

with women who have offended. Readers in the United States will find Motz's style a substantial departure from that of other books on the topic because of the psychodynamic bent, which is not often found in the American courtroom. However, it may help U.S. clinicians to obtain a fuller understanding of violent female offenders, their situations, and motives.

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## Contemporary Issues in Family Law and Mental Health

By Michael G. Brock and Samuel Saks. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, 2008. 158 pp. \$32.95.

Michael G. Brock and Samuel Saks say that, in *Contemporary Issues in Family Law and Mental Health*, they examine the use of mental health evidence in family law disputes. The chapters in their book, which have been adapted from a series of articles on family relations and the law, relate well to one another in content and readability. The authors do an excellent job of discussing challenges encountered by mental health professionals who are expected to meet the diverse and complex needs of the court system, particularly in family law.

The book's 20 chapters, which cover a wide range of topics in family law, should be useful to any forensic mental health professional who works in this area. The authors discuss the role of the forensic mental health professional in family court, the rules of evidence and mental health testimony, the process and pitfalls of conducting forensic evaluations, the techniques of evaluation and syndromes that are of particular relevance to mental health consultation in family law, and the treatment of children through the court system. In several chapters, they review how goals and expectations in court differ from those in clinical or therapeutic settings. They describe the danger that arises when treating clinicians enter the judicial realm without a clear understanding of their role. This fundamental concept is repeated throughout the text, to convey its importance in forensic work. The text has extensive end notes with citations

including legal cases, references from the psychological and medical literature, and online resources. Also, the authors frequently make additional comments following the references at the end of each chapter.

One of the best features of this work is that the material is applicable to any mental health professional who is involved in litigation. I have used sections of this book to illustrate to psychiatry residents and forensic psychiatry fellows the difference between the roles played by treating clinicians and forensic consultants in court. The case examples were equally useful when advising colleagues who had been asked to testify by a patient's attorney. Chapter 3, entitled "Case Preparation Versus Expert Witnesses," provides a succinct review of case law, including landmark cases that control the admissibility of evidence in court hearings and how they affect the mental health expert witness.

Michael G. Brock works in Michigan as a clinical social worker, and Samuel Saks completed law school in Michigan. They devote a chapter to discussing the specifics of the 2003 amendment to the Michigan Rule of Evidence 703, which is intended to reduce or eliminate the use of hired-gun experts in child custody hearings. Although this chapter will be most relevant to professionals who testify in Michigan or in states with similar statutory limitations of evidence in family court, it is an interesting study of the challenges encountered when experts are used by both sides to argue a custody dispute.

*Contemporary Issues in Family Law and Mental Health* is a welcome addition to the forensic mental health literature. It is valuable to forensic mental health professionals, especially those who work with children and adolescents. It also may serve as a useful reference for non-forensically trained clinicians who work with pediatric patients and who may occasionally find themselves in court as fact witnesses. The experiences of my colleagues and me, who practice together in a large pediatric and family psychiatric private clinic, echo the message of Brock and Saks: when legal matters arise in caring for our patients, "Treatment professionals beware" (pp 43–50).

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