



Against Criminology

Stanley Cohen

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During the 1960s, traditional thinking about crime and its punishment, deviance and its control, came under radical attack. The discipline of criminology split into feuding factions, and various schools of thought emerged, each with quite different ideas about the nature of the crime problem and its solutions. These differences often took political form, with conservative, liberal, and radical supporters, and the resulting controversies continue to reverberate throughout the fields of criminology and sociology, as well as related areas such as social work, social policy, psychiatry, and law. Stanley Cohen has been at the center of these debates in Britain and the United States. This volume is a selection of his essays, written over the past fifteen years, which contribute to and comment upon the major theoretical conflicts in criminology during this period. Though associated with the "new" or radical criminology, Cohen has always been the first to point out its limitations--particularly in translating its theoretical claims into real world applications. His essays cover a wide range of topics-political crime, the nature of individual responsibility, the implications of new theories for social work practice, models of crime used in the Third World, banditry and rebellion, and the decentralization of social control. Also included is a previously unpublished paper on how radical social movements such as feminism deal with criminal law. Many criminology textbooks present particular theories or research findings. This book uniquely reviews the main debates of the last two decades about just what the role and scope of the subject should be.

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