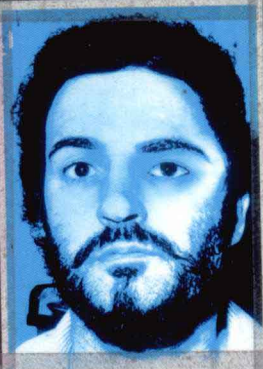
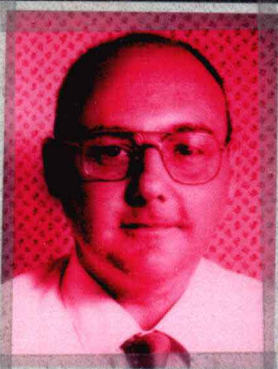


OXFORD

Criminology



Stephen Jones

Fourth edition

CRIMINOLOGY

Fourth edition

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Preface to the fourth edition

I am very pleased to have been asked to write a new edition of *Criminology*. This is especially the case as I am now able to feel a greater degree of empathy with some of the people whose behaviour is considered in the book. Some time ago, I entered a branch of a well-known British supermarket chain on a dark rainy evening. I happened to be wearing a jacket with a hood and, given the weather conditions, the hood was up. I was hardly through the shop entrance before a security guard swooped and told me to take it down. Although I pointed out to a representative of the 'management' that even my greatest detractors would be unlikely to mistake me for a hoodie, he seemed unimpressed. If I were forty years younger, I doubt if I would have received the respectful treatment that was accorded to me. Moreover, although I was able to rebuff this attempt at labelling, it is possible that some innocent teenagers would not be. (The supermarket chain subsequently refused to answer my query about its policy towards female customers who cover their heads for religious reasons.)

This edition has been updated and, in certain areas, expanded. A new section on research methodology has been added. When the publishers told me that readers like the book's compact nature, I decided that something had to go. In the event, the axe has fallen on the old chapter 1, which dealt with the history of the police, as this seemed to be less integrated within the overall structure of the book. Hopefully, this will not annoy too many people. There are several books that deal with this material, the best of which is Robert Reiner's excellent *The Politics of the Police*.

Finally, I cannot think of anyone I need to thank for helping me with this new edition.

Stephen Jones
Rotterdam, October 2008

Preface to the third edition

As I write, it is increasingly apparent that a general election is imminent in the UK. The strongest possible indicator of this is present—politicians are vying to assure the public that they will take the toughest stance on crime. There is a widespread assumption that the only way to prevent future offending is by imposing more severe punishments. Predictably, few politicians have raised the issue of why people commit crimes in the first place.

Despite this depressing background, it is encouraging that students are choosing to study criminology and related courses in increasing numbers. I hope that the new edition of this book can continue to help meet the growing need for a basic text in the subject. There have been no changes to the structure of the book, but new material has been added throughout and some areas expanded. My belief that it is important for students to have a grounding in the traditional criminological theories has been strengthened by the renewed interest in several of the older writers, such as Robert K Merton.

In the preface to the second edition, I pointed out that government publications and many journals are available on-line in university and college libraries. Four years later, this is now even more likely to be the case, and I hope this will provide some compensation for the increased length of the bibliography.

Finally, I am very grateful to Oxford University Press for being prepared to add this work to their already impressive list of criminology publications.

Stephen Jones
La Rochelle, February 2005

Preface to the second edition

I am very pleased that the response to the first edition of *Criminology* has led to the publishers asking me to produce a new version some three years later. On the basis that I must have done something right last time, I have not changed the structure of the book, but have confined myself to updating the material and expanding one or two areas. Although the number of references has increased to the extent that the bibliography now forms a sizeable part of the book, many journals (as well as Home Office and other government publications) are increasingly available on-line in university and college libraries. I have also made some minor alterations: for example, readers will be relieved to discover that they are no longer required to contemplate the perplexing notion of 'pubic transport'.

Having looked again at the preface to the first edition, I find that I still agree with the views I expressed at that time, and there is no need to repeat them here. I should like to add the names of Sue Pettit, the University's Law Librarian, Vanessa Mortiaux and my colleagues Janine Griffiths-Baker and Sam Lewis to the list of people who have assisted in the preparation of this book.

Stephen Jones
Helsinki, May 2001

Preface to the first edition

I must confess to having experienced a certain amount of discomfort in writing this book. Perhaps this came from my split personality. The half of me that is a law teacher has no problem in producing a textbook. The half of me that is a criminology teacher knows that *real* criminologists do not write textbooks and are reluctant to recommend their use to students. Textbooks, after all, are never detailed enough or cover all the arguments. It is far better to have a well-stocked library which, together with a carefully operated short-loan system, should be capable of meeting the students' needs.

The problem with this is that my experience of teaching criminology to undergraduates has taught me that they like the idea of having some sort of a textbook. It seems to provide a sense of security. With the increase in course assessment nowadays, I suspect that we tutors are making ever greater demands on our students. We would be delighted if they found the time to read all the references from the original sources that we set, but there are still only twenty-four hours in a day. Perhaps the references can be read in the vacation when there is more time but, for now, the students need to know where they are going. Hence this book.

The word criminology, in an academic context, is used in two different ways. The narrower usage is confined to the theoretical aspects, such as what determines the content of the criminal law and why some people act in such a way as to break the rules. The wider usage covers these considerations and also includes studies of sentencing and penology. This book is based on the narrower usage. This reflects developments at my own university (and, I suspect, at others) where modularisation has created a trend towards shorter courses.

The book is divided into three main parts. The first considers issues relating to the definition, measurement, portrayal and control of the phenomenon we call crime. The second looks at various explanations of crime which are predominantly based on societal influences. The third looks at some explanations of crime which mainly involve either biological or psychological influences, or both. The fact that much of the sociological analysis comes from America does not indicate some anti-British bias; it is simply a reflection of where a substantial amount of the research has been conducted, especially in the first half of the century. This occurred because not only were (and are) there extensive differences among individuals in America on account of widespread immigration, but because American culture has come to reflect the country's pioneering spirit and to exalt in its individuality. Hopefully, readers will be able to judge for themselves whether the cultural differences between the two countries (which some may feel are diminishing by the day) render the American literature less relevant. The biological and psychological material in the final part of the book is more likely to include British work: the medical sciences have never completely relinquished a hold on the study of crime in this country.

The inclusion of this last part may cause surprise to some people. Psychological explanations of crime have become distinctly unfashionable among criminologists, particularly as they embody what is perhaps the criminologist's most reviled notion: determinism. As will become apparent throughout this book, one of the commonest objections raised during the past thirty years to 'traditional' explanations of crime is that they deny individual actors 'freedom of choice'. However, this is a sweeping assertion, which should be treated with a certain amount of caution. Moreover, some sociologists appear to have an aversion to matters psychological and refuse even to contemplate the possibility that such issues could be relevant to antisocial behaviour. I have tried throughout to be open-minded. I do not provide 'the answers' at the end, but I hope I have asked the right questions.

Nor do I apologise for the fact that the approach (although, hopefully, not the contents) adopted in this book is basically a traditional one, using the conventional categories within the discipline and with a liberal sprinkling of references to 'the causes' of crime. My teaching experience suggests that such an approach is still fundamentally valid, and is more readily understood by undergraduate students. It also provides a good base for those who wish to progress further into the subject. In any case, as the difficulties with the traditional approach are raised in the text, students will become aware of them.

Some people may think the title *Criminology* to be somewhat grand for such a modest work. Indeed, a well-known criminologist colleague of mine was surprised by the brevity of the title and suggested that, in the best tradition of social scientific publications, I should follow the word 'Criminology' with a colon and then a suitably snappy subtitle. Unfortunately, I have been unable to think of one, so *Criminology* it remains. (In fact, the title became a 'working description' used in dealings with Butterworths, and then somehow found its way into their promotional literature!).

It is customary at this point to thank people who have provided assistance in the creation of this book, while at the same time assuming total responsibility for any blunders that it may contain. Thanks are due to Naomi Bull, Claire Hall, Katherine Rose Hall, Pat Hammond, Filomena Jones and Richard Jones. Yet, above all I owe a debt of gratitude to my students, who have sustained me over many years. They have been a source of inspiration, frustration and even humour (especially the one who wrote in an examination about 'rods and mockers'). If each of them were to buy a copy of this book, it would probably top the best-sellers list.

Stephen Jones
Tel Aviv, November 1997

Contents

<i>Preface to the fourth edition</i>	v
<i>Preface to the third edition</i>	vi
<i>Preface to the second edition</i>	vii
<i>Preface to the first edition</i>	viii

Introduction—Criminology: its origins and research methods	1
The origins of criminology	1
The development of criminology in Britain	2
The development of criminology in the USA	4
Britain's radical contribution	5
The past thirty years	6
Methods of criminological research	6
Quantitative research	7
Qualitative research	9
Conclusion	10

PART I CRIME AND CRIME CONTROL: ALTERNATIVE DISCOURSES

1 Crime: definitions and conflicting images	13
Problems of definition and context	13
Alternative definitions of 'criminal' behaviour	16
Crime is in the eye of the beholder	19
Crime as protecting the interests of the powerful	20
Conflicting images of crime	21
Autonomous behaviour v structural forces	21
Rich law v poor law	22
Corporate crime v street crime	24
Terrorism v justifiable state action	28
Conclusion	30
2 The statistics on crime and their meaning	31
Court statistics	32

Police statistics	32
Reporting crime	33
Recording crime	35
The counting rules	38
The National Crime Recording Standard	39
Victim surveys	40
Self-report surveys	45
International crime comparisons	47
Official data	47
The International Crime Victims Survey	48
The International Study of Self-Reported Delinquency	49
Conclusion	49
3 The media and 'law and order'	51
Legal constraints on the media	51
Sources of the media's information on crime	52
The police	52
Other sources of information	53
Selection of crime news	53
The content of crime news	57
A media agenda?	59
The implications of the media's portrayal of crime	62
Deviance amplification	62
Moral panic	63
Public perception of crime	65
Effect on attitudes and behaviour	66
Effect on sentencers	68
Conclusion	68
<hr/>	
PART II SOCIOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS OF CRIME	
4 The classical and positivist traditions	73
Pre-Enlightenment Europe	73
The classical school	74
Cesare Beccaria	75
Jeremy Bentham	77

Problems with classicism	78
The neoclassical school	79
The positivist school	80
Quetelet and Guerry	81
Cesare Lombroso	82
Enrico Ferri	83
Raffaele Garofalo	84
Evaluation	85
The classical and positivist approaches: later developments	87
Conclusion	89
5 Crime and the environment	90
The Victorian slum	90
The Chicago School and social disorganisation	92
Differential association—the interactionist link	96
Evaluation of differential association	98
The legacies of the Chicago School	100
Post-war developments in Britain	101
The growth of modern environmental criminology	102
Effects on social policy—USA	104
Effects on social policy—Britain	106
Conclusion	109
6 Poverty, anomie and strain	112
Crime and poverty	112
Crime and unemployment	113
Economic inequality	115
Conclusion	116
Functionalism and anomie	116
Emile Durkheim	117
Merton, anomie and strain	121
Durkheim and Merton	124
Evaluation of Merton's theory	124
Empirical support	127
Early developments of anomie theory	127

More recent developments of anomie theory	128
Agnew's general strain theory	128
'Crime and the American Dream'	130
'The Exclusive Society'	132
Conclusion	132
7 Subcultural theories	134
Frederick M Thrasher	134
William F Whyte	135
Albert K Cohen	135
Walter B Miller	138
Criticism	140
Richard A Cloward and Lloyd E Ohlin	141
Delinquency and opportunity: criticisms	143
Evaluation of American subcultural theories	144
David Matza	145
The early British research	148
British subcultures in the 1970s	149
The new millennium—from gangs to delinquent youth groups	152
Girls and subcultures	153
Race and gangs	155
Conclusion	155
8 Interactionism and phenomenology	157
Interactionism	157
Evaluation	162
Policy implications	166
Reintegrative shaming	168
Conclusion	173
Phenomenology and ethnomethodology	174
Katz's 'Seductions of Crime'	177
Cultural criminology	179
Evaluation	180
9 Conflict, Marxist and radical theories of crime	181
Conflict theorists	181
Thorsten Sellin	181

George Vold	182
Ralf Dahrendorf	183
Austin T Turk	184
The transition	185
Richard Quinney 1	185
William Chambliss 1	186
Evaluation of conflict criminology	188
Marxist criminology	190
Willem Bonger	190
Richard Quinney 2	191
William Chambliss 2	192
Marxism and crime in Britain: 'The New Criminology'	193
Evaluation of Marxist criminology	197
Late modernism and the post modern condition	199
The 'risk society'	199
Post modernism	201
Peacemaking criminology	203
Constitutive criminology	203
Conclusion	204
10 Realist criminology and victims	206
Right Realism	206
Evaluation	209
Left Realism	210
Evaluation	213
Victims	217
Conclusion	223
11 Theories of control	225
Early social control theories	226
Travis Hirschi and social control	228
Gottfredson and Hirschi's individual control theory	230
Hagan's power control theory	234
Control theory in Britain	235
Evaluation	238
Tittle's control balance	240
Conclusion	242

12 Gender and crime	244
The extent of female crime	244
Traditional criminology: biological and psychological explanations	246
Cesare Lombroso	246
W I Thomas	247
Sigmund Freud	248
Otto Pollak	248
Later positivist work	249
Traditional criminology: sociological explanations	251
Female emancipation	256
Radical feminism	259
Masculinities and crime	260
Masculinities and crime: problems	263
Conclusion	265

PART III BIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF CRIME

13 Biological factors and crime	269
Constitutional factors	269
Cesare Lombroso	269
Charles Goring	270
Earnest Hooton	271
William Sheldon and body types	272
Genetic factors	274
Twin studies	275
Adoption studies	277
Chromosome abnormalities	279
Biochemical factors	282
Neurotransmitters	282
Hormones	283
Nutrition and hypoglycaemia	286
The environment	287
Central nervous system	287
Epilepsy	288
Brain damage and dysfunction	289
Autonomic nervous system	291

Alcohol and drugs	292
Alcohol	293
Drugs	295
Conclusion	296
14 Intelligence, mental disorder and crime	300
Intelligence and crime	300
Background	300
Intelligence and crime	301
Race, intelligence and crime	303
Conclusion	305
Mental disorder and crime	306
The legal definition	307
The relationship between crime and mental disorder	308
Mental disorder in criminals	308
Criminal behaviour in mentally disordered populations	309
Forms of mental disorder	310
Mental disorder and violence	316
Conclusion	317
15 Personality theories	319
The search for 'criminal' traits	319
Psychoanalytic explanations of crime	320
The Freudian personality	321
Phases of personality development	322
Methods of dealing with instinctual urges	322
Resolution of the Oedipus complex	323
Later problems with the superego	324
Attachment	326
Evaluation	329
Conclusion	330
Learning theories	331
Classical conditioning	332
Operant learning	332
Social learning theory	333
Rational choice theory	335
TV and film violence	336

Differential association theory	339
Eysenck's theory of criminality	339
Structure of personality	340
The biological basis of personality	342
Socialisation	342
Gordon Trasler	343
Evaluation	343
Conclusion	344
16 Violent, aggressive and sexual offences	346
Violent and aggressive offences	346
Frequency of violent offences	347
Explanations of violent offending	348
Factors precipitating violence	351
The aggressive personality	351
Spouse or partner abuse	352
Child abuse	354
Sexual offences	358
Frequency of sexual offences	358
Explanations of sexual offending	360
Exposure	361
Sexual offences against children	362
Rape	364
Conclusion	369
And finally...	371
<i>Bibliography</i>	375
<i>Name index</i>	429
<i>Subject index</i>	437

Introduction—Criminology: its origins and research methods

The origins of criminology

Writings about crime can be found from the earliest times. Sometimes they were in the form of novels and on other occasions they were accounts, such as the consequences of deprivation in slums and the evils of drink. Yet, such writers did not think of themselves as criminologists. They wrote from a variety of perspectives: religion, medicine and, in particular, a growing concern about the governance of the country that arose from increasing urbanisation. The term ‘criminology’ emerged at the end of the nineteenth century because a group of theorists laid claim to systematic knowledge as to the nature of criminal behaviour, its causes and solutions. Prior to this, commentaries on crime largely arose out of other enterprises. How was it that criminology came to develop as a specialist science of the criminal?

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the administration of criminal justice in most European countries had been influenced by the views of several writers whose approach, although differing in certain respects, has come to be referred to as ‘classicism’. The main exponent is generally agreed to be Cesare Beccaria, who set out his ideas in the book *On Crimes and Punishments* (1764). These were later taken up in England by the philosopher Jeremy Bentham. The basic view as to the organisation of society adopted by the classicists was influenced by the social contract theories of Hobbes and Rousseau. Individuals agree to join together to form a society, and there is a consensus within the society for the private ownership of property and the protection of its members from harm. People enter freely into a ‘social contract’ with the state to maintain this consensus. Part of this ‘contract’ gives the state the power to punish criminals. Punishment should not be arbitrary or excessive, but proportionate to the harm caused. Individuals are rational beings and are therefore considered responsible for their own actions.

The classical approach to criminal justice was described by the American criminologist George Vold (1958) as: ‘An exact scale of punishments for equal acts without reference to the nature of the individual involved and with no attention to the question of special circumstances under which the act came about’.

In practice, this approach was modified—mitigating factors were allowed in the determination of punishment—but during the nineteenth century classicism had to confront the challenge of a new set of writers, who came to be known as positivists. The term was first used by Auguste Comte. Positivism developed as a result of growing