

## Criminal Profiling: International Theory, Research, and Practice

Edited by Richard N. Kocsis, PhD. Totowa, NJ: Humana Press, 2007. 413 pp. \$124.00.

Criminal profiling is often misrepresented in the media, which introduced the public to careers in profiling and other forensic professions. It seems reasonable, therefore, for forensic psychiatrists to have access to a scholarly resource that describes the state of the practice of criminal profiling. *Criminal Profiling: International Theory, Research, and Practice* may be one such reference.

The book is edited by Richard N. Kocsis, PhD, a forensic psychologist who assembled a team of 30 professionals from North America and Western Europe to author 20 chapters about various aspects of criminal profiling. Despite the multi-national backgrounds of the authors, the material presented demonstrates more similarities than differences in the state of the science behind criminal profiling, including how it is interpreted by courts in various countries. As with many multi-authored texts, the scholarly impact of each chapter varies.

The book offers a solid definition of criminal profiling: "the application of psychological theory and behavioral analysis to the investigation and reconstruction of physical evidence that relates to a particular offender's crime scene characteristics, victimology, motivation, and behavior patterns" (p 62). Unfortunately, this definition is not included in the book's first chapter, "What is Criminal Profiling?" in which Kocsis summarizes how criminal profiling has been defined by others. He chose to introduce the quoted definition in Chapter Three, "Rhetoric and Reality: Investigating the Skills and Accuracy of Criminal Profiling." An introductory chapter on the basics of criminal profiling would have been invaluable, since forensic psychiatrists and other readers may not have had prior exposure to the academic science of criminal profiling (outside of the popular media).

Eighteen chapters contain previously unpublished material on criminal profiling. Two chapters, which are reworkings of Kocsis' previously published work,

were authored or coauthored by Kocsis. The chapter in which he describes the state of the science and limitations of criminal profiling was particularly interesting because few scholarly resources address these topics. As a matter of fact, much of the available literature in this area was published by Kocsis, who has authored more than 80 articles and two books about criminal profiling.

In several chapters, the authors examine techniques or strategies that are at the forefront of profiling, such as profiling of terrorists and geographic profiling. They also examine case linkage, which is "a process that aims to identify crimes that are likely to have been committed by the same suspect because of the behavioral similarity across the crimes" (p 118). Case linkage shares the assumption used in criminal profiling that offenders are consistent in the way in which they behave across their crime series. Case linkage diverges from the criminal profiling philosophy that assumes that crime scene behavior can predict a perpetrator's demographic characteristics. The authors state that limited field studies involving the accuracy of case linkage have jeopardized the admissibility of case linkage data in court. They also review other aspects of criminal profiling, including examining evidence in sex offenses, arson, and serial crimes.

Kocsis offers an overview of four primary approaches, or schools of thought, to criminal profiling: diagnostic evaluation, criminal investigative analysis (as used by the FBI), investigative psychology (which was founded by British psychologist David Canter), and Kocsis's own crime action profiling. Although the diagnostic evaluation approach is probably less accurate than the other three approaches, no particular school of thought has emerged as superior to the others. This chapter may be a starting point for future study, as the material in the preceding 19 chapters focuses on various aspects of criminal profiling, and not on any of the schools of thought.

Although James Herndon's chapter on the portrayal of profiling in the media is not meant to be scientifically rigorous, it captures the essence of the lay person's fascination with criminal profiling as portrayed in both fictional and nonfictional books, movies, and television shows. He noted, in a historical overview of profiling in the popular media, that television shows in Great Britain and the United States tend to last for one to four seasons. Herndon,

who wrote his chapter in 2005, also commented that the first season of the television show *Criminal Minds* was being televised that year. In 2010–2011 *Criminal Minds* will be in its sixth season, and a spin-off show on profiling has been proposed. Profiling in the popular media, and in real life, is here to stay.

In sum, readers who can overlook the absence of an introduction to and concise history of criminal profiling will find that Kocsis has assembled a broad collection of chapters that capture the use and limitations of criminal profiling as it is currently operationalized in the United States and Western Europe. The book serves as an informative and valuable resource about criminal profiling and is recommended to forensic psychiatrists who want to learn more about this topic.

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## The Insanity Defense, The World Over

By Rita James Simon and Heather Ahn-Redding. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006. 248 pp. \$29.95 paperback.

As a forensic clinician, I welcomed the opportunity to review this book; the title aroused my curiosity. I looked forward to the prospect of reading about how the insanity defense has evolved and is applied in different countries around the world.

*The Insanity Defense, The World Over* is part of Lexington Books' series, Global Perspectives on Social Issues. The book will appeal to readers who are interested in criminology, sociology, and international relations; it is not a forensic mental health or legal text.

The authors' stated goal was to examine and compare insanity defense criteria and procedures across 22 countries. The countries are divided into eight geographic regions: North America (Canada and the United States), South America (Argentina and Brazil), Western Europe (France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, The Netherlands, and Sweden), Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Russia), Middle East (Israel and Turkey), Asia (China, India, and Japan), Africa (Nigeria and South Africa), and

the Pacific (Australia). In addition to describing the criteria for the insanity defense in each country, the authors proposed to report the burden and degree of proof required, whether the trier of fact is a judge or a jury, the role that experts play in the proceedings, the disposition of insanity acquittees, and how often insanity is proffered as a defense.

The chapters are well organized and follow a consistent format. A general introduction to each country is followed by an outline of the history of its legal system and a review of the current criminal code. The authors report the mental health laws of some, but not all, countries. When present, it is a useful resource. The chapters also contain a detailed review of how each country defines and interprets the insanity defense.

Although one of the book's strengths lies in its contribution to comparative social and international studies, I was surprised by the presence of minimal commentary on the social and cultural aspects of the insanity defense. An unaddressed reality is that mental health systems differ among countries and that the various degrees of adequacy and organization of the systems determine the level of care received by defendants and offenders who have mental disorders. In the chapter on China, the authors attempt to examine the connection between the insanity defense and the psychiatric abuse of political dissidents, but such analyses are notably absent in other sections of the book.

The authors meet all of their stated goals when they describe the laws and practices of countries that have well-developed forensic mental health systems (such as Great Britain, the United States, Canada, and Australia). The other chapters are unevenly handled.

I read this book hoping that I might be able to rely on the authors' scholarship as a springboard for identifying and locating mental health law references for countries that have scant forensic psychiatric literature, such as Japan and India. It was disappointing, therefore, to find that more diligent research was not undertaken by the authors. In Chapter 13, which describes practices and laws in Hungary, a source is cited entitled the "History of Shock Therapy in Psychiatry," taken from an Internet magazine called *Brain and Mind*. The citation in Chapter 20 of a newspaper article from the *Japan Times* that describes changes in that country's mental health system made me wonder about the accuracy of some of