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Criminal Law

Marise Cremona BA, LLM

*Principal Lecturer in Law
at the City of London Polytechnic*

Law series editor
Marise Cremona

*Principal Lecturer in Law
at the City of London Polytechnic*

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Preface

This book is intended as an introduction to the basic principles of criminal liability and some of the most important criminal offences. The offences have been chosen (from among the vast range of criminal offences) to illustrate clearly the principles underlying the criminal law; they also feature in most courses on substantive criminal law. There is a fundamental need for the law (and especially the criminal law) to be clear, and its content easily understood by the lay person, but first-time students of the subject often find its key concepts difficult to grasp and the major textbooks somewhat formidable. The *Mastering Law* series should provide a comprehensible account of major areas of the law and an introduction to the controversy and debate that is inseparable from any serious study of the law. This book was commissioned by the late Lady Oliver, who gave me much encouragement, and who was a firm believer in the need for accessible student texts as an adjunct to large-scale scholarly and reference works.

Certain features of the book have therefore been designed to help those who are studying criminal law for the first time. There is a Casenotes section at the end of each chapter which gives, in respect of the key cases mentioned in the text, a short account of the facts and decision. Cases which are noted in this way are marked with an asterisk when they are first mentioned in the text, and the page on which the casenote appears is printed in bold type in the Table of Cases. In addition there is a selective bibliography (giving references to works mentioned in the text) and list of further reading for each chapter. Of the books listed, two are worth special mention; all students of English criminal law will come to know well Glanville Williams's *Textbook of Criminal Law* and Smith and Hogan's *Criminal Law*.

The section of Exercises at the end of each chapter is designed both to test the reader's understanding and to stimulate further thought on the topics covered. The Workshop section gives an opportunity to practice the practical application of the rules and principles discussed.

The book endeavours to state the law as at the end of March 1988.

MARISE CREMONA

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