



POLICY PRIMER

Crime, Punishment, and Justice

August 2021

General and History

Alexander, Michelle. 2010. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: New Press.

California Research Bureau HV9950 .A437 2010

"As the United States celebrates the nation's 'triumph over race' with the election of Barack Obama, the majority of young black men in major American cities are locked behind bars or have been labeled felons for life. Although Jim Crow laws have been wiped off the books, an astounding percentage of the African American community remains trapped in a subordinate status, much like their grandparents before them, who lived under an explicit system of control. In this ... critique, former litigator-turned-legal-scholar Michelle Alexander provocatively argues that we have not ended racial caste in America: we have simply redesigned it. Alexander shows that, by targeting black men and decimating communities of color, the U.S. criminal justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control, even as it formally adheres to the principle of color blindness. The New Jim Crow challenges the civil rights community - and all of us - to place mass incarceration at the forefront of a new movement for racial justice in America." ([Columbus Metropolitan Library](#))

Barker, Vanessa. 2009. *The Politics of Imprisonment: How the Democratic Process Shapes the Way America Punishes Offenders*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

"This book examines how the democratic process and social trust shape penal sanctioning in the United States. The research shows that higher levels of civic engagement tend to support milder punishments whereas lower levels tend to support more coercive criminal justice policies. The book challenges a taken-for-granted assumption about the democratic process and punishment. It shows that the apparent link between public participation, punitiveness, and harsh justice is not only historically contingent but dependent on specific institutional contexts and patterns of civic engagement, patterns that tend to vary within the United States and across liberal democracies. But perhaps more importantly, the research suggests the opposite relationship: increased democratization can support and sustain less coercive penal regimes. By comparing state-level imprisonment variation and state-level democratic traditions, this book highlights the importance of place, locality, and context in a globalizing social world." ([Oxford Scholarship Online](#))

Friedman, Lawrence. 1993. *Crime and Punishment in American History*. New York: Basic Books.

California State Library General Collection KF9223 .F75 1993

"Lawrence M. Friedman argues that the evolution of criminal justice has reflected transformations in America's character. Thus the theocratic world of seventeenth-century Puritanism generated a peculiar equation between crime and sin. The extraordinary geographic and social mobility of nineteenth-century America produced its own distinctive approach to crime and punishment. And the expressive individualism of the twentieth century encouraged an emphasis on 'crimes of the self.' " *Crime and Punishment in American History* covers vast and fascinating terrain: the Salem witchcraft trials; the Red Scare after World War I; the rise of the American penitentiary; the emergence of the professional detective; the development of laws against fornication and gambling and the reform of rape laws; the rise of the insanity defense; the growth of a prisoners rights movement; and much more. It is about vigilantes, outlaws, embezzlers, swindlers, and what happened to them; about the growth of white-collar crime; and about revolutionary changes in the relationship between gender and criminal justice." "Informed by the perspective of the social sciences, this book is a social history of crime and punishment, the story of the social reaction to crime. Not a history of criminal law or an intellectual history of penology or a treatise on the philosophy of good and evil, this book chronicles the development of a working system of criminal justice, from arrest to trial to prison and punishment." "Serious crime has skyrocketed in our day, affecting the lives of millions of people directly and all of us indirectly. This elegant and magisterial history helps us understand why this is happening - where we have been and where we are heading. It is a story that needs to be told." ([WorldCat](#))

Garland, David. 2001. *Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society*. University of Chicago Press. (Garland has 3-4 books on the history of criminal justice and corrections)

California State Library General Collection HV9950 .G36 2001

"Garland explains how the new policies of crime and punishment, welfare and security—and the changing class, race, and gender relations that underpin them—are linked to the fundamental problems of governing contemporary societies, as states, corporations, and private citizens grapple with a volatile economy and a culture that combines expanded personal freedom with relaxed social controls. It is the risky, unfixed character of modern life that underlies our accelerating concern with control and crime control in particular. It is not just crime that has changed; society has changed as well, and this transformation has reshaped criminological thought, public policy, and the cultural meaning of crime and criminals. David Garland's *The Culture of Control* offers a brilliant guide to this process and its still-reverberating consequences." ([AbeBooks](#))

Goodman, Philip, Joshua Page, and Michelle Phelps. 2017. *Breaking the Pendulum: The Long Struggle over Criminal Justice*. Oxford University Press.

“While this view is common wisdom, it is wrong. In *Breaking the Pendulum*, Philip Goodman, Joshua Page, and Michelle Phelps debunk the pendulum perspective, showing that it distorts how and why criminal justice changes. The pendulum model blinds us to the blending of penal orientations, policies, and practices, as well as the struggle among actors who shape laws, institutions, and how we think about crime, punishment, and related issues. Through a reanalysis of more than 200 years of penal history, starting with the rise of penitentiaries in the nineteenth century and ending with ongoing efforts to roll back mass incarceration, the authors offer an alternative approach to conceptualizing penal development. Their agonistic perspective posits that struggle is the motor force of criminal justice history. Punishment expands, contracts, and morphs because of contestation between real people in real contexts, not a mechanical ‘swing’ of the pendulum.” ([Oxford Scholarship Online](#))

Haney, Craig. 2006. *Reforming Punishment: Psychological Limits to the Pains of Imprisonment*. Washington, DC: APA Books.

CDMH Collection HV9471 .H36 2006

“In *Reforming Punishment: Psychological Limits to the Pains of Imprisonment*, author Craig Haney argues that the United States has pursued fundamentally flawed prison policies that have crossed the line from imposing punishment to doing real harm. His carefully reasoned argument suggests that—by ignoring the social contextual causes of crime and minimizing the potentially harmful effects of imprisonment itself—these policies not only cause undue pain to the imprisoned but ultimately increase crime. Today the United States imprisons more people than any other nation. Its prisons are overcrowded, contain unprecedented numbers of mentally ill and nonviolent prisoners, and grossly overrepresent minorities. Too many prison systems still do too little to provide meaningful programming and other forms of effective rehabilitation. Yet adverse conditions can cause prisoners to adapt to the pains of imprisonment in ways that are problematic while they are imprisoned and dysfunctional after they are released.” ([WorldCat](#))

Petersilia, Joan (2003) *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry*. New York: Oxford University Press.

California Research Bureau HV9304 .P464 2003

“As long as there have been prisons, society has struggled with how best to help prisoners reintegrate once released. But the current situation is unprecedented. As a result of the quadrupling of the American prison population in the last quarter century, the number of returning offenders dwarfs anything in America's history. What happens when a large percentage of inner-city men, mostly Black and Hispanic, are regularly extracted, imprisoned, and then returned a few years later in worse shape and with dimmer prospects than when they committed the crime resulting in their imprisonment? What toll does this constant ‘churning’ exact on a community? And what

do these trends portend for public safety? A crisis looms, and the criminal justice and social welfare system is wholly unprepared to confront it.

Drawing on dozens of interviews with inmates, former prisoners, and prison officials, Joan Petersilia convincingly shows us how the current system is failing, and failing badly. Unwilling merely to sound the alarm, Petersilia explores the harsh realities of prisoner reentry and offers specific solutions to prepare inmates for release, reduce recidivism, and restore them to full citizenship, while never losing sight of the demands of public safety.” ([Oxford University Press](#))

Reiter, Keramet. Mass Incarceration. 2017. Oxford University Press.

“In this brief, timely text, Keramet Reiter explores the least visible, but arguably most important, characteristics of mass incarceration in the United States: the systematic constriction of prisoners' constitutional rights; the treatment of the mentally ill in prison; the long-term consequences of having served time in prison; the problem of prisoner disenfranchisement; and the privatization of multiple aspects of the prison industry. Each chapter begins with a narrative account of one individual's experience within the prison system, drawn from actual cases and recent events that frame the history, themes, and core ethical questions addressed in that chapter.” ([Oxford University Press](#))

California

Bookspan, Shelley. 1991. *A Germ of Goodness*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
California State Library, California Reading Room HV9475.C2 B66 1991

“‘This is the story,’ writes Bookspan, ‘of the penury and personality struggle through which California developed a prison system to assess, and to address, individual needs while retaining its custodial institutions. It is a story of the West, even though eastern penology, with all of its overtones of moral duty, provided the language for prison reform. In a state where chaos preceded the assertion of normative rule, fear, not hope, formed the governing principle of penology. It is a story of America because true reform on an expanded sense of individual potential.’ ” ([University of Nebraska Press](#))

Calavita, Kitty and Valerie Jenness. 2014. *Appealing to Justice Prisoner Grievances, Rights, and Carceral Logic*. University of California Press.

“Having gained unique access to California prisoners and corrections officials and to thousands of prisoners’ written grievances and institutional responses, Kitty Calavita and Valerie Jenness take us inside one of the most significant, yet largely invisible, institutions in the United States. Drawing on sometimes startlingly candid interviews with prisoners and prison staff, as well as on official records, the authors walk us through the byzantine grievance process, which begins with prisoners filing claims and ends after four levels of review, with corrections officials usually denying requests for remedies. *Appealing to Justice* is both an unprecedented study of disputing in an extremely asymmetrical setting and a rare glimpse of daily life inside this most closed of institutions. Quoting extensively from their interviews with prisoners and officials, the

authors give voice to those who are almost never heard from. These voices unsettle conventional wisdoms within the sociological literature—for example, about the reluctance of vulnerable and/or stigmatized populations to name injuries and file claims, and about the relentlessly adversarial subjectivities of prisoners and correctional officials—and they do so with striking poignancy. Ultimately, *Appealing to Justice* reveals a system fraught with impediments and dilemmas, which delivers neither justice, nor efficiency, nor constitutional conditions of confinement.” ([UC Press](#))

Cummins, Eric. *The Rise and Fall of California’s Radical Prison Movement (1st Edition)*. 1994. Stanford University Press.

California State Library, California Reading Room HV9475.C3 C83 1994

“This is a history of the California prison movement from 1950 to 1980, focusing on the San Francisco Bay Area's San Quentin State Prison and highlighting the role that prison reading and writing played in the creation of radical inmate ideology in those years.... This was an extraordinary era in the California prisons, one that saw the emergence of a highly developed radical convict resistance movement inside prison walls. This inmate groundswell was fueled at times by remarkable individual prisoners, at other times by groups like the Black Muslims or the San Quentin chapter of the Black Panther Party. But most often resistance grew from much wider sources and in quiet corners: from dozens of political study groups throughout the prison; from an underground San Quentin newspaper; and from covert attempts to organize a prisoners' union. The book traces the rise and fall of the prisoners' movement, ending with the inevitably bloody confrontation between prisoners and the state and the subsequent prison administration crackdown.

The author examines the efforts of prison staff to augment other methods of inmate management by attempting to modify convict ideology by means of ‘bibliotherapy’ and communication control, and describes convict resistance to these attempts as control. He also discusses how Bay Area political activists became intensely involved in San Quentin and how such writings as Chessman's *Cell 2455*, Cleaver's *Soul on Ice*, and Jackson's *Soledad Brother* reached far beyond prison walls to influence opinion, events, and policy.” ([Stanford University Press](#))

Fiber-Ostrow, Pamela and Christine L. Gardiner. 2014. *California's Criminal Justice System (Second Edition)*. Carolina Academic Press.

“California's Criminal Justice System, 2nd Edition, shares the history, purpose, structure and procedures of California's criminal justice system. It begins with conversations about the state of crime in California, the demographics of crime, and the practices of legislative actions and direct democracy in creating state laws. The book includes discussions of criminal justice policies as well as criminal justice institutions such as policing, courts, corrections, and the juvenile justice system. Each chapter is authored by an expert in the field and highlights some of the current issues, challenges, and controversies facing California's criminal justice system. The authors also highlight some of the current criminal justice policies and controversies within the state, including gun

policy, sex policy, drug policy, capital punishment, realignment, gangs, and victims' rights. In addition, the authors include discussions on a variety of different employment opportunities related to criminal justice and the occupational outlook for these positions. This text is appropriate for undergraduate students in introductory courses on criminal justice, law and government and can be used either as a supplemental text or as a stand-alone resource for students." ([Carolina Academic Press](#))

Gilmore, Ruth. 2007. *Golden Gulag*. Berkley: University of California Press.
California Research Bureau HV9475.C2 G73 2007

"In an informed and impassioned account, Ruth Wilson Gilmore examines this issue through statewide, rural, and urban perspectives to explain how the expansion developed from surpluses of finance capital, labor, land, and state capacity. Detailing crises that hit California's economy with particular ferocity, she argues that defeats of radical struggles, weakening of labor, and shifting patterns of capital investment have been key conditions for prison growth. The results—a vast and expensive prison system, a huge number of incarcerated young people of color, and the increase in punitive justice such as the 'three strikes' law—pose profound and troubling questions for the future of California, the United States, and the world. *Golden Gulag* provides a rich context for this complex dilemma, and at the same time challenges many cherished assumptions about who benefits and who suffers from the state's commitment to prison expansion." ([UC Press](#))

Kruttschnitt, Candace and Rosemary Gartner. 2004. *Marking Time in the Golden State: Women's Imprisonment in California*. Cambridge University Press.

"In recent decades, the nature of criminal punishment has undergone change in the United States. This case study of women serving time in California in the 1960s and 1990s examines key points in this recent history. In this 2005 book, the authors begin with a look at imprisonment at the California Institution for Women in the early 1960s, when the rehabilitative model dominated official discourse. They compare women's experiences in the 1990s, at the California Institution for Women and the Valley State Prison, when the recent 'get tough' era was near its peak. Drawing on archival data, interviews, and surveys, their analysis considers the relationships among official philosophies and practices of imprisonment, women's responses to the prison regime, and relations between women prisoners. The experiences of women prisoners reflected the transformations Americans have witnessed in punishment over recent decades, but they also mirrored the deprivations and restrictions of imprisonment." ([Cambridge University Press](#))

Kupers, Terry A. 2006. "How to create madness in prison." *Humane Prisons*.
Available [here](#):

"The recipe for creating madness in our prisons is easy enough to explicate, one merely needs to identify the steps that were taken to reach the current state of affairs. Here is the recipe: Begin by over-crowding the prisons with unprecedented numbers of drug-

users and petty offenders, and make sentences longer across the board. Dismantle many of the rehabilitation and education programs so prisoners are relatively idle. Add to the mix a large number of prisoners suffering from serious mental illness. Obstruct and restrict visiting, thus cutting prisoners off even more from the outside world. Respond to the enlarging violence and psychosis by segregating a growing proportion of prisoners in isolative settings such as supermaximum security units. Ignore the many traumas in the pre-incarceration histories of prisoners as well as traumas such as prison rape that take place inside the prisons....” ([Minutesbeforesex](#))

Page, Joshua. 2011. *The Toughest Beat: Politics, Punishment, and the Prison Officers Union in California*. New York: Oxford University Press.

“When a panel of federal judges ruled in August 2009 that California must release a full one-quarter of its prisoners, it did more than insist that 40,000 people go free. It asserted that what was once a ‘correctional crisis,’ marked by deadly overcrowding and monumental prison mismanagement, had become chronic. No longer a temporary phenomenon, the ‘critical condition’ of the Golden State’s prisons was now the normal state of affairs. This book shows how the California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA), the labor union representing prison officers and other correctional workers, had transformed from a loose, fraternal organization into one of the most politically potent and feared interest groups in the nation. The book describes how the union promoted ultratough policies like ‘Three Strikes and You’re Out,’ empowered political figures and groups that supported its interests and views on criminal punishment, and frustrated efforts to privatize prisons. And as its leaders made strides for its members, the union also influenced the nature, purpose, and scope of imprisonment. So to understand California’s deep and durable penal crisis, the book explains, we cannot neglect the story of this group so often known simply as ‘the powerful prison guards’ union.’ The book draws on years of intensive research as [Page] uses the lessons of the CCPOA to explore how actors create, shape, and protect their preferred status quo and considers whether, by making these mechanisms clear, we might open the door to real and lasting change in the penal field and beyond.” ([Experts at University of Minnesota](#))

Reiter, Keramet. 2016. *23/7: Pelican Bay Prison and the Rise of Long-Term Solitary Confinement*. Yale University Press.

“Originally meant to be brief and exceptional, solitary confinement in U.S. prisons has become long-term and common. Prisoners spend twenty-three hours a day in featureless cells, with no visitors or human contact for years on end, and they are held entirely at administrators’ discretion. Keramet Reiter tells the history of one ‘supermax,’ California’s Pelican Bay State Prison, whose extreme conditions recently sparked a statewide hunger strike by 30,000 prisoners. This book describes how Pelican Bay was created without legislative oversight, in fearful response to 1970s radicals; how easily prisoners slip into solitary; and the mental havoc and social costs of years and decades in isolation. The product of fifteen years of research in and about prisons, this book

provides essential background to a subject now drawing national attention.”
([DeGruyter](#))

Simon, Jonathan. 1993. *Poor Discipline*. University of Chicago Press.

“Jonathan Simon uses the practice of parole in California as a window to the changing historical understanding of what a corrections system does and how it works. Because California is representative of policies and practices on a national level, Simon explicitly presents his findings within a national framework.” ([Bibliovault](#))

Impact of

Alex, Byron, David B. Weiss, Fatos Kaba, Zachary Rosner, David Lee, Sungwoo Lim, Homer Venters, and Ross MacDonald. "Death after jail release: matching to improve care delivery." *Journal of Correctional Health Care* 23: 1.

Available [here](#)

“The period immediately after release from prison or jail carries increased mortality risk. This study sought to better understand postrelease death by matching electronic health records from those incarcerated in New York City jails between 2011 and 2012 with vital statistics records. The in-jail and 6-week postrelease mortality rates were estimated to be 1.39 and 5.89 per 1,000 person-years, respectively. Of 59 deaths occurring within 6 weeks of release from jail, the causes included opioid overdose (37.3%), other drugs (8.5%), chronic disease (25.4%), assaultive trauma (20.3%), and other trauma (8.5%). These data confirm that overdose death accounts for the most frequent cause of postrelease death. Matching between correctional health systems and vital statistics can inform quality improvement efforts in jail health care delivery.” ([PubMed](#))

Haney, Craig. 2012. Prison Effects in the Era of Mass Incarceration. *The Prison Journal*, 0032885512448604.

Available [here](#)

“This article summarizes some of the negative psychological effects of imprisonment. It examines the psychological stressors—dehumanization, deprivation, and danger—to which prisoners are exposed, and the process of prisonization by which they attempt to accommodate to their conditions of confinement. It also discusses the effects of two opposite prison extremes, overcrowding and solitary confinement, as well as the kind of vulnerabilities that many prisoners bring to prison that make the experience a form of retraumatization for them. The article ends with a set of brief, programmatic but psychologically informed proposals for change.” ([Sage](#))

Haney, Craig. 2006. "The wages of prison overcrowding: Harmful psychological consequences and dysfunctional correctional reactions." *Wash. UJL & Pol'y* 22: 265.

Available [here](#)

“At the outset of this brief article I want to make three preliminary, clarifying points. The first is that we now fully understand – in psychology and related disciplines – that powerful social contexts like prisons can shape and transform the people who enter them. When prison environments become unduly painful they also become harmful, and prisoners carry the effects or consequences of that harm back into the ‘freeworld’ once they have been released. Thus, bad prisons are not only unpleasant or uncomfortable; they can be destructive as well.” ([Heinonline](#))

Haney, Craig. 2003. *The psychological impact of incarceration: Implications for post prison adjustment. Conference paper.*

Available [here](#)

“This paper examines the unique set of psychological changes that many prisoners are forced to undergo in order to survive the prison experience. It argues that, as a result of several trends in American corrections, the personal challenges posed and psychological harms inflicted in the course of incarceration have grown over the last several decades in the United States.” ([Urban](#))

Kaba Fatos, Andrea Lewis, Sarah Glowa-Kollisch, James Hadler, David Lee, Howard Alper, Daniel Selling et al. 2014. "Solitary confinement and risk of self-harm among jail inmates." *American Journal of Public Health* 104: 3.

Available [here](#)

“These self-harm predictors are consistent with our clinical impressions as jail health service managers. Because of this concern, the New York City jail system has modified its practices to direct inmates with mental illness who violate jail rules to more clinical settings and eliminate solitary confinement for those with serious mental illness.” ([PubMed](#))

Kupers, Terry A. 2008. "What to do with the survivors? Coping with the long-term effects of isolated confinement." *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 35:8.

Available [here](#)

“As a growing number of individuals suffering from serious mental illness are consigned to prison and selectively relegated to long-term isolated confinement, there is a newly expanded subpopulation of prisoners approaching their release from prison while exhibiting signs of mental illness and repeatedly violating rules. An attribution error and various forms of obfuscation divert attention from a cycle of longer stints in isolation and more rule-breaking behavior, until the time arrives to release the ‘disturbed/disruptive’ prisoner. Since this subpopulation of prisoners is deemed dangerous, there is a crisis in the criminal justice system. There are attempts to solve

the crisis by convicting the prisoner of additional crimes to extend prison tenure or by activating postincarceration civil commitment to a psychiatric hospital. These trends are examined, and the question is raised whether they address the core problems in the criminal justice system that result in more prisoners nearing their release dates essentially out of control behaviorally.” ([Heinonline](#))

Travis, Jeremy, Bruce Western, and Steve Redburn, Editors. 2014. *The Growth of Incarceration in the United States Exploring Causes and Consequences*. 2014. The National Academies of Sciences Engineering Medicine.

Available [here](#):

“*The Growth of Incarceration in the United States* examines research and analysis of the dramatic rise of incarceration rates and its affects. This study makes the case that the United States has gone far past the point where the numbers of people in prison can be justified by social benefits and has reached a level where these high rates of incarceration themselves constitute a source of injustice and social harm. *The Growth of Incarceration in the United States* recommends changes in sentencing policy, prison policy, and social policy to reduce the nation's reliance on incarceration. The report also identifies important research questions that must be answered to provide a firmer basis for policy. The study assesses the evidence and its implications for public policy to inform an extensive and thoughtful public debate about and reconsideration of policies.” ([National Academies of Science Engineering and Medicine](#))

Turney, Kristin, and Rebecca Goodsell. 2018. "Parental incarceration and children's wellbeing." *The Future of Children* 28: 1.

Available [here](#)

“After documenting the scope of parental incarceration, Turney and Goodsell review mechanisms that may link parental incarceration to children’s wellbeing, such as the parent’s physical absence, the trauma associated with the criminal justice process, and the stigma of having a parent in jail or prison. They also review research into how parental incarceration affects four aspects of children’s wellbeing: behavior, education, health, and hardship and deprivation. In each of these areas, parental incarceration has detrimental consequences for children. The authors then turn to programs designed to improve the wellbeing of children of incarcerated parents....” ([ERIC](#))

Turney, Kristin, and Christopher Wildeman. 2015. "Detrimental for some? Heterogeneous effects of maternal incarceration on child wellbeing." *Criminology & Public Policy* 14: 1.

Available [here](#)

“It is important that public policies take into account the fact that not all children experience similar effects of maternal incarceration. For children of mothers who are unlikely to experience incarceration, the negative consequences of maternal incarceration could be driven by at least three factors, all of which may operate simultaneously and all of which potentially call for different policy interventions: (a) jail

incarceration as opposed to prison incarceration, (b) incarceration for a crime that did minimal or no harm to their children, and (c) inadequate family supports for coping with maternal incarceration. We discuss these policy implications.” ([Wiley](#))

Turney, Kristin, Christopher Wildeman, and Jason Schnittker. 2012. "As fathers and felons: Explaining the effects of current and recent incarceration on major depression." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 53: 4.

Available [here](#)

“Dramatic increases in the American imprisonment rate since the mid-1970s have important implications for the life chances of minority men with low educational attainment, including for their health. Although a large literature has considered the collateral consequences of incarceration for a variety of outcomes, studies concerned with health have several limitations: Most focus exclusively on physical health; those concerned with mental health only consider current incarceration or previous incarceration, but never both; some are cross-sectional; many fail to consider mechanisms; and virtually all neglect the role of family processes, thereby overlooking the social roles current and former prisoners inhabit. In this article, we use stress process theory to extend this research by first considering the association between incarceration and major depression and then considering potential mechanisms that explain this association. Results from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study (N = 3,107) show current and recent incarceration are substantially associated with the risk of major depression, suggesting both immediate and short term implications. In addition, consistent with stress proliferation theory, the results show the well-known consequences of incarceration for socioeconomic status and family functioning partly explain these associations, suggesting the link between incarceration and depression depends heavily on the consequences of incarceration on economic and social reintegration, not only the direct psychological consequences of confinement.” ([PubMed](#))

Western, Bruce, and Becky Pettit. 2010. "Incarceration & social inequality." *Daedalus* 139: 3.

Available [here](#)

“In the last few decades, the institutional contours of American social inequality have been transformed by the rapid growth in the prison and jail population. America’s prisons and jails have produced a new social group, a group of social outcasts who are joined by the shared experience of incarceration, crime, poverty, racial minority, and low education. As an outcast group, the men and women in our penal institutions have little access to the social mobility available to the mainstream. Social and economic disadvantage, crystallizing in penal confinement, is sustained over the life course and transmitted from one generation to the next. This is a profound institutionalized inequality that has renewed race and class disadvantage. Yet the scale and empirical details tell a story that is largely unknown.” ([Amacad](#))

Wildeman, Christopher, and Bruce Western. 2010 "Incarceration in fragile families." *The Future of Children*.

Available [here](#)

“But Wildeman and Western argue that criminal justice reform alone will not solve the problems of school failure, joblessness, untreated addiction, and mental illness that paved the way to prison. In fact, focusing solely on criminal justice reforms would repeat the mistakes the nation made during the prison boom: trying to solve deep social problems with criminal justice policies. Addressing those broad problems, they say, requires a greater social commitment to education, public health, and the employment opportunities of low-skilled men and women. The primary sources of order and stability—public safety in its wide sense—are the informal social controls of family and work. Thus, broad social policies hold the promise not only of improving the wellbeing of fragile families, but also, by strengthening families and providing jobs, of contributing to public safety.” ([Eric](#))

[On Abolition as a Course to Justice](#)

Brown, Michelle and Judah Schept. 2017. “New Abolition, Criminology and a Critical Carceral Studies” in *Punishment & Society* 19 (4).

“Criminology has been slow to open up a conversation about decarceration and abolition in comparison with other disciplines, including history, geography, and gender, race, and critical ethnic studies. Scholars from these areas and actors on the ground—close up to confinement—have done most of the organizing against mass incarceration and theorizing of alternative possibilities. Why those experiences—and the theoretical traditions that inform their work—have been less recognized and developed in criminology is of pivotal concern as more criminologists move forward with the political project of decarceration. The extent to which criminology can sustain an alternative or abolitionist politics remains an open question. Amid growing conversations about decarceration and shifting rhetorics on punishment, we address some of the obstacles that limit criminology as a site from which to engage the abolitionist project, asking where criminologists might turn for interventionist models that move away from imprisonment and the violence of the carceral state. In this article, we advocate for and discuss the contours of critical carceral studies, a growing interdisciplinary movement for engaged scholarly and activist production against the carceral state. We discuss the imperatives for criminological engagement with critical carceral studies and sketch some of the terrain on which the discipline can contribute to the project, including important work to counter criminological discourses and knowledge production that reify and reproduce carceral logics and practices.” ([Sage](#))

Davis, Angela Y. 2016. *Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*. Hayward Books.

“Reflecting on the importance of black feminism, intersectionality, and prison abolitionism for today's struggles, Davis discusses the legacies of previous liberation struggles, from the Black Freedom Movement to the South African anti-Apartheid

movement. She highlights connections and analyzes today's struggles against state terror, from Ferguson to Palestine. Facing a world of outrageous injustice, Davis challenges us to imagine and build the movement for human liberation. And in doing so, she reminds us that 'Freedom is a constant struggle.' " ([Haymarket Books](#))

Foner, Eric. 2011. *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery*. New York: W Norton & Co Inc.

California State Library General Collection E 457.8 O18

"Selected as a Notable Book of the Year by the *New York Times Book Review*, this landmark work gives us a definitive account of Lincoln's lifelong engagement with the nation's critical issue: American slavery. A master historian, Eric Foner draws Lincoln and the broader history of the period into perfect balance. We see Lincoln, a pragmatic politician grounded in principle, deftly navigating the dynamic politics of antislavery, secession, and civil war. Lincoln's greatness emerges from his capacity for moral and political growth." ([WW Norton](#))

Kaba, Mariame. 2021. *We Do This 'Til We Free Us: Abolitionist Organizing and Transforming Justice*. Haymarket Books.

" 'Organizing is both science and art. It is thinking through a vision, a strategy, and then figuring out who your targets are, always being concerned about power, always being concerned about how you're going to actually build power in order to be able to push your issues, in order to be able to get the target to actually move in the way that you want to.' What if social transformation and liberation isn't about waiting for someone else to come along and save us? What if ordinary people have the power to collectively free ourselves? ... Kaba's work is deeply rooted in the relentless belief that we can fundamentally change the world. As Kaba writes, 'Nothing that we do that is worthwhile is done alone.' " ([Haymarket Books](#))

Global

Morris, Norval and David J. Rothman. 1995. *The Oxford History of the Prison*. New York: Oxford University Press.

"In *The Oxford History of the Prison*, a team of distinguished scholars offers a vivid account of the rise and development of this critical institution. The authors trace the persistent tension between the desire to punish and the hope for rehabilitation, recounting the institution's evolution from the rowdy and squalid English jails of the 1700s, in which prisoners and visitors ate and drank together; to the sober and stark nineteenth-century penitentiaries, whose inmates were forbidden to speak or even to see one another; and finally to the 'big houses' of the current American prison system, in which prisoners are as overwhelmed by intense boredom as by the threat of violence. The text also provides a gripping and personal look at the social world of prisoners and their keepers over the centuries. In addition, thematic chapters explore in-depth a variety of special institutions and other important aspects of prison history, including the jail, the reform school, the women's prison, political imprisonment, and prison and literature." ([WorldCat](#))

Reiter, Keramet, Lori Sexton, and Jennifer Sumner. 2018. "Theoretical and empirical limits of Scandinavian Exceptionalism: Isolation and normalization in Danish prisons." *Punishment & Society* 20: 1.

Available [here](#)

“Drawing on interviews with 76 prisoners, 47 prison staff, and 14 experts, we document lived experiences of punishment in the Danish prison context. We argue that, regardless of ‘humanizing’ elements of normalization and humanity, prisoners and staff may experience the power of the carceral state in Denmark in ways similar to those under more obviously harsh confinement regimes, as exist in the United States and, to a lesser extent, in the United Kingdom. Ultimately, macro-level theories like Scandinavian Exceptionalism serve as a rhetorical tool, implying that harsher prison systems are fixable, but fail to reflect the micro-level realities of incarceration.” ([Sage](#))

[Alternatives to](#)

Brown, Michelle and Judah Schept. 2017. “New Abolition, Criminology and a Critical Carceral Studies” in *Punishment & Society* 19 (4).

“Criminology has been slow to open up a conversation about decarceration and abolition in comparison with other disciplines, including history, geography, and gender, race, and critical ethnic studies. Scholars from these areas and actors on the ground—close up to confinement—have done most of the organizing against mass incarceration and theorizing of alternative possibilities. Why those experiences—and the theoretical traditions that inform their work—have been less recognized and developed in criminology is of pivotal concern as more criminologists move forward with the political project of decarceration. The extent to which criminology can sustain an alternative or abolitionist politics remains an open question. Amid growing conversations about decarceration and shifting rhetorics on punishment, we address some of the obstacles that limit criminology as a site from which to engage the abolitionist project, asking where criminologists might turn for interventionist models that move away from imprisonment and the violence of the carceral state. In this article, we advocate for and discuss the contours of critical carceral studies, a growing interdisciplinary movement for engaged scholarly and activist production against the carceral state. We discuss the imperatives for criminological engagement with critical carceral studies and sketch some of the terrain on which the discipline can contribute to the project, including important work to counter criminological discourses and knowledge production that reify and reproduce carceral logics and practices.” ([Sage](#))

Lynch, M. (2015). (Im)migrating penal excess: The case of Maricopa County, Arizona. In *Extreme Punishment: Comparative Studies in Detention, Incarceration and Solitary Confinement*, Keramet Reiter and Alexa Koenig (Eds.), pp. 68-90. Palgrave MacMillan.

“This ground-breaking collection examines the erosion of the legal boundaries traditionally dividing civil detention from criminal punishment. The contributors

empirically demonstrate how the mentally ill, non-citizen immigrants, and enemy combatants are treated like criminals in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States." ([Palgrave](#))

Kupers, Terry A. 2015. "A community mental health model in corrections." *Stan. L. & Pol'y Rev.* 26: 119.

Available [here](#)

"The jail and prison population in the United States has been multiplying exponentially for four decades. We now have almost two-and-a-half million people behind bars, and during the same years the proportion of prisoners with serious mental illness has also grown. The Treatment Advocacy Center and the National Sheriffs Association recently released a study showing that there are ten times as many individuals with serious mental illness in our jails and prisons as there are in our state psychiatric hospitals. Mental health services behind bars have not grown apace, and as a result a large number of prisoners with serious mental illness are subject to victimization in the jails and prisons, receive inadequate mental health treatment, and are subjected to harsh conditions of confinement that exacerbate their mental illness and make their prognosis dire. There is a mental health crisis behind bars, and correctional mental health treatment requires urgent attention." ([Stanford Law](#))

Kupers, Terry A., Theresa Dronet, Margaret Winter, James Austin, Lawrence Kelly, William Cartier, Timothy J. Morris et al. 2009. "Beyond supermax administrative segregation: Mississippi's experience rethinking prison classification and creating alternative mental health programs." *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 36:10.

Available [here](#)

"Litigation in Mississippi required the Department of Corrections to ameliorate substandard conditions at the supermaximum Unit 32 of Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman, remove prisoners with serious mental illness from administrative segregation and provide them with adequate treatment, and reexamine the entire classification system. Pursuant to two federal consent decrees, the Department of Corrections greatly reduced the population in administrative segregation and established a step-down mental health treatment unit for the prisoners excluded from administrative segregation. This article describes and discusses not only the process of enacting the changes but also the outcomes, including the large reductions in rates of misconduct, violence, and use of force." ([ACLU](#))

Schept, Judah. 2015. *Progressive Punishment: Job Loss, Jail Growth, and the Neoliberal Logic of Carceral Expansion*. NYU Press.

"In *Progressive Punishment*, Judah Schept offers an ethnographic examination into the politics of incarceration in Bloomington, Indiana in order to consider the ways that liberal discourses about therapeutic justice and rehabilitation can uphold the logics, practices and institutions that comprise the carceral state. Schept examines how political leaders on the Left, despite being critical of mass incarceration, advocated for a

‘justice campus’ that would have dramatically expanded the local criminal justice system. At the root of this proposal, Schept argues, is a confluence of neoliberal-style changes in the community that naturalized prison expansion as political common sense among leaders negotiating crises of deindustrialization, urban decline, and the devolution of social welfare. In spite of the momentum that the proposal gained, Schept uncovers resistance among community organizers, who developed important strategies and discourses to challenge the justice campus, disrupt some of the logics that provided it legitimacy, and offer new possibilities for a non-carceral community.” ([NYU Press](#))

Story, Brett. 2019. *Prison Land: Mapping Carceral Power across NeoLiberal America*. University of Minnesota Press.

“From broken-window policing in Detroit to prison-building in Appalachia, exploring the expansion of the carceral state and its oppressive social relations into everyday life Brett Story investigates the production of carceral power at a range of sites, from buses to coalfields and from blighted cities to urban financial hubs, to demonstrate how the organization of carceral space is ideologically and materially grounded in racial capitalism. By framing the prison as a set of social relations, *Prison Land* forces us to confront the production of new carceral forms that go well beyond the prison system.” ([University of Minnesota Press](#))

Venters, Homer. 2016. "A three-dimensional action plan to raise the quality of care of US correctional health and promote alternatives to incarceration." *AJPH*.
Available [here](#)

“The United States has the world’s highest incarceration rate. Nonetheless, health care provided during approximately 12 million annual incarcerations remains disconnected from the rest of the nations’ health apparatus. Care delivered to the incarcerated disproportionately impacts the poor, people of color, and those with behavioral health problems. The scope and quality of this care is inconsistent and often directed by security leadership, not health professionals. Additionally, vital information gathered in these settings is rarely used to coordinate care with community providers or consider alternatives to incarceration. To increase the quality and coordination of correctional health care, three key areas must be addressed: the funding model, the scope of services, and correctional health staff.” ([NCBI](#))

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The Office of California State Senator Steven Bradford requested this primer.

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