
Although its editor does not state the intended audience for Handbook of Offender Assessment and Treatment, it is clear that the content gravitates toward faculty and students involved in the study of criminal justice. From that, one might conclude that criminal justice practitioners might also be an appropriate audience. No, this is not an academic monograph. Practitioners will have little interest in it. It is not a guidebook for conducting assessment or for treatment of criminals. However, it is an excellent resource for legislators and policy makers. The 36 short chapters (5-10 pages) provide a comprehensive review and/or analysis of cutting-edge issues related to assessment and/or treatment. Although these chapters are short, they are comprehensive.

Clive Hollin did a remarkable job of editing. Those who have themselves edited a monograph will be impressed with his ability to create a book with 36 authors that maintains a consistent underlying theme, giving the impression that it was written by a single person. In addition, Hollin persuaded the authors to be economical in their writing. Most importantly, each chapter includes a magnificent bibliography. These bibliographies, which include citations on the specifics of treatment and assessment, are both historically significant and cutting edge. Hollin must be applauded for his coordination skills.

One central and consistent theme is a reaction to the 1970s philosophy initiated by Martinson's paper, which suggested that "nothing works." Martinson's influence was international. During this time frame, policy makers and politicians elected to decrease and/or eliminate rehabilitation programs because the evidence suggested that funding them

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was futile. For social scientists this was an extremely embarrassing time in which assessment and evaluation research methods were almost nonexistent. The public and policy makers were seeking and expecting interventions that would provide an absolute cure. Policy makers, in particular, were demanding a Disneyland approach to solving problems: Give all offenders one type of quick, cost-effective intervention that would convert them into productive and non-problematic members of society. This was a time of great naiveté. We did not realize that each offense might have unique causal factors. Since theory was excessively weak, social scientists had no adequate tools for assessment. Sophisticated inferential statistics, though impressive for providing generalizations, are meaningless without a conceptual framework to interpret the results.

Hollin’s work gives meaning to many of the mindless inferential statistics that have been generated over the last three decades. These authors do not put on airs. They are straight with their readers and quickly point out “This is what we don’t know.” Knowing what we don’t know is an important step in the right direction. The 1970s were a time of great social and scientific arrogance. Researchers were filled with unrealistic optimism in thinking that final answers were at hand. There are no final answers, and the authors of *Handbook of Offender Assessment and Treatment* make this clear.

The authors make use of the current literature to identify causal relationships associated with successful treatment. Chapter 19, “Anger Treatment with Offenders,” is an excellent example. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, we begin to see typology development. For example, in chapter 23, “Adolescent Sexual Offenders,” Hudson and Ward begin to identify characteristics of offenders that are critical in predicting successful treatment. An important policy question emerges: “Should we focus on treatment for offenders who have the highest probability of