Record Nr. UNINA9910797310403321
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Cashing in on crime: the drive to privatize California state prisons / /

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Pubbl/distr/stampa Boulder, Colorado:,: FirstForumPress, Incorporated,, 2014

ISBN 1-62637-297-7

Descrizione fisica 1 online resource (170 p.)

Disciplina 365/.9794

Titolo

Soggetti Prison-industrial complex - California

Prison industries - California

Prisons - California Corrections - California Privatization - California

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 (pages 177-194) and index.

Nota di contenuto Title page; copyright page; Dedication; Contents; Acknowledgments;

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of Privatization; Privatization Stalls in California; Theoretical

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Policies: Ideology and Penal Welfarism: Social Science Research and the

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Sommario/riassunto

What explains the boom in private prisons—especially since the record of privatization for rehabilitating prisoners and saving taxpayer dollars is, at best, mixed? Karyl Kicenski examines the privatization of California state prisons to illuminate the forces that shape and distort our criminal justice policies. Tracing the growth of private prisons from 1980 to the current day, Kicenski explores the role of political and economic factors, as well as the impact of changing public attitudes toward crime and governance. The result is a clear set of lessons for the uneasy partnership between public safety and for-profit enterprise.