

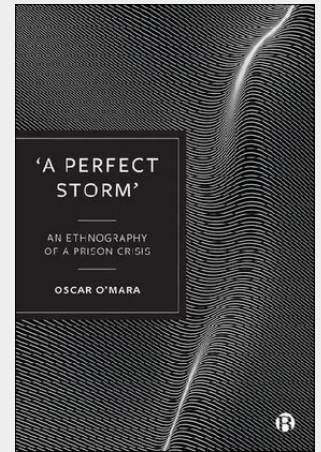
O'Mara

'A Perfect Storm'

An Ethnography of a Prison Crisis

This ethnography of an English adult male prison explores a polycrisis of violence, self-harm, overcrowding, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Using Bourdieu's field theory, it uniquely highlights the complex interplay of policy, people, and practices to reveal how prisons exacerbate social inequality. The book uncovers paradoxes between prison's stated aims of safety, security, and (re)habilitation and their adverse realities, including the harms to prisoners' reintegration upon release. The prison operates as 'a perfect storm' of mutually reinforcing conditions that reproduce harmful outcomes. The book contends that the real crisis isn't that prisons fail, it's that we continue to believe they're meant to succeed.

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