

work contains a relative dearth of pragmatic, clinically relevant material. Some of the length is attributable to the Appendix, which contains excerpts from 10 of the cases explored in the book, a description of the Residential Treatment Unit at the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, and the *Dunn v. Voinovich* consent decree from Ohio. Not only does the material found in the Appendix seem extraneous, it occupies about one-half the space in one of the volumes. Therefore, unless a forensic or clinical psychiatrist has an extreme interest in the tedious legal underpinnings surrounding correctional mental health, this lengthy work, while appearing to be a solid contribution to the legal world, would be best kept on the shelves of libraries and institutions for psychiatrists to consult on an as-needed basis.

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## Detecting Lies and Deceit: Pitfalls and Opportunities

By Aldert Vrij. Second edition. Chichester, UK: John Wiley and Sons, 2008. 502 pp. \$170.00.

Everybody lies.—Gregory House, MD

There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics.—Mark Twain

A fundamental principle in all forensic work is to beware of malingering by the examinee in every forensic examination done for any purpose whatsoever. Because there is always an interest at stake, the need for help that governs traditional clinical work does not usually apply. The present book addresses this core concept from the standpoint of lying and deception and their detection. It is part of the Wiley Series in the Psychology of Crime, Policing and Law.

The author is Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom, and his main area of specialization appears to be nonverbal and verbal cues to deception and lie detection. He is described as an advisor to police on interviewing suspects and as an expert witness who also gives worldwide lectures and workshops on lie detection. He notes that the impetus for this second edition (published relatively soon after the first edition in 2000) derived from the terror attacks and security concerns that have placed a premium on obtaining truthful information.

The book itself is divided into 15 chapters (the first, an introduction) and an epilogue, as well as a preface and reference section. The author notes that this edition attempts to marshal the research data in “a comprehensive review of deception research published to date”; he uses “lying” and “deception” interchangeably. The book is intended to discuss “non-verbal, verbal, and physiological indicators of deceit and the ability to detect lies on the basis of these indicators.” Subsequent chapters are devoted to each of these topics. The text is punctuated with boxed sections that serve as extended but optional footnotes to ideas noted in the surrounding text.

The introduction begins provocatively and amusingly by stating some “facts” about lies and liars and then revealing that these are all myths. This section goes on to debunk claims of accurate lie detection that are not supported by the literature. Indeed, the various chapters continue the practice of challenging widely accepted myths about lying, including views held by professionals whose roles, such as law enforcement, require good lie detection. Some widely used lie detection instruments are similarly challenged. There seems to be no single cue that a person is lying that is comparable to Pinocchio’s growing nose. Subsequent chapters cover topics such as why it is difficult to catch liars and how interviewers can improve their lie detection skills.

Although the book is one of the most densely researched that I have read, the content is leavened by social and even popular digressions, such as why people lie, how lying is part of everyday life, and how lying is a social lubricant. The author himself, realizing the level of detail achieved in this comprehensive work, admits that the book is not meant to be read through but to be dipped into when questions arise about deception. This reviewer concurs with that approach.

The book clearly represents a kind of high-water mark for research in lie detection and deception. Both for valuable information in forensic assessments and to address concerns raised in court on cross-examination, this is an extremely valuable contribution to the forensic literature.

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## Writing Forensic Reports: A Guide for Mental Health Professionals

By Daniel P. Greenfield, MD, MPH, MS, and Jack A. Gottschalk, JD, MA, MSM. New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2009. 198 pp. \$45.00 paperback.

Although report writing is an integral part of the practice of forensic psychiatry, few resources are devoted to teaching this skill. Daniel Greenfield and Jack Gottschalk, the authors of *Writing Forensic Reports: A Guide for Mental Health Professionals*, wrote the handbook to “assist the neophyte, novice, apprentice (trainee), reasonably experienced, and very experienced forensic mental health practitioner with forensic expert report writing.” Although the book may be useful for students and residents considering forensic psychiatry, it does not provide enough specific guidance about report writing to be helpful to the “reasonably experienced” or “very experienced” forensic psychiatric expert.

The handbook consists of seven chapters divided into three sections. The first section, the “Introduction,” consists of two chapters. The first chapter, titled “The Importance of Forensic Reports,” makes a compelling case for studying forensic report writing and provides an overview of the book. The chapter closes with seven “pointers” for working collaboratively with counsel that are needlessly repeated in the epilogue of the book. While these suggestions, such as avoiding delays and remaining focused on the task at hand, are useful to forensic mental health professionals, only one of the recommendations, “communicate clearly,” is specific to report writing.

“Forensic Reports and the Law” is the title of the second chapter, which provides an excellent concise overview of the role of forensic reports in civil and

criminal cases. The authors also describe landmark U.S. Supreme Court cases that examine the admissibility of expert witness testimony.

The second section of the handbook, “The Reports,” is divided into four chapters. The second and fifth chapters review full criminal and civil reports, respectively, and the remaining two chapters, four and six, provide synopses of criminal and civil reports.

“The Reports” section includes full-length reports that offer good, practical teaching opportunities. Unfortunately, Greenfield and Gottschalk do not fully use the reports as educational tools. They identify areas in which each report models good practices, such as using American Psychiatric Association: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) diagnoses; however, there is no adequate discussion about how each report, although generally well-written, could be improved. For example, the first sample report in Chapter Three, “State v. Edward Taylor Hard,” examines the role of voluntary intoxication in a homicide. The report’s author chooses not to describe details of the incident in the report, “in the interest of saving time.” Given the seriousness of the case, the expert’s decision to omit details of the alleged offense could be used by opposing counsel during cross-examination to undermine the expert’s opinion(s). In addition, the expert states that the fatality occurred during “what appears to have been a bar brawl.” The expert’s choice of words, implying that the expert is uncertain of key details in the case, is potentially problematic.<sup>1</sup> The author should have identified the source of information about the “bar brawl.”

Two chapters that provide brief vignettes of criminal and civil forensic cases are also included in Section Two. Each vignette is approximately two to three paragraphs long and presents a question of referral, a brief synopsis of the expert’s analysis, and the expert’s opinion. These chapters provide a good overview of a variety of referral concerns, but no specific advice about report writing.

The final section is an epilogue that restates the seven recommendations for working collaboratively with attorneys. Also included are six appendices, among which are a guide to abbreviations, additional resources, and a concise discussion of psychological testing.

Overall, the book is a well-organized overview of a wide range of questions and problems attending forensic psychiatric referrals. As noted, the book is a