

resources are allocated, particularly to meet the needs and special concerns of women. While these efforts have not yet yielded much in the way of concrete results, they have given a big boost to the vitality and interconnectedness of Tanzanian civil society.

A few of the chapters cover familiar ground, e.g., Rodríguez-Garavito's chapter on Nike and the antisweatshop movement, de Sousa Santos's chapter on the World Social Forum, and Rajagopal's chapter on the anti-dam movement in the Narmada Valley in India. Some limit their scope primarily to the national or international rather than global level, e.g., Rusimbi and Mbilinyi on Tanzania and Larson on Texas colonias. But almost all the chapters give solid, thoughtful treatments of their topics, and taken as a whole they serve as a very good introduction to the ways in which locally anchored, globally linked issues have entered the legal arena.

The main weakness of the volume, as I see it, is that it largely fails to answer the editors' call for a theory of subaltern cosmopolitan legality (a regrettably clumsy term). Such a theory would entail efforts to understand the conditions under which different levels of law are invoked, the nature of bureaucratic and judicial responses to legal action by marginalized citizens, factors explaining the varying degrees of success of the complainants, and so on. The book provides much empirical grist for the theorist's mill regarding such matters but does little of the grinding itself.

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*Punishment and Inequality in America*. By Bruce Western. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006. Pp. 247. \$29.95 cloth.

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There are currently more individuals incarcerated and individuals with felon status than at any other point in U.S. history. Scholars from diverse fields have turned their attention to the nearly 700,000 individuals released annually from prisons, the more than 9 million felons and ex-felons, and the web of disadvantage these individuals face because of their felon status. Informal consequences (such as discrimination and depressed levels of human capital) join with formal consequences (laws that disqualify individuals from voting, serving as jurors, and holding numerous occupations) to maintain and possibly worsen racial and ethnic inequality across social institutions. Research is just beginning to show the empirical impact of these consequences; there is little doubt that trends in criminal punishment have disadvantaged large numbers of racial minorities.

Since the 1970s, all forms of correctional supervision increased at unprecedented levels. Much of this increase has fallen disproportionately on African Americans, Hispanics, and individuals that occupy the lowest rungs of the socioeconomic ladder—most notably high school dropouts and individuals with chronic joblessness. Elevated levels of punishment, which stemmed largely out of conservative politics and racial conflict, have come with great social costs. Stints in prison now act as a rudder, steering many individuals into economic peril. Incarceration's impact persists throughout the life course and extends far beyond the economic sphere. We can see vivid evidence of the former in the labor market and the latter in families—two social institutions where Bruce Western focuses his analysis in *Punishment and Inequality in America*.

Western's study displays the methodological innovativeness and sophistication that is characteristic of his previous work. He analyzes data from diverse sources to test his central thesis that incarceration has played a significant role in concealing and ultimately worsening racial and ethnic inequality in the United States. The greatest asset of this study is its impressive array of empirical analysis. Western employs multiple analytic procedures and techniques, including adjustments for selection into prison, which is a vexing empirical conundrum for this area of inquiry. Individuals who spend time in prison are not representative of the population as a whole, and many would likely experience some level of hardship even if they had not been incarcerated. This makes assessing the unique contribution of incarceration in current trends of inequality challenging. Yet Western deftly tackles the selection problem by employing fixed-effect models and quasi-experimental techniques in which he finds cases that match on all characteristics except for a history of incarceration. This allows him to make persuasive causal claims that are supported by the data.

His findings reaffirm suspicions that net of selection into prison, incarceration reduces lifetime earnings, hourly wages, and employment. It also depresses the likelihood of marriage, enhances the chances of divorce, and elevates the number of children with an absent parent, most often a father. As would be expected, the deleterious effects of incarceration are most pronounced for racial minorities, especially African Americans. Finally, Western explores whether incarceration was responsible for the drop in serious crime during the late 1990s and early 2000s. He finds that most of the reduction in serious crime would have taken place even if rates of imprisonment had not increased.

This research also covers several theoretical perspectives that help situate many of Western's empirical findings. He couches the book's broad theoretical aims in notions of citizenship and democracy. He also employs a life course perspective to contextualize the

predominance of imprisonment in the lives of poor African American men. In casting such a wide theoretical net, however, some key arguments seem underdeveloped and often isolated from one another. While this makes the theoretical contributions of this study less definitive than its empirical ones, it is unclear whether Western ever intended to provide deep theoretical insight. Even without it, this book is informative and makes compelling arguments about the role of the criminal justice system in contemporary patterns of stratification.

Taken as a whole, it would be difficult to overstate the importance of Western's work in an area that is gaining substantial momentum across disciplines. The consequences of incarceration and felon status more generally are timely issues. Western's work lays the empirical foundation for future efforts to investigate the impact of incarceration and felon status, especially on the poor and racial minorities. This book provides an invaluable resource for any scholar with an interest in punishment or inequality, and it serves as the flagship piece of research concerning the social consequences of U.S. penal policy during the past 30 years.