



What Works in Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation: Lessons from Systematic Reviews (Springer Series on Evidence-Based Crime Policy)

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Systematic reviews aim to minimize any possible bias in drawing conclusions by stating explicit criteria for inclusion and exclusion of studies, by conducting extensive and wide-ranging searches for possibly eligible studies, and by making all stages of the review explicit and transparent so that the methods can be checked and replicated. Over a decade ago, a concerted effort was made by members of the criminology community, including the Editors and contributors of this volume, to bring the practice of systematic reviews to the study of Criminology, providing replicable, evidence-based data to answer key questions about the study of crime causation, detection, and prevention. Now, the pioneers in this effort present a comprehensive stock-taking of what has been learned in the past decade of systematic reviews in criminology. Much has been discovered about the effectiveness of (for example) boot camps, “hot spots” policing, closed-circuit television surveillance, neighborhood watch, anti-bullying programs in schools, early parenting programs, drug treatment programs, and other key topics.

This ambitious volume aims to bring together and assess all major systematic reviews of the effectiveness of criminological interventions, to draw broad conclusions about what works in policing, corrections, developmental prevention, situational prevention, drug abuse treatments, sentencing and deterrence, and communities. It will be of interest to researchers in criminology and criminal justice, as well as in related fields such as public health and forensic science, with important implications for policy-makers and practitioners.

Decisively showing that the “nothing works” era is over, this volume takes stock of what we know, and still need to know, to prevent crime. Focusing on different areas of prevention, individual chapters provide a state-of-the-art analysis of the extent evaluation evidence. Together, they comprise an essential guide to improving both public safety and the lives of those most at risk of criminal involvement. I plan to keep this book close at hand and to use it often!

Francis T. Cullen, Distinguished Research Professor Emeritus, University of Cincinnati

This impressive volume, edited by Weisburd, Farrington and Gill, provides a comprehensive picture of what we’ve learned from systematic reviews about “what works” in addressing crime – and goes on to identify the “next step” issues that demand attention if the field is to move forward. At a time when there is a broad commitment to bringing science to the front lines of practice, this book should be on the reading list of both policymakers and scholars.

Laurie O. Robinson, Clarence J. Robinson Professor of Criminology, Law Society, George Mason University and former Assistant Attorney General of the U.S. Department of Justice

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