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The Handbook of Juvenile Delinquency and Juvenile Justice

Edited by Marvin D. Krohn and Jodi Lane

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The Handbook of Juvenile Delinquency and Juvenile Justice

Wiley Handbooks in Criminology and Criminal Justice

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The handbooks in this series will be comprehensive, academic reference works on leading topics in criminology and criminal justice.

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The Handbook of Juvenile Delinquency and Juvenile Justice Edited by Marvin D. Krohn and Jodi Lane

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Introduction

Marvin D. Krohn and Jodi Lane

Over the last few decades, major changes have occurred in both the fields of juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice. Our understanding of juvenile delinquency, especially theories, has been refined. The number of youths entering and exiting the system increased dramatically in the 1990s; yet, despite warnings that things would get much worse over time, the population of youths being processed through the system has declined in recent years. Still, policy changes instituted at the height of concern over juvenile crime remain. Theories addressing the reasons for juveniles' delinquent behavior have undergone significant development, and research examining the correlates and causes of delinquency has advanced with the acquisition of longitudinal data and the use of innovative statistical analytical methods.

The 35 chapters in this compendium are intended to address the changes that have taken place in how we deal with delinquency and the evolution of how we think about and study juvenile delinquents and their behavior. We asked the authors to provide some background on where the field has been, what the current state of knowledge is, and where they see practice, research, and theory about juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice going in the future.

The handbook is divided into five distinct sections examining trends in juvenile delinquency, the correlates of youth crime, theories of delinquent behavior, justice approaches (including prevention and treatment), and special issues.

Part I provides eight chapters exploring the current status of juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice in different nations around the world and discusses the processing of juvenile offenders. Most published works focus exclusively on the situation in the US, occasionally comparing it with "sister" nations that are similar in one aspect or another. We were intent upon taking a more global view of the problem and invited scholars from nations in Europe, South America, and Asia to provide a description of the rates of delinquency in their country of interest and to briefly discuss recent changes in laws concerning the processing of delinquents. By including detail about these nations, we are underscoring the notion that juvenile

delinquency is a global problem and, more importantly, that scholars and practitioners have much to learn from other countries. Also in this section, Gardner and Lanza-Kaduce write about the processing of juvenile offenders in the US, focusing especially on legal issues and how major court cases have affected the way that youths are treated in the justice system.

In Part II, we turn attention to an examination of the correlates of delinquent behavior to set the groundwork for the theoretical explanations of delinquency reviewed in Part III. Scholars review the state of the research on gender (Chesney-Lind and Chagnon), race and ethnicity (Unnever), genetics (Gibson and Davis), parenting (Hoffman), schools (Welsh and Harding), peers (Eassey and Buchanan) and neighborhoods (McNeeley and Wilcox). Each chapter not only examines our current knowledge but, perhaps more importantly, makes suggestions for future research efforts in their respective areas.

Our field is replete with theories of why juveniles engage in delinquent behavior, and a thorough exploration of all the theoretical positions would constitute a full handbook of its own. For Part III, we have selected six theoretical perspectives to illustrate approaches to explaining delinquency. Scholars well-known for their work on these theories write about the respective points of view on the causes of juvenile crime. The included theories are general strain theory (Agnew), social learning theory (Winfree), social control and self-control theories (Goode), life course theories (Blokland), labeling theory (Krohn and Lopes), and routine activities and opportunity theories (Tilley and Sidebottom).

In Part IV we focus on how the system responds to delinquency. Authors explore three different types of prevention programs to determine what constitutes best practice. Brennan and Shaw look at parental and early childhood prevention, Lab examines programs in schools, and Fagan and Lindsey focus on neighborhood-based prevention. The remainder of this section examines what happens when prevention does not work. Shteynberg and Redlich discuss how the police respond to juveniles. Ray and Childs focus on juvenile diversion. Lieber and Peck examine how juvenile and adult courts deal with troubled teens. Once youths are adjudicated delinquent, different programming and treatment strategies are available. Garcia examines community-based sanctions, and Glick reviews the current state of institutionalization and describes the treatment strategies used in these institutions.

The final section of this compendium covers special issues related to juvenile delinquency. Juvenile or youth gangs have been of considerable policy importance in recent decades both in the US and Europe. Howell examines the current knowledge of the gang problem within the US, while Weitekamp discusses the causes of youth gangs in European nations with a special emphasis on German gangs. Statistics also show that delinquent behavior becomes more problematic when weapons are involved, and Emmert and Lizotte discuss some of the motivations among youth for carrying and using weapons. Drug use constitutes a major form of delinquency among teenagers, and Stogner and Miller identify the different types of prescription and illegal drugs that are commonly used by youths.

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Another factor related to delinquency is victimization, and Ireland writes about the connections between child abuse and becoming an offender. Finally, May discusses the broader literature on juvenile victimization and fear of crime among adolescents.

No single compendium can cover the range of relevant issues necessary for a complete understanding of issues regarding juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice. Yet, we believe the current attempt provides a comprehensive examination of many of the most important issues. Including chapters written by scholars who have either established themselves in their respective fields of expertise or are on their way to doing so results in a compendium that provides an up-to-date examination of what we know about juvenile delinquency and the operation of the juvenile justice system.

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