

gling to construct a defensible response to such fundamental critiques.

Brief but illuminating, the chapter titled “Gotcha and Goodbye” does a particularly good job of explicating how lawyers exploit cognitive biases in ways that impact our work in the courtroom. To do this, the authors frame a cross-examination strategy within a psychological concept called the “peak-end rule.” This rule articulates that most people (i.e., possible jurists) formulate their conclusions in ways that draw heavily on the *peak* (the “gotcha”) and the *end* (the “goodbye”) of their experience. One of the defining studies of the existence of this rule was conducted by Daniel Kahneman in 2003, which evaluated how patient’s overall perceptions of a colonoscopy varied based on the perception of pain intensity at the end of the procedure. In this study, the researchers randomized a group of patients receiving a screening colonoscopy and intentionally prolonged the procedure in a way that decreases discomfort for a short interval at the end of the colonoscopy. The group who received this technique, despite the increase in the length of the procedure, had a better perception of the experience as a whole and increased adherence for follow-up. How, one might ask, do lessons from this study apply to the courtroom? The authors not only demonstrate how attorneys utilize the peak-end rule in an effort to shape jury opinions with strong, assertive, and dismissive proclamations, but they also suggest strategies the expert can use to limit the impact of this technique.

The authors pepper chapters with equally useful and practical advice for courtroom experiences such as, the attorney’s use of “illusory documentation,” fielding obtuse and confusing questions, weathering personal attacks, and correcting innuendo. I found that the vignettes accurately described many of the “testimony nightmares” that experts often confront. The suggestions throughout the book have the potential to settle the anxiety of experts and help them navigate their work in the courtroom feeling confident and prepared.

The introduction suggests that “the reader can start anywhere and stop anywhere with no loss of continuity,” and I found that guidance to be true. However, self-promoting as it may seem, the authors recommend reading their other books on testifying first, writing that this book picks up where the others have left off. In the spirit of full transparency, I strayed from following the author’s advice and only

looked at their other books after having finished this one. I would argue a different perspective though. I think that this book is well suited as a starting point for some learners. However, like both Brodsky’s *Testifying in Court* and Gutheil’s *The Psychiatrist as the Expert Witness*, this book is packed with thoughtful guidance for testifying experts of all levels. One criticism is that the layout and voice may not suit the intense, the neurotic, or the overly organized learner who may be hoping to find a foundational reference for their work as an expert. This book tends to speak to those who are open to reflecting on their testimony as a work-in-progress and are able to generalize, ponder, peruse, and appreciate learning at a leisurely pace. I think that it would be a wonderful addition to any forensic fellowship training, and it is both educational and enjoyable to read for seasoned and novice medical experts alike.

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Criminal Genius: A Portrait of High-IQ Offenders

By James C. Oleson. University of California Press: Oakland, California. 2016. 335 pp. \$39.95.

The title of this book is immediately intriguing. In the introduction of the book, Oleson, quoting from one of his prior works, eloquently sheds light onto why:

There is a celebrity of infamy. It is no coincidence that we are as interested in Al Capone as Albert Einstein, as interested in Ted Bundy as Teddy Roosevelt, and as interested in John Wayne Gacy as John Wayne . . . [B]oth the genius (a social personification of that which is divine in our human faculties) and the criminal (a social personification of the antisocial and malevolent impulses that psychologist Carl Jung said constitute the “shadow archetype”) are powerful icons. While they seem different from us, there is something strangely familiar about both the genius and the criminal. In them, we see alienated aspects of ourselves, refined and magnified, and reflected back with a kind of majesty. The genius and the criminal fascinate us, and when a rare individual exists as *both* genius and criminal, we struggle to reconcile his divinity (of genius) with his wickedness (of crime) (Ref. 5, p5).

Criminal Genius: A Portrait of High-IQ Offenders is a detailed summary of a research study conducted

by James Oleson, Associate Professor of Criminology at University of Auckland. In his study, Oleson examines the relationship between IQ and crime via self-reported data from a group of 465 adults with IQs of 130 or higher, compared with a control group of 765 individuals. Oleson strives to provide some empirical data about a group that is frequently sensationalized in movies, yet rarely researched. Much of the quantitative data came from self-report surveys; however, Oleson also conducted in-person follow-up interviews of 44 subjects to obtain more qualitative data. Oleson quotes Patton in describing the importance of the qualitative part of his research, saying “Qualitative data describe. They take us, as readers, into the time and place of the observation so that we know what it was like to have been there. They capture and communicate someone else’s experience of the world in his or her own words. Qualitative data tell a story” (Ref. 2, p 205).

The book opens with a fascinating introductory chapter that reviews some infamous criminal geniuses from both history and media. The next chapter discusses the concept of genius and its evolving definitions over time, and it provides a foundation for what is understood about the relationship between IQ and crime. The book then delves into the details of Oleson’s study. The chapters are well organized by topic and include a chapter on the study’s methodology, another on the participants, a chapter about the offenses, a chapter about punishments received (or the lack thereof), and a chapter proposing some possible explanations for high-IQ crime. Finally, the summary and conclusion chapter highlights key findings.

Oleson’s study involved sending out surveys that collected demographic data and information about 72 different criminal offenses. The survey asked the participants whether they had ever engaged in each of the 72 criminal behaviors and, if so, how many times in the last year and in total. Participants were also asked whether they were arrested and/or convicted of each of the various offenses. The results were organized by dividing the offenses into several categories: sexually oriented crimes, violent crimes, drug crimes, property crimes, professional misconduct, vehicular crimes, justice system offenses, and miscellaneous.

The index group in Oleson’s study was composed of students at elite universities, members of a high-IQ society, and individuals incarcerated in

the United States or the United Kingdom with an IQ greater than the ninety-eighth percentile. Oleson chose to draw his index participants from these three separate groups to try capture the three distinct types of gifted individuals previously described in the literature: the conformists, the socially estranged outsiders, and the dropouts (p 79). The control group consisted of students enrolled in a distance-learning course at a large urban university.

Oleson’s results challenge the idea that there is an inverse relationship between IQ and crime. Index participants in his study reported higher prevalence rates for 50 of the 72 measured offenses, as well as a higher number of offenses per person compared with controls. However, there were several significant limitations to the study, which Oleson outlines in the book’s final chapter. For example, a number of the results were not statistically significant due to small numbers. Additionally, the control group of the study had an average IQ of 115.4 (one standard deviation above the average in the population). This means that individuals with low average IQs were underrepresented in the control sample. Oleson did not include an incarcerated sample in the control group, whereas a portion of the index group was incarcerated.

From start to finish, the book is meticulously detailed. Oleson manages to organize and thoroughly explain a colossal amount of data. He offers useful insights about how his findings fit within the context of the available literature on the topic. The bulk of the book, however, focuses on the quantitative data of the study and reads much like a (very) long journal article. The most engaging parts of the book, for me, included the bits of qualitative data woven in where Oleson tells some of the stories gathered from the in-person follow-up interviews of the index group. It was interesting to hear how one of the high-IQ repeat offenders experienced life with a remarkably high IQ, how he was drawn into a criminal lifestyle, and how he coped with the trauma of witnessing and participating in murders.

Overall, although the book has some intriguing aspects to it, it is of little practical value for the day-to-day work of most forensic psychiatrists. It seems unlikely that the findings of this study will significantly change our approach to risk assessment, though it might cause us to take pause at the frequently held misconception that IQ and crime are

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inversely correlated, especially when considering the extremes of IQ.

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