



Critical Issues in American Psychiatry and the Law

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As President of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law (AAPL), it is a pleasure to write this foreword. Dr. Richard Rosner deserves full credit for helping AAPL pursue its educational goals by publishing a series of books. Consumerism and the civil rights movement have dramatically changed the practice of American psychiatry over the last 2 decades. Extensive legal regulation now makes it necessary for both general and forensic psychiatrists to keep abreast of changing laws. The contents of Volume II of Critical Issues in American Psychiatry and the Law demonstrate Dr. Rosner's gift for selecting and editing important theoretical and practical articles. This volume addresses a broad range of forensic issues. The pendulum-like swings of laws regarding civil commitment and insanity are clearly illuminated by Dr. Quen's contribution, "Violence, Psychiatry, and the Law." A review of historical psychiatric testimony supporting insanity defenses on the bases of homicidal mania, moral insanity, and phrenological evidence should make modern forensic psychiatrists humble. However, some of our colleagues continue to testify that defendants were unable to refrain from criminal conduct because of CT evidence of schizophrenia, pathological gambling, or the effects of junk food. Excellent theoretical discussions are presented by Dr. Macklin ("A Philosophical Perspective on Ethics and Forensic Psychiatry") and Mr. Hughes ("Legal Aspects of Predicting Dangerousness"). These chapters present thorough, up-to-date, scholarly analyses of complex issues from the vantage point of non psychiatrists.

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