

The American Psychiatric Publishing Textbook of Forensic Psychiatry, 2nd ed

edited by Robert I. Simon, MD, and Liza H. Gold, MD. American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc, Washington, DC, 2010, 702 pages, \$130.00 (hardcover).

Expanded and improved, this second edition of the *American Psychiatric Publishing Textbook of Forensic Psychiatry* is a gem that should be read and frequently referred to by any clinician with an interest or practice involving forensic psychiatry. The first edition was published only 5 years ago, but chapters have been updated and a number of new ones have been added, which substantially enhances the value of this book.

Divided into 4 parts, 23 chapters, a glossary of legal terms, and subject and legal case indexes, the book runs 702 pages in length. Yet it is not a tome and is not encyclopedic in its scope. Nor is it intended to be. Although the chapters are not exhaustive, they are not superficial, either. They have satisfying pragmatic depth to them. The pages are handsome with a pleasing font and liberally used bold section headings, and informative footnotes, and references are included at the end of each chapter. Also at the end of each chapter are 2 brief sections entitled “Key Points” and “Practice Guidelines” that reinforce particularly salient concepts from the chapter.

The 4 parts of the book are a logical division of topics in forensic psychiatry and include Introduction to Forensic Psychiatry, Civil Litigation, Issues in Criminal Justice, and Special Topics. The first chapter, by Liza H. Gold, MD, is entitled “Rediscovering Forensic Psychiatry” and is an excellent discussion of the roots of not just forensic psychiatry but psychiatry in general. Dr Gold traces the asylum movement and moral treatment to medical jurisprudence and the evolution of the expert witness. Dr Gold concludes her chapter with discussions of backlash against forensic psychiatry underscored with the trial of John Hinckley Jr in 1982. This chapter is surprisingly illuminating and should be carefully read and re-read by any clinician who practices forensic psychiatry. Another 2 chapters worthy of special mention in Part I are “Psychiatric Diagnosis

and Litigation,” written by Robert I. Simon, MD, and Dr Gold, and the “Forensic Examination and Report,” written by Robert M. Wettstein, MD. These chapters grapple with the very difficult issues that surround trying to use the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition, Text Revision, nosology in a legal context, and all of the myriad considerations in conducting a psychiatric examination and preparing or not preparing a report depending upon varying legal situations. These are extremely complex topics that the authors handle with aplomb.

Part II, Civil Litigation, thoroughly and competently covers a range of relevant and core forensic topics including psychiatric malpractice; the host of civil competencies such as competency to marry, to execute a will, and to enter into a contract; and issues related to personal injury litigation, disability impairment, Social Security Disability, and the Americans With Disability Act.

In Part III, Issues in Criminal Justice, there are 4 chapters. The first, written by Charles L. Scott, MD, discusses the competency to stand trial and the insanity defense. The next chapter, by John Bradford, MD, and colleagues, is on forensic assessment of sex offenders and is a good review of this controversial area. Jeffrey L. Metzner, MD, and Joel Dvoskin, PhD, briefly review some important topics in correctional psychiatry. I was pleased to see that the last chapter in this section, “Forensic Psychiatry in Law Enforcement,” by Deborah A. Pinnels, MD, and Marilyn Price, MD, covered important police topics of relevance to forensic psychiatrists, such as “suicide by cop,” crisis negotiations, and fitness for duty evaluations of law enforcement officers.

The final part, Special Topics, is broken into 7 chapters and expertly covers the important areas of malingering, children and adolescents, and forensic geriatric psychiatry. Alan R. Feltshouse, MD, writes a more expansive chapter on violence covering the violence of persons in psychiatric hospitals, violent persons in the criminal justice system, and workplace violence. Two of the chapters, one by Douglas Mossman, MD, on understanding risk assessment instruments and the other by Madelon V. Baranoski, PhD, on psychological testing in forensic psychiatry, address the type of actuarial scales and psychological tests forensic psychiatrists may want to utilize and will have to understand in their practice. A timely chapter devoted to forensic psychiatry and the Internet, written by Patricia R. Recupero, JD, MD, does a fine job of beginning to explore the burgeoning issues that forensic psychiatrists need to be aware of including cyber-harassment and cyber-stalking and the impact on mental health of Internet use.

In summary, this is a well-written, thoughtfully organized compendium of information relevant to forensic psychiatry. This book should be part of the library of every clinician who has an interest in or clinical practice related to forensic psychiatry.

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