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## RECENT BOOKS

### CRIMINAL LAW AND CRIMINOLOGY: A SURVEY OF RECENT BOOKS

BARD R. FERRALL\*

#### CRIMINOLOGY

LEE E. ROSS, *AFRICAN-AMERICAN CRIMINOLOGISTS, 1970-1996: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998) 108pp.

To remedy the lack of a ready reference to the growing body of published work of African-American criminologists, the editor of this work compiled a list as possible of African-American criminologists, and issued an invitation to submit abstracts. Represented in this bibliography are 80% of the criminologists listed in the *African-American Criminology and Criminal Justice Directory* (Heard & Bing, 1995). A limitation of four entries per author was imposed. Collaborations were included, so long as at least one of the contributing authors was African-American. Selected references to each publication are given in a separate section. Also included are selected books, manuscripts and government publications providing Afrocentric perspectives on issues of crime and justice. An appendix contains the titles of the doctoral dissertations of all the contributing African-American authors.

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\* Librarian, Northwestern University School of Law Library; M.A., University of Denver; J.D., Northwestern University.

### JUVENILE JUSTICE

MARTIN R. GARDNER, *UNDERSTANDING JUVENILE LAW* (NY: Matthew Bender, 1997) 346 pp.

This book is divided into three sections. The first section is a general discussion of the legal treatment of juveniles, and the second with legal issues arising outside the juvenile courts. The last section deals with the juvenile justice system (by which the author means courts separately organized to deal specifically with juvenile offenders). Each point is accorded very brief treatment, but the author provides suggestions for readers interested in more coverage treatment in a single source.

### PENOLOGY

ROBERT ADAMS, *THE ABUSES OF PUNISHMENT* (NY: St. Martin's Press, 1998) 269 pp.

With the understanding that "punishment" is more than a penalty for a specific act, the author draws from a large number of sources (mostly from the United Kingdom) to find that punishment is used pervasively as a means of social control, especially in authoritarian institutions. The author examines many types of punishment to show that it is difficult to evaluate the distinction between proper and abusive punishment. The deterrent value of punishment is not at all certain in many instances, and while punishment may deter much wrongful behavior, the research suggests that the deterrent effect of punishment may be least on those whom society wishes to deter—the extremely violent and dangerous criminal.

BRIAN P. BLOCK & JOHN HOSTETTLER, *HANGING IN THE BALANCE: A HISTORY OF THE ABOLITION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN BRITAIN* (Winchester, England: Waterside Press, 1997) 288 pp.

This book covers the debate over the death penalty in England from the late medieval period to 1969, when Britain ended capital punishment (except for treason and piracy). The authors present the arguments advanced over the centuries by

English jurists, clerics, philosophers and politicians, for and against the death penalty. About two-thirds of this book describes Parliamentary debates in the decades after World War II. Important changes in English death penalty law, from the time of William the Conqueror to the present day, are summarized. The authors also describe public opinion on the question, and how certain events changed that opinion. Interwoven throughout this history, and forming a substantial part of the text, are noteworthy cases, including those of executed persons who may have been innocent.

DANIEL ALLEN HEARN, *LEGAL EXECUTIONS IN NEW YORK STATE: A COMPREHENSIVE REFERENCE, 1639-1963* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1998) 365 pp.

This is a chronological list of executions in New York State, from the founding of the colony of New Netherlands to 1963 (the date of the last execution in New York). To the extent the information can be determined from existing records, the name, age, and race of the executed person is given, as well as the date, place and method of execution, and a description of the crime for which the punishment was imposed. In a separate section of notes, the author gives the sources of information. The author notes that sex, age and social standing were not necessarily barriers to execution; included in this book are a preteen, men past eighty, and a governor. There are even cases where the condemned committed suicide while awaiting execution, and was hanged anyway.

DAVID LESTER, *THE DEATH PENALTY: ISSUES AND ANSWERS* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 2d ed. 1998) 164 pp.

This book briefly describes the methodology and conclusions of empirical research studies on questions relating to the death penalty. The first edition of this work reviewed the research up to 1984. This edition includes subsequent research and makes some modifications to the conclusions in the first edition. The author notes that empirical research will not settle the debate over capital punishment, because much of the disagreement is in the realm of morality and values. Nonetheless, empirical research may cast light on certain questions, such as whether or not the death penalty deters. And even when the existing research often is inconclusive, the author offers the possibility that the re-

search reviewed in this book may suggest avenues for further investigation.

### POLICE

POLICE BRUTALITY IN URBAN BRAZIL (New York: Human Rights Watch/ Americas Human Rights Watch, 1997) 118 pp.

Recent investigations into reports of violations of human rights by Brazilian police are presented in this report prepared for the Human Rights Watch. The focus is upon incidents in seven cities (including six of the largest in Brazil). The report concludes that unjustified police killing and other abusive police practices remain a significant problem. The report further concludes that the combined failure of several institutions adequately to respond to police abuses results in near impunity for such practices, and that this impunity is the major reason for the continuation of urban police brutality in Brazil. Seventeen specific recommendations are made in this report.

This report also endorses the "National Human Rights Plan," released in 1996 by the President of Brazil. Implementation of most of the measures required enactment by both Houses of the Brazilian legislature; as of publication of this Report, however, almost none of the measures had passed.