


The Political Roots of Racial Tracking in American Criminal Justice


By *Nina M. Moore*



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The race problem in the American criminal justice system persists because we enable it. The tendency of liberals to point a finger at law enforcement, racial conservatives, the War on Drugs, is misguided. Black as well as white voters, Democrat as much as Republican lawmakers, President Obama as much as Reagan, both Congress and the Supreme Court alike; all are implicated. We all are 'The Man'. Whether the problem is defined in terms of blacks' overrepresentation in prisons or in terms of the disproportional use of deadly police force against blacks, not enough of us demand that something be done. The Political Roots of Racial Tracking in American Criminal Justice is the story of how the race problem in criminal justice is continually enabled in the national crime policy process, and why.

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Editorial Review

Review

"American criminal justice policies and practices systematically treat black people differently - worse than other people - and obstruct their full, equal and untrammelled participation in American life. The problems are neither unknown nor insoluble but go unacknowledged and unaddressed in mainstream American politics. Nina Moore compellingly explains how and why that has happened."

Michael Tonry, McKnight Presidential Professor in Criminal Law and Policy, University of Minnesota

"Imagine Richard Wright as an academic writing *Native Son* - full of statistics and theories - but at heart always returning to a murder. Author Nina Moore's childhood friend is the victim. Her adult work as a professor is figuring out what happened and why it is still happening."

Juan Williams, Fox News political analyst, author of *Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary and Eyes on the Prize*

"Moore offers a broad indictment of racism in criminal justice, reaching beyond the biases of police, prosecutors, and criminal-court judges. She shows how a pervasive tendency to blame blacks for the problems they face encourages legislative and public indifference to reforming a system that channels African Americans toward harsher punishment than whites. This detailed account argues that we must challenge punitive public attitudes and legislative shortsightedness, as well as actors within the criminal-justice system, if we are ever to arrive at a more even-handed approach."

Doris Marie Provine, Professor Emerita, School of Social Transformation, Arizona State University

About the Author

Nina M. Moore is a political science professor at Colgate University. She was recently named in *The Princeton Review's* The Best 300 Professors in the United States. Her research, teaching, and writing focus on racial inequality, public policy, and governance processes. Moore was appointed by Governor David Patterson to a four-year term on the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct (2009-13) and by the New York state senate to the Advisory Council on Underage Alcohol Consumption and Youth Substance Abuse (2010-present). She is the author of *Governing Race: Policy, Process, and the Politics of Race*.

Users Review

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