



# Psychological Evaluations for the Courts: A Handbook for Mental Health Professionals and Lawyers, Second Edition

By Gary B. Melton PhD, John Petrila JD LLM, PhD Norman G. Poythress PhD, Christopher Slobogin JD LLM

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Considered the definitive resource and text on forensic psychiatry and psychology since the publication of the first edition, *Psychological Evaluations for the Courts, Second Edition*, continues to be the most comprehensive discussion of legal, research, and clinical issues for both mental health and legal professionals. Fully revised and updated, the volume covers a broad range of topics in forensic mental health, including insanity, child abuse, sentencing, personal injury claims, and civil commitment. Less traditional subjects such as federal antidiscrimination and entitlement laws, competency to testify, workers' compensation, and a new section on the clinical evaluation of witness credibility have also been added. Throughout, the authors summarize and analyze legal issues, offer suggestions for evaluation procedures, and review appropriate research on both clinical opinions and the legal process.

## New to the Second Edition

Completely updated to reflect current research and practice, the volume contains four entirely new chapters and has been revised throughout to include analyses of new case law and clinical techniques; important research on competency and dangerousness from the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Mental Health and Law; and new ethical rules developed by the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association. Also new to this edition are exercises and case studies for students in each chapter (see below).

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

"*Psychological Evaluation for the Courts* is a splendid resource for mental health professionals who come into contact with the legal system. Relevant law is presented concisely, and its application illustrated with thorough reviews of empirical research. Clinicians are guided carefully through the essentials of the evaluation process. This second edition is even more comprehensive than its excellent predecessor. It is an indispensable aid for all forensic evaluators, and an indispensable tool for students in forensic training programs from the undergraduate to the postgraduate levels." --Paul Appelbaum, MD, Department of Psychiatry, University of Massachusetts Medical Center

"This is a brilliant synthesis of law, policy, theory, practical wisdom, and clinical knowledge, integrated in such a way as to make this book absolutely essential reading for any forensic evaluator or examiner working today. It is a tour de force of law and the behavioral sciences, and will set the standard against which other efforts in this area will be assessed for the indefinite future. The authors' treatment of the insanity defense is, simply, the best that I have ever seen in this type of context." --Michael Perlin, JD, Professor of Law, The New York Law School

"This is a brilliant synthesis of law, policy, theory, practical wisdom, and clinical knowledge, integrated in such a way as to make this book absolutely essential reading for any professor of, or student in, forensic mental health law. It is a tour de force of law and the behavioral sciences, and will set the standard against which other efforts in this area will be assessed for the indefinite future. The authors' treatment of the insanity defense is, simply, the best that I have ever seen in this type of context." --Michael Perlin, JD, Professor of Law, The New York Law School

"With this fresh edition, Melton, Petrila, Pythress, and Slobogin have made another landmark contribution to forensic practice. Comprehensive in legal coverage and rigorously empirical in analytic approach, this lucidly written book is packed with astute suggestions for conducting clinical assessments. Any psychologist or psychiatrist who gets on the witness stand without carefully having read *Psychological Evaluations for the Courts, Second Edition* should be committed as 'dangerous to self.' This is an immensely impressive work, one of the few in the field that deserve to be called authoritative." --John Monahan, PhD, Doherty Professor of Law, Professor of Psychology and Legal Medicine, University of Virginia

### About the Author

Gary B. Melton, PhD, is Director of the Institute for Families in Society, Professor of Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Science, and Adjunct Professor of Law, Pediatrics, and Psychology at the University of South Carolina.

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