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## Books in Brief

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## **BOOKS IN BRIEF**

**A LESSER LIFE: THE MYTH OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION IN AMERICA.** By Sylvia Ann Hewlett. William Morrow & Company, Inc.: New York, N.Y. 1986. Pp. 461. \$17.95. This book does away with the favorite myths in America about the "liberated women" and reveals the fact that women today, regardless of what role they play, have little economic security. The author connects this reality to unemployment rates and high divorce rates among other factors. Hewlett explores the economics of divorce; the women's movement; the "aberrant fifties;" and finally political possibilities for changing the economic realities of women in today's society. This scholarly exploration together with Hewlett's own personal insight adds strength to the conclusions she draws and the solutions she proposes.

**DANGEROUS OFFENDERS: THE ELUSIVE TARGET OF JUSTICE.** By Mark H. Moore, Susan R. Estrich, Daniel McGillis and William Spelman. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts. 1984. Pp. 252. No price given. "The worst 1 percent of offenders commit crimes at such a high rate (more than fifty serious offenses per year) that simply incapacitating them would justify their imprisonment, even if there were no other justification such as deterrence, rehabilitation, or simple justice." Recent studies indicate that we can distinguish high rate offenders on the basis of personal characteristics. The urge is to separate these offenders from society by imposing longer prison terms. Thus, every aspect of the criminal justice system centers on these "career criminals." Consequently, the authors of this book concentrate on the general issues that arise from this focus on high rate offenders. Then they address more specific issues about how this focus might be created and approached from within the criminal justice system. The result is guidance to those involved in the criminal justice system on how to deal with this selective approach to the dangerous offender.

SENTENCING YOUNG PEOPLE: WHAT WENT WRONG WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT OF 1982. By Elizabeth Burney. Gower Publishing Co.: Brookfield, VT. 1985. Pp. 103. \$27.95. The purpose of the Criminal Justice Act of 1982 was to make it more difficult for courts to give custodial sentences to young offenders. The author examines this new statutory framework by studying the problems that twelve courts have encountered in applying this law. The author uses these courts as a foundation for both drawing conclusions about the statute and making suggestions for future use of the statute.

The thrust behind the author's purpose for writing this book is the apparent ineffectiveness of the Act's provisions aimed at avoiding sentencing for young people. The Act's shortcomings are indicated by the discovery that magistrate courts are "failing properly to observe the statutory procedures intended to make custody a genuine last resort for young offenders." This piece of evidence, among others that are revealed by the study, crystalize the author's thesis that the Act's lack of effectiveness are founded in the ambivalent attitude toward these offenders of society and the criminal justice system as well as their hesitancy to use new ideas.