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*Courting the Community: Legitimacy and Punishment in a Community Court*. By Christine Zozula. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2019. 218 pp. \$29.95 paperback

Reviewed by Jamie Rowen, University of Massachusetts in Amherst

In *Courting the Community*, Christine Zozula takes us inside a community court designed to help address "quality of life" crimes. The argument is fairly straightforward: these courts individualize social problems, creating a form of "ambivalent justice" that requires them to continuously explain their contribution to individual defendants and the community as they balance rehabilitation and retribution. Meanwhile, they construct deserving and undeserving participants in ways that reinforce the court's image of itself as a benevolent institution. Her analysis reminds us of the continuing, and growing, instrumentalization of law to deal with entrenched social and political problems related to poverty. It also underscores the limitations of this instrumentalization, a topic of interest to a diverse group of law and society scholars.

While there are a number of books that discuss the problematic way in which treatment courts individualize social problems (most notable in my mind is Rebecca Tiger's 2012 analysis of drug courts), this latest book on community courts offers a somewhat distinct perspective because it focuses on quality-of-life crimes. Throughout the book, we are offered glimpses of what brought each participant to court, ranging from substance use to playing loud music in the street. We also learn about the different sanctions that the court uses in order to make participants comply,

and how they work to explain themselves to court participants whose “crimes” have as much to do with their gentrifying community as with some form of individual deviance.

This book is useful for scholars looking for an introduction to treatment courts. The introductory chapters situate the court within the larger history of treatment courts and rehabilitative probation policies. Treatment courts began as a progressive response to regressive sentencing policies, policies that were themselves a response to progressive decarceration efforts. Understanding treatment courts as part of a long history of criminal justice reforms is important and also highlights that it is difficult to provide new lessons from detailed case studies. The goal for this author is to tell us something new.

Zozula makes several important observations, some already well established and others less so. Treatment courts unintentionally, and under the guise of benevolence, reproduce inequality. Even the most ardent defenders of treatment courts now accept this reality and are working to remedy it, but the causes are not well understood. Is it the way that participants are chosen, the way the courts treat particular participants, or some other factor exogenous to the court?

While the book points out these inequalities, we don't get a clear sense of how prevalent they are in this particular court. This is one tradeoff of observational work that doesn't seek to quantify information about participant treatment or outcomes. However, it would still be useful to have a general sense about the racial composition of this court in relation to the community, and to have a much longer discussion of this inequality. For example, right when the Chapter 3 explicitly touches on the subject of inequities and inequalities, it moves along after a few paragraphs to the conclusion.

Likewise, Zozula observes that the personnel emphasize the autonomy of court participants and spend time chastising court participants and trying to legitimize the court. Of course, these participants have few options, choosing to adhere to rigorous community court rules or going to jail. Zozula documents this false choice throughout her book. Furthermore, she focuses on the ways that the court delineates deserving and undeserving defendants. Similar studies focus on defendants in drug courts who are supposed to conform to a script of “recovering addict” grateful for the court's benevolence. In community courts, Zozula tells us that deserving and undeserving defendants are likewise constructed with regard to how much they embrace the court's logic of rehabilitation.

The most interesting chapter comes at the end, when Zozula documents the various marketing strategies employed by the court. She asks a useful question as to why community justice initiatives would need to be advertised at all. Of course, the answer is no different than for other policy choices, where lobbyists are chosen and public messaging is

essential. Perhaps what is most interesting, then, is the imaginary of the court. We think of the court as something that would not need to be advertised. It is absolutely right that these types of reforms must be flexible and adaptable to be successful. This is why these courts are easy to create. Zozula could go further in explaining how that same adaptability leads to conflicts down the road. Stakeholders want these courts, but for different reasons. They will inevitably be disappointed when the courts don't deliver. She outlines how important it is to have legitimacy, and how crime in the community undermines the courts rehabilitative messaging. This theoretical work is some of the most important and most innovative in the book. The ambivalence she identifies is not just about rehabilitation and punitiveness. Rather, there is an underlying question as to whether these courts can or do actually help defendants access much needed social services, or whether these courts simply ensnare more impoverished people in the criminal justice system.

There are a few more areas where the book's ideas and, importantly, the methods, could be more fully developed. While Zozula provides an overview of treatment courts and community courts, the meat of the book is in her examples of court interactions. The dilemma of these stories is that the reader doesn't know whether they are common examples or not, or how they differ from regular criminal courts. One limit, of course, is that she is doing a case study of one community court. Does this kind of "organizational ambivalence" (141) toward the offender translate into the other community courts, and how is it different than treatment courts?

These limitations aside, this is an important book for scholars who study courts as organizations, who are interested in treatment courts, and who are interested in the criminalization of poverty. Community courts offer a distinct site to study how our society uses criminal law to solve problems this law simply cannot solve, and actually contributes to new problems in need of redress.

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*Prisoners of Politics: Breaking the Cycle of Mass Incarceration.* By Rachel Elise Barkow. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. 2019. 291 pp. \$35.00 hardcover

Reviewed by Malcolm M. Feeley, University of California in Berkeley, CA

The first two-thirds of this important book canvass the horrors in the American criminal process: carelessly defined crimes; bullying