

Taking Stock: The Status of Criminological Theory (Advances in Criminological Theory)

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Criminology is in a period of much theoretical ferment. Older theories have been revitalized, and newer theories have been set forth. The very richness of our thinking about crime, however, leads to questions about the relative merits of these competing paradigms. Accordingly, in this volume advocates of prominent theories are asked to "take stock" of their perspectives. Their challenge is to assess the empirical status of their theory and to map out future directions for theoretical development.

The volume begins with an assessment of three perspectives that have long been at the core of criminology: social learning theory, control theory, and strain theory. Drawing on these traditions, two major contemporary macro-level theories of crime have emerged and are here reviewed: institutional-anomie theory and collective efficacy theory. Critical criminology has yielded diverse contributions discussed in essays on feminist theories, radical criminology, peacemaking criminology, and the effects of racial segregation. The volume includes chapters examining Moffitt's insights on life-course persistent/adolescent-limited anti-social behavior and Sampson and Laub's life-course theory of crime. In addition, David Farrington provides a comprehensive assessment of the adequacy of the leading developmental and life-course theories of crime.

Finally, *Taking Stock* presents essays that review the status of perspectives that have direct implications for the use of criminological knowledge to control crime. Taken together, these chapters provide a comprehensive update of the field's leading theories of crime. The volume will be of interest to criminological scholars and will be ideal for classroom use in courses reviewing contemporary theories of criminal behavior.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Cullen, Wright, and Blevins engaged contemporary theorists to discuss the current state of the gamut of criminological theory for this excellent 15th volume in the series "Advances in Criminological Theory." Each chapter highlights a specific area of theory as an innovator or originator of the perspective, and brings current world and social affairs to bear on the framework… Summing Up: Highly recommended. Graduate students and above.”

—F. E. Knowles, *Choice*

"All writings have a common roots in the basic understanding of criminology theory, particularly the three perspective at the core of criminology: social learning theory, control theory, and strain theory. Intended for advanced criminology students, *Taking Stock* is a valuable contribution to common understanding of the causes of, deterrents to, and optimum means to combat crime."

—Michael Dunford, *Midwest Book Review*

"According to the editors of this of this new volume in the venerable *Advances in Criminological Theory* series, the emergence of a multiple array of criminological theories in recent decades may well be 'intellectually bewildering for the average criminologist.' Imagine the plight of practioners (or ordinary citizens) interested in digging a little deeper into the roots of criminal offending behavior! It is of great value, then, that the editors, all associated with the University of Cincinnati's criminal justice program, have made the effort to "entice scholars who have either authored a specific theory or had been prominent within a theoretical tradition to take stock of their respective perspectives." [...] This collection of 15 articles, plus a thorough introduction from the editors, serves professional and lay readers equally well. Of particular importance is the editors' emphasis on the utility of meta-analysis and on not just taking stock but takng empirical responsibility for the vitality and usefulness of particual theories."

—Russ Immarigeon

About the Author

Francis T. Cullen is distinguished research professor emeritus and senior research associate in the School of Criminal Justice at the University of Cincinnati.

Kristie R. Blevins received her Ph.D. in 2004 from the University of Cincinnati and is currently an assistant professor of criminal justice at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

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