



NEW TITLE

CLASSIFYING TO KILL

An Ethnography of the Death Penalty System in the United States

Brackette F. Williams

Summary

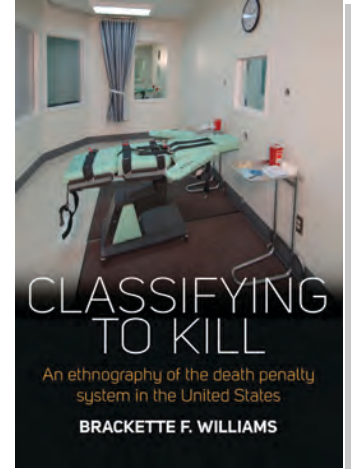
From the late 19th through the 20th century, scientists, legislators, and other policy makers in "modernizing" societies increasingly turned to formal classification schemes to define and devise solutions for complex social problems. In her exploration of a specific classificatory system - the death penalty in the United States - the author offers a rich ethnographic study of how the parties involved in making, administering, and responding to the forty death penalty classification schemes form such concepts and how they learn and use the resulting categories. When practices are devised by relying on formal classification schemes to define and solve problems, the results are controlling processes that Bruce Lincoln terms "taxonomic tyranny," and Pierre Bourdieu identifies as the stake in all political, economic, and social games. This study contributes to an understanding of why that stake is all too often driven into the heart of targets for reasons that mystify both those that drive the stake and those it kills.

"This is a scintillating read that goes to the heart of some central and quite shocking dimensions of United States society. The study presents a sustained ethnographic account of the moral and micro-political contests that make and remake classifications that define a crime and a perpetrator as deserving death. The book is a searing critique of the death penalty." · Diane Austin-Broos, University of Sydney

"This is an important book, which extends the meaning of ethnography and participant observation because it makes us consider what, not merely who participates in the actions observed...The book's view of ritualized thought in classification-controlled decisions should encourage students of ritual to rethink the limits currently placed on identifying and understanding ritual in modern society." · Carol A. Smith, University of California, Davis

About the Author

Brackette F. Williams received a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from the Johns Hopkins University and is currently Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Arizona. She has taught at Duke University, Queens College, and the Graduate Center of New York City, The New School for Social Research, the University of California at Berkeley, the Johns Hopkins University, and the University of Chicago. In 1997 she received the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fellowship. As a 2008 Soros Justice Fellow, she conducted a study of the impact of long-term solitary confinement on reentry of persons released from the Arizona Department of Corrections, SMU I and II units.



Binding Hback
PRINT ISBN 978-0-85745-124-8
E-ISBN 978-0-85745-125-5
Final Extent 260 pages, 4 ills, bibliog., index
Price \$80.00 / £47.00
Publication Date June 2011
Pub Date UK July 2011
Subject SOC002010
SOC026000
POL000000

ORDER INFORMATION

UK & Europe:
Marston Book Services
PO Box 269
Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4YN
United Kingdom
tel: +44 (0)1235 465500
fax: +44 (0)1235 465555
trade.enq@marston.co.uk

US & Rest of World:
Berghahn Books Inc,
PO Box 605
Herndon, VA 20172
USA
tel: 1(800) 540-8663 (US)
+1 (703) 661-1500 (RoW)
BerghahnMail@PressWarehouse.com

EDITORIAL OFFICES

UK & Europe:
Berghahn Books Ltd.
3 Newtec Place, Magdalen Road
Oxford OX4 1RE
United Kingdom
tel: +44 (0)1865 250011
fax: +44 (0)1865 250056
salesuk@berghahnbooks.com

US & Rest of World:
Berghahn Books Inc.
150 Broadway, Suite 812
New York NY 10038
United States
tel: +1 212 233 6004
fax: +1 212 233 6007
salesus@berghahnbooks.com



Table of Contents

List of Illustrations
Acknowledgments

Introduction: Formal Classification Schemes: A Problem for 21st Century

Chapter 1. Informal Classification and Public Moral Outrage

Chapter 2. Making Offender and Offended Categorical Identity Disparities

Chapter 3. Informal Classification and Untamed Sexual Identity

Chapter 4. Formal Classification Schemes: Taming Moral Outrage

Chapter 5. Formal Classification: Taming Person

Chapter 6. Statutory and Non-statutory Mitigation: Taming Unique

Chapter 7. Mitigation: Making Categorical Persons

Chapter 8. System Legitimacy: Crossing Nodes, Standards, and Product Quality

Chapter 9. Balancing Acts: Principles, Whole Persons, and Sentencing

Conclusion: The Wilds of Classification and Cognition

Bibliography
Index

Related Titles of Interest

SOCIAL TORTURE

The Case of Northern Uganda, 1986-2006

Chris Dolan

338 pages, 17 ills, bibliog., index

ISBN 978-1-84545-565-1 Hb

ISBN 978-0-85745-291-7 Pb

RIGHTS IN EXILE

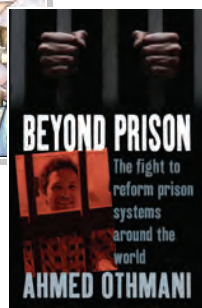
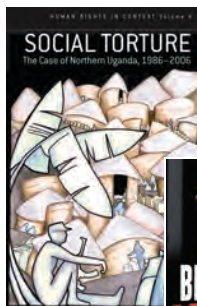
Janus-Faced Humanitarianism

Guglielmo Verdirame and Barbara Harrell-Bond with
Zachary Lomo and Hannah Garry

480 pages, bibliog., index

ISBN 978-1-84545-103-5 Pb

ISBN 978-1-57181-526-2 Hb



BEYOND PRISON

The Fight to Reform Prison Systems around the World

Ahmed Othmani

With a Preface by Mary Robinson, former UN High
Commissioner for Human Rights

Translated from the French by Marguerite Garling
144 pages,

ISBN 978-1-84545-454-8 Hb