

BOLD Ideas, ESSENTIAL Reading

Collision Course

Economic Change, Criminal Justice Reform, and Work in America

KATHLEEN AUERHAHN

"The scope of Auerhahn's analysis in this valuable publication is very ambitious and wide-ranging, and embraces economic change and the reform of social welfare institutions."

—Bill Jordan, author of *Socialist Policy of the 21st Century*

This book is about the convergence of trends in two American institutions – the economy and the criminal justice system. The American economy has radically transformed in the past half-century, led by advances in automation technology that have permanently altered labor market dynamics. Over the same period, the U.S. criminal justice system experienced an unprecedented expansion at great cost. These costs include not only the \$80 billion annually in direct expenditures on criminal justice, but also the devastating impacts experienced by justice-involved individuals, families, and communities.

Recently, a widespread consensus has emerged that the era of "mass incarceration" is at an end, reflected in a declining prison population. Criminal justice reforms such as diversion and problem-solving courts, a renewed focus on reentry, and drug policy reform have as their goal keeping more individuals with justice system involvement out of prisons, in the community and subsequently in the labor force, which lacks the capacity to accommodate these additional would-be workers. This poses significant problems for criminal justice practice, which relies heavily on employment as a signal of offenders' intentions to live a law-abiding lifestyle. The diminished capacity of the economy to utilize the labor of all who have historically been expected to work presents significant challenges for American society. Work, in the American ethos is the marker of success, masculinity and how one "contributes to society." What are the consequences of ignoring these converging structural trends? This book examines these potential consequences, the meaning of work in American society, and suggests alternative redistributive and policy solutions to avert the collision course of these economic and criminal justice policy trends.

KATHLEEN AUERHAHN is an associate professor of criminal justice at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Her research focuses on criminal justice policy analysis, with an emphasis on the intersection of inequality, social control, and harm reduction.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements
Chapter 1: The Contours of the Problem
Chapter 2: The US Economy in the 21st Century
Chapter 3: The Criminal Justice System in the 21st Century
Chapter 4: Work and Welfare in American Culture and Society
Chapter 5: The Consequences of Denial
Chapter 6: A Way Forward
Chapter 7: Conclusion: Charting a New Course
References
Index



186 pages, 13 b/w images, 6 x 9
9781978817968 paper \$27.95 **\$19.56**
9781978817975 cloth \$120.00 **\$84.00**
January 2022

Ebook available directly

30% OFF + free shipping

rutgersuniversitypress.org or 1 800 621 2736
US orders only • Code: RFLR19

In Canada:

20% OFF • Code: RUTGERS20
Free shipping online with orders over \$40
ubcpres.ca/rutgers or 1 800 565 9523

In Latin America: Use either the US code above or the Eurospan code below

In the UK, Europe, and the rest of the world:

20% OFF • Code: RutFriendsFamily
Free shipping worldwide
eurospanbookstore.com or
UK: 0845 474 4572
International: +44 (0)20 3286 2420
info@eurospanbookstore.com

Prices are in local currencies.

Examination and desk copies:

rutgersuniversitypress.org/educators

Join our mailing list for news and special offers:

rutgersuniversitypress.org/specials