

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910465014903321
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Titolo	The ex-prisoner's dilemma : how women negotiate competing narratives of reentry and desistance // Andrea M. Leverentz
Pubbl/distr/stampa	New Brunswick, New Jersey ; ; London, [England] : , : Rutgers University Press, , 2014 ©2014
ISBN	0-8135-6229-5
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (248 p.)
Collana	Critical Issues in Crime and Society Series
Disciplina	365/.660820973
Soggetti	Women prisoners - Rehabilitation - United States Criminals - Rehabilitation - United States Ex-convicts - Services for - United States Prisoners - Family relationships - United States Ex-convicts - United States Electronic books.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction -- Part I. Becoming an Ex-Offender -- 1. The Mercy Home and the Discourse of Reentry and Desistance -- 2. Introducing the Women and Their Pathways to Offending -- 3. A Year in the Life: Evolving Perspectives on Reentry and Desistance -- Part II. The Social Context of Reentry -- 4. Family Dynamics in Reentry and Desistance -- 5. Women's Chosen Relationships and Their Role in Self-Redefinition -- 6. Education, Employment, and a House of One's Own: Conventional Markers of Success -- Conclusion -- Appendix A: Respondent Characteristics -- Appendix B: Research Methods -- Notes -- References -- Index -- About the Author
Sommario/riassunto	When a woman leaves prison, she enters a world of competing messages and conflicting advice. Staff from prison, friends, family members, workers at halfway houses and treatment programs all have something to say about who she is, who she should be, and what she should do. The Ex-Prisoner's Dilemma offers an in-depth, firsthand

look at how the former prisoner manages messages about returning to the community. Over the course of a year, Andrea Leverentz conducted repeated interviews with forty-nine women as they adjusted to life outside of prison and worked to construct new ideas of themselves as former prisoners and as mothers, daughters, sisters, romantic partners, friends, students, and workers. Listening to these women, along with their family members, friends, and co-workers, Leverentz pieces together the narratives they have created to explain their past records and guide their future behavior. She traces where these narratives came from and how they were shaped by factors such as gender, race, maternal status, age, and experiences in prison, halfway houses, and twelve-step programs-factors that in turn shaped the women's expectations for themselves, and others' expectations of them. The women's stories form a powerful picture of the complex, complicated human experience behind dry statistics and policy statements regarding prisoner reentry into society for women, how the experience is different for men and the influence society plays. With its unique view of how society's mixed messages play out in ex-prisoners' lived realities, *The Ex-Prisoner's Dilemma* shows the complexity of these women's experiences within the broad context of the war on drugs and mass incarceration in America. It offers invaluable lessons for helping such women successfully rejoin society.

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