Breaking Women: Gender, Race, and the New Politics of Imprisonment. By Jill A. McCorkel. New York: New York University Press, 2013. Pp. xvi+272. $75.00 (cloth); $23.00.

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In *Breaking Women: Gender, Race, and The New Politics of Imprisonment*, Jill McCorkel examines an intensive drug-addiction treatment program operating as a semi-independent entity in a state prison for women. The "company," an outside private contractor, runs the program. McCorkel uses her case study to help the reader understand current trends in punishment in the United States and their variations across race and gender. The author conducted extensive participant observation at the prison between 1994 and 1998. She returned to the field for six weeks in 2000. She also conducted approximately 100 interviews with participants and 40 with staff and administrators. Her research additionally drew from archival and administrative data.

The book is divided into three sections. In the first, McCorkel explores the large-scale societal forces that were operating upon and within the correctional system during the 1990s. These included overcrowding, budgetary problems, and get-tough politics. She goes on to look at how these forces interacted with the then-current political, economic, and social situation in the (unnamed) state to influence the adoption and shape of this drug treatment program. She finds that increases in the number of African-American women in the prison (due in large part to the war on drugs) led the staff of the prison to change their views about the essential nature of the prisoners. Instead of seeing them as good girls gone wrong, they were increasingly portrayed as predatory and aggressive. This new view, combined with a "tough on crime" mindset, provided the justification for the old system of rehabilitation to be abolished. When the federal government offered to subsidize the company's highly punitive drug addiction services, cash-strapped administrators felt unable to refuse.

The second section of the book examines the ideology and practices of the drug program. McCorkel found that the program was focused on "habilitation," the idea that the participants' "diseased selves" needed to be broken down. Her depiction of the day-to-day operation of this program is highly disturbing, revealing practices of systematic degradation such as abusive name-calling. To succeed in the program, participants were forced to radically redefine themselves and their individual life narratives. The program assumed that their criminal behaviors were only a small part of the problem because their diseased selves infected all areas of their lives. The program concentrated on three specific areas: motherhood, sexuality, and dependency (generally defined as welfare use). These areas were clearly gendered and influenced by belief in a welfare queen stereotype.

The final section of *Breaking Women* looks at the experience of the program through the eyes of the participants. The importance of narrative is a central theme of McCorkel's book, and it fits well with other research on the topic. Shadd Maruna's work (*Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives* [American Psychological Association, 2001]), for example, indicates that some narratives can be a helpful tool for criminally involved people trying to desist from crime. McCorkel's book also shows the power of narrative but shows a much darker side—how those in power can impose a narrative on others that causes deep psychological damage. Participants in the drug treatment unit were asked to narrate their lives through the program language and ideology and, in so doing, completely redefine themselves in negative terms. Sadly, some of the women started to forget the positive parts of their past lives that did not fit with the accepted narrative of addiction, illness, and self-blame. At the same time, not all of the respondents accepted the new narrative. McCorkel identifies three different responses: some women accepted the given narrative and redefined themselves, some left the program (often at tremendous personal cost, including the loss of a sentence reduction), and a final group "faked it" to try and survive the program psychologically intact. She names the latter two paths as forms of resistance and is able to identify some characteristics that determine which path particular women choose.

One of the many strengths of *Breaking Women* is its effective use of Foucault as well as Malcolm Feeley and Jonathan Simon ("The New Penology," *Criminology* 30 [1992]: 449–74) to frame the study. McCorkel compellingly argues that the program's techniques were a powerful way to control "unruly groups." Instead of shackling women's bodies, however, control was achieved from within—through forced self-redefinition. Of course, many institutions that deal with men employ similar methods (the military, mental hospitals, etc.). McCorkel's use of Goffman's (gender-neutral) framework of the moral career acknowledges this. At the same time, she suggests that men's prisons focus more on control of the body than on control of the mind. Because the book is an ethnography of one program, however, McCorkel's ability to generalize her conclusions is somewhat limited, as is her ability to draw comparisons to various control measures used in other prisons. It would have been helpful to include more information about the prevalence of this type of habilitation program in all types of prisons.

Breaking Women is critical reading for policy makers and prison administrators. One of the areas policy makers should concentrate on involves privatization. Once the prison contracted with a private company, the two groups began to struggle over issues of control. Ultimately, the company ended up with the power to do almost anything it wanted with the prisoners assigned to it. Additionally, when studies showed the program was no more effective than regular prison, the company insisted that its programming only worked if paired with reentry services (which, conveniently, they could provide). By then, the company had gained the power

to define the situation and the state appeared to ignore the program's negative evaluation.

The book is extremely accessible and would be useful in criminology, penology, or introductory sociology courses. It would also work well in introductory theory courses. While it is an important piece of reading for criminologists, I hope it will find a much wider audience.

Blind to Sameness: Sexpectations and the Social Construction of Male and Female Bodies. By Asia Friedman. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013. Pp. x+210. $25.00 (paper).

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In *Blind to Sameness*, Asia Friedman intervenes in ongoing debates in the sociology of gender and gender studies over the social construction of sexed bodies (and the relation of sex to gender) from the fresh perspective of cognitive sociology. Friedman's key contribution, filter analysis, theorizes the perceptual and cognitive mechanisms through which reality is socially constructed. Friedman draws on cognitive science to explain the central concepts of attention and inattention, through which individuals filter the overwhelming amount of sensory information they take in, attending to some as relevant and overlooking the rest. She argues that social norms shape these cognitive and perceptual filters, and therefore in turn shape what sensory information we pay attention to or disattend when encountering and classifying others. Norms of binary sex and assumptions of fundamental sex difference form the foundation of our "sexpectations," the cognitive filters that organize our perceptions of bodies by allowing evidence of sex difference through while blocking perceptions of similarities and ambiguities. Our observations then confirm the assumed obviousness of fundamentally different male and female bodies. Accordingly, "the sexes . . . are not nearly as physically different as they typically seem, yet we are socialized to be blind to their sameness" (p. 2).

The first two chapters situate filter analysis within theories of the social construction of reality and feminist theories of the construction of sexed and gendered bodies. In chapter 1, Friedman introduces some basic concepts of cognition and cognitive sociology. She links cognitive science to central theories of social construction (frame, schema, habitus, perspective, and thought style) via their shared focus on perception. In chapter 2, she situates filter analysis within feminist and queer theories and elaborates on sexpectations, highlighting how they constitute "considerable social pressure to focus on sex differences and ignore, avoid, and deny sex similarities" (p. 36). Throughout, Friedman draws from a symbolic interactionist tradition (Suzanne Kessler and Wendy McKenna's work; see *Gender* [Wiley & Sons, 1978]) and poststructuralist feminist and queer theory, noting