

BOOK REVIEW

William J. Fremouw,¹ Ph.D. and Allison M. Schenk,² B.A.

Review of: *The Cambridge Handbook of Forensic Psychology*

REFERENCE: Brown JM, Campbell EA, editors. The Cambridge handbook of forensic psychology. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 900 pp.

The Cambridge Handbook of Forensic Psychology is an ambitious, comprehensive, edited volume containing 102 chapters covering the broadest range of forensic psychology available. The 134 authors are a "Who's Who" in forensic psychology. Ninety percent of the authors are from the United Kingdom, while the remaining scholars are also giants of forensic psychology in the U.S., such as Elizabeth Loftus and Richard Rogers. It is logically organized into eight sections that cohesively unite topics in Psychological Underpinnings, Assessments, Interventions, Psychology and Criminal Behaviour, Psychology and Civil Law, Special Topics, Professional Practice, and Research Practice. The handbook is an encyclopedic style resource. Each chapter is organized with an outline of current issues, research, definitions, alternative positions, and references. Entries are eight to nine pages and highlight the current theory and research. The 102 topics provide almost exhaustive coverage of contemporary forensic psychology issues with an intermediate level of depth and ample references for further exploration.

One of the strengths of this handbook is the uniqueness of some of the topics, such as chapters on child soldiers, victims of terrorism, and parole decision making. The book also contains relevant, up-to-date issues, such as a chapter on Internet sexual offending. It is designed to serve as a resource for lawyers, law enforcement professionals, and general mental health professionals who need a contemporary and scholarly introduction to these forensic areas.

The first section of this volume (Psychological Underpinnings) covers broader, but vital areas of forensic psychology. Chapters on child and adolescent offending, eyewitness memory, theories of change, and violent offending can be found in this section. The volume progresses to the second section of forensically relevant

assessments with areas of false memory, risk, and offender profiling, to name a few. Interventions in an array of populations (e.g., child sexual abuse, rehabilitation of offenders, treatment of sexual offenders) are covered in the third section. The fourth section is Psychology and Criminal Behaviour, which discusses the psychological components of a number of different criminal acts, such as hate crimes, robbery, sexual assault, and stalking. Psychology and Civil Law is briefly covered in the fifth section. Special topics, including arson, bullying among prisoners, and hostage taking, comprise the sixth section. The seventh and eighth sections focus on Professional Practice and Research Practice. Finally, the index is usefully organized by both subject matter and author.

The *Handbook of Psychology: Forensic Psychology*, edited by Goldstein and Weiner (2003), shares a similar handbook designation, but offers more in-depth coverage of 28 topics, with each chapter being 15–20 pages (1). That book is more designed for forensic psychologists and not other professionals, such as lawyers or law enforcement professionals.

The editors, Brown and Campbell, are praised for their ambition, vision, and ability to compile such a volume. The only negative consideration is that the majority of authors cite legislation or case law specific to England and Wales, which would not be as relevant for readers from other countries. However, the research citations and summaries are not bound by these geographic considerations.

This volume will serve as a very useful resource for people with a variety of interests in the field of forensic psychology. The topics are comprehensive and timely. Overall, this 2010 handbook is an essential reference for any forensic science professional.

Reference

1. Goldstein AM, Weiner IB, editors. *Handbook of psychology: forensic psychology*, Vol. II. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003.

¹Department of Psychology, West Virginia University, P.O. Box 6040, Morgantown, WV 26506.

²Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program, West Virginia University, P.O. Box 6040, Morgantown, WV 26506.