

Welch

Punishment in America

Social Control and the Ironies of Imprisonment

"Michael Welch's book is an invitation to think. It is an invitation to grow intellectually and critically, as a consumer of crime policy and an observer of the American scene. Written by a scholar who has dedicated his work to uncovering the hidden ironies of formal crime policy, this is a collection of essays of depth and significance. Those who read it will be challenged, and those who engage with the challenges contained within these pages will have their views of the realities of penal policy changed: deepened, and made more honest, more complete. More true." --from the Foreword by Todd R. Clear, Florida State University Punishment in America offers readers a critical examination of the so-called back end of the criminal justice system, namely, incarceration. The book integrates various levels of analysis ranging from the macrosociological aspects of punishment to the meso (organizational) and micro (individual) dimensions of imprisonment. The overarching themes of Punishment in America are social control and the ironic effects of incarceration. In an effort to reduce crime, the criminal justice system ironically produces various self-defeating measures. Moreover, these pitfalls in current correctional policy and practice which neglect fundamental social inequality merely compound the problem of crime.

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