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052182558X - Marking Time in the Golden State: Women's Imprisonment in California

Candace Kruttschnitt and Rosemary Gartner

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Marking Time in the Golden State

In recent decades, the nature of criminal punishment has undergone profound change in the United States. This case study of women serving time in California in the 1960s and 1990s examines two key points in this recent history. 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. To this they compare women's experiences in the 1990s, at both the California Institution for Women and the Valley State Prison for Women, 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 that seem to transcend time and place.

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