

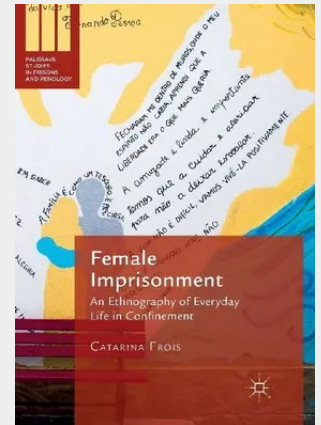
Frois

Female Imprisonment

An Ethnography of Everyday Life in Confinement

This book is a reflection on the nature of confinement, experienced by prison inmates as everyday life. It explores the meanings, purposes, and consequences involved with spending every day inside prison. *Female Imprisonment* results from an ethnographic study carried out in a small prison facility located in the south of Portugal, and Frois uses the data to analyze how incarcerated women talk about their lives, crimes, and expectations. Crucially, this work examines how these women consider prison: rather than primarily being a place of confinement designed to inflict punishment, it can equally be a place of transformation that enables them to regain a sense of selfhood. From in-depth ethnographic research involving close interaction with the prison population, in which inmates present their life histories marked by poverty, violence, and abuse (whether as victims, as agents, or both), Frois observes that the traditional idea of "doing time", in the sense of a strenuous, repressive, or restrictive experience, is paradoxically transformed into "having time" – an experience of expanded self-awareness, identity reconstruction, or even of deliverance. Ultimately, this engaging and compassionate study questions and defies customary accounts of the impact of prisons on those subjected to incarceration, and as such it will be of great interest for scholars and students of penology and the criminal justice system.

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