



Criminal Genius: A Portrait of High-IQ Offenders

By James C. Oleson

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For years, criminologists have studied the relationship between crime and below-average intelligence, concluding that offenders possess IQ scores 8-10 points below those of non-offenders. Little, however, is known about the criminal behavior of those with above-average IQ scores. This book provides some of the first empirical information about the self-reported crimes of people with genius-level IQ scores. Combining quantitative data from 72 different offenses with qualitative data from 44 follow-up interviews, this book describes the nature of high-IQ crime while shedding light on a population of offenders often ignored in research and sensationalized in media.

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Editorial Review

Review

"In his new book *Criminal Genius* James Oleson offers a novel and previously unavailable insight into the world of high-IQ offenders. . . as rich in qualitative analysis as it [is] quantitative."
(*Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*)

From the Inside Flap

"In most natural groupings, the higher one's intelligence, the less likely one is to commit criminal acts. Yet the unexpected results in this groundbreaking book show us that, at the extreme upper end of the scale, the immunity from crime that comes with intelligence tends to lose its potency. In the end, however, this reduced immunity stems not so much from this tiny group's intelligence as from its perhaps inevitable distance from ordinary mortals."—Travis Hirschi, author of *Causes of Delinquency*

"One of the widely acknowledged risk factors for offending is low IQ, but very little is known about offending by high IQ people. James Oleson challenges conventional wisdom by concluding that high IQ people self-report more offenses than matched controls but are more likely to avoid detection and punishment. His book includes many enlightening case histories and deserves to be read by all criminologists and psychologists."—David P. Farrington, Emeritus Professor of Psychological Criminology, Cambridge University

"This book is a fascinating and highly readable account of the criminal behavior of a group we rarely think about—the genius wrongdoer. I recommend it to anyone interested in or concerned with the criminal mind."—Joshua Dressler, Distinguished University Professor, Michael E. Moritz College of Law, The Ohio State University

"This is a fascinating multi-sample study of crime among individuals with very high IQ scores. Spanning the worlds of biosocial criminology, psychology, executive functioning, and true crime, Oleson crafts an accessible and fun look at criminal behavior among individuals who seemingly should not commit crime. The book is a must-read for criminologists and true crime aficionados alike."—Matt DeLisi, Iowa State University, Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Criminal Justice*

About the Author

James C. Oleson is Associate Professor of Criminology at the University of Auckland.

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