

## Chapter 4 “Fear” Leslie Alexander and Michelle Alexander

101. The author rehearses several well-known police brutality culminating with the George Floyd murder. The authors also reference the police’s violence against the mostly White protestors following the George Floyd murder. In contrast, police brought minimal manpower to contain the January 6th violence against the US capital.

White people revere white people’s yearning for freedom, and they vilify the same aspiration when espoused by Blacks—this is the theme of this essay.

This pattern developed in the US during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The authors reflect on the principle, articulated in the Declaration of Independence, that it is the duty of people to cast off any government that did not honor the value and freedom of all. Ever since Americans have realized that there was a coming rendezvous with destiny as long as Blacks were enslaved or oppressed. America’s obsession with policing, imprisonment is driven by this dynamic.

Black people have been viewed as inherently in need of monitoring and supervision. Hence, the slave codes and Jim Crow.

The slave patrol was the first police force. Slave patrols invaded Black cabins for contraband. Policing in schools is reminiscent of this tradition.

The [Stono Rebellion](#).

105. The Stono Rebellion 1739 resulted in the Negro Act of 1740. These were laws governing owned persons. This then put the entire community in the service of supervising Blacks. This also placed White people in position of authority over every Black person.

The South Carolina slave code became the template for other colonies and continued for a century. Similar laws were enacted for the management of enslaved people considerably fewer in number, in the northern colonies. Again, these laws granted every White person sweeping authority over any enslaved person. In turn these laws persisted after British rule.

The Haiti rebellion sent a chill through the ranks of White people in North America. The author revisits the horrors of sugar cultivation, resulting often in early deaths for enslaved people. Enslaved Africans far outnumbered their White enslavers and overlords

107. The Haiti slave rebellion happened during Geo Washington’s presidency. After 1791, there was a sweeping crackdown.

108. Enslavers were authorized to cross state lines in pursuit of runaway slaves. The Haiti revolution did indeed inspire other slave populations to demand freedom and rights.

John Adams moved to guard against slave rebellion. Enslaved people in America saw themselves as connected with enslaved people throughout North and South America

109. Haiti became a sovereign nation in 1803. The rebels had managed to defeat Napoleon's army.

110. A sovereign nation rising from slavery was a Black dream and White nightmare. All of America's slave revolts were inspired by Haiti.

German Coast Rebellion 1811 Louisiana

Nat Turner Rebellion 1831 Virginia Turner himself was eventually lynched. White vigilantes roamed around while Turner was at large.

Book: [Hadden: Slave Patrols](#)

111. By 1837, the slave patrol in Charlestown, SC reached 100 men who captured fugitives, prevented rebellions. What's strange is that similar enforcement was enacted in the North, with the purpose of keeping even free Blacks in their place. All of this was done through legislation.

By 1861, the start of the Civil War, a pattern of continual supervision and surveillance of Black people had been established.

112. White people feared reprisals by Blacks after they were able to walk off the plantations and had access to arms.

The Civil War brought the collapse of the racialized Southern social order. The whole framework was based on racial separation and regimentation. War equalized Whites and Blacks.

113. Southerners employed a range of weapons and measures to restore Southern hierarchy. The Black codes followed.

114. Whites had quashed Black dreams of freedom and equality pretty much completely by the end of Reconstruction

Among the measures used to suppress Blacks:

Poll taxes

Literary tests

Vigilante violence

Terrorism

### The reestablishment of White political control

1. Wilmington, NC, Whites reacted to growing Black power to reassert Black initiatives
2. Whites held rally, burned black neighborhoods and unveiled a White Declaration of Independence.

### Police Departments

1. Consisted of KKK and former slave patrollers
2. Used curfews, vagrancy laws
3. The Klan was semi-legit and could murder people.

### Jim Crow

1. Between 1877 and 1950 4000 lynchings
2. The Great Migration—White mob violence was in the North too
3. St. Louis Massacre 1917—100 Blacks killed
  - a. Entailed multiple lynchings
  - b. Burning of homes
4. Tulsa Massacre
  - a. White mob of 2000
  - b. Mob razed Greenwood district where Black businesses flourished. 35 blocks burned
  - c. 300 people killed
  - d. 10000 Black homeless people resulted.
5. What was attacked was Black enterprise and success. Nothing frightened White people more than Blacks yearning to be free.

### p. 115 Civil Rights Movement

1. A fresh wave of White vigilante violence attacked Blacks in Little Rock, Boston, Chicago, and New Orleans. These blacks were protesting vestiges of Jim Crow restrictions.
2. The FBI targeted leaders such as MLK, Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael
3. [COINTELPRO](#) – under J. Edgar Hoover infiltrated and suppressed Black organizations
4. Even murder was carried out by officials
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### End of Civil Rights Movement

1. MLK assassinated 1968; Riots followed
2. 2000 uprisings between May 1968 – 1972
3. [America on Fire](#) Elizabeth Hinton
4. Most violence triggered by routine police violence
5. White mob violence is seen as political; Black rioting has traditionally been cast as criminal, deviant.

Excursus: I wonder which group, Blacks or Whites, have perpetrated more violence.

6. [Kerner Commission](#) – created by LBJ, to study violence in Detroit and Newark.
7. Concluded that comprehensive poverty, police violence sparked much unrest
8. Whites mostly rejected the Kerner commission findings.

p. 118 9. LBJ at least partially understood why Blacks were so unsettled.

## The War on Drugs and Mass Incarceration

1. Together with funding slash in education, drug treatment, housing
2. No of imprisoned multiplied 5 x in 40 years
3. Getting tough on crime is said to be what Black people wanted
4. Civil Rights organizations have resisted mass incarceration
5. [1994 Crime Bill](#) was draconian
6. Stop and Frisk is reminiscent of the old slave patrols
7. The foregoing is the endless repeat of the American impulse to suppress Black people's flourishing. There should be no surprise that there has been such a reaction following Obama's election
8. Things have probably gotten worse since the Kerner commission report
9. The racially mixed character of the George Floyd protests is a sign of hope.

## Summary Chapter 4 "Fear" Leslie Alexander and Michelle Alexander

This chapter successfully traces the characteristic American impulse to suppress any Black energy to be free, equal, and flourishing. White Americans have tended to respond to Black flourishing with policing laws and often violence. This began with the colonial slave patrols, which inaugurated the practice of restricting African-descent people beyond the limitations of their status as property. By this device, Blacks were not merely people caught in the trap of chattel slavery, but essentially lesser humans positioned beneath Whites. All White people had an implicit right to supervise and assume a superior social stance above Blacks. The Civil War brought an end to the Southern social framework, which secured White Supremacy at the expense of Black citizens. But beginning with Reconstruction, Whites worked vigorously to reestablish America's determined resistance to Black flourishing. This was done through voter suppression, racialized policing, Jim Crow, the KKK and 4000 lynchings. Several massive massacres, legal countermeasures undertaken during the Civil Rights Era, and mass incarceration. The chapter, aptly titled simply, "fear" traces a thread that runs through America's history, which is the official violence directed at Black people in order to keep them securely invisible and locked in low caste status.