



Life after Death Row: Exonerees' Search for Community and Identity (Critical Issues in Crime and Society)

Saundra D. Westervelt, Kimberly J. Cook

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Life after Death Row examines the post-incarceration struggles of individuals who have been wrongly convicted of capital crimes, sentenced to death, and subsequently exonerated.

Saundra D. Westervelt and Kimberly J. Cook present eighteen exonerees' stories, focusing on three central areas: the invisibility of the innocent after release, the complicity of the justice system in that invisibility, and personal trauma management. Contrary to popular belief, exonerees are not automatically compensated by the state or provided adequate assistance in the transition to post-prison life. With no time and little support, many struggle to find homes, financial security, and community. They have limited or obsolete employment skills and difficulty managing such daily tasks as grocery shopping or banking. They struggle to regain independence, self-sufficiency, and identity.

Drawing upon research on trauma, recovery, coping, and stigma, the authors weave a nuanced fabric of grief, loss, resilience, hope, and meaning to provide the richest account to date of the struggles faced by people striving to reclaim their lives after years of wrongful incarceration.



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