



Gendered Justice in the American West: Women Prisoners in Men's Penitentiaries

Anne M. Butler

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In this study of women prisoners in men's penitentiaries from 1865 to 1915, Anne M. Butler shows that the women, already faced with distinct gender disadvantages within western society, were subjected to intense physical and mental violence while in prison. For women of color or of lower social class, she argues, the violence was even greater and more frequent. Butler's poignant cross-cultural account draws on prison records and the words of the women themselves. She explores how nineteenth-century criminologists constructed the "criminal woman"; the elements of age, race, class, and gender in women's court proceedings; the kinds of violence encountered by women inmates; their diet, illnesses, experiences with pregnancy and child-bearing; prison work systems for women; and women's own strategies for response.

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