



Understanding Justice: An introduction to Ideas, Perspectives and Controversies in Modern Penal Theory (Crime and Justice)

Barbara Hudson

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- * Why should offenders be punished - what should punishments be designed to achieve?
- * Why has imprisonment become the normal punishment for crime in modern industrial societies?
- * What is the relationship between theories of punishment and the actual penalties inflicted on offenders?

This revised and updated edition of a highly successful text provides a comprehensive account of the ideas and controversies that have arisen within law, philosophy, sociology and criminology about the punishment of criminals. Written in a clear, accessible style, it summarises major philosophical ideas - retribution, rehabilitation, incapacitation - and discusses their strengths and weaknesses. This new edition has been updated throughout including, for example, a new section on recent cultural studies of punishment and on the phenomenon of mass imprisonment that has emerged in the United States. This second edition includes a new chapter on restorative justice, which has developed considerably in theory and in practice since the publication of the first edition.

The sociological perspectives of Durkheim, the Marxists, Foucault and their contemporary followers are analysed and assessed. A section on the criminological perspective on punishment looks at the influence of theory on penal policy, and at the impact of penal ideologies on those on whom punishment is inflicted. The contributions of feminist theorists, and the challenges they pose to masculinist accounts of punishment, are included. The concluding chapter presents critiques of the very idea of punishment, and looks at contemporary proposals which could make society's response to crime less dependent on punishment than at present.

Understanding Justice has been designed for students from a range of disciplines and is suitable for a variety of crime-related courses in sociology, social policy, law and social work. It will also be useful to professionals in criminal justice agencies and to all those interested in understanding the issues behind public and political debates on punishment.

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