

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910455045903321
Titolo	Captured by the media : prison discourse in popular culture / / edited by Paul Mason
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cullompton, Devon, U.K. ; ; Portland, Or. : , : Willan Pub., , 2006
ISBN	1-299-28509-0 1-134-00875-9 1-282-07737-6 9786612077371 1-84392-576-1
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (251 p.)
Altri autori (Persone)	MasonPaul
Disciplina	302.23 364.6
Soggetti	Corrections Mass media and criminal justice Prisons Punishment 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	Cover; Captured by the Media; Title Page; Copyright Page; Table of Contents; Acknowledgements; Notes on contributors; 1 Turn on, tune in, slop out; 2 The function of fiction for a punitive public; 3 Red tops, populists and the irresistible rise of the public voice(s); 4 Crime sound bites: a view from both sides of the microphone; 5 What works in changing public attitudes to prison: lessons from Rethinking Crime and Punishment; 6 Delivering death: capital punishment, botched executions and the American news media; 7 'Buried alive': representations of the separate system in Victorian England 8 Undermining the simplicities: the films of Rex Bloomstein 9 Creating a stir? Prisons, popular media and the power to reform; 10 The violence of images: inside the prison TV drama Oz; 11 The anti-heroines of Holloway: the prison films of Joan Henry and J. Lee Thompson; 12 Relocating Hollywood's prison film discourse; 13 Future punishment in

Sommario/riassunto

This book turns on the television, opens the newspaper, goes to the cinema and assesses how punishment is performed in media culture, investigating the regimes of penal representation and how they may contribute to a populist and punitive criminological imagination. It places media discourse in prisons firmly within the arena of penal policy and public opinion, suggesting that while *Bad Girls*, *The Shawshank Redemption*, internet jail cams, advertising and debates about televising executions continue to ebb and flow in contemporary culture, the persistence of this spectacle of punishment - its c

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Autore

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Nota di bibliografia

Nota di contenuto

Sommario/riassunto

UNINA9910810007203321

Sklenar Robert John

Plant of a strange vine : oratio corrupta and the poetics of senecan tragedy // Robert John Sklenar

Berlin, [Germany] ; ; Boston, [Massachusetts] : , : De Gruyter, , 2017
©2017

3-11-051894-5

3-11-051974-7

1 online resource (108 pages)

Beitrage zur Altertumskunde, , 1616-0452 ; ; Band 363

188

Stoics - History

Inglese

Materiale a stampa

Monografia

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Frontmatter -- Foreword -- Contents -- Chapter One. Letter 114 and the Poetics of Decadence -- Chapter Two. A Senecan Reading of Seneca's *Oedipus*, Part I -- Chapter Three. A Senecan Reading of Seneca's *Oedipus*, Part II -- Chapter Four. Seneca and Neronian Aesthetics -- Bibliography -- Subject index

This book studies Seneca's poetic drama from a novel point of view. Whereas most criticism of Seneca's dramas has tended to focus on their relationship to Stoicism, I approach them from the perspective of Seneca's own theory of literary decadence, which he sets forth in the

114th of his letters to Lucilius. His theory can be summed up as follows: the various forms of stylistic corruption are the result of a straining for effect, which itself reflects a taste for the extreme. A writer or speaker's stylistic vices thus mirror the vices of his character; they also reflect the vices of the time and place in which he lives, since every user of language is conditioned by his environment. What is especially striking about Seneca's discussion is that a number of the vices he lists – hyperbole, disruption of natural word order, excessive metaphor – are notable features of the poetic style of his own dramas. I argue for a rehabilitation of the 'decadent' style of Seneca's tragedies: in Seneca's hands, this style is a precise diagnostic tool for revealing the self-destructive irrationality that governs not only the individual, but also his society and the entire universe.
