

## BOOK REVIEW

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### Review of: *Principles and Practice of Forensic Psychiatry, Second Edition*

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**REFERENCE:** Rosner R, editor. *Principles and practice of forensic psychiatry*. 2nd ed. Arnold, London, 906 pp.

The *Second Edition of Principles and Practice of Forensic Psychiatry* is a most welcome addition to the forensic literature. Richard Rosner and a talented and diverse group of authors and co-editors have offered up what can only be described as the most definitive exposition of the whole of forensic psychiatry as practiced in the United States. Most notable is that it is a significant improvement on what was already the leading text of its kind. It retains, and even adds to, the breadth and accessibility needed to function as a reference text for diverse professionals while offering more depth and nuance to the experienced forensic practitioner. It is also a much more lively read, perhaps reflecting both the seasoning of the many authors who refined their chapters from the First Edition and the addition of authors in some chapters.

Part 1 is an overview of forensic psychiatry from history to general practice guidelines, such as report writing and testimony, to education. There are also several chapters in this first part devoted to troublesome, and often troubling, issues with moral and ethical overtones such as The Death Penalty and Liability of the Forensic Psychiatrist. For Parts 2–7, the layout of the book corresponds to the primary arenas of forensic practice: Legal Regulation of Psychiatric Practice, Forensic Evaluation and Treatment in the Criminal Justice System, Civil Law, Family Law and Domestic Relations, Correctional Psychiatry, and Special Clinical Issues in Forensic Psychiatry.

The final two parts are titled Basic Issues of Law and Landmark Cases in Forensic Psychiatry. These are good overviews of law properly directed at clinicians. The chapter devoted to case law is a case-by-case summary of the landmark cases identified by the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law and the Association

of Directors of Forensic Psychiatry Training Programs. It will prove invaluable in training and as a quick reminder of seminal holdings. It should be noted that cases are appropriately cited throughout the book, not just in the chapter on landmark cases.

Additions include chapters on sexual harassment, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, placement of children, substance abuse and addiction, prosecution of assaultive patients, and stalking. There was also substantial expansion of the text with regard to the evaluation and treatment of sex offenders and to neuropsychiatric aspects of forensics.

The chapter authors have done a good job of framing the forensic issues, often placing them in an historical context that helps the reader to understand the political and social framework of the legal issue. They then develop the essential material with a focus on providing basic practical guidance and directing the reader to more detailed sources. Particularly refreshing is that almost all the chapters go beyond the basics (if briefly) and, without preaching, direct the reader's attention to relevant ethical and systems issues that bear on the practice of forensic psychiatry.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly for busy professionals, it is very easy to access material of interest. The layout of the book and the clarity of the titles make this table of contents actually useful and the index is complete without being minute. The book is similarly well referenced but not overdone; high quality citations have been emphasized over exhaustive completeness. This overarching approach will provide those wanting to delve further into a topic with efficient entrees into the literature.

This second edition is timely. The field has been changing rapidly over the last decade and interest in forensic psychiatry is waxing. Rosner et al. have delivered the text for the next epoch. Whether residents, forensic and correctional mental health administrators, attorneys, judges, or old hands at forensics, all who have this text on their shelves will find themselves reaching for it regularly.

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