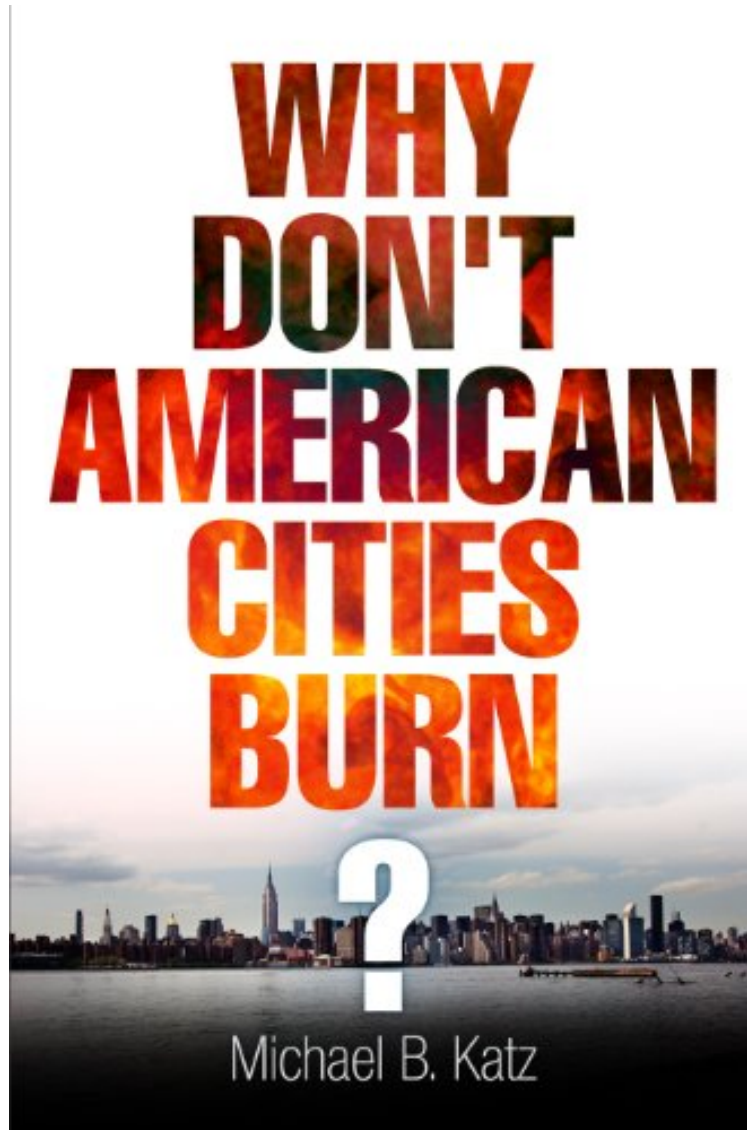


(Download pdf) Why Don't American Cities Burn? (The City in the Twenty-First Century)

## Why Don't American Cities Burn? (The City in the Twenty-First Century)

*Michael B. Katz*

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**Michael B. Katz : Why Don't American Cities Burn? (The City in the Twenty-First Century)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Why Don't American Cities Burn? (The City in the Twenty-First Century):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The disintegration of the African American quest for freedom and justiceBy Jim CrooksWritten from the perspective of an historian who lived through the "burning" years of the civil

rights movement and its immediate aftermath, Katz asks why, in the light of little recent progress and some back sliding, haven't minorities rebelled as they did in the 1960s and 70s? His answers are insightful: a portion of the African American community has become middle class moving to the suburbs, becoming consumers like their neighbors. Many have been co-opted into the new political and governmental establishments becoming part of the status quo. A large minority are imprisoned or otherwise under the surveillance of the criminal justice system. The remaining impoverished 25 percent have lost their leadership and have no voice. Discrimination continues in schools, jobs, health care, law enforcement, but no one seems to care. The victims are powerless. They are forgotten by the religious and political leaders, and others of the earlier era. And thus they turn on one another rather than against the unjust system.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Marwa MoazGood sociological perspective

At 1:27 on the morning of August 4, 2005, Herbert Manes fatally stabbed Robert Monroe, known as Shorty, in a dispute over five dollars. It was a horrific yet mundane incident for the poor, heavily African American neighborhood of North Philadelphia one of seven homicides to occur in the city that day and yet not make the major newspapers. For Michael B. Katz, an urban historian and a juror on the murder trial, the story of Manes and Shorty exemplified the marginalization, social isolation, and indifference that plague American cities. Introduced by the gripping narrative of this murder and its circumstances, *Why Don't American Cities Burn?* charts the emergence of the urban forms that underlie such events. Katz traces the collision of urban transformation with the rightward-moving social politics of late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century America. He shows how the bifurcation of black social structures produced a new African American inequality and traces the shift from images of a pathological black "underclass" to praise of the entrepreneurial poor who take advantage of new technologies of poverty work to find the beginning of the path to the middle class. He explores the reasons American cities since the early 1970s have remained relatively free of collective violence while black men in bleak inner-city neighborhoods have turned their rage inward on one another rather than on the agents and symbols of a culture and political economy that exclude them. The book ends with a meditation on how the political left and right have come to believe that urban transformation is inevitably one of failure and decline abetted by the response of government to deindustrialization, poverty, and race. How, Katz asks, can we construct a new narrative that acknowledges the dark side of urban history even as it demonstrates the capacity of government to address the problems of cities and their residents? How can we create a politics of modest hope?