place finally admits to the injustice of its policy. This also serves to explain in part how prisons began to be so rapidly filled and why it was mainly people of color filling prisons, although people of color make up such a small percentage of America's population. The stigma that became associated with drug users who were imprisoned had a dangerous effect on society. With the law making the use of crack so punishable, and the militarization of the police, it became easy of the media to have stories that got the attention of America. Also due to the criminalization of crack it made it so that the police were mainly only in minority neighborhoods arresting people of color in their armor and high powered weapons as the media recorded every second of it given its own commentary. This helped drive further the dehumanization of black people. This establishes the black people are deviants narrative, which serves to not make the public not feel sympathy for the faces they see on TV and in many ways begin to fear them.

With all of the dehumanization and fear being practiced in the media and amongst the police toward people of color, many also had to start to deal with a new hell. The hell of living

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life behind bars and what that meant for them. In conducting interviews with several people of color who have spent time incarcerated for a range of crimes but mainly drug charges, it becomes clear just how traumatizing life in prison is. On paper, a daily prison routine seems very straight forward and almost like any given day for anybody. According to the North Carolina Prison system, the daily routine for their inmates are as follows, wake up at 6 am, breakfast at 7 am, work at 8 am, 30 minutes of lunch at 11am followed by more work until 4 pm when they get a hour of yard time. Dinner from 5- 5:30 then free time to go to religious meetings or AA groups until about 8 pm when they are expected back in their dorms. The day ends with lights out at 11 pm until the next day to start the process all over again (North Carolina Department of Public Safety). What are not included in this are the thousands of negative interactions and micro aggressions that the inmates go through day after day between each other, correction officers, and administration of the job. All three of these things have a very dominating affect on one's mental health. Also this schedule highlights how much of their day is spent working in comparison to how much of their time is allotted for activities that help reform and rehab. The inmates here are asked to work 5-6 hours a day but are only given a one hour to go to anger management or narcotic anonymous sessions to better themselves.

In conducting interviews with people who served time in imprisonment and have been released, it becomes apparent the toll prisons take on an individual. Mass incarceration breeds the breaking down of a person's pride and integrity, much like how colonization worked to demean and break down the individuals being colonized. In doing research on Mass Incarceration I conducted interviews with people who were incarcerated within the last 30 years and also a correction officer who then became incarcerated. In one interview conducted

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during the research of this paper, and interviewee was asked “Why did you join a gang while being incarcerated?” to which he gave a response that highlights the harsher reality of prisons that don’t come out on paper of their descriptions or on the schedule. He said, “ I joined a gang in prison to survive and because I had to, if I didn’t, one of the other gangs would have tried to get me to join and if I didn’t the would probably have tried to kill me, inmates in prison are very racialized and gang territorial because the correction officers don’t do anything help stop it”(Nathan). Compounded on this is the fact that prison often times will add years to somebodies sentence if they believe them to be affiliated with a violent gang. This very theme creates a cyclical relationship that in one-way traps hundreds of thousands of people in prisons. People are entering prisons immediately feeling a sense of danger and in order to survive some are pushed to join gangs if they aren’t already in one. Just based on your color or prior affiliations you maybe a target to some groups so then to protect yourself and survive you join gang. However, once you join a gang for some prisons, you run the risk of getting years added to your sentence for doing so according to a correction officer who worked at Rikers Island in New York City (Timothy). The prison systems neglect to properly rectify this issue is inhumane in practice. It puts inmates in a position where they are stuck between a rock and a hard place. This added time being imprisoned also serves in the interest of the private companies that own the prison and make money off of prison labor. All while they are serving this extra time, it is damaging to their mental health and status and leaves many who get out to begin suffering from “prison induced PTSD that the system offers no help to deal with” according to one interviewee (Fausto). Living in a confined space, with barely any free will or free time is damaging to an individual. The United States has a punishment system that no one

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization would knowingly have built from the ground up. It is often unjust, it is unduly severe and it does enormous damage to the lives of black Americans. - Michael Tonry, 1995 (Todd R. Clear and Natasha A. Frost 2014:17). I asked all of the interviewees, “Do you feel your time in Prison reformed you? Was it beneficial to helping you being able to rejoin society?” All of the interviewees in one way or another said no. They all unanimously felt the prisons they were in had very little structure to helping them. One interviewee said, “Prisons have the ability to help, I mean shit some of the guards want to help because they are like us and come from a similar upbringing but the system doesn’t allow it. We don’t get mandated anger management time or workshops to deal with PTSD, we need a session on how to transition back into society and the modern technology but they don’t even teach us that and a lot of us leave unprepared and ill equipped to handle the real world like I was when I got out after my ten years”(Fausto). Mass Incarceration has failed to help people; it has failed to reform citizens and rehabilitate them back into society and failed to help society as a whole. One part of America benefits at the inhuman expense of another being marginalized, oppressed, and destroyed.

The privatization of prisons America is another contributing factor to the boom of mass incarceration but also another part of punishment in America that violates more of the rules Foucault pointed out. What the privatization of prison means is the buying of state prisons by privately owned and governed companies that then run these prisons on their own agenda. For example, Wal-Mart, Wholefoods, Wendy’s, Starbucks, McDonalds, Sprint, Verizon, Victoria Secret are just a few companies that have either purchased prisons in the United States or are invested in them. This is because U.S. law has allowed it and it allows them to then use prison labor to make their products for much cheaper than they could anywhere else. Why this is

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization significant is because by having privately owned companies buy prisons and run them, the motivation and agenda for running the prison is different than it would be if the government ran them. By owning prisons, these companies have the ability to profit off of the stripping away of human rights of these prisoners essentially. An inmate may work all day and the prison only has to pay them about a dollar for their labor where as citizen's not imprisoned state-to-state minimum wage law protects, with the lowest minimum wage being \$12. The profit margin for these companies are tenfold thanks to the prison industrial system so to further help them some companies have paired with a group called The American Legislative Exchange Council also known as ALEC. According to them,

“The American Legislative Exchange Council is America’s largest nonpartisan, voluntary membership organization of state legislators dedicated too the principles of limited government, free markets and federalism. Comprised of nearly one-quarter of the country’s state legislators and stakeholders from across the policy spectrum, ALEC members represent more than 60 million Americans and provide jobs to more than 30 million people in the United States” (ALEC)

What ALEC actually does is write laws for companies such as Wal-Mart or Verizon that when helps maximize their profit by either increasing prison terms, changing felony and misdemeanor offences and altering the rules of conduct for a prison. Once the private company pays ALEC to write the law they then give it to one of the politicians that is apart of ALEC to push the law to congress or whomever it needs to get approved (DuVernay 2016). The politicians join ALEC because it offers an opportunity for them to get funding for their reelection campaigns or financial backing for other initiatives they maybe working on in their

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization district. This is exploitation of the market, legal system, and at worst, humanity. By changing the view of prisons to be less about reform and more about profit margins and bottom line statistics, it commodifies the lives of the inmates. They are no longer individuals apart of society that needs help reforming to assimilate back in society by now they are means to a profit for companies. They are no longer individuals with names but rather a function with a number. This sort of commodification of inmates in prison is no different then the commodification of slaves during colonization. Slaves weren't given names always and if they had a name the slave owners and overseers didn't care for it because they only cared for their profitability. The privatization of prisons is another part of mass incarceration that breeds inhumanity on the level of colonization.

There is another detrimental affect of mass incarceration that occurs outside of the prisons far away in most cases from its walls. While predominately men and women of color are being incarcerated at high rates due to a faulty system, the families and communities they leave behind taken a divesting hit as well which often times creates a cycle of poverty and/or a cycle of incarceration. The cycle of poverty refers to the theory that when a family is in an impoverished state due to a lack of opportunities due to school and job disadvantages, each generation will most likely remain in the economic social class unless an outside figure intervenes. The cycle of incarceration refers to the process by which people in poor communities typically are afflicted by incarceration in the family that leads to mitigating circumstances that lead to re imprisonment or younger generations to follow suit and evitable end up in prison as well. During one of the interviews, one interviewee noted that, "when my father came back from prison he told me everything about the experience and what he went

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization through but not in a way to scare me or tell a story but to teach and prepare me for when I end up there, like he knew there was a good chance I would one day be in jail just because of the fact we were growing up in a poor situation”(Fausto). The father’s identification of the marginalities of his community is profound and disturbing. It highlights his awareness of the disadvantage as well as the acceptance of his fate and what he perceives to be his son’s fate which isn’t how punishment in America is suppose to work. The idea of just assuming that jail is in your future simply because of your finances is a mistreatment of society and oppressive. Todd Clear notes in his book, *How Mass Incarceration Makes Disadvantaged Neighborhoods Worse*, “As a rule, poor people go to prison and others do not. This pattern is as old as prison itself. What it really means is that imprisonment is a kind of social welfare policy”(Clear 2007:61). How do we justify punishment if people are being punished for being poor? How do we justify punishment if it means the have-nots are punished and are forced to work for the haves of society to cyclically continue to have? The idea of imprisonment is synonymous with minority neighborhoods.

Mass incarceration takes a considerable toll on children and their families. The mass incarceration of hundreds of thousands of fathers in America has an effect on the communities and it’s glaring how widespread it is. During some of the research Todd Clear did for his book, *Imprisoning Communities*, his group of researchers walked through the Florida Panhandle community knocking on doors to see the dynamic of families and their homes. Todd Clear noted that, “It becomes a theme in almost every house we visit. Mothers, children, television, noise... and no fathers”(Clear 2007:95). This is important because fatherless homes have an affect on neighborhoods. Todd Clear even notes that families are what he calls “the building

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blocks of a healthy society, and family functioning is the key ingredient in child development” which highlights the importance of a father being around but also the cyclical nature it serves for him not being around. The cyclical nature of incarceration in poor neighborhoods of America is evident and rampant in communities as young men between the ages of 25-35 are incarcerated for the first time usually leaving behind young children who are affected by this. On an intellectual level, Todd Clear found that the incarceration of the mother produces a significant worsening of reading scores and the child’s behavior and when the father is incarcerated, it found that children had a higher rate of developing anti social behavior later in life (Clear 101) Affected not only emotionally and psychologically but also in a physical monetary way. The kids lack an emotional support system while also living in a house with one less person to provide for them. Single parented households supporting children have an effect on the kids as they grow up watching their single parent struggle to make ends meet and provide them with the necessities while seeing on TV and other forms of media all the extra things there are in life but they cant afford to do. A lot of times children will start to do things that are deemed criminal because the crimes are a means of quick cash, which helps them, support their family. Crimes such as stealing or selling drugs to make quick cash are common in poor neighborhoods. However, with the intense penalization of drugs the children now soon end up in prison like their parents and the cycle continues, destroying families, generations, and communities.

The millions of men and women who serve time in prisons then come home to a whole new set of worries and troubles to deal with. For example, the ability for an ex-convict to get employed after serving jail time is incredibly diminished. Many city jobs don’t allow ex-

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convicts to work for them, which eliminate a conglomerate of available positions right there. Also many jobs in private sectors have on their employment applications a part that asks if the applicant is an ex-felon or not. By checking yes many jobs use this as a primary deciding factor to not hire employees. Another factor is that after time in prison, technology has made so many advances that jobs are often based in technology and the inability for somebody to know how to use it disqualifies them as a candidate. The prisons don't offer technology literacy classes catered to an inmates time in prison to allow them an opportunity to get back on their in society and in a modern era run by technology this is another step back for many. One interviewee pointed this out and said, " It was shitty trying to get back home and seeing all this future looking technology and not understanding it. The prison should offer a speed course on new technology before releasing us so that we can fit in. I'm still trying to learn how to use a smart phone that's why I wont buy one" (Fausto). The inability to work in society after being imprisoned makes it incredibly hard for a lot of people to assimilate back into society. Ex cons are often hit with a series of new bills they immediately have to be responsible for. A lot of times the ex felons come out of prison with a parole officer, which they have to pay for. They also sometimes are required to have an ankle bracelet, which they also must pay for out of their own pocket. Not to mention if their situation also includes a need for them pay fines or child support, they need to start making money soon and in great amounts. What often happens is due to most jobs no longer being on the table for them just because of the time they served in prison, they after to take lower tier jobs that most people don't want because the jobs are either too dangerous, tough, or doesn't pay enough for the amount of work asked. Even within that, not all minority communities that ex-convicts move back into have these opportunities so they

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization are forced to begin selling drugs or stealing in order to avoid going back to jail. The irony of the situation is also what dictates the dynamic of incarceration that fuels it being cyclical. This cyclical nature isn't fair and in many ways again defeats the originally proposed purpose of incarceration. Clearly modern day mass incarceration isn't about reform, its about profit and marginalization. The millions of people being returned back to prison show the disparity of the true intentions of mass incarceration and its true affect. One of the interviewees noted that,

“When I had served my 6 months for drug possession I came back and got hit with a list of new issues that nobody had told me about. I was paying child support for the time I missed while in prison, I had to pay for my parole officer and the random drug test he would make me get and the shit I had to do for money sucked. Nobody would hire to work except grocery or food stores that needed either a cook in the back or a janitor. Honestly, it was hard to not just start selling drugs because it would be so much easier and safer in many ways, I felt I had a better chance of avoiding prison by selling drugs for money then doing it under the conventional sense they expected”(Lateek).

This quote highlights a broken system, how can we punish people for a crime and make their solution to staying out of trouble much harder than them choosing a solution that makes them a repeat offender. Opportunities to better yourself and reform your life aren't available during the end of your time incarcerated which creates a system where the opportunities that are available for you are greatly reduced.

Part of the problem that makes it so hard for people to assimilate back into society not only on an economically level but also on an everyday interactional level is the stigma that is

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization involved with the label of ex-convict. Erving Goffman, a sociologist that wrote specifically on stigma in his book, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, identifies an important part of stigmas role in society and how it affects people. Goffman wrote that stigma is what happened to people who are unable to conform to the standards that society has deemed normal, it is a label that disqualifies you from what he calls full social acceptance whether it be, drug addicts, prostitutes, ex-mental patients or in this case ex-convicts (Goffman 1974). Stigma works like a tattoo in today's society, once you have been placed with a label such as those, you forever have it. The term ex-con is a stigmatized word that creates thoughts in people's minds of untrustworthy or violent individuals who are deviants of society. It's this stigma that also feeds into the job marginalization they face. However, looking back again at the root cause of many imprisoned people it is because the of drug possession and the illegality of these drugs changed as a result of the Nixon campaign. Many ex-convicts aren't violent in nature but are treated as they are.

Conclusion

The importance of identifying that mass incarceration is contemporary colonization is that it gives insight to see the evil and inhumanity that is mass incarceration. We understand in history that the process of colonization in this country has a dark and bloody track record that damaged and affected the lives and cultures of millions. Colonization was an entity in this country that helped build its foundation but at the expense of the souls and integrity of millions of men, women and children. It was an entity entirely backed and supported by the ideals capitalism prioritized in society. Capitalism made the notions that took place in colonization acceptable. It made it acceptable for men to come to a foreign land to gather, resources to

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promote self-interest, which was profit. These resources being fruits, animals, land, and most notably people and the labor they could offer. Furthermore this push to better profit created the under any means necessary mentality that lead to the pillaging and destroying of peoples and cultures to gain. Occupation of these foreign lands for profit was encouraged and even as decolonization began prioritization was still priority. The colonizers created a system that put them in power and gave them the ability to dictate what the culture was and what success was. As Frantz Fanon said, they defined the validity of citizenship was during decolonization and this was key to still profiting and gaining advantage. Mass incarceration makes its way into the conversation because it is very similar. The policies created to redefine what a criminal offense was helped create a dynamic that allowed mass incarceration to be accepted by most people and allow for the treatment of the convicted to not be second guessed. It's this acceptance that then allowed the privatization of incarceration, which was used to gain profits for the companies involved. This push for the human commodity that prisons provided created an, any means necessary mindset for corporations to maximize profits. This lead to them influencing policy and buying prisons themselves to ensure they could influence and affect the numbers they got and who they got. This destroys minority communities because policy has been created in way to target them the highest. Also similarly to decolonization, when you are released from prison your access to jobs is greatly reduced which is an indication of your validity in society. Your ability to work in the labor force validates your role in society and if after prison your ability to get a job is greatly diminished you're forced to take the lower tier jobs nobody typically wants but corporations do need people to take. Seeing exactly how dehumanizing colonization was a means for people to denounce it and identify it as an evil, this

If it looks like it, moves like it, and sounds like it, then it probably is Contemporary Colonization comparison is valuable for people to see how evil mass incarceration is because it causes some of the same negative effects as colonization. The souls of minority people are the expense here in both cases which. Michelle Alexander remarks in her book,

“When we pull back the curtain and take a look at what our so-called colorblind society creates without affirmative action, we see a familiar social, political, and economic structure- the structure of racial caste. When those behind bars are taken into account, America’s institutions continue to create nearly as much racial inequality as existed during Jim Crow”(Alexander 256).

There is great disparity and marginalization that goes on today in the prison system which runs very parallel to colonization. That is why I theorize that mass incarceration is contemporary colonization and it is not just important but necessary to restructure the system we have in America. Our correctional facilities do not properly correct and reintegrate individuals into society. They fail to do so because they have no interest in doing so. Their interest lays heavily in profit the same as colonization was about finding new landing and spreading the word of Christ but more about profit. Colonization and Incarceration in America was rooted in profit and marginalization by the commodification and objectification of a group of people. By deeming a group of people more commodity then person you create a dynamic were you are bound to have inhumane practices created and repeated. Colonization became about enslavement for profit much like incarceration today. Knowing everything about them, how different really is mass incarceration from colonization? How is it not contemporary colonization?

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This careful analysis of mass incarceration juxtaposed with contemporary colonization identifies the similarities of the two distinctly in order to show why it is important to see them as a similar entity. What is offered by this careful analysis is all the striking similarities both colonization and incarceration hold. They both have themes of: expropriation of resources, control over the bodies of others, expropriation of culture, lack of freedom of movement and expression of ones self or culture, psychic control (manipulation of citizenship), dehumanization, colonizer creates power structure's on the backs of the confinement/slavery/subjugation of the colonized/the imprisoned, justification of dehumanization lies in stigma of the savage, heathen, violent ex felon and drugs users in society, and the colonizer destroying what the colonized then have to repair.

The necessity to recognize what is at stake for our future and the humanity of a group of people and how the marginalization of one group truly affects all is important, as we have seen it be a reoccurring theme through out history. We saw the aftermath of colonization and what it did to this country, we saw various catastrophic events and wars, and genocides and inhumane practices take place on a large scale, which later affected those who didn't choose to help because they thought they were immune. We see how our failure to rectify slavery and abolish it early on led to one of the bloodiest wars this country has ever seen. We saw how our negligence to join WWII because we weren't originally affected but knew the atrocities being committed to the people of Europe under the denomination of nudism came back to hunt us as pearl harbor was bombed. We are setting out self's up to relive history. We our effectively repeating out past by watching the souls of an other be tortured and mothering them as a means to not get involved. Our normalization of atrocities is grotesque, however a lot of times its is

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hegemonically created and never questioned until after all is said and done. The purpose of analysis intricately this matter is that we cannot allow for mass incarceration to not be viewed in the same light as these other events in history that we all understand to be dark and bloody segments of history that shouldn't have happened and we will never let happen again. By accepting the current system and not doing anything to alter it we are accounting the dehumanization of minorities the same way it was normalized during slavery. We are witnessing quite literally the commodification of human labor as a means to maximize profit, just like we did with slavery. We are seeing private companies buy prisons for the intention of money and profit and not for reform and properly punishing individual and rectifying wrongs. Similarly to how colonization quickly lost its purpose of spreading religion and knowledge with gaining some wealth for their parent nations to becoming a booming trade of human labor and enslavement. Not rectifying the wrong that is mass incarceration doesn't just leave in contempt and hurt the minority community; you are putting at stake the souls of the people humanity are choosing to forget about. Failure to change a marginalizing system teaches the oppressed group to hate whom they are born as and attempt to be more like the other. This puts at stake not only the souls of black folk but also the souls of society and the morality of an era.

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