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Confronting Drug Policy: Illicit Drugs in a Free Society. Ronald Bayer and Gerald M. Oppenheimer.

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Ronald Bayer and Gerald M. Oppenheimer (Eds.). *Confronting Drug Policy: Illicit Drugs in a Free Society*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993. \$59.95 hardcover; \$19.95 papercover.

While few would deny that the United States has a drug problem of alarming proportions, there is little agreement about the best way of dealing with it. However, many experts believe that the 'get tough' policy of recent years has been a dismal failure. Not only has it failed to reverse the trend towards greater narcotic consumption, but it has fostered greater drug-associated violence, dramatically increased the prison population and wasted hundreds of millions of dollars on interdiction programs that have not curbed the flow of illicit narcotics.

There is no doubt that new approaches to dealing with the drug problem are urgently needed. This book suggests the most radical of all—decriminalization. Previously dismissed out of hand, de-criminalization is now more openly discussed both in politically conservative and liberal circles. Many experts now believe that a proper debate on the advantages and disadvantages of legalization is urgently needed.

Bayer and Oppenheimer's wide ranging analysis of the issue provides an examination of this kind. Contributors to this important volume deal with diverse facets of the topic and cover critical legal, political, economic and treatment issues. The book contains particularly interesting chapters on the needs of women and children, on the relevance of the Prohibition Era to the current debate, and on the experiences of other countries. This book is an extremely useful source of information and essential reading for anyone interested in the issue of decriminalizing drug use in the United States today.

Gale Miller and James A. Holstein (Eds.). *Constructionist Controversies*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 1993. \$22.95 papercover. James A. Holstein and Gale Miller (Eds.). *Reconsidering Social Constructionism*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 1993. \$74.95 hardcover.

Analyses of crime and deviance have not been accorded proper recognition in sociological circles, and the field is still