

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Over the course of our combined 100-plus years of undergraduate teaching, we have reviewed and used many different introductory textbooks for criminal justice. Indeed, Tom Winfree began undergraduate studies in the mid-1960s when there were few colleges or universities that even offered coursework on this subject. By the mid-to late 1970s, as Tom started teaching in criminal justice departments, introductory textbooks were new and more resembled sociology of criminal justice textbooks than ones dedicated to the emerging discipline of criminal justice. It was his frustration with introductory textbooks—which were either too esoteric and disconnected from the reality of crime and justice or too focused on “war stories”—that led him to consider writing an introductory textbook that stressed the essentials of criminal justice.

Michael E. Antonio has a diverse background working, studying, and publishing in the fields of psychology, criminology, public policy, and law. His research experiences involving prison rehabilitative programming, cognitive behavioral interventions, procedural justice, mental health and wellness, and juror decision making in capital cases make him uniquely fitted for contributing to an introductory textbook about criminal justice.

Christine Tartaro has been teaching criminal justice and working with corrections, juvenile justice, and police departments for almost 30 years. Her research involves jails, suicide in custody, mental health, reentry, and police encounters with people with mental illness. She has served as an expert witness in lawsuits involving suicides in prisons and jails and has authored multiple books.

Leanne Fiftal Alarid is a product of the second generation of introductory criminal justice textbooks, published in the 1980s. Leanne, like her three coauthors, has contributed to the discipline of criminal justice through both research and textbook authorship. In short, we began this effort with a wealth of experience and knowledge about the discipline of criminal justice, in both its contemporary form and its historical context.

More than a decade ago, Tom and Leanne started a discussion about what we thought was missing at the introductory level. Joined for this edition by Michael and Christine, we have taken our collective experiences as students, teachers, and practitioners to heart

and crafted what we believe is a textbook that is student-centric and informative without being encyclopedic. We relate the origins and development of criminal justice as an academic area of study and an eventual career choice for those who choose to work in this diverse field. Indeed, we do not sugarcoat the work world of criminal justice. We are a mix of former practitioners and current academics who believe that, whether the readers of this textbook seek careers as scholars or practitioners or simply wish to be better-informed citizens of the community, it is best to make decisions based on carefully reasoned arguments and highly verified evidence. This perspective guided us in the preparation of this textbook.

Our textbook is a departure from many other introductory textbooks currently available. First, this is an essentials book. Just from holding the book or viewing it electronically, you know that this subtitle does not translate into “shorter” or “the basics.” Rather, the material we included in this textbook is what we believe is necessary to achieve the following goals.

- First, the text provides casual readers with sufficient information and understanding about how the nation’s criminal justice system functions to become better-informed citizens.
- Second, and along the same line, for students of this subject who intend to further their studies, this text establishes a foundation by providing the essential tools required to advance their interest in criminal justice. These tools include general critical thinking skills, an analytical and evidence-based approach to the subject matter, and a generalist perspective that can be expanded on by advanced studies in criminal justice.
- Third, for those who intend to pursue a career in criminal justice, this book gives unvarnished, balanced, and current insights into how the system should function and how it does function. This information should allow the preservice individual or the current CJS employee seeking advancement through academics to approach their respective goals in a better-informed manner.

How do we achieve these goals? The answer to this question is straightforward. We employ three specific teaching devices. First, we emphasize the historical development of all the component parts of the nation’s system of criminal justice, including its evolution as an area of academic study. As George Santayana famously stated, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” As you will learn in this text, many criminal justice pundits and even so-called experts have shown there is much truth in Santayana’s aphorism. As importantly, and as observed by William Shakespeare in his play *The Tempest*, “What’s past is prologue.” For those studying

criminal justice, this means we need to understand the past, since it influences and sets the context for the present. The past is often the path to the future. The truth of this statement will become clear as we look at such issues as the militarization of policing agencies throughout history and societal tinkering with various punishments intended to reduce crime. A historical perspective is essential if one is to understand more fully where we are now in terms of the administration of justice and where we are headed.

Second, we present this material in a consumable, student-friendly fashion. We provide many definitions and highlight these in callouts throughout the textbook. We relate the information in a nontechnical fashion but build on the readers' early knowledge throughout the text, so that by the final chapter, they are able to apply the lessons of the previous chapters in the exploration of this final set of national and international challenges.

The third teaching device we employ—one related to the issue of student consumption—is the inclusion of a series of review questions at the end of each chapter. These are more than “busy-work” assignments. In most cases, the answer to the question does not lie in the regurgitation of a series of facts found within the text. Readers may need to look more broadly for supporting evidence or provide their own analysis. We are strong proponents of the exercise and development of critical thinking skills, and these questions should help to hone readers' skills on the whetstone of criminal justice. In this vein, we also include critical thinking questions, ones to which there may not be a “right” or “wrong” answer, but which will cause students to think about the issues at hand.

A brief review of the text's content may prove useful at this juncture, if only to give readers a sense of what lies ahead.

Chapter 1 (“Criminal Justice: An Overview”). This chapter provides a definitional framework for the remaining chapters. A key part of the chapter is simply defining justice and criminal justice. While these terms may seem intuitively straightforward, Chapter 1 reveals that this is far from the case as it explores their more subtle and complex natures. The chapter ends with an overview of the meaning of the criminal justice system in contemporary society.

Chapter 2 (“Defining and Reporting Crime”). Is crime more prevalent today than ever before? In fact, the rate of crime is lower today than in previous decades, even if the volume of crime is, in some cases, higher. Readers who think that this answer is a case of weasel wording should read Chapter 2 very carefully. What they will learn is that there are many ways to measure and report crime. Knowing how much crime there is and the trends in its occurrence is central to understanding how a society responds to it.

Chapter 3 (“Criminal Law and the Legal Environment”). It is often said that we are a nation of laws, and this chapter provides an overview of criminal law and the broader legal environment within which criminal law is created, interpreted, and enforced. To fully understand the criminal justice processes in the United States, readers must have at least a basic appreciation for key concepts embodied in criminal law.

Chapter 4 (“An Introduction to Policing”). For many students of criminal justice, this chapter signals the beginning of the core of the course. It is here that they will begin to appreciate the true impact of history on the evolution and development of a central piece of the criminal justice system. In addition, this chapter introduces contemporary policing, including its goals and objectives, structure and organization, and activities.

Chapter 5 (“U.S. Law Enforcement Agencies”). Few textbooks contain the breadth of coverage on law enforcement that we provide. From local and state agencies to the range of federal responses to crime and justice, this chapter reveals a great deal about the agencies and the people who populate them, serving their communities and the nation.

Chapter 6 (“Issues in Law Enforcement”). If a textbook claims to cover all the issues related to a single element of the criminal justice system, that claim is probably false. In this chapter, we provide essential information about the following topics in law enforcement: professionalism, corruption, use of force, and police-judiciary interactions. Chapter 6 is intended to give readers an understanding of several of the key problem areas that confront police in the 21st century.

Chapter 7 (“Local, State, and Federal Courts”). Many people have only a passing familiarity with this nation’s courts. Usually that knowledge comes through appearing for a traffic ticket or after receiving a summons to serve on a jury. This chapter provides a review of the different kinds of courts found at all three levels of government in the United States. In addition to giving basic definitions, it explains the functions of the different types of courts at all levels.

Chapter 8 (“Trials and Trial Procedures”). Much of what the average person knows about court processes comes from television and movie depictions of various aspects of trials. Some of this information is accurate, and some is inaccurate (to provide greater drama). This chapter follows criminal cases through the various stages that occur when cases go to trial. However, one important point is worth emphasizing again and again: Somewhere between 80 and 90 percent of all of the criminal cases filed in this country are resolved with something other than a trial, most through a process of negotiated settlement known generally as plea bargaining.

Chapter 9 (“Issues in the Judiciary”). As with the other “issues” chapters, there is no end to the possible questions and controversies that could be covered here. We have chosen to focus on how attorneys are provided for the majority of criminal defendants who cannot afford to hire their own; how judges are selected in the United States and what their qualifications are; and how we discipline judges who misconduct themselves in their personal or professional lives. Although other issues are included, three in particular are likely to spark interest and classroom discussion: the use of scientific evidence in court (such as DNA testing), wrongful convictions and the impact they have on the perception of justice, and the lingering controversies surrounding the death penalty. We expect this chapter (along with the other issues chapters) to draw students and instructors into serious discussions.

Chapter 10 (“Probation and Community Corrections”). Since the vast majority of those persons sentenced in court serve their correctional sentences on probation in the community, we thought it important to introduce the most common ways that individuals serve correctional sentences while living at home. We address how restitution, fines, and community service are used to financially compensate victims and help the community. We also discuss technological advances in electronic monitoring of clients, including the ramifications that technology has for the increased chance of registering probation violations and how this has contributed to net widening and jail crowding.

Chapter 11 (“Institutional Corrections”). This chapter reviews the historical background of punishment and penitentiaries to address the full context behind how penitentiaries began and how incarceration rates in the United States became so high. Students will learn how the United States is different from other Western countries in its response to crime. This chapter covers the different types of correctional institutions, including jails, prisons, youth detention centers, and private facilities, all of which have the primary goal of depriving justice-system-involved persons of their liberty and various freedoms as part of their sentences.

Chapter 12 (“Living and Working in Prison”). Students of criminal justice have always been interested in what prison might be like; often, they believe that justice-involved persons have an easy life. This chapter challenges that argument and gives students a glimpse into life behind bars. They will read about what doing time is like, why prisons can be violent and unsafe places, why decent prison conditions are important, and how women’s prisons are different from men’s. The goal of this chapter is to enlighten the student on the importance of having a safe environment for the correctional staff members who make up

the foundation of the prison environment.

Chapter 13 (“Issues in Corrections”). The corrections system currently faces a multitude of challenges. This chapter examines five of the most important issues of our time, which include why racial/ethnic disparities exist in corrections, why a disproportionate number of persons with mental illnesses are in jails and prisons, and what happens when prisoners leave early to reenter the community. We highlight the effectiveness of correctional treatment and of imprisonment itself in deterring crime.

All textbook authors owe debts. No book is simply the work of those writing it. This book is no exception. To this end, we thank the tens of thousands of students who have sat through our lectures and continue to come to class! They inspired us to write a textbook that would hold readers’ attention and inform them. Leanne and Tom wish to thank G. Larry Mays for his contributions to previous editions of this book.

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Is this a perfect introductory textbook? Probably not. Nevertheless, it is one that we wish we had had access to as students and professors earlier in our careers. It takes the student on an informed journey across several thousand years of societal responses to crimes and those accused or convicted of committing crimes. We ground this journey in the most relevant and recent insights we have on these issues. We hope that this text serves to stimulate students’ appetite for insights into criminal justice and that they seek even more definitive answers to the questions that we pose—and ones that occur to them as well. Enjoy *Introduction to Criminal Justice: The Essentials* and enjoy the search that is about to begin. We are still on that journey. Perhaps we will meet at some juncture.