
Coramae Richey Mann and Marjorie S. Katz have edited a very interesting book about race, ethnicity, crime, and the criminal justice system in America today. Their work is divided into five parts, each consisting of scholarly essays that offer numerous examples of the ways in which American Indians, African Americans, Latino/a, Americans and Asian Americans experience oppression and domination. These five parts demonstrate how popular perceptions of crime and criminality are racialized and gendered.


of black participation in street crime and in the illegal drug market, they also contrive stereotypical images of African Americans as criminals.

Part III, “The Color Brown,” contains Luis J. Rodriguez’s essay “The Color of Skin is the Color of Crime,” Diego O. Castor’s essay “Hot Blood and Easy Virtue: Mass Media and the Making of Racist Latino/a Stereotypes,” Alberto G. Mata’s essay “Immigrant Bashing and Nativist Political Movements,” and Edward L. Portillos’ essay “Latinos, Gangs and Drugs.” Rodriguez notes that the present day media’s portrayal of Latinos and crime is distorted. Castro indicates that television, newspapers and weekly news magazines in the United States are agents of social authority, reporting news in such a way that intentionally perpetuates racist Latino/a stereotypes. Mata examines the use of stereotypes by politicians to scapegoat Latinos in order to win elections. Portillos points out that Latinos and Latinas encounter predicaments with extreme police monitoring and informal police profiles that target people with dark skin, and with a lack of appropriate court interpreters.

Part IV, “The Color of Yellow,” contains Karen Joe Laidler’s essay “Senator Sir, Meet Susie Wong and the Inscrutable Fu Manchu,” Thomas K. Nakayama’s essay “Framing Asian Americans,” Bong Hwan Kim’s essay “Asian Americans and the Black-White Paradigms,” and Taiping Ho’s essay “Vice Crimes and Asian Americans.” Laidler argues that it is important to move beyond the Asian American stereotypes (that is, the model minority group without any social problems or the slick, violent gangster or the erotic, submissive woman) and see the realities of Asian American life. Nakayama discusses the stereotyping of Asian Americans by the media. Kim indicates that the Korean-African American conflict in Los Angeles is an outcome of these two ethnic minorities being made to compete for scarce resources. Taiping Ho points out that the American criminal justice system tends to deal with crimes against Asian Americans inappropriately.

Part V, “The Invisible Color White,” consists of Peggy McIntosh’s essay “White Privilege, Color, and Crime: A Personal Account,” Jody Miller and Peter Levin’s essay “The Caucasian Evasion: Victims, Exceptions, and Defenders of the Faith,” Jerome Miller’s “The Politics of Race and Crime,” and Mark S. Hamm’s “The Laundering of White Crime.” McIntosh lists 62 privileges in which she experienced daily for being white that are not experienced by African Americans. Miller and Levin examine media stereotyping of whites and crime (that is, an overemphasis by the media viewing whites as crime victims). Miller discusses the stereotyping of blacks and Latinos as criminals by politicians. Hamm indicates that white Americans, through law and culture, have produced a situation whereby white American violence has become imageless (that is, white American violence appears to be non-existent).