



Mass Incarceration and the Politics of Exclusion

AMH 3930-4 | Spring 2021

T/Th 9:45–11 a.m. (*synchronous*)

Professor Paul M. Renfro

This course examines the phenomenon of punishment in the United States, focusing specifically on the emergence of mass incarceration since the 1960s and 1970s. How did 2.3 million Americans wind up behind bars? How did nearly one million Americans end up on sex offender registries? What sorts of behaviors and identity markers—whether sexual, racial, or otherwise—have subjected certain populations to punishment? What has such punishment looked like at various points in US history? Why (and for how long) have some activists sought to defund the police and abolish jails and prisons? This course explores these and other questions, moving in rough chronological order from 1945 through the present.