

Locked In: The True Causes of Mass Incarceration—and How to Achieve Real Reform

John Pfaff



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Locked In: The True Causes of Mass Incarceration—and How to Achieve Real Reform John Pfaff A groundbreaking examination of our system of imprisonment, revealing the true causes of mass incarceration as well as the best path to reform

The United States, home to about 5 percent of the world's population, holds nearly 25 percent of its prisoners. How did we get to this point?

In *Locked In*, John F. Pfaff argues that existing accounts of the causes of mass incarceration are fundamentally misguided. The most widely accepted explanations—the failed War on Drugs, draconian sentencing laws, an increasing reliance on private prisons—actually tell us much less than we like to think. Instead, Pfaff urges us to look at other factors, including a major shift in prosecutor behavior that occurred in the mid-1990s, when prosecutors began bringing felony charges against arrestees about twice as often as they had before.

An authoritative, clear-eyed account of the root causes of mass incarceration, *Locked In* ultimately forces us to reconsider what we must to do build a more equitable and humane society.



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