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—POLICE COMMISSIONER RAYMOND W. KELLY

JAMES Q. WILSON

THINKING ABOUT CRIME

REVISED EDITION

With a New Foreword by Charles Murray

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Review

- "No one thought more insightfully about crime than James Q. Wilson."
- -Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly
- "In his influential book Thinking About Crime, as he so often did when thinking, writing or speaking about public policies, James Wilson was able to present his ideas and observations in such a way that they provoked and stimulated thought, debate, and action in new directions. He certainly did that for me throughout my career and this book was just one example."
- —Bill Bratton, former Chief of the LAPD and Police Commissioner for the New York City and Boston Police Department
- "Thinking About Crime set the national crime-control agenda for a generation. Conditions have changed since: we have about five times as many people behind bars now as 1975. The debate has changed too. But forty years have not deprived Wilson's thinking of its fine critical edge, or his ideas of their centrality."
- —Mark Kleiman, Professor of Public Policy, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs
- "[Wilson] was that rare academic whose ideas could be put into action and improve the quality of life.... The greatest evidence of his success surrounds us—a resurgent city and thousands of New Yorkers who are alive today because of his radical solution to a tidal wave of crime."
- -Rudolph Giuliani
- "The most accomplished social scientist of the last half-century.... Elegant in bearing, voracious for learning, eloquent in advocacy and amiable in disputation, Wilson was a prophet honored in his own country."
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From the Inside Flap

When James Q. Wilson's brilliant and provocative classic "Thinking About Crime" was first published, the conversation around crime had become rigid and polarized even as crime inexorably rose. Wilson transformed the debate with his novel argument that criminal activity is largely shaped by rewards and penalties, and that therefore society's responses to crime must be based on designing payoffs that will

minimize criminal activity. Now with a new foreword by the prominent libertarian scholar and best-selling author Charles Murray, the paperback edition of "Thinking About Crime" will introduce a new generation of readers to the theories and ideas that have been so influential in shaping the American criminal justice system.

About the Author

James Q. Wilson (1931–2012) taught at Harvard, UCLA, and Pepperdine. Author of eighteen books, including the standard college textbook on its topic, American Government, Wilson was a member of national commissions on criminal justice, drug abuse prevention, and national security. He received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2003.

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As crime rates inexorably rose during the tumultuous years of the 1970s, disputes over how to handle the violence sweeping the nation quickly escalated. James Q. Wilson redefined the public debate by offering a brilliant and provocative new argument—that criminal activity is largely rational and shaped by the rewards and penalties it offers—and forever changed the way Americans think about crime. Now with a new foreword by the prominent scholar and best-selling author Charles Murray, this revised edition of Thinking About Crime introduces a new generation of readers to the theories and ideas that have been so influential in shaping the American justice system.

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