

ODARA (Chapter 6), used to determine the risk of wife assault.

In summary, I recommend this book to any forensic clinician who is looking for an update on research in the area of domestic violence. It can be read in a few evenings, and the time would be well invested for both a seasoned forensic clinician to confirm and reinforce his knowledge base in the area and for a novice forensic clinician who needs a basic primer. The reader will gain knowledge about key risk considerations and assessment instruments that may help when faced with difficult assessment questions in domestic violence situations.

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## Foundations of Forensic Mental Health Assessment

By Kirk Heilbrun, Thomas Grisso, and Alan M. Goldstein.  
New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2009. 180 pp.  
\$35.00.

*Foundations of Forensic Mental Health Assessment* (FMHA) is the first in a series of 20 short and user-friendly books devoted to situations involving criminal, civil, juvenile, and family law that are encountered by forensic mental health clinicians and mental health law professionals. The series is authored by three respected forensic psychologists, who begin this introductory text by summarizing scientific and ethics-based developments in forensic mental health during the past quarter-century. The authors' stated goal is to identify an aspirational best practice paradigm for FMHA that satisfies scientific advancement, ethics and professional standards, and legal relevance. Despite this goal, they repeatedly acknowledge that the aspirational standard may not always be attainable.

This book, which contains five succinct chapters, serves as a starting point for the series. Readers are expected to seek additional information from any of the subsequent 19 books, based on their interests and needs. The book's introductory chapter is followed by a discussion of forensic mental health assessment, including basic definitions, and a review of the recent

history of forensic psychology and forensic psychiatry, which begins in the mid-20th century. As psychologists, the authors have a more intimate knowledge of the development of forensic psychology than forensic psychiatry. The book's omission of a discussion about the early history of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law (AAPL) is attributed to a purported lack of written materials on the early days of AAPL. There is a discussion about the beginnings of the American Psychology Law Society, which was founded within one year of AAPL. The authors attribute the beginnings of a national credentialing system for forensic psychiatry solely to AAPL, and do not cite the contributions of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) to the formation of the American Board of Forensic Psychiatry, which was the first organization to offer formal subspecialty certification in forensic psychiatry. Despite these shortcomings, the authors provide a succinct summary of the history of modern forensic mental health and capture the highlights of the past half-century, which include violence risk assessment, legal competencies, child custody, due process in delinquency cases, and legal admissibility of forensic mental health testimony.

The authors examine the components of their best practices standard in the third chapter. These include: law, knowledge based on the behavioral and medical sciences, professional ethics, and professional practice, which they broadly define to include theory, guidelines, recommendations, and regulation by professional organizations. Within this framework, the authors discuss a variety of topics, including who can be an expert witness; admissibility of testimony including use of third-party information; ultimate issue testimony, including whether the legal standard is met; and most significantly, the formulation of clinico-legal opinions. The authors propose a best practice standard for opinion-making, though this paradigm was articulated at the start of the modern era of forensic mental health by professionals, including Seymour Pollack, MD.

There is a discussion of forensic mental health training in the third chapter that is skewed toward training of forensic psychologists; comparatively little information is presented on forensic psychiatry training or training of other forensic mental health professionals.

The authors use the fourth chapter to develop a set of principles for FMHA. They explore guidelines and principles for FMHA from the literature, distill their findings, and derive 7 general principles of FMHA along with 31 other principles covering specific aspects of FMHA, ranging from preparing for the FMHA to testifying. Although the standards derived by the authors are aspirational, they also may be used to inform forensic mental health practice in various settings.

The fifth and concluding chapter returns to addressing the best practices conceptualization and forms a segue to any of the other 19 books in the series. Overall, this volume on FMHA contains a vast array of important information on the topic. The book captures the essence of FMHA in a readable fashion. For a forensic mental health trainee, it can serve as an invaluable guidepost to learning about FMHA. For the seasoned forensic mental health clinician, it provides a concise and cogent review of the topic.

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## Explorations in Criminal Psychopathology: Clinical Syndromes With Forensic Implications, Second Edition

Edited by Louis B. Schlesinger. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas Publisher, Ltd., 2007. 394 pp. \$79.95 hardcover, \$55.95 paperback, \$55.95 ebook.

By design, *Explorations in Criminal Psychopathology* differs from most books in the fields of forensic psychiatry and forensic psychology. In the Introduction, the Editor, Dr. Louis B. Schlesinger, describes the book's intent: "Practitioners . . . need to have expertise in a wide range of clinical conditions—beyond those covered in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)*—that relate to various forms of criminal conduct" (p xiii). The Introduction's final paragraph states: "The need for forensic practitioners to understand . . . the psychodynamics of crime cannot be overemphasized"

(p xiv). With these goals in mind, the volume is organized in terms of clinical and psychodynamic concepts, as opposed to specific diagnostic categories (such as psychosis or substance abuse) or medico-legal matters, such as competence to stand trial, diminished capacity, and legal insanity.

The book is divided into three sections of five chapters each: "Disorders of Behavior," "Disorders of Thought," and "Borderline and Psychotic Disorders." In each section, the reader will find description and analysis of unusual or uncommonly discussed criminal forensic topics. The first section covers catathymic reactions, pathological gambling and its relationship to crime, idiosyncratic alcohol intoxication, organic brain dysfunction, and sadistic aggression. Section II reviews delusional misidentification syndromes, obsessional following (stalking), factitious disorder (including the by-proxy variant), morbid jealousy, and forensic aspects of *pseudologia fantastica*, or pathological lying. In Section III are discussions of Ganser's syndrome and other rare dissociative states, conduct disorder history in men with schizophrenia, dissociative identity disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and malingering. As this listing indicates, only a few chapters, such as those on PTSD and on the assessment of malingering, cover ground that is likely to be familiar to many or most forensic practitioners.

Some might wonder why a book devoted to examining psychodynamic processes and forensic "zebras" is necessary or worthwhile. But anyone who has worked in forensic psychiatry for any length of time realizes that the complexities of human behavior cannot always be easily explained simply by the application of a diagnostic label. Knowledge of psychodynamics can be of great value in assisting the forensic expert to make sense of the unconscious motivations and other antecedents for what may on the surface appear to be a bizarre or senseless crime. In certain cases, familiarity with psychodynamic mechanisms allows the evaluator to provide a more complete picture of the defendant's psychological makeup, emotional reactions, and thought processes, as well as their relationship to the legal question(s) at hand, especially for criminal defendants who have personality disorders or clinically significant maladaptive personality traits, but whose perception of reality in the traditional sense is found to be intact.

In the past few decades, many psychiatry residency programs have de-emphasized the teaching of psy-