

Are Prisons Obsolete?

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With her characteristic brilliance, grace and radical audacity, Angela Y. Davis has put the case for the latest abolition movement in American life: the abolition of the prison. As she quite correctly notes, American life is replete with abolition movements, and when they were engaged in these struggles, their chances of success seemed almost unthinkable. For generations of Americans, the abolition of slavery was sheerest illusion. Similarly, the entrenched system of racial segregation seemed to last forever, and generations lived in the midst of the practice, with few predicting its passage from custom. The brutal, exploitative (dare one say lucrative?) convict-lease system that succeeded formal slavery reaped millions to southern jurisdictions (and untold miseries for tens of thousands of men, and women). Few predicted its passing from the American penal landscape. Davis expertly argues how social movements transformed these social, political and cultural institutions, and made such practices untenable.

In *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, Professor Davis seeks to illustrate that the time for the prison is approaching an end. She argues forthrightly for "decarceration", and argues for the transformation of the society as a whole.

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标签

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评论

radical imagination

好吧，其实这个问题我还是没想明白，又一本UMN课堂reading

“We would not be looking for prisonlike substitutes for the prison...Rather, positing decarceration as our overarching strategy, we would try to envision a continuum of alternatives to imprisonment— a justice system based on reparation and reconciliation rather than retribution and vengeance.” ---Prison abolition means social reformation.

监狱的存在太根深蒂固了以至于人们无法想象没有监狱的存在。究竟是为什么人们认为剥夺了犯罪分子的人身自由，把他们关到监狱里监狱外的人就能更安全呢？监狱是用来安置破坏了犯法分子的，但大部分人在一生中都可能偷偷犯过法，那谁被抓进监狱的存在很大程度上就是种族主义和阶级主义的了。监禁的私有化让罪犯和奴隶没什么差别，是没有工会、没有保障、没有人身自由和尊严的工作机器了。男人犯罪被认为是犯错误了，女人犯罪被认为是疯了。把因为杀害家暴丈夫的女性抓进监狱是在变相默许和庇护男权。不要想着改革监狱，目标应该是废除。唯有建立一个资源分配平等、人人平等的社会才有可能做到。或许学校是一个导管，什么时候不发达的社区里面的学校里暴力不再发生了，才标志着社会进步可能发生了

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