

CRIMINAL LAW

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UNIVERSITY CASEBOOK SERIES

CRIMINAL LAW

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PREFACE

Some readers will recognize this book as a successor to Low, Jeffries, and Bonnie, *Criminal Law* (Second Edition, 1986). We set out to revise that volume, but the changes were so radical that we thought it best to proclaim a fresh beginning. In consequence, this book is styled the first edition of Bonnie, Coughlin, Jeffries, and Low.

That is not to say that we have completely abandoned the predecessor. On the contrary, we sought to retain its strengths, both in particular packages of materials that taught well and in overall analytic sophistication. If we could claim one virtue for the prior volume, it would be intellectual challenge. That tradition is continued here in the selection of main cases that present difficult issues on interesting facts and in the extensive use of notes that provide background and identify analogous problems.

To that tradition, this volume brings a pervasive updating of materials and a significantly revised intellectual agenda. Basically, we have tried to marry analytic sophistication and contemporary debate. We have tried to combine an intellectually rich presentation of criminal law doctrines and concepts with increased attention to the political and cultural controversies that dominate our times. This ambition is most evident in Chapter IV, which presents contested issues in rape and sexual assault; in Chapter V, on justification and excuse, which covers the battered woman syndrome and the prosecution of Bernard Goetz; and in Chapter VI, which explores the insanity defense. In these and other areas, we have sought to bring contemporary controversies into the classroom in ways that enrich instruction.

We have also tried to make this book teachable. Users of the predecessor volume will note the streamlining of Chapters I and II, dealing respectively with the criminal act and the criminal mind. These materials have been reduced from over 300 pages in the prior casebook to just over 180 pages here. As a result, the essential structure of crime definition can be covered more economically, and the teacher can move to a selection of interesting problems elsewhere.

We have taught from these materials and found them very much to our liking, and we hope you agree.

RJB
AMC
JCJjr
PWL

November 1996
Charlottesville, Virginia

*

TABLE OF CASES

Principal cases are in bold type. Non-principal cases are in roman type. References are to Pages.

- Aaron, People v., 831, 832, 848
 Abbott, State v., 350, 351, 352
 Abbott v. The Queen, 408
 Acevedo, People v., 243
 Ackerly, State v., 164, 166
 Adami, People v., 232, 233
 Addington v. Texas, 518, 528, 531, 5212
 Agnew, Commonwealth v., 809
Alabama, State of v. Judith Ann Neelley, 705
 Alexander v. State, 264
 Alexander and Murdock, United States v., 482
 Allen, Commonwealth v., 281
 Allen v. Illinois, 535
 Almeida, United States ex rel. v. Rundle, 76
 American Booksellers Ass'n, Inc. v. Hudnut, 64
 American Tobacco Co., United States v., 54
 Amlotte v. Florida, 850
 Anderson, People v., 662
Antick, People v., 850, 856, 857, 859, 860
Application of (see name of party)
 Aptheker v. Secretary of State, 45
 Archer, People v., 332, 333, 339
 Arnold's Case, 448
 Ascolillo, Commonwealth v., 301
 Ashley v. State, 952
 Audette, State v., 164
- Backun v. United States, 577, 579, 620**
 Bainbridge, Regina v., 617
 Baker v. Marcus, 804
 Balint, United States v., 194, 203
Barber v. Superior Court of State of Cal. for Los Angeles County, 98, 101, 104, 105
Barker, United States v., 227, 393, 399, 418
 Barnes, People v., 282
 Barraza, People v., 414, 415, 417
 Bartlett, State v., 830 P.2d 823, p. 958
 Bartlett, State v., 792 P.2d 692, p. 958
 Bass, United States v., 83, 84
 Batchelor, United States v., 412
 Batson v. Kentucky, 753, 760, 762
 B.B. v. State, 320
 Beardsley, People v., 93
 Beasley v. State, 508, 509, 511
 Bechtel v. State, 369
- Beck v. Alabama, 847
 Bedder v. Director of Public Prosecutions, 785, 786
 Bell v. State, 313 S.E.2d 678, p. 57
 Bell v. State, 180 S.W. 186, p. 491
 Bellevue, City of v. Miller, 57
 Benson, State v., 741
 Berck, People v., 57
 Berge, State v., 818
 Berkowitz, Commonwealth v., 283, 302
 Berrigan, Commonwealth v., 326, 327, 330
 Berry, People v., 784
 Bess, State v., 367
 Bethea v. United States, 544, 545, 547, 553, 555, 556
 Bey, State v., 836
 Biondi v. State, 729
 Bishop, United States v., 119
 Bitt, State v., 57
 Blackwell v. State, 806
 Bledsoe, United States v., 643, 645
 Blystone v. Pennsylvania, 727
 Booker, United States v., 293, 294, 295
 Booth v. State, 254
 Boro v. Superior Court (People), 295
 Bouie v. City of Columbia, 69, 75, 76, 78, 79
Bowen, People v., 220, 232
 Boyde v. California, 727
 Boyett, State v., 156
 Bradford, State v., 837
 Brailsford, Rex v., 32
Braverman v. United States, 627, 629, 630
 Brawner, United States v., 451, 493, 499, 500, 501
 Bray, People v., 167, 168
Bright, United States v., 550, 553, 554, 555
 Briscoe v. United States, 478
 Brody, People v., 74
 Bronston v. United States, 260
 Brown, People v., 311
 Brown, State v., 355, 378
 Brown v. Texas, 46
 Brown v. United States, 351, 352, 356
 Bruno, United States v., 630
 Buckman, State v., 38
 Buffington, United States v., 230, 231, 232
 Bullock, People v., 957
 Burgdorf, State v., 282
Burleson, People v., 597, 601, 612

- Byrne, Regina v., 800
- Callanan v. United States, 612
 Calley, United States v., 398
 Callins v. Collins, 693
 Camara v. Municipal Court of City and County of San Francisco, 389
 Camarco v. City of Orange, 57
 Cameron, State v., 469
 Canola, State v., 374 A.2d 20, p. 856
 Canola, State v., 343 A.2d 110, pp. 855, 857, 859
 Capitolo, Commonwealth v., 326, 327, 331
 Care and Treatment of Hendricks, Matter of, 536
 Carroll, Commonwealth v., 660
Casassa, People v., 792, 800, 801
 Castro, People v., 238, 239, 240, 248
 Chavez, People v., 70, 71, 72, 73
 Chester, Commonwealth v., 479
 Chittum v. Commonwealth, 188, 804
 Cinque v. Boyd, 429
City of (see name of city)
 Clark, State v., 837, 841, 844, 845, 846, 848
 Cleveland v. Municipality of Anchorage, 331
 Clowers v. State, 952
 Coates v. Regina, 108
 Cofield v. State, 726
Cogan and Leak, Regina v., 587, 589, 590, 592
Coker v. Georgia, 674, 760, **901**, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 923, 924, 933, 944, 952
 Coleman, People v., 223
Commonwealth v. _____ (see opposing party)
 Coney, Regina v., 569
 Connally v. General Const. Co., 50, 68, 69
 Coolidge, United States v., 37
 Copeland, State v., 734, 742
 Cox v. State of La., 162, 163, 417, 418
 Crawford v. State, 352
 Crimmins, United States v., 610
 Crouse, Ex parte, 421, 422
 Culmo, State v., 55
 Cunningham, Regina v., 121, 123, 124
- Dahl, Matter of**, 436, 440, 442, 443, 444, 445
 Darry v. People, 818
 Davis v. Mississippi, 45
 Davis, State v., 246
 Davis v. United States, 867
 Decina, People v., 110, 111
 Delahanty v. Hinkley, 454, 455, 495
 Dey, People ex rel. v. Superior Court of City of New York, 305
D.F.B., Matter of, 441, 444, 445
 Diana, State v., 335
 Director of Public Prosecutions v. Beard, 184
Director of Public Prosecutions v. Majewski, 181, 187, 188
- Director of Public Prosecutions v. Morgan, 298, 299
Director of Public Prosecutions v. Smith, 168, 176, 177, 180
 Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland v. Lynch, 408, 409
 Direct Sales Co. v. United States, 614, 615, 617
Dragash, People v., 248, 254, 260
 Dohring, People v., 281
 Donnelly v. DeChristoforo, 761
 Dorsey, State v., 331
 Dotterweich, United States v., 194, 203
 Dred Scott v. Sandford, 763
 Drew, People v., 505
 Drope v. Missouri, 514, 528
 Dudley and Stephens, Regina v., 336, 339, 413
 Dunn, State v., 119
Durham, People v., 583, 586
 Durham v. United States, 451, 468, 624
 Dusenbery v. Commonwealth, 589, 592
- Ealey v. State, 235
 Eddings v. Oklahoma, 678, 729, 764, 921
 Edward J. DeBartolo Corp. v. Florida Gulf Coast Bldg. and Const. Trades Council, 214
Ehrlichman, United States v., 386, 391, 393
 Einhorn, State v., 152
 Ellingwood, State v., 480
 Elliott, State v., 796
 Elliott, United States v., 645
 Enmund v. Florida, 678, 694, 735, 848, 916, 924, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 944, 952, 954
Essex v. Commonwealth, 801, 809
 Evilsizer v. State, 511
Ex parte (see name of party)
- Fain v. Commonwealth, 108
 Fairless, United States v., 540
 Falcone, United States v., 61 S.Ct. 204, pp. 614, 615, 618
 Falcone, United States v., 109 F.2d 579, p. 616
Faulkner, Regina v., 114, 118, 123, 124, 133, 136, 147, 172, 176, 180
 Felton, State v., 367
 Feola, United States v., 210, 610
 Ferlin, People v., 853, 854
 Fisher, Commonwealth v., 424
 Fleming, People v., 281
 Florida v. Ecker, 57
Foucha v. Louisiana, 519, 521, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536
Fox, State v., 149, 153, 161, 202
Freddo v. State, 774, 777, 778, 799
Freed, United States v., 193, 196, 198, 202
 Freeman, People v., 111
 Frysig, People v., 238, 240

- Furman v. Georgia, 664, 671, 673, 674, 675, 678, 679, 683, 684, 687, 688, 691, 695, 726, 729, 747, 752, 754, 760, 765, 782, 903, 904, 911, 912, 913, 916, 956, 957
- Gaetano v. United States, 332
- Gardner v. Florida, 759
- Garnett v. State, 312**, 318, 319, 321
- Gault, Application of, 427, 431
- Gebardi v. United States, 632
- Gentry v. State, 241
- Gervin v. State, 42
- Giarratano v. Commonwealth, 804
- Gilbert, People v., 740, 852, 853
- Gilbert, State v., 735, 736
- Gilham, State v., 952
- Gilmore v. Utah, 668
- Gleckler, People v., 719, 720
- Godfrey v. Francis, 726
- Godfrey v. Georgia, 680**, 681, 692, 693, 705, 721, 726, 745, 756, 922
- Godfrey v. State, 693, 746
- Goetz, People v., 340**, 347, 348, 353, 354, 355, 356, 358
- Goodman v. Commonwealth, 807
- Goodseal, State v., 829, 834**, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848
- Gould, United States v., 497
- Gounagias, State v., 779, 782, 784
- Graham v. Collins, 680, 729
- Green v. State, 134
- Gregg v. Georgia, 673, 679, 681, 683, 684, 686, 687, 688, 692, 726, 742, 751, 754, 755, 758, 762, 902, 903, 904, 921
- Gretzler, State v., 725
- Grunewald v. United States, 631
- Guffey, State v., 251
- Hale v. Morgan, 152
- Hall, State v., 510, 511, 512, 514
- Hamilton v. Commonwealth, 804
- Hamm v. City of Rock Hill, 79
- Harden v. State, 264
- Harmelin v. Michigan, 938**, 957, 958, 959, 962
- Harper, United States v., 229
- Harris, People v., 243
- Harrison v. Commonwealth, 803
- Hayes, State v., 592
- Hazel v. State, 271, 275, 276, 277, 280
- Heacock v. Commonwealth, 848
- Hearst, United States v., 412
- Heart of Atlanta Motel, Inc. v. United States, 79
- Henderson v. Kibbe, 822
- Hernandez, People v., 614 P.2d 900, p. 240
- Hernandez, People v., 393 P.2d 673, pp. 248, 315
- Hicks, United States v., 290, 293
- Higgins, Rex v., 216
- Hilton, State v., 291, 293
- H.J. Inc. v. Northwestern Bell Telephone Co., 652
- H.M. Advocate v. Fraser, 108
- Hoffman Estates, Village of v. Flipside, Hoffman Estates, Inc., 44, 45, 48, 49
- Hogan, State v., 439
- Hollis v. State, 281
- Hopkins v. State, 154
- Houston v. State, 726
- Howe, Regina v., 408
- Hudson, United States v., 37
- Hunt, State v., 739, 740
- Hutto v. Davis, 939, 940, 941, 946, 949
- Hyde v. United States, 226, 621
- Iannelli v. United States, 632
- In re (see name of party)**
- Instan, Regina v., 94
- International Minerals & Chemical Corp., United States v., 203
- Jackson v. Indiana, 515, 530, 531
- Jackson, State v., 739, 740, 741
- Jacobellis v. State of Ohio, 61
- Jaffe, People v., 251, 254, 255, 257, 259
- Jahnke v. State, 374, 376
- Janes, State v., 376, 377
- Jenkins v. State, 836
- Jernatowski, People v., 813
- Johnson, United States v., 956 F.2d 894, p. 405
- Johnson, United States v., 25 M.J. 691, p. 302
- Jones v. Randall, 33
- Jones v. State, 640 So.2d 1084, p. 320
- Jones v. State, 76 Ala. 8, p. 353
- Jones, State v., 451, 467
- Jones v. United States, 103 S.Ct. 3043, pp. 516, 518, 521, 522, 524, 525, 526, 528, 530
- Jones v. United States, 308 F.2d 307, pp. 92, 95, 531, 532
- Jurek v. Texas, 673
- Kane, People v., 821
- Kane v. United States, 513
- Katz, People v., 380
- Katzenbach v. McClung, 79
- Keeler v. Superior Court of Amador County, 64**, 76, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82
- Keenan v. Commonwealth v., 660
- Kelly, People v., 369**, 370, 373, 378, 406, 502, 509, 511, 512
- Kelly, State v., 360**
- Kent v. Dulles, 45
- Kent v. United States, 426
- Kibbe v. Henderson, 822, 823, 824, 826
- Kibbe, People v., 819**, 822, 823, 824, 826, 827
- Kinder, United States v., 398
- King v. Barker, 227
- King v. Creighton, 453

- Knüller v. Director of Public Prosecutions, 35
Kolender v. Lawson, 43, 50, 51, 52, 53, 56
Konz, Commonwealth v., 85, 92, 97
 Kotteakos v. United States, 649
 Krizka, People v., 331
 Kroncke, United States v., 331
 Krovarz, People v., 239, 240, 246
 Krulewitch v. United States, 596
- Lafferty, State v., 498
 Lambert v. California, 159, 160, 161, 194, 202
 Lanzetta v. New Jersey, 45, 50, 68, 69
Lauria, People v., 613, 619
 Lee, State v., 782
 Leggett v. State, 513
 Leidholm, State v., 356, 357, 358
 Leland v. State of Or., 455, 527, 889
 Lewellyn, United States v., 497
 Lewis v. City of New Orleans, 46
 Liberta, People v., 308, 311
 Lievers v. State, 629
 Liparota v. United States, 209, 212
 Lipman, Regina v., 185
 Lockett v. Ohio, 677, 678, 679, 716, 725, 728, 729, 745, 921
 Long v. State, 167
 Lord Mohun's Case, 569
 Luciano, People v., 624
 Lyons, United States v., 739 F.2d 994, p. 456
 Lyons, United States v., 731 F.2d 243, p. 456
- Maher v. People, 777, 778, 779, 785
 Maik, State v., 511
 Malcolm, United States ex rel. Newsome v., 57
 Malone, Commonwealth v., 808, 809
Manley, Rex v., 31, 33, 34, 35, 77, 78, 216
Markum, Commonwealth v., 325, 331, 332, 334, 336
 Marrero, People v., 153, 154
 Marshall, People v., 581
Martin v. Ohio, 887, 891
 Martin, State v., 887
 Martin, State ex rel. v. Tally, 573, 574
Martin v. State, 106
Matter of (see name of party)
 Mayfield v. State, 334
 McBoyle v. United States, 82, 84
 McBrayer v. State, 319
McCleskey v. Kemp, 748, 765, 774
 McDonald, Commonwealth v., 281
 McDonald v. United States, 493, 499
 McFarland v. American Sugar Refining Co., 874
 McGautha v. California, 671, 673, 688
 McGhee v. Virginia, 572
 McIlvoy, State v., 719, 720
 McKinnon v. State, 714
 McLaughlin, People v., 616
 McNair v. State, 293
 Memoirs v. Massachusetts, 58, 59, 61
 Merritt v. Commonwealth, 241
- Michael M. v. Superior Court of Sonoma County, 321, 322
 Miller v. California, 59, 60, 61, 63, 64
 Miller v. State, 415 So.2d 1262, p. 730
 Miller v. State, 373 So.2d 882, p. 722
 Mills v. United States, 281
 Milwaukee, City of v. Nelson, 57
 Minneapolis, City of v. Altimus, 507
 Minor, Regina v., 108
 Mitchell, State v., 251
 Mlinarich, Commonwealth v., 542 A.2d 1335, pp. 288, 289
 Mlinarich, Commonwealth v., 498 A.2d 395, p. 289
 M'Naghten's Case, Daniel, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 465, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 484, 491, 504, 505, 506, 507, 528, 800
 Mochan, Commonwealth v., 38
 Moe, State v., 334
 Moffitt, State v., 836, 838, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846
 Montana v. Egelhoff, 188, 189
 Moore, United States v., 921 F.2d 207, pp. 231, 232
 Moore, United States v., 486 F.2d 1139, p. 498
Moose, State v., 696, 703
 Moran, People v., 252
 Moretti, State v., 251
 Morgan, Regina v., 588
Morissette v. United States, 124, 125, 132, 134, 146, 149, 165, 193, 194, 195, 196, 198, 199, 209, 210, 212, 896, 897
Mullaney v. Wilbur, 864, 872, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 883, 885, 886, 890, 891, 892, 893, 897, 898, 899
- Naovarath v. State, 952
 Nash v. United States, 54, 63, 76
 National Ass'n for Advancement of Colored People v. Button, 56
 National Organization for Women, Inc. v. Scheidler, 643
Neelley v. State, 712, 715, 717, 721
 Newsome, United States ex rel. v. Malcolm, 57
 New York v. Ferber, 206
 Norman, State v., 372
 Northington v. State, 818
- O'Brien, State v., 331
 O'Connor v. Donaldson, 522, 528
 Ogen, People v., 786, 787
 Ogunmola, People v., 293
 Oliver, People v., 93
 Oliver, State v., 702
 Olivio, State v., 306
 O'Malley, Commonwealth v., 131
 O'Neil v. State of Vermont, 944
 Ott, State v., 799

- Papachristou v. City of Jacksonville, 44, 46, 50, 52, 53
 Paris Adult Theatre I v. Slaton, 61
 Parish, State v., 151
 Parker v. Levy, 45, 48
 Parker, Regina v., 542
 Parker v. State, 509
 Parsons v. State, 452, 491
Patterson v. New York, 527, 794, 795, 801, 870, 888, 889, 890, 891, 893, 896, 897
 Patterson, People v., 795, 796, 881, 885, 886, 891, 892, 899
 Pearson v. State, 263
 Peaslee, Commonwealth v., 225, 226
 Pennsylvania v. Gillespie, 38
 Penry v. Lynaugh, 678, 932, 936
Peoni, United States v., 576, 579, 620
People v. _____ (see opposing party)
 People By and Through Russel v. District Court For Fourth Judicial Dist., 818
People ex rel. v. _____ (see opposing party and relator)
 People, on Inf. of Price v. Sheffield Farms-Slawson-Decker Co., 198
 Peters v. Kiff, 753
 Petrillo, United States v., 46, 54, 58
 Pierce v. Turner, 510
 Pigg, Regina v., 246
 Pike, State v., 451
 Pinch, State v., 742
Pinkerton v. United States, 620, 623, 624, 625, 631
 Pippin, People v., 225
 Plessy v. Ferguson, 763
 Poplis, People v., 813
 Porta v. Mayor, City of Omaha, Neb., 57
 Porter, Rex v., 32
 Portland, City of v. White, 57
 Powell v. State of Tex., 112, 498, 529
 Prince, Regina v., 200, 201, 202
 Proffitt v. Florida, 55, 673
 Pruitt v. State, 264, 265
 Pugh v. Commonwealth, 803
 Pulley v. Harris, 695, 747, 751, 754

 Quinlan, Matter of, 99, 100

 R., In re, 432, 434
 Raley v. State of Ohio, 162, 418
 Randall, State v., 532, 534
 Randolph, State v., 850
 Redline, Commonwealth v., 856
 Reed, State v., 837
 Reese, United States v., 44, 51
Regina v. _____ (see opposing party)
Register, People v., 811, 817
 Regle v. Maryland, 604
Rex v. _____ (see opposing party)
 Richards, Regina v., 590, 591, 592
 Ristaino v. Ross, 761
 Rivera v. Delaware, 455, 889
 Rizzo, People v., 226, 229

 Robbins, People v., 91, 92, 97, 98
 Roberts v. Louisiana, 97 S.Ct. 1993, p. 674
 Roberts v. Louisiana, 96 S.Ct. 3001, pp. 673, 903, 904, 914
 Robinson v. State of Cal., 111, 112, 498, 901, 922
 Roe v. Wade, 327, 330, 333
 Rogers, Commonwealth v., 452
 Romine v. State, 726
 Rood, State v., 235
Ross v. Mississippi, 262, 265
 Roth v. United States, 58, 59, 61, 62
 Rummel v. Estelle, 939, 940, 942, 944, 946, 949, 952, 953, 955
 Rundle, United States ex rel. Almeida v., 76
Rusk, State v., 271, 280, 281, 283, 302
Russell, Rex v., 567, 570, 571, 572, 574, 575, 576
 Russell, United States v., 416

 Salerno, United States v., 522, 523, 524, 530, 531
 Sall, United States v., 621
 Salt Lake City v. Savage, 57
 Sandoval v. Acevedo, 305
Sandstrom v. Montana, 892, 898, 899
 Satchell, People v., 839, 840, 841, 842
 Schenck v. United States, 206
 Schmidt, People v., 469
 Scofield, Rex v., 216
 Seattle, City of v. Jones, 57
 Sedima, S.P.R.L. v. Imrex Co., Inc., 651, 654, 656
 Seven Minors, Matter of, 436
 Shaw v. Director of Public Prosecutions, 34, 35
 Shelton, People v., 796, 798
 Sheriff, Clark County v. Morris, 849
 Sherman v. United States, 416
 Shiflet v. State, 804
 Shorter v. People, 344
 Shuttlesworth v. City of Birmingham, 45, 50
 Sidley, Rex v., 33
 Sigma Reproductive Health Center v. State, 331
 Sikora, State v., 367, 488
 Simcock, Commonwealth v., 301
 Simpson, United States v., 331
 Smith v. Goguen, 44, 46, 48, 49
Smith, State v., 554 A.2d 713, pp. 296, 301, 302
 Smith, State v., 534 P.2d 1180, p. 243
Sobiek, People v., 74, 77, 78, 82
 Solem v. Helm, 754, 939, 940, 942, 943, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959
 Solomon, People v., 44, 45
 Sostilio, Commonwealth v., 809
 Spaziano v. Florida, 716, 764
 Speiser v. Randall, 872, 891
 Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey v. United States, 54
 Stanford v. Kentucky, 678, 717, 932, 936, 951

- Staples v. United States, 198, 203, 209, 210, 212
 Starks, State v., 57
State of (see name of party)
State v. (see opposing party)
State ex rel. v. (see opposing party)
 State in Interest of M.T.S., 285, 286, 287, 288, 303
 St. Christopher, State v., 605, 607
 Steele v. State, 556
 Stein, State v., 625
Stephenson, Regina v., 540, 542, 543, 553
 Sterrett, State v., 151
 Stever v. State, 263
 Stewart, State v., 372
 Still, United States v., 230, 231, 232
 Stockton, State v., 291
 Story v. United States, 581
 Strasburg, State v., 557
 Strauder v. State of West Virginia, 753
 Striggles, State v., 154
 Sumner v. Shuman, 674
 Superior Court (Caswell), People v., 57
 Superior Court of City of New York, People ex rel. Dey v., 305
 Sykes v. Director of Public Prosecutions, 617

 Tally, State ex rel. Martin v., 573, 574
 Tate, State v., 335
 Taylor, Commonwealth v., 38
 Taylor, People v., 854
 Taylor, State v., 251, 859
 Teal, People v., 252
 Tenement House Dept. of City of New York v. McDevitt, 198
 Tennessee v. Garner, 349
 Terry v. Ohio, 43, 44, 46, 47, 49
 Thacker v. Commonwealth, 241, 243, 244
Thomas, People v., 236, 241, 244, 245, 247, 248
 Thomas, Regina v., 616
 Thomas, United States v., 251, 610, 611
 Thompson v. Oklahoma, 678, 717, 932, 936
 Thompson v. Washington, 846
 Tichnell v. State, 743
 Tison v. Arizona, 678, 694, 719, 924, 932
 Tizard, State v., 294, 295
 Tolson, Regina v., 166
 Tomlins, People v., 352
 Torniero, United States v., 735 F.2d 725, p. 495
 Torniero, United States v., 570 F.Supp. 723, p. 494
 Toscano, State v., 407
 Tot v. United States, 875
 Trimble v. State, 718
 Trop v. Dulles, 670, 904, 951, 952
Turkette, United States v., 632, 636, 643, 645, 650
 Turner v. Murray, 753, 759, 761
Tyrell, Regina v., 593, 594, 632
Tyvonne, In re, 427, 432, 434

Underwood, State v., 842, 845, 847, 848
United States v. (see opposing party)
United States ex rel. v. (see opposing party and relator)
 United States Gypsum Co., United States v., 203

 Valencia, State v., 717
 Vasquez v. Hillery, 753, 761
 Villa, People v., 585
Village of (see name of village)

 Wahrlich v. State of Ariz., 545
 Wakefield, Regina v., 108
 Walden, State v., 572, 576
 Walker, State v., 134, 136, 146, 147, 199
 Walters v. Lunt, 588, 589
 Walton v. Arizona, 680, 728
 Wanrow, State v., 846
 Warshow, State v., 331
 Washington v. Bingham, 663
 Washington, People v., 852, 853, 855, 856
 Watson, People v., 805
 Wayte v. United States, 761
 Weems v. United States, 943, 944, 946, 947
 Welfare of Givens, Matter of, 443
 Welfare of J. F. K., Matter of, 443
 Wells, People v., 792
 Wetmore, People v., 547, 550, 556
 Whisenant, State v., 738, 740
 Whiteford v. Commonwealth, 807
 Whitus v. State of Ga., 761
 William A., In re, 432
 Williams, People v., 301
 Williams v. State, 410, 412
 Williams, State v., 742, 745
Willis, United States v., 401, 406, 410
 Wilson v. State, 119
 Wiltberger, United States v., 80
 Winship, In re, 527, 528, 529, 822, 863, 867, 868, 869, 873, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 886, 887, 888, 891, 893, 895, 897
 Withers v. Director of Public Prosecutions, 34
 Witherspoon v. State of Ill., 664, 665, 753
 Woodruff v. Superior Court of Los Angeles County, 854
Woods, State v., 163, 165, 166, 167, 168
 Woodson v. North Carolina, 673, 729, 903, 904, 945

X-Citement Video, Inc., United States v., 205, 206, 207

 Yanz, State v., 790
 Yates v. Aiken, 736
Yates, State v., 732, 740, 741
 Yermian, United States v., 136, 137, 203, 205
 York, Commonwealth v., 866, 867

Young, In re, 536

Young v. American Mini Theatres, Inc., 214

Young, People v., 183 N.E.2d 319, pp. **385**,
386

Young, People v., 210 N.Y.S.2d 358, pp.
378, 740, 741, 746

Young, State v., **736**

Young v. Weston, 536

Youngs, People v., 225

Zant v. Stephens, 679, 680, 694, 726

*

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	iii
TABLE OF CASES	xxiii
INTRODUCTION The Purposes of Punishment.....	1
CHAPTER I The Criminal Act.....	31
1: The Requirement of Previously Defined Conduct	31
2: Conduct in the Definition of the Offense	64
3: The Requirement of a Voluntary Act	106
CHAPTER II The Criminal Mind	114
1: The Foundations of Mens Rea	114
2: Application of the Mens Rea Structure	168
CHAPTER III Attempt	216
1: The Required Conduct.....	217
2: Mens Rea	236
3: Impossibility	248
4: Abandonment in Attempt and Other Offenses	262
CHAPTER IV Sexual Offenses	268
1: Rape	268
2: Statutory Rape	311
CHAPTER V Justification and Excuse	324
1: Justification.....	325
2: Situational Excuse	399
CHAPTER VI Criminal Responsibility	419
1: Immaturity	420
2: Mental Abnormality.....	445
CHAPTER VII Liability for the Conduct of Another.....	565
1: Complicity	565
2: Conspiracy.....	595
3: RICO	632
CHAPTER VIII Homicide	657
1: Capital Homicide	664
2: Grading of Non-Capital Homicides	774
3: Causation	819
4: Felony Murder	828
CHAPTER IX Proof and Proportionality	863
1: Proof Beyond a Reasonable Doubt.....	863
2: Proportionality.....	901

APPENDIX A: THE MODEL PENAL CODE.....	A-1
TABLE OF MODEL PENAL CODE REFERENCES	A-99
APPENDIX B: SELECTED PENAL STATUTES	B-1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	iii
TABLE OF CASES	xxiii
INTRODUCTION The Purposes of Punishment	1
A Testing Case: <i>People v. Delury</i>	2
Retribution.....	3
1. The Criminal Law As a Moral Statement.....	6
2. Retribution and the Capacity for Responsible Conduct	6
3. Retribution and Grading: Proportionality	9
4. Retribution as a Limiting Principle.....	10
General Deterrence	11
1. The Concept	12
2. The Criminal as Rational Calculator	13
3. How Much Punishment Will Deter?.....	15
4. Measuring Deterrence.....	17
5. Deterrence and Blameworthiness	18
Individual Prevention	21
1. Special Deterrence.....	21
2. Incapacitation.....	22
3. Rehabilitation.....	26
CHAPTER I The Criminal Act.....	31
Sec.	
1: The Requirement of Previously Defined Conduct	31
<i>Rex v. Manley</i>	31
Notes on <i>Manley</i> and the Common Law.....	33
1. Introduction to the Common Law.....	33
2. Later English Cases.....	34
3. Questions and Comments on Judicial Crime Creation	35
Notes on the Principle of Legality.....	35
1. Introduction	35
2. European Origins.....	36
3. The American Experience: Encounter with the Common Law.....	37
4. Recent Experience	38

Sec.

1: The Requirement of Previously Defined Conduct—Continued

5. Growing Acceptance and Evolving Meaning	39
6. The Continuing Significance of the Common Law	42
<i>Kolender v. Lawson</i>	43
Notes on the Vagueness Doctrine	50
1. Rationales of the Vagueness Doctrine	50
2. Limits of the Vagueness Rationales	51
3. <i>Papachristou v. City of Jacksonville</i>	52
4. Tolerable Vagueness and the Demands of Necessity	53
5. <i>Nash v. United States</i> and Questions of Degree	54
6. Intolerable Vagueness and Protected Freedoms	55
7. Questions and Comments on <i>Kolender v. Lawson</i>	56
Notes on Obscenity: A Case Study in Vagueness	57
1. The Obscenity Problem	57
2. The <i>Roth-Memoirs</i> Test	58
3. Redefining Obscenity: <i>Miller v. California</i>	59
4. The Brennan Dissent	61
5. Pornography as a Violation of Women's Rights	63
2: Conduct in the Definition of the Offense	64
A: Acts	64
<i>Keeler v. Superior Court of Amador County</i>	64
<i>People v. Sobiek</i>	74
Notes on <i>Keeler</i> and <i>Sobiek</i>	77
1. Questions on <i>Keeler</i> and <i>Sobiek</i>	77
2. Relation to <i>Manley</i>	77
3. <i>Bowie</i> : Background of a Constitutional Precedent	78
Notes on the Doctrine of Strict Construction	80
1. Origin of the Doctrine	80
2. The Legislative Response	81
3. <i>McBoyle v. United States</i>	82
4. Strict Construction of Federal Statutes: <i>United States v. Bass</i>	83
B: Omissions	85
<i>Commonwealth v. Konz</i>	85
Notes on Omissions	91
1. <i>People v. Robbins</i>	91
2. The Necessity of a Duty to Act	92
3. Failure to Summon Medical Assistance for Drug Overdose	93
4. Failure to Provide Sustenance	94
5. A General Duty to Rescue?	95
Note on Complicity	97
<i>Barber v. Superior Court of Los Angeles County</i>	98
Notes on the Omission of Life-Sustaining Treatment	101
1. Questions and Comments on <i>Barber</i>	101
2. Report of the President's Commission	102
3. Differentiating Acts From Omissions	104
4. Legislative Solutions	104

Sec.

2: Conduct in the Definition of the Offense—Continued	
Note on Possession	105
3: The Requirement of a Voluntary Act	106
<i>Martin v. State</i>	106
Notes on the Requirement of a Voluntary Act	106
1. The Requirement of a Voluntary Act	106
2. Forms of Impaired Consciousness	107
3. Codification	109
4. Content and Function of the Voluntary Act Requirement	109
5. Involuntary Act in a Voluntary Course of Conduct: <i>People v. Decina</i>	110
6. Constitutionalizing Voluntariness?: <i>Robinson and Powell</i>	111
7. Relation to Other Doctrines	112
CHAPTER II The Criminal Mind	114

1: The Foundations of Mens Rea	114
A: Historical Origins of Mens Rea	114
<i>Regina v. Faulkner</i>	114
Notes on the Evolution of Mens Rea	116
1. Introduction	116
2. The Language of Mens Rea	117
3. Mens Rea and General Malevolence	118
4. Holmes' Theory	119
5. <i>Regina v. Cunningham</i>	121
6. <i>Faulkner</i> and <i>Cunningham</i> Compared	123
<i>Morissette v. United States</i>	124
Notes on the Tradition of Mens Rea	130
1. Background on Theft Offenses	130
2. Rationale for the Mens Rea for Theft	132
3. "Specific" and "General" Intent	133
4. The Defense of Mistake of Fact	134
5. Concluding Questions on <i>Morissette</i>	137
B: The Model Penal Code	137
Introductory Notes on the Model Penal Code	137
1. The Actus Reus	137
2. The Mens Rea	139
Notes on the Model Penal Code Culpability Structure	141
1. Minimum Requirements of Culpability	141
2. "Purpose"	142
3. "Knowledge"	143
4. "Recklessness"	143
5. "Negligence"	144
6. Offense Silent as to Mens Rea	145
7. Ambiguous Mens Rea Provisions	145
8. Hierarchy of Model Penal Code Culpability Terms	149
9. Mistake of Fact	149
C: Ignorance or Mistake of Criminality	149