



A Plague of Prisons: The Epidemiology of Mass Incarceration in America

Ernest Drucker

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When Dr. John Snow first traced an outbreak of cholera to a water pump in the Soho district of London in 1854, the field of epidemiology was born. Ernest Drucker's *A Plague of Prisons* takes the same concepts and tools of public health that have successfully tracked epidemics of flu, tuberculosis, and AIDS to make the case that our current unprecedented level of imprisonment has become an epidemic. Drucker passionately argues that imprisonment—originally conceived as a response to the crimes of individuals—has become mass incarceration: a destabilizing force, a plague upon our body politic, that undermines families and communities, damaging the very social structures that prevent crime.

Described as a “towering achievement” (Ira Glasser) and “the clearest and most intelligible case for a reevaluation of how we view incarceration” (*Spectrum Culture*), *A Plague of Prisons* offers a cutting-edge perspective on criminal justice in twenty-first-century America that “could help to shame the U.S. public into demanding remedial action” (*The Lancet*).

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