THE END OF INCARCERATION? EXPLORING THE CONTRADICTIONS OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM


This project will help determine whether the adoption of drug and parole reforms is indicative of a comprehensive shift away from the policies and practices that led to mass incarceration. The findings will contribute to a variety of socio-legal literatures, as well as more policy-oriented discussions regarding the potential and limits of drug law reform as a means of reducing mass incarceration and racial disproportionality in the U.S. criminal justice system.

This mixed methods study will analyze changing and potentially contradictory criminal justice practices and policies and the discourse through which the latter are legitimated. Analysis of National Corrections Reporting Program data (2000-2012) will shed light on recent and potentially contradictory trends in prison admissions, sentences, and time served. Compilation of a legislative dataset drawn from the National Council on State Legislatures' Significant State Corrections and Sentencing Legislation reports will identify potentially contradictory trends in criminal justice policy-making. The informal mechanisms that help to account for changing criminal justice outcomes will also be identified through a case study of criminal case processing in King County, Washington.

People Involved:  Katherine Beckett
Status of Research: Ongoing
Research Type: Projects and Grants
Related Fields: Criminal Law and Punishment, Incarceration

Source URL: https://soc.washington.edu/research/projects-and-grants/end-incarceration-exploring-contradictions-criminal-justice-reform