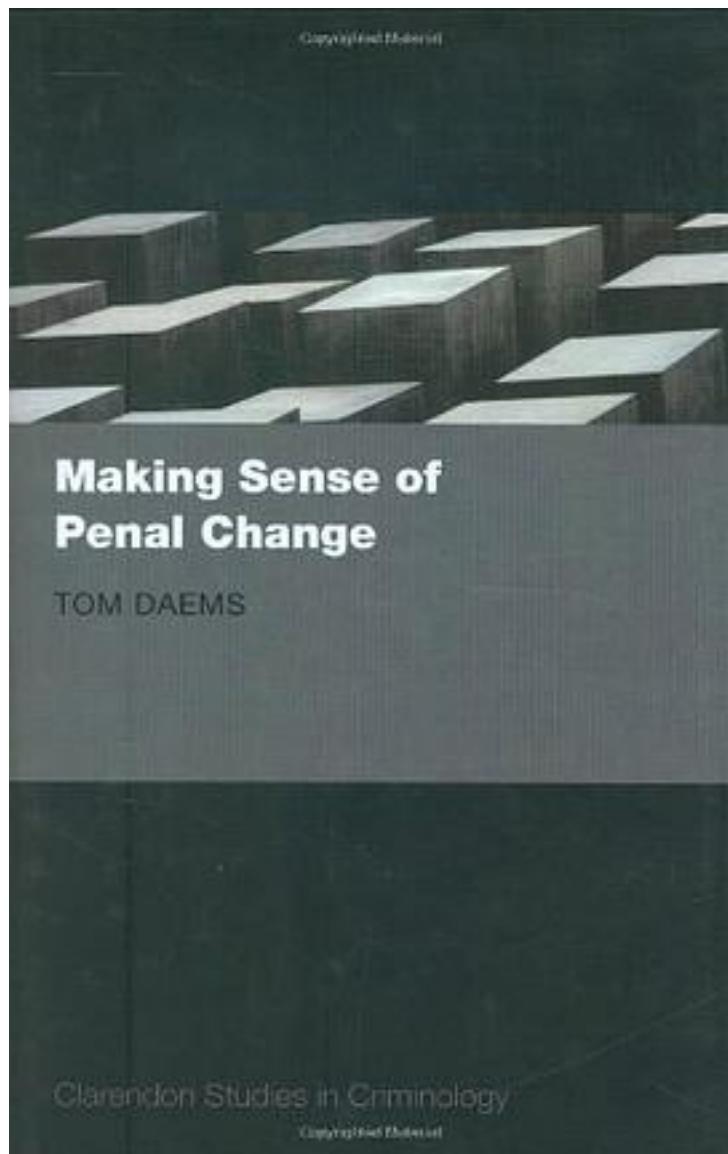


Making Sense of Penal Change



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This book reviews the burgeoning literature on contemporary punishment and penal change, concentrating on the work of four scholars- David Garland, John Pratt, Hans Boutilier and Loic Wacquant. The book differs from classical reviews in that it places the scholars themselves, rather than the problem to be addressed, at the centre of the book. Daems argues that academics do not think and write in a vacuum, they carry a past with them and are influenced by new insights and theories, and constantly need to reposition themselves within their own field and their political environment. This book, then, is as much about the selected authors as the stories they bring. It includes four large chapters devoted to the work of each author, offering an exposé of their work framed within the context of their lives. It offers a discussion of their central ideas and their distinctive approach towards questions of penal change and an analysis of the relationship between their roles as scholars in an academic environment and citizens in a political community. The scholar-oriented approach allows the author to deal with questions related to criminology's public persuasiveness - a timely analysis in view of recent calls for criminologists and other social scientists to enter public debate more directly. This book is an accessible and important contribution to the debate on recent penal change, presented in a way that both experts and non-experts will be able to follow. It will be of interest to criminologists, sociologists, socio-legal scholars, and criminal lawyers and students.

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