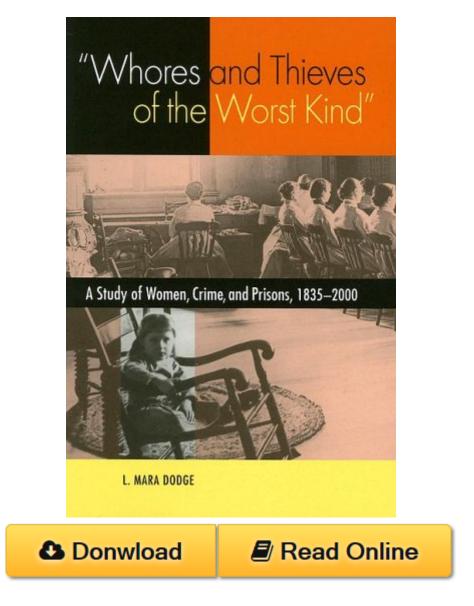
"Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind": A Study of Women, Crime, and Prisons, 1835-2000 PDF



"Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind": A Study of Women, Crime, and Prisons, 1835-2000 by L. Mara Dodge ISBN 0875806112

Prostitutes, shoplifters, vagrants, murderesses—Dodge tracks the history of such "improper" women as she explores the history of female incarceration in Illinois from 1835 to the present. In court and in prison, these women—some who are considered beyond all hope of reformation—have received vastly different treatment than their male counterparts.

A woman's fate in court often hung on officials' estimates of her moral and sexual reputation.

Alleged promiscuity, illegitimate births, venereal disease, interracial relationships, or use of alcohol could condemn her in the eyes of judge and jury. Ethnic and social prejudice played a role, too, as most incarcerated women poor, workingclass, immigrants, or members of a racial minority.

In women's prisons, the slightest misbehavior—from poor table manners to inappropriate dress—could lead to disciplinary action. Guards vigilantly monitored female friendships, suspecting lesbianism in the most innocent acts. Instead of creating docile and dutiful subjects, such treatment stirred resistance among the prisoners and fostered a powerful inmate subculture.

Highly readable yet theoretically sophisticated, "Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind" provides a striking collective portrait of incarcerated women. Drawn from extensive primary sources, the voices of female prisoners emerge powerfully and poignantly as individuals tell their stories.

"Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind": A Study of Women, Crime, and Prisons, 1835-2000 Review

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