



Doing Probation Work: Identity in a Criminal Justice Occupation (Routledge Frontiers of Criminal Justice)

Rob Mawby, Anne Worrall

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A great deal has been written about the political, policy and practice changes that have shaped probation work but little has been written on the changes to occupational cultures and the ways in which probation workers themselves view their role. This book fills that gap by exploring the meaning of 'doing probation work' from the perspective of probation workers themselves.

Based on 60 extensive interviews with probation workers who joined the probation service from the 1960s to the present day, this book reaches beyond criminological and policy analysis to an application of sociological and organizational theory to rich qualitative data. It explores the backgrounds and motivations of probation workers, their changing relationships with other criminal justice agencies, and the complex public perceptions and media representations of probation work. The book considers the relative influences of religion, the union, diversity and feminization and, while it acknowledges that probation work is stressful, it draws innovatively on sociological and organizational concepts to categorize how workers respond to turbulent times.

This book challenges the dominant narrative of probation's decline in recent literature and constructs three 'ideal types' of probation worker - 'lifers', 'second careerists' and 'offender managers.' Each makes an essential contribution to probation cultures, which collectively contribute to, rather than undermine, the effectiveness of offender management and the future of probation work. This book will be important reading for researchers in the disciplines of criminology, criminal justice, sociology and management as well as probation workers of all grades and those in training.

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