

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910788997503321
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Titolo	Cruel and unusual [[electronic resource] ] : the culture of punishment in America // Anne-Marie Cusac
Pubbl/distr/stampa	New Haven, : Yale University Press, c2009
ISBN	1-282-41588-3 9786612415883 0-300-15549-2
Descrizione fisica	xii, 318 p
Disciplina	364.60973
Soggetti	Punishment - United States - History Prisons - United States - History Prison administration - United States - History Prisoners - United States - Social conditions
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [261]-302) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction -- 1. When Punishment Is the Subject, Religion Is the Predicate -- 2. "A Heart Is Not Wholly Corrupted" -- 3. Reforming the Reforms -- 4. Punishment Creep -- 5. Vigilantism and Progressivism -- 6. The Devilish Generation -- 7. Flogging for Jesus -- 8. Pain Becomes Valuable Again -- 9. Pop Culture and the Criminal Element -- 10. Stunning Technology -- 11. The Return to Restraint -- 12. Abu Ghraib, USA -- Epilogue -- Notes -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	The statistics are startling. Since 1973, America's imprisonment rate has multiplied over five times to become the highest in the world. More than two million inmates reside in state and federal prisons. What does this say about our attitudes toward criminals and punishment? What does it say about us? This book explores the cultural evolution of punishment practices in the United States. Anne-Marie Cusac first looks at punishment in the nation's early days, when Americans repudiated Old World cruelty toward criminals and emphasized rehabilitation over retribution. This attitude persisted for some 200 years, but in recent decades we have abandoned it, Cusac shows. She discusses the

dramatic rise in the use of torture and restraint, corporal and capital punishment, and punitive physical pain. And she links this new climate of punishment to shifts in other aspects of American culture, including changes in dominant religious beliefs, child-rearing practices, politics, television shows, movies, and more. America now punishes harder and longer and with methods we would have rejected as cruel and unusual not long ago. These changes are profound, their impact affects all our lives, and we have yet to understand the full consequences.

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