

Commentaries on Criminal Law Conversations

Paul H. Robinson, Stephen P. Garvey, and Kimberly Kessler Ferzan (eds): Review of Criminal Law Conversations. Oxford University Press, New York, 2011, ISBN: 978-0-19-986127-9

Alfonso Donoso

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Abstract One of the first things striking readers of *Criminal Law Conversations* is its unusual methodology. The editors of this volume have put together 31 conversations around as many cutting edge and influential articles. This article considers critically some discussions representative of each of the book's three parts: Principles, Doctrine, Administration and provide a glimpse of the richness and variety of *Criminal Law Conversations*.

Keywords Criminalization · Punishment · Jury nullification · Control test · Insanity defense · Death penalty

One of the first things striking readers of *Criminal Law Conversations* is its unusual methodology. The editors Paul Robinson, Stephen Garvey and Kimberly Ferzan (2011) have put together 31 conversations around as many cutting edge and influential articles. For each paper, the author wrote a core text included in the collection, followed by objections, comments, and suggestions by different commentators. Each 'conversation' concludes with a reply by the author of the core text that initially motivated the discussion. The result is a compilation of 227 contributions from 107 distinguished academics. All this grants to the book the appearance of a 'blog' dedicated to a range of issues on the principles, doctrine and administration of the criminal justice system. This way of presenting a scholarly discussion may reasonably inspire suspicion: too many cooks may spoil the broth. However, the result here is quite the opposite. Both the editors and contributors have done a wonderful job in harmonizing and combining that sort of quick exchange characteristic of contemporary digital media with the traditional subtleness, depth and intellectual provocation typical of academic conversation.

Two additional features of this collection's methodology are worth mentioning. First, unlike traditional compendiums of essays, *Criminal Law Conversations* is not the result of

A. Donoso (✉)

Instituto de Ciencia Política, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago, Chile
e-mail: aldonoso@uc.cl