The Quality of Prison Life

In recent years, incarceration in the United States transformed drastically as prison populations soared and carceral philosophies shifted accordingly. Today, the U.S. prison population numbers in excess of 2 million persons, and the experience of confinement is an ever-more-frequent life event for a great many individuals. Indeed, a staggering 1 in 29 U.S. residents have experienced incarceration in their lifetime. Broadly, my research addresses what happens to people during incarceration. In this talk, I will share how my ten-year career working in the psychology department of a maximum-security prison shaped my main interest in understanding the day-to-day prison experience, discuss some of my current research projects, and describe how the work of undergraduate and graduate students in my research lab shapes what happens behind prison walls.

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