

# Preface

One function of a casebook supplement is to keep teachers and students connected to recent events. In terms of basic doctrine, most aspects of criminal procedure have changed only modestly over the past few years. This is particularly true for a book, such as this one, that emphasizes nationwide trends within state criminal justice systems. Such nationwide changes can take longer to develop than shifts in any single jurisdiction.

Nevertheless, these are remarkable times in criminal justice, and dramatic—even historic—events and major trends force their way into every vibrant criminal procedure course. One trend that has been building over the past few decades is a serious debate in many (but not all) states over the exceptional criminal sanctions we use in the United States, especially the historically high use of imprisonment and parole. On the other side of the scale, a decades-long decline in crime rates across the United States has shown signs of a reversal in recent years, especially for homicide rates. What has made punishment reform suddenly relevant? How important is leadership to such change?

Tragic police uses of force create astonishing news coverage, often with video footage. These events are so raw, so immediate, and so unpredictable that the full impact on the criminal justice system will not be known for some time. As just one example, the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis in 2020 triggered nationwide protests and serious efforts to rethink models of policing. Which tasks do we need to assign to armed state agents? What training and organizational changes within police departments might result in less harm to residents while preserving public safety?

Some of the materials in this supplement will appear in the next edition; other materials may eventually disappear from the print format materials and move to the web site. Many decisions from the U.S. Supreme Court seem on a first reading to make a dramatic shift in law and practice. However, after a year or two for reflection, some of those cases appear to

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be less important or innovative. A casebook supplement can test the staying power of new cases, statutes, and policies.

This supplement is consistent with our larger goal of creating materials to extend the breadth and depth of the core casebook. We have also created internet-based pages for this casebook to enrich the resources available for students using this casebook. Our goal is not to create a single electronic coursebook. Instead, the electronic resources create new layers that broaden, deepen, and enliven the core text.

The *Criminal Procedures* web pages include materials allowing students to test and expand their knowledge, such as practice problems and exam questions. They also include brief recorded lectures, or “video introductions,” connected to selected materials in the printed text. The address for these pages is <http://www.crimpro.com> (or simply type “crimpro” into your browser). We welcome suggestions for materials to post on the web pages or to publish in this printed supplement.

This supplement provides fresh material for two published casebooks: *Criminal Procedures—The Police* and *Criminal Procedures—Prosecution and Adjudication*. A combined volume is also available in electronic format.

We hope that the casebook, this supplement, and the web pages—together—offer a complete, coherent, and challenging set of tools to support your learning about criminal procedure.

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