

Kelly Lytle Hernández. *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017. Pp. 312. Hardcover. \$28.00.

In her second monograph, UCLA Professor of History, African American Studies, and Urban Planning, Kelly Lytle Hernández opens with a bold claim, that incarceration is elimination. This is the premise in which she examines how Los Angeles became the most carceral city in the most carceral country in the world through the incarceration of those deemed racial, political, or cultural threats to the city's elite. Explicitly framing her study around the need to dismantle the United States' system of mass incarceration, Hernández explores the settler-colonialist foundation of L.A.'s criminal justice system. In this well-research and compelling social history, Hernández argues that from the Spanish invasion in 1769 through the Watts Uprising two hundred years later, settlers and white elites in Los Angeles have utilized mass incarceration as a form of elimination, exclusion, and enslavement against racially excluded communities.

City of Inmates analyzes the history of incarceration in Los Angeles from its founding in 1771 through the Watts Uprising in 1965. The book is organized chronologically, moving through different eras of L.A.'s carceral system by focusing on those who were targeted for caging. The first chapter highlights how Spanish, Mexican, and American city leaders developed eliminatory policies of incarceration against the indigenous Tongva residents of the area. As the city developed and expanded, other groups faced incarceration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including white vagrants, Chinese migrants, Mexican *magonistas* (anarchists) and laborers, and the city's Black community. Though they each represented distinct threats to the elite constructions of the racial, cultural, and economic make-up of the growing metropolis, each of these communities faced carceral policies of elimination through a growing criminal justice system that attempted to deny their rights to exist in public space. Hernández's most compelling contribution to the field is her intersectional analysis of how different communities in L.A.'s developing criminal justice system have fallen under a shared project of removal.

Hernández's engagement with the archive is another strength of this study. Despite the destruction or concealment of the vast majority of the LAPD's historical records, the breadth of sources Hernández utilizes confirms her assertion that mass incarceration in Los Angeles is a wide-ranging social institution. Building on newspaper articles, elite correspondence, and records of labor and political organizations, Hernández also highlights what she calls the "rebel archive" of songs, speeches, manifestos, and handbills created by those targeted by and resisting the carceral system. These rebel sources confront and subvert the violence against marginalized communities that an archive manufactured by those in power maintains. Hernández ends her monograph with twenty pages of a modern rebel archive, providing a platform for those continuing to protest incarceration and displacement. She shares speeches, poems, and songs about their fight against police brutality, neighborhood gentrification, and deportations, providing an intentional and powerful challenge to the archive and taking a critical eye to how historical knowledge is created, maintained, and legitimized.

Occasionally, Hernández's work falls short of its great ambitions. Likely due to an even more severe dearth of sources, her analysis of the Tongva maintains a top-down perspective that does not feature indigenous perspectives or resistance to their incarceration beyond brief discussions of uprisings and rebellions. Thus, the first chapter provides an excellent establishment of her theoretical framework on carceral exclusion and elimination, but lacks engagement with her archival intentions by leaving out the voices of the Tongva who faced eliminatory policies. Her examination of Mexican anarchist revolutionary Ricardo Flores Magón and his followers has the opposite problem, in that it provides an insightful example of the rebel archive but engages less with the central thesis of the book. While incarcerated in Los Angeles for

his brash criticisms of Porfirio Diaz in the early twentieth century, Magón continued to write and organize a transnational revolutionary movement. His letters are an excellent source base, illustrating how some of those who were targeted for incarcerated actively resisted the systems that attempted to eliminate them. However, Hernandez's extensive background on Magón and his movement ultimately distracts from her wider claims. In addition, the book's exclusion of Japanese American incarceration during World War II leaves a noticeable gap in the history of racialized exclusion through incarceration.

Hernández's study provides a well-researched, insightful, and innovative approach to the history of incarceration. Though focusing on Los Angeles, her analysis provides local examples of national trends of how the U.S. carceral state became intertwined with settler-colonialism, immigration control, race, labor, and class, and how targeted communities have resisted the attempts to exclude or eliminate them from public space. This book is a must-read for any student of Los Angeles or mass incarceration, and will also be insightful for scholars with interests in indigenous studies, urban history, and the American West.

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