Legacies of Crime

Legacies of Crime explores the lives of seriously delinquent girls and boys who were followed over a twenty-year period as they navigated the transition to adulthood. In-depth interviews with these women and men and their children – a majority of whom are now adolescents themselves – depict the adults' economic and social disadvantages and continued criminal involvement, and in turn the unique vulnerabilities of their children. Peggy C. Giordano identifies family dynamics that foster the intergenerational transmission of crime, violence, and drug abuse, rejecting the notion that such continuities are based solely on genetic similarities or even lax, inconsistent parenting. The author breaks new ground in directly exploring – and in the process revising – the basic tenets of classic social learning theories and in confronting the complications associated with the parent's gender. Legacies of Crime also identifies factors associated with resilience in the face of what is often a formidable package of risks favoring intergenerational continuity.

Peggy C. Giordano is Distinguished Research Professor at Bowling Green State University. Her research – published in leading journals such as Criminology, American Sociological Review, and the American Journal of Sociology – has long focused on the causes of juvenile delinquency and particularly on similarities and differences in male and female pathways to criminal involvement. A Fellow of the American Society of Criminology, Giordano’s analyses of the adult lives of a sample of delinquent youth have twice won the American Sociological Association's James F. Short, Jr. award for best article. This book extends this research in a unique exploration of the lives of the children of the original study subjects.
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Legacies of Crime

A Follow-Up of the Children of Highly Delinquent Girls and Boys

Peggy C. Giordano
Bowling Green State University
To my parents,

Doris and Jim Cochran
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