

BOOK REVIEW

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A Review of Critical Issues in American Psychiatry and the Law, Volume 2

REFERENCE: Rosner, R., Ed., with a foreword by P. J. Resnick, *Critical Issues in American Psychiatry and the Law*, Vol. 2, Plenum Press, 233 Spring St., New York, NY 10013, 1985, 307 pp., \$39.50.

I like this book. In 1983, reviewing the first volume of this series [1] prepared for the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law (Tri-State Chapter), I groused a great deal. I complained that papers were uneven in quality, and that many had been prepared for oral presentation rather than reading. While it might be an excellent textbook on forensic psychiatric problems, I felt this book would probably be of far less value to attorneys or to psychiatrists seeking information for specific cases.

This second volume has a new publisher that, indeed, offers a plan whereby the reader can obtain delivery of each new volume upon publication. Dr. Rosner continues as editor. The volume covers many topics of concern to the practicing forensic psychiatrist, topics worthy of seminar discussion or dinner table conversation, topics that stimulate the mind and help the reader rethink difficult problems rather than finding facile solutions.

I was especially impressed with papers dealing with the clinician's responsibility to society. Dr. Rosner's lead article on legal regulation of psychiatry and forensic psychiatry is a touchstone for practitioners. Dr. Macklin's article on ethics deals with important issues in a thorough but readable manner. I was especially impressed by the discussion of Daniel W. Schwartz, "The Problem of the Malingering Defendant," with several excellent vignettes. There are excellent presentations on violence, dangerousness, civil law, will-related matters, malpractice from both a plaintiff's and defendant's perspective, adolescence and law, and related topics.

This volume is more than excellent, it is superb. It has been carefully assembled with a view toward giving the reader a chance to review problems while considering the author's perspective. The essays are well written, easily read, comprehensive, and informative. I recommend this volume unreservedly for specialists in law, medicine, and psychiatry and their students.

Reference

[1] Rosner, R., Ed., with a foreword by H. E. Thomas, *Critical Issues in American Psychiatry and the Law*, Vol. 1, Charles C Thomas, Springfield, IL, 1982.

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