



Introduction to Forensic Psychology

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- Define forensic psychology and trace its historical development.
- Review career areas in the forensic sciences.
- Distinguish forensic psychology from other forensic sciences.
- Identify and describe major subareas of forensic psychology.
- Review the educational, training, and certification requirements to become a forensic psychologist.
- Provide illustrations of roles and tasks performed by forensic psychologists.

When an explosion occurred aboard an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010, resulting in the deaths of 11 workers and the subsequent spillage of an estimated 75,000 barrels of oil a day for over 86 days, forensic scientists from various federal agencies and private companies were immediately sent to the site to assess the damage and try to identify the causes of the accident. They were investigators trained to uncover evidence that may or may not eventually end up in a court of law.

Forensic experts of a different type came to the aid of the Target Corporation in late 2013, when it was learned that Target's databases had been hacked into, and credit card data of some 70 to 110 million shoppers had been compromised. These experts dug through firewall logs, web traffic logs, and e-mails to find the source of the problem.

When the space shuttle *Columbia* disintegrated upon reentry into the Earth's atmosphere in 2003, and when a bomb was detonated in New York's Times Square in 2010, these events were investigated by scientists representing various federal and state agencies. As all of these examples indicate, the term *forensic* refers to anything pertaining or potentially pertaining to law, both civil and criminal. Forensic scientists participate in the investigation of major crimes—not necessarily violent ones—and are present at many accident scenes.

Investigations of this sort almost invariably occur whenever there are unexpected and unexplained events that are not obvious natural disasters. In these contexts, scientists can perform numerous functions. They may be able to

determine whether human factors—for example, sabotage, negligence, or terrorist activities—caused the tragedies. The information they provide can help in identifying those responsible. In the case of the oil spill, scientists tried to determine not only how the explosion occurred, but also how to stop the leakage and limit the extent of damage to wildlife and the environment. In the case of the Target investigation, they were searching for digital footprints to determine how hackers got in and how to prevent further breaches of security.

Forensic science has become an all-encompassing professional activity and a popular career choice among students. Nearly every conceivable profession, including psychology, has a forensic specialization. Many people are confused about the various forensic areas and assume that professionals within these fields do largely the same thing. It will become clear in this book, however, that they do not. What they do have in common, in addition to their association with the law, is the fact that all of these fields are based on scientific principles. Although **forensic psychology** is the subject of this text, it is helpful to begin with illustrations of other forensic sciences for comparison purposes. In other words, it is important for readers to know at the outset what forensic psychology is *not*.

The Forensic Sciences

Examples of the forensic fields, in addition to forensic psychology, include forensic engineering, forensic linguistics, forensic oceanography, forensic medicine, forensic computer investigation, forensic social work, forensic nursing, forensic pathology, forensic anthropology, and forensic archaeology. The focus of each discipline is evident from the terms. Forensic linguistics, for example, is concerned with the in-depth evaluation of language-related characteristics of text, such as grammar, syntax, spelling, vocabulary, and phraseology, either to profile an offender or to determine whether specific writing samples are from the same author (H. C. Black, 1990). Forensic anthropology refers to the identification of skeletal, badly decomposed, or otherwise unidentified human remains. Forensic pathology is that branch of medicine concerned with diseases and disorders of the body that relate to questions that might come before the court. The forensic pathologist—popularized in television shows such as the *CSI series*, *Bones*, and *NCIS*, and in the novels of Patricia Cornwell—examines the bodies of crime victims for clues about the victim's demise. Forensic anthropologists and forensic pathologists often work in conjunction with homicide investigators to identify the person who died; discover evidence of foul play; and help establish the age, sex, height, ancestry, and other unique features of the decedent from skeletal remains. Forensic nurses, who often work in hospital emergency departments, are nurses with special training in the collection of evidence pertinent to a crime, such as a sexual assault.

Forensic laboratories are usually maintained or sponsored by governmental agencies specifically to examine physical evidence in criminal and civil matters. The scientists working in these laboratories are expected to prepare reports and provide courtroom testimony on the physical evidence if needed. Alternatively, private laboratories provide services to governmental agencies on a contractual basis or employ scientists who conduct independent research.

Scientists from both public and private laboratories may be asked to examine and testify about latent fingerprints, hair fibers, firearms and ballistics, blood spatter, explosives and fire debris, toxic material, and other pertinent evidence found at or near a crime scene or tragic accident. Some forensic labs are better at investigating certain types of evidence than others. For example, a lab maintained by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was instrumental in investigating a major product-tampering case that occurred in the United States in 1982. Seven persons in the Chicago area collapsed and died soon after taking Tylenol capsules. The capsules had been purchased in six different stores, and victims included a 12-year-old girl, a woman who had just returned from the hospital after giving birth, and three members of one family. Chemical investigation revealed that the capsules had been laced with cyanide. FDA chemists developed fingerprinting-like techniques that allowed authorities to trace the cyanide back to the specific manufacturer and distributor (Stehlin, 1995). Unfortunately, despite the fact that the poison was identified and the source was traced, the perpetrator was never found.

With increased threats of mass violence and events such as the anthrax scare that followed the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the twin towers in New York and the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, quick forensic chemical-detection

methods such as those described above have become especially crucial. In addition to terrorism-related concerns, also critical are forensic techniques that can address more common crimes, such as drug trafficking, computer crimes, and a wide variety of white-collar offenses that involve fraudulent documents.

Forensic laboratories also often employ scientists who specialize in **forensic entomology**, which is the study of insects (and their arthropod relatives) as it relates to legal issues. This specialty is becoming increasingly important in both civil and criminal investigations. For example, entomological investigations of termite infestation may be used to support civil litigation dealing with real estate, pest control, or landlord–tenant disputes. In another context, forensic entomology may be useful in investigations of food contamination. Scientists try to determine where an infestation occurred (e.g., which plant or store), when it occurred, and whether it was accidental or the possible result of human tampering. (Whether there actually was negligence or evil intent, though, is left to the courts to decide.)

In criminal investigations, forensic entomology is used to determine the time since death (postmortem interval), the location of the death, placement or movement of the body, and manner of death. Forensic entomology can also be applied to investigations of drug trafficking. Insects are sometimes found in drugs, and their identity can help in pinpointing where the drugs were produced or packed. In some cases, forensic entomologists can establish from the DNA of body or head lice whether two individuals had contact with each other (Mumcuoglu, Gallili, Reshef, Brauner, & Grant, 2004).

Still another science represented in forensic laboratories is forensic document examination. This science analyzes handwriting, print fonts, the authenticity of signatures, alterations in documents, charred or water-damaged paper, the significance of inks and papers, photocopying processes, writing instruments, sequence of writing, and other elements of a document to establish authorship and authenticity. The process is often called **questioned document examination or analysis**. The questioned document may be a check, a threatening letter, a hold-up note, a credit application or receipt, a will, an investment record, a tax form, or a medical record (R. Morris, 2000). Questioned document analysis can be applied to many types of investigations, including fraud, homicide, suicide, sexual offenses, blackmail, bombings, and arson. Questioned handwriting analysis, for example, may include the forensic examination of a signature, a handwritten letter, entries on a form, or even graffiti on a wall. A forensic document examiner (FDE) may be asked to examine and render opinions on the authorship of writing on building walls; recover engraved or obliterated writing on different types of surfaces; or determine the brand or model of typewriters or keyboards, printers, embossers, inks, and printing processes (R. Morris, 2000).

A rapidly developing forensic specialty is **computer evidence recovery**. Anyone who has experienced hard drive failure can recall the momentary panic it engenders. We now know that most “lost” data can actually be recovered. As embarrassed politicians, their staffs, and other high-profile professionals and public figures have learned, e-mail messages do not inevitably disappear in cyberspace, even with the press of the delete key. Computer evidence recovery, also called forensic data recovery, involves e-mail and Internet analysis, along with sophisticated hard drive, diskette, and memory stick recovery techniques of orphaned, fragmented, and erased data. A computer evidence recovery specialist has the training to search, seize, and analyze magnetic media originating from a variety of operating systems pursuant to the execution of a search warrant or subpoena. Without specialized training, though, a law enforcement officer armed with a search warrant would not be advised to open computer files from the office of a person suspected of Internet fraud or one suspected of distributing child pornography. The major goal of the specialist or investigator is to recover the data or images without modifying them. These skills are used in a wide variety of investigations, such as financial fraud, embezzlement, sexual harassment, child pornography, program vandalism, identity theft, document forgery, software piracy, narcotics trafficking, and money laundering.

As is apparent from the above illustrations, forensic investigations usually require expertise in chemistry, biology, physics, or other sciences, including computer technology. Although television, movies, and popular novels provide numerous graphic examples of forensic examinations of evidence, the extensive scientific preparation required to work in forensic laboratories is usually not emphasized. The scientists depicted typically have access to state-of-the-art equipment, and they are often glamorous or have complex emotional lives, a depiction that may be quite unrealistic. Many students express a keen interest in the forensic sciences and seriously consider pursuing a career in the field without fully understanding what it is or what is required to reach their goal.

The field of forensic psychology involves a very different type of preparation and is significantly different in content, but it, too, requires considerable preparation. Nonetheless, there are many different avenues to entering this field, as will become apparent in this text.

Forensic Psychology: An Overview

For some time, the definition of forensic psychology has been in flux. As Otto and Ogloff (2014) observe, “Perhaps it is surprising, given the relatively long history and growth of forensic psychology over the past 40 years, that there is no uniform or consensual definition for this specialty area” (p. 35). In a similar way, John Brigham (1999) wrote that if a group of psychologists who interact with the legal system in some capacity are asked, “Are you a forensic psychologist?” many will say yes, some will say no, and a majority will probably admit they really do not know. Referring to his own testimony in court, Brigham noted that, when asked the question, his most accurate current response would be, “Well, it depends.”

As Brigham (1999) and Otto and Ogloff (2014) point out, differences in definition revolve around how narrowly or broadly the field is defined. Some of the professional literature refers to forensic psychology broadly as the *research* and *application* of psychological knowledge to the legal system, whereas some of it prefers a more narrow approach, limiting forensic psychology to the *application* and *practice* of psychology as it pertains to the legal system. A while back, we (Bartol & Bartol, 1987) offered the following definition:

We view forensic psychology broadly, as both (1) the research endeavor that examines aspects of human behavior directly related to the legal process . . . and (2) the professional practice of psychology within, or in consultation with, a legal system that embraces both civil and criminal law. (p. 3)

Ronald Roesch (cited in Brigham, 1999) suggested a narrow definition: “Most psychologists define the area more narrowly to refer to clinical psychologists who are engaged in clinical practice within the legal system” (p. 279).

The narrow definition may be too restrictive because it seems to imply a specialty called “forensic *clinical* psychology.” Furthermore, it excludes—among others—clinicians who perform corrections-related tasks, such as assess inmates for parole decision-making purposes, or clinicians who offer consulting services to police departments. The broad definition, on the other hand, includes not only clinicians (also called practitioners), but also social, developmental, counseling, cognitive, experimental, industrial-organizational, and school psychologists—some but not all of whom are clinicians. The common link is their contribution to the legal system. We recognize, however, that only a small proportion of their work may be performed in this context, so they might not consider themselves forensic psychologists. So, Brigham was correct in answering, “It depends.”

DeMatteo, Marczyk, Krauss, and Burl (2009) note that the lack of consensus for defining forensic psychology as well as the activities it comprises has continued: “[T]here is considerable disagreement over the scope of forensic psychology and what activities (i.e., research, assessment, and treatment) and roles should appropriately be considered the exclusive province of forensic psychology” (p. 185). They point out that increasing dissatisfaction with narrow conceptualizations led the American Psychology-Law Society to endorse a broad definition, particularly one that would embrace the contributions of researchers as well as clinicians. Most recently, following these recommendations, the **Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology** (APA, 2013c) promoted a broad definition, which is one we endorse and illustrate throughout this text:

Forensic psychology refers to professional practice by any psychologist working within any sub-discipline of psychology (e.g., clinical, developmental, social, cognitive) when applying the scientific, technical, or specialized knowledge of psychology to the law to assist in addressing legal, contractual, and administrative matters. (p. 7)

The above broad definition of forensic psychology focuses primarily on forensic practice, referring as it does to the application of psychology’s specialized knowledge to the law. It is understood that this application must be based

on solid research. The practice of forensic psychology, as it will be treated here, includes investigations, studies, evaluations, advice to attorneys, advisory opinions, and depositions or testimony to assist in the resolution of disputes relating to life or property in cases before the courts or other law tribunals. It can—and does—encompass situations before they reach the court as well as those situations following the court decision. It includes activities as varied as the following: courtroom testimony, child custody evaluations, screening and selection of law enforcement candidates, and clinical services to offenders and staff in correctional facilities. It also includes research and theory building in criminology; the design and implementation of intervention, prevention, and treatment for youth offenders; and counseling of victims of crime.

For organizational purposes, we divide forensic psychology into five subspecialties: (1) police and public safety psychology, (2) legal psychology, (3) psychology of crime and delinquency, (4) victimology and victim services, and (5) correctional psychology. It should be emphasized, however, that this is for purposes of organizing the text and is not necessarily the organizational scheme that is universally accepted in the field. Other scholars have adopted various methods of addressing the many ways psychology can interact with the law (e.g., Melton, Petrila, Poythress, & Slobogin, 2007; Otto & Ogloff, 2014). Furthermore, we recognize and appreciate that some psychologists prefer to maintain a distinction between forensic psychology and correctional psychology in particular (Magaletta et al., 2013). This is addressed in more detail below.

Each of our subdivisions has both research and applied aspects, and psychologists conducting research in one area of forensic psychology may consult with or train practitioners in other areas. Finally, a forensic psychologist may operate in more than one of the above subspecialties. Although we separate them for organizational purposes, we do not intend to isolate them or suggest that they have little in common with one another. We will discuss each subspecialty in more detail after briefly reviewing the history of the field.

Brief History of Forensic Psychology

Although the growth of forensic psychology has been especially apparent since the 1970s, its history can be traced back at least to the end of the 19th century, when J. McKeen Cattell conducted a very simple psychological experiment on eyewitness testimony in a psychology class at Columbia University. Cattell merely asked his students questions such as what the weather was like exactly a week before. Surprised at the wide variation in responses—often given with absolute certainty, even though they were wrong—Cattell decided to explore in greater depth and with more sophistication the field of eyewitness identification. Numerous psychologists subsequently undertook similar research. Some, for example, staged exercises wherein an “intruder” would enter the classroom, “confront” the professor, and leave. Students would then be asked to describe the intruder and the events that followed. To this day, eyewitness research remains of high interest to many forensic psychologists, yielding a rich store of information.

Psychologists also studied other topics that eventually produced knowledge of great value to the legal system. Research on human cognition, child development, abnormal behavior, the detection of deception, and stress are but a few examples. In the twentieth century, such psychological knowledge gradually was introduced into legal proceedings in the form of expert testimony, first in civil courts and later, as the century wore on, in criminal courts (Bartol & Bartol, 2014; Otto, Kay, & Hess, 2014). In the early part of that century, psychologists also began to consult with juvenile courts and offer treatment services to juvenile and adult correctional facilities. By the start of World War II, psychologists like Lewis Terman had brought intelligence and aptitude testing to the military and some civilian law enforcement agencies. By mid-century, it was not unusual to see psychologists consulting formally with law enforcement agencies, particularly by offering services for the screening of candidates for police positions.

In the 1960s and 1970s, psychologists began to testify in courts in increasing numbers. They also joined other mental health professions in submitting *amicus curiae* briefs to appeals courts, offering scientific information about topics that reached the courts, such as the effects of discrimination or research on human development. They sometimes consulted with lawyers in trial preparation and jury selection, and they began to offer predictions of dangerousness under limited circumstances. Each of these areas of involvement will be discussed in detail in the chapters ahead. Focus 1.1 provides selected benchmarks in the history of forensic psychology.

In 1981, Loh observed that the relationship between psychology and law had come of age. Board certification in forensic psychology, provided by the American Board of Forensic Psychology, had begun in 1978 (Otto & Heilbrun, 2002). Shortly thereafter, the American Psychological Association established Division 41, the American Psychology-Law Society (AP-LS), and that society was instrumental in prompting the APA to adopt forensic psychology guidelines in 1991 (subsequently revised in 2013). Forensic psychology was accepted by the APA as a specialization in 2001 and recertified in 2008. In 2010, Heilbrun and Brooks noted that forensic psychology had matured. They observed, “we are closer to identifying best practices across a range of legal contexts that are addressed by forensic psychology research and practice” (p. 227). The growth in the field is reflected in the development of professional organizations devoted to research and practice in forensic psychology, significant increases in the number of books and periodicals focusing on the topic, the development of undergraduate and graduate training programs, and the establishment of standards for practitioners working in the discipline (DeMatteo et al., 2009; Heilbrun & Brooks, 2010; Otto & Heilbrun, 2002; Weiner & Otto, 2014).

FOCUS 1.1. HISTORICAL BENCHMARKS IN FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

1893—First psychological experiment on the psychology of testimony is conducted by J. McKen Cattell of Columbia University.

1903—Louis William Stern of Germany establishes a periodical dealing with the psychology of testimony (*Beiträge zur Psychologie der Aussage [Contributions to the Psychology of Testimony]*)

1906—Publication of a little-known work, *Psychology Applied to Legal Evidence and Other Constructions of Law*, by George Frederick Arnold.

1908—Publication of Hugo Münsterberg's *On the Witness Stand*, arguably one of the first professional books on forensic psychology. Some scholars consider the author, a Harvard professor of psychology, to be the father of forensic psychology.

1908—Social science brief submitted to an appellate court, the Oregon Supreme Court, in *Muller v. Oregon*.

1909—Clinic for juvenile offenders established by psychologist Grace M. Fernald and psychiatrist William Healy.

1911—J. Varendonck becomes one of the earliest psychologists to testify in a criminal trial, held in Belgium.

1913—First time that psychological services are offered within a U.S. correctional facility (a women's reformatory in New York State), by psychologist Eleanor Rowland.

1917—Psychologist-lawyer William Marston develops the first “polygraph.” Shortly thereafter, his expert testimony on the polygraph is rejected by a federal court (*Frye v. United States*, 1923) because the polygraph, as then developed, lacked general acceptance by the scientific community.

1917—Louis Terman becomes the first American psychologist to use psychological tests in the screening of law enforcement personnel.

1918—First inmate classification system developed by psychologists, established by the New Jersey Department of Corrections. New Jersey also becomes the first state to hire full-time correctional psychologists on a regular basis.

1921—First time an American psychologist testifies in a courtroom as an expert witness (*State v. Driver*, 1921).

1922—Karl Marbe, a psychology professor at the University of Würzburg, Germany, becomes the first psychologist to testify at a civil trial.

1922—William Marston becomes the first to receive a faculty appointment in forensic psychology, as “professor of legal psychology” at American University.

1924—Wisconsin becomes the first state to provide comprehensive psychological examinations of all admissions to its prison system and all applications for parole.

1929—Psychologist Donald Slesinger is appointed associate professor at Yale Law School, qualifying him as the first psychologist granted faculty status in an American law school.

1931—Howard Burt’s *Legal Psychology* is published—the first *textbook* in the forensic area written by a psychologist.

1954—U.S. Supreme Court cites social science research, including that of psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark, in its landmark ruling, *Brown v. Board of Education*.

1961—Hans Toch edits one of the first texts on the psychology of crime, *Legal and Criminal Psychology*.

1962. Psychologists are recognized as experts on the issue of mental illness by D.C. Court of Appeals in *Jenkins v. United States*.

1964—Psychologist Hans J. Eysenck formulates a comprehensive and testable theory on criminal behavior in the book *Crime and Personality*.

1968—Martin Reiser, the first prominent full-time police psychologist in the United States, is hired by the Los Angeles Police Department. Reiser became instrumental in establishing police psychology as a profession.

1968—The first PsyD program is established at the University of Illinois.

1972—Under the guidance and leadership of the American Association for Correctional Psychology (AAPC), Stanley Brodsky, Robert Levinson, and Asher Pacht, correctional psychology becomes recognized as a professional career.

1973—The first successful interdisciplinary psychology and law program is developed at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

1978—The American Board of Forensic Psychology provides board certification in forensic psychology.

1978—The American Psychological Association approves a clinical internship in corrections at the Wisconsin Department of Corrections.

1991—The American Academy of Forensic Psychology and American Psychology-Law Society (Division 41 of the APA) publishes *Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychologists*.

2001—The American Psychological Association recognizes forensic psychology as a specialty.

2006—The Committee on the Revision of the Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology recommends a broader definition that encompasses research as well as clinical practice.

2008—The American Psychological Association recertifies forensic psychology as a specialty.

2013—The “Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology” are published. Forensic psychology is described as “professional practice by any psychologist working within any subdiscipline of psychology (e.g., clinical, developmental, social, cognitive) when applying the scientific, technical, or specialized knowledge of psychology to the law to assist in addressing legal, contractual, and administrative matters.”

Forensic Psychology Today

Today, the practice of forensic psychology is evident in numerous contexts. Here are just a few examples of things that forensic psychologists (depending on their specialty) may be asked to do.

Police and Public Safety

- Assist police departments in determining optimal shift schedules for their employees.
- Establish reliable and valid screening procedures for law enforcement officer positions at various police and sheriff's departments.
- Perform fitness-for-duty evaluations of officers after a critical incident, such as a hostage-taking situation ending in multiple deaths.
- Train police officers on how to deal with mentally ill citizens.
- Provide counseling services to officers after a shooting incident.
- Provide support services to the families of law enforcement officers.
- Inform police of the research evidence regarding the reliability of eyewitness identification.

Legal Psychology

- Conduct child custody evaluations, visitation risk assessments, and child abuse evaluations.
- Assist attorneys in jury selection through community surveys and other research methods.
- Perform evaluations of a defendant's competency to stand trial.
- Testify at a trial in which the defendant has pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity.
- Evaluate civil capacities, such as the capacity to make a will or consent to treatment.
- Testify before a legislative committee on relationships between aggression and violent video games.

Psychology of Crime and Delinquency

- Evaluate the effectiveness of intervention strategies designed to prevent violent behavior during adolescence.
- Conduct research on the development of psychopathy.
- Consult with legislators and governmental agencies as a research policy advisor on responses to stalking.
- Consult with school personnel on identifying troubled youth who are a potential threat to other students.
- Develop a psychological measure for assessing risk of harm to self or others among the mentally ill.
- Inform the legal community about research on decision making in adolescence.

Victimology and Victim Services

- Evaluate persons who are the victims of crime or witnesses to crime.
- Conduct psychological assessments for personal injury matters related to auto accidents, product liability, sexual harassment and discrimination, and medical negligence or worker's compensation, and so on.
- Educate and train victim service providers on psychological reactions to criminal victimization, such as post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Assess, support, and counsel those who provide death notification services.
- Educate service providers on the impact of multiculturalism when victims seek mental health and support services.

Correctional Psychology

- Establish reliable and valid screening procedures for correctional officer positions at correctional facilities.
- Assess inmates entering prison for both mental health needs and suitability for prison programs.
- Assess prisoners for risk in parole decision making.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of programs for juvenile and adult offenders, such as victim-offender reconciliation programs, sex offender treatment, or health education programs.
- Develop a stress management program for correctional personnel.
- Conduct sexually violent predator assessments.

It should be mentioned that the above list would be shortened considerably if we were to adopt a narrower, clinically based definition of forensic psychology. In addition to the above, forensic psychologists teach in colleges and universities and conduct research that is relevant to the legal system, such as research on eyewitness testimony, the comprehension of Miranda rights, and jury decision making.

The work settings in which forensic psychologists are found include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Private practice
- Family, drug, and mental health courts
- Child protection agencies
- Victim services
- Domestic violence courts and programs
- Forensic mental health units (governmental or private)
- Sex offender treatment programs
- Correctional institutions (including research programs)
- Law enforcement agencies (federal, state, or local)
- Research organizations (governmental or private)
- Colleges and universities (teaching or research)
- Juvenile delinquency treatment programs
- Legal advocacy centers (e.g., for the mentally ill or intellectually disabled)

Throughout this book, text boxes in most of the chapters will introduce you to professionals who are engaged in these activities and work in these settings.

In today's economic climate, many students are worried that they will not secure employment upon graduation from college or upon earning an advanced degree. It is a reality that government grants and positions are being cut, and these affect scientists at all levels. Forensic psychology has thus far not been extensively damaged, however, and the outlook for career opportunities in its many facets is bright (Griffin, 2011). Keep in mind, though, that with greater competition for available dollars comes greater accountability in the provision of services. For example, in the treatment arena, treatment providers are asked to document that their services are effective—in other words, that they are based on research evidence. “Evidence-based treatment” has become an important term in the correctional lexicon as well as in other areas of human services. Likewise, evidence-based practice—whereby psychologists use methods and instruments that, if not perfect, have respectable reliability and validity—is crucial for professionals interacting with the legal system.

Forensic Psychology, Forensic Psychiatry, and Forensic Social Work

Some of the tasks listed above are performed by mental health professionals who are not psychologists, most particularly psychiatrists or social workers. Increasingly, these three groups of professionals work in collaboration, but it is important to point out some of the differences among them.

Psychologists, particularly clinical, counseling, and forensic, are often confused with psychiatrists by the public and the media. Today, the lines of separation between the two professions are becoming increasingly blurred. Clinical, counseling, and forensic psychologists, along with psychiatrists, are trained to provide direct assessment and treatment services to persons with emotional, cognitive, or behavioral problems.

Psychiatrists are medical doctors (MDs) (or, in some cases, doctors of osteopathy [DOs]), who specialize in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of mental, addictive, and emotional disorders. Psychologists do not hold a medical degree, although some may have earned related degrees, such as a master of public health (MPH). Another major distinction between the two has been the license to prescribe drugs, including psychoactive drugs. Traditionally, psychologists have not been permitted by law to prescribe any medication. Now, that is beginning to change. In 2002, New Mexico became the first state to allow properly trained psychologists to prescribe psychoactive drugs, or drugs

intended to treat mental disorders. In 2004, Louisiana became the second state in the country to pass a law authorizing properly trained psychologists to prescribe certain medications for the treatment of mental health disorders. In that state, these practitioners are called “medical psychologists.” Psychologists in the military also have prescription privileges. To date, though, psychologists in no other states have gained prescription privileges, although legislation has been introduced in numerous states. In April 2010, Oregon became the most recent state to deny these privileges. Medical associations typically have resisted extending prescription privileges, maintaining that this will lead to abuses and decrease the quality of patient care. Nevertheless, even among clinical psychologists there is not universal support for prescription privileges or authority, although most surveys find at least a majority in favor (e.g., Baird, 2007; Sammons, Gorny, Zinner, & Allen, 2000).

Many psychiatrists, like psychologists, work in a variety of forensic settings, including the court, correctional facilities, and law enforcement, but especially the first. Psychiatrists who are closely associated with the law are often referred to as **forensic psychiatrists**. In some areas, such as issues relating to insanity determination by the courts, psychiatrists are more visible—and sometimes more preferred—than psychologists. As we will discuss in a later chapter, this reflects a greater comfort on the part of some judges with the medical model approach to mental disorder (Melton et al., 2007). Psychologists and psychiatrists seem to be equally involved in pretrial assessments of juveniles, while psychologists are more likely to conduct custody evaluations, consult with law enforcement, and work within the correctional system. Law-related research tends to be the bailiwick of psychologists, although some psychiatrists are engaged in conducting and publishing such research also.

Forensic social workers also can be found in the same arenas as their psychological and psychiatric counterparts. They may counsel victims of crimes or families of victims and offenders and provide substance abuse and sex offender treatment to offenders, among other functions. In many correctional facilities, social workers are part of the treatment team. Forensic social workers may be found participating in child custody evaluations, termination of parental rights, spousal abuse cases, and juvenile justice and adult corrections.

Forensic social work is the application of social work principles to questions and issues relating to law and legal systems. A professional group, the National Organization of Forensic Social Work [NOFSW], publishes the *Journal of Forensic Social Work*, which addresses contemporary forensic practice issues for practitioners and social researchers. Forensic social workers typically possess a master’s degree in social work (MSW) with a forensic concentration and supervised field experience. In most states, they are not recognized as experts in criminal cases but do testify in civil cases.

In all areas of forensic work, collaboration among professionals is crucial. Therefore, although our text focuses on the work of psychologists, it is important to stress that contributions from other mental health disciplines cannot be overlooked and that the disciplines often work in collaboration.

Ethical Issues

With the increasing opportunities available to forensic psychologists, numerous pragmatic and ethical issues also have been raised. Prescription authority, mentioned briefly above, is one example. Other ethical issues pertain to the dual relationships between the psychologist and the client, conflicts of interest, participation in research, issues of confidentiality, and the tension between punishment and rehabilitation (A. Day & Casey, 2009; Ward & Birgden, 2009; Weiner & Hess, 2014). In recent years, contentious issues have revolved around psychologists participating in military interrogations, making recommendations in child custody cases, conducting violence risk assessments in death penalty cases, labeling juveniles as psychopathic, and establishing proper boundaries between assessment and treatment.

Like all psychologists, forensic psychologists are expected to practice in accordance with the “Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct” (APA, 2010a), which includes five general principles and ten standards. The latter are mandatory rules that psychologists are obliged to follow. In addition, the aforementioned *Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology* (APA, 2013c), as well as a variety of other guidelines published by the American Psychological Association, should be consulted. We will visit these guidelines as they relate to material in the chapters ahead.

Careers in Psychology

Since the 1970s, there has been an enormous expansion of the profession of psychology in general (Reed, Levant, Stout, Murphy, & Phelps, 2001) as well as forensic psychology specifically (Packer & Borum, 2013). Psychology encompasses a wide spectrum of topics ranging from engineering designs (human factors) to animal behavior, and it has a place in every imaginable setting. Psychologists can be found in “personnel selection and training, developing user-friendly computer software, the delivery of psychological services to victims of natural and man-made disasters, the profiling of serial killers, the creation of effective commercials that increase the sale of a product, and so on” (Ballie, 2001, p. 25).

In 2012, there were approximately 134,000 total members of the **American Psychological Association (APA)**. Membership includes undergraduate students, high school students, teachers, international members, affiliates, and professional members. Sixty percent of the membership are women. The APA, based in Washington, D.C., is the largest association of psychologists worldwide. As of 2013, approximately 26,000 psychologists from the United States and abroad, whose specialties span the entire spectrum of scientific, applied, and teaching areas, were members of the **Association for Psychological Science (APS)** (www.psychologicalscience.org), the second-largest psychological organization in the United States. The APS, also based in Washington, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of scientific psychology. In addition to the APA and APS, psychologists belong to many other professional organizations at the international, national, state, and local levels.

Education and Training

As most psychology undergraduates become quickly aware, the bachelor’s degree provides a basic foundation in psychology, but it does not adequately prepare a person to be a professional psychologist. The minimum educational requirement for psychologists is the master’s degree, but that degree is also limited. Psychology is a doctoral-level profession. In some states, graduates of master’s degree programs in psychology—with the appropriate clinical training—may be eligible for licensure as a psychological associate (LPA) or as a masters-level psychologist (MacKain, Tedeschi, Durham, & Goldman, 2002).

Graduates with a master’s degree in psychology may also qualify for positions in school or industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology, although most states prohibit them from using the professional title “psychologist.” This term is reserved for individuals with doctorate degrees. If the graduate with the master’s degree obtains several years of experience in business or industry, he or she may be able to obtain a position in consulting or in market research. In some states, graduates with master’s degrees in psychology may be licensed with *nonpsychology* titles, such as licensed mental health counselor, marriage and family therapist, or psychotherapist (MacKain et al., 2002). The most common master’s degrees in psychology are in clinical, counseling, or I/O psychology.

In addition to course work at the undergraduate and master’s level, various types of internships provide students with valuable opportunities to learn more about the field. As you read through this text, you may note that quite a few of the essayists featured in the Perspectives boxes mention internships during their undergraduate or early graduate years. As they pursued doctoral-level training, the internships became more advanced and involved additional responsibilities.

In addition, specialization in psychology usually begins at the graduate or even postgraduate level, although many undergraduate programs offer concentrations in certain areas, such as social psychology, education psychology, forensic psychology, or human development. Graduate programs in psychology usually offer graduate degrees in experimental, biopsychology, developmental, cognitive, clinical, counseling, school, and industrial/organizational psychology. The last four represent the more applied or practitioner’s side of psychology. Recently, as we will see shortly, forensic psychology has become a fifth applied branch in the field, and in 2013, police and public safety psychology was recognized as still another applied branch.

To say that psychology is a doctoral-level profession is not to discourage students from seeking only a master’s degree, particularly if a doctorate seems too far out of reach for the time being. At the master’s level, clinical,

counseling, and school psychology attract the most students (Cassin, Singer, Dobson, & Altmaier (2007). In a survey conducted in North Carolina, Sally Joy MacKain and her associates (2002) asked state and private employers if they employed LPAs. Through this method, they were able to identify 345 master's-level psychologists working within the state. The researchers discovered that 158 were employed at mental health centers, 108 were with the state department of corrections, 54 were working at residential centers that serve the developmentally disabled, and 25 were employed at state psychiatric hospitals. Employers indicated that LPAs were as marketable as other master's-trained clinicians such as social workers and counselors. Eighteen percent of the employers stated they were more likely to hire psychologists than other master's-trained clinicians, and 49% said they were "just as likely to hire them." In fact, some employers reported difficulty in finding enough LPAs for their positions. Salaries for LPAs ranged from \$27,000 to \$45,000 with a median of \$30,500, a range similar to that of other master's-level clinicians. In addition to employers, MacKain et al. also surveyed 60 LPAs. More than half the graduates interviewed (54%) stated they were definitely planning or were considering entering a doctoral program within the next 5 years, suggesting that the opportunities presented by the LPA alone may be limited. Of the LPAs, 36% were employed in community mental health centers, 24% were working in state corrections or the courts, 16% were involved in private inpatient or outpatient facilities, 10% were in university or college settings, and 8% were in non-private agencies. Nonetheless, motivated students always are encouraged to pursue the higher degree.

Graduate Training: Doctoral Level

At the doctoral level, clinical psychology attracts the largest number of students of all the applied specialties. A doctorate is considered the entry-level credential for the independent practice of psychology (Michalski, Kohout, Wicherski, & Hart, 2011). Interestingly, in a recent year (2008–2009), U.S. and Canadian graduate departments awarded slightly more PsyD doctorates than PhD doctorates—1,350 vs. 1,222 (Kohout & Wicherski, 2010). Approximately 4,000 students earn doctorates in the many other fields of psychology (N. B. Anderson, 2010). In their 2008–2009 survey, Michalski et al. discovered that 72% of the responding psychologists who earned their doctorate in 2009 said they obtained their first choice when looking for a job. A large majority indicated they had secured their first choice within 3 months of obtaining their doctorate.

The *PhD* degree (doctor of philosophy) requires a dissertation and is well accepted in the academic world as appropriate preparation for scientists and scholars in many fields across the globe (Donn, Routh, & Lunt, 2000). It is regarded primarily as a research-based degree. A *dissertation* refers to a substantial paper based on the PhD candidate's original research, which should make a significant contribution to the research literature. The *PsyD* (doctor of psychology) is a graduate degree designed primarily for students who wish to become practitioners rather than researchers. The first PsyD program was established in 1968 at the University of Illinois (Peterson, 1968). Although many PhD psychologists have questioned the soundness of the PsyD since its beginnings, especially in light of its limited research focus, the degree has received increasing professional recognition in recent years and has attracted the interest of many students. As noted in Table 1.1, the PsyD in forensic psychology is offered by approximately 10 schools.

Although it is wise to be cautious whenever salary information is offered, it is generally accepted that salaries for those with a doctorate are highest in the private sector and lowest for those in academe (college or university teaching and research). Administrative positions in academe typically are more lucrative. In 2009, the overall median 9- to 10-month faculty salary for psychologists was \$76,090, whereas the overall 11- to 12-month median salary for doctoral-level psychologists in the applied field was \$120,000 (Finno, Michalski, Hart, Wicherski, & Kohout, 2010). Those working for the government fall somewhere in between an academic salary and a salary in the applied field, with a 2009 median salary of \$86,293.

Licensure

According to Tucillo, DeFilippis, Denny, and Dsurney (2002), by 1977, every U.S. state had laws relating to the licensure of psychologists, and in 1990, all Canadian provinces regulated the practice of psychology. In 1987, in an effort to encourage standardized licensing requirements, the APA developed a model act to serve as a prototype for drafting

state legislation (Tucillo et al.). One of the chief criteria to qualify for licensing is possession of the doctoral degree. Professional psychologists are also ethically obligated to comply with the standards pertaining to their practice, as outlined by the **Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (EPPCC)** (American Psychological Association, 2002, 2010a).

Guidelines are also offered in a number of areas associated with research and clinical practice. A good example is the *Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology* (SGFP; American Psychological Association, 2013c) mentioned above. One distinction between standards and guidelines should be made. Psychologists are expected to comply with *standards*, and there is an enforcement mechanism in place in case they do not. For example, a violation of the standards outlined in the Code of Conduct could result in a complaint to the APA's Professional Conduct Board and, ultimately, loss of one's license to practice psychology. By contrast, the *guidelines* are aspirational; psychologists are strongly encouraged—but not required—to abide by them. However, the various guidelines offered to psychologists are extremely helpful to those working in clinical as well as research settings.

Employment

Surveys are periodically done to determine where psychologists with recent doctorates find employment. One such survey (D. Smith, 2002) found that about three quarters are employed in higher education or human service settings (such as schools or hospitals). The rest are working in business, government, or private practice. About 25% of those with new doctorates found employment in academic positions at 4-year colleges and universities. Morgan, Kuther, and Habben (2005) edited an interesting book in which new doctorates in psychology wrote about the rewards and challenges they faced at the entry level of their careers. Kuther and Morgan (2013) also published a work reviewing careers in psychology in a changing world. Another helpful book on careers in psychology was written by Sternberg (2008).

A survey conducted by the AP-LS (P. Griffin, 2011), one specifically related to forensic psychology, found that independent practice was the primary work setting of psychologists involved in psychology and law activities. Approximately 45% identified independent practice (e.g., conducting child custody evaluations or risk assessments) as their main setting. Another 25% worked primarily in university settings, 12% in hospital or other human service settings, and approximately 10% in government settings. It should be noted that, although psychologists will have a primary setting, many also overlap their work into other settings—as you will again find as you read the essays in this book. For example, a number of psychologists whose primary setting is a college or university also maintain private practices.

Those with doctorates in psychology have a strong foundation in theory, research methodology, and analysis that allows them to work in a variety of occupations. “Rather than being stereotyped as a professor or therapist, more and more psychologists are being seen as applied scientists” (Ballie, 2001, p. 25).

The Applied Specialties

At present, there are six specialties of applied psychology recognized by the American Psychological Association: clinical, counseling, school, industrial/organizational, forensic psychology, and police and public safety psychology. As noted earlier, forensic psychology was first recognized as a specialty in 2001 and was recertified in 2008. Although these specialties may have distinct features, journals, associations, and interests, they also have many things in common.

In all of these practices, psychologists are finding that their clients are often from cultural backgrounds different from their own. Just over a decade ago, E. F. Morris (2001), observed that, “The majority of service providers are European Americans with middle-class values and orientation; a sizeable portion of the diverse client populations are African-Americans and underserved with mixed values and orientations” (p. 563). A growing black middle and upper class contributes to the diversity. In addition, psychologists are encountering in their practices more persons of Latino, Asian, Native American, and Middle Eastern heritage. It is extremely crucial for practicing psychologists to be knowledgeable about and sensitive to the cultural values and norms held by persons to whom they are providing service. This may be especially important for forensic psychologists. Members of racial and ethnic minorities are often overrepresented in the populations these psychologists serve (Carter & Forsyth, 2007). Furthermore, the psychologists are often

not chosen by those they evaluate or treat, but they nevertheless are called on to assist in making decisions that may drastically affect the lives of these individuals. In recognition of the need to be aware of diversity and a changing society, various guidelines have been adopted in recent years (e.g., APA, 2003b, 2012).

Forensic Psychology as a Specialty

Educational and Training Requirements

Regardless of the debate over how broadly or narrowly forensic psychology should be defined, the growth in the field is demonstrated by the continuing development of graduate programs throughout the world, particularly in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. In August 2010, the website GradSchools.com was listing 101 forensic psychology graduate programs, at both the MA and PhD or PsyD levels. Some were campus based and others were online programs. In the United States and Canada alone, it is estimated that 41 institutions offer 68 programs in forensic psychology, “including 15 clinical PhD programs, 10 PsyD programs, 15 nonclinical PhD programs, 12 joint-degree programs . . . and 16 master’s programs” (Burl, Shah, Filone, Foster, & DeMatteo, 2012, p. 49). (See Table 1.1 for a representative list of doctoral programs.)

One interesting path is that taken by individuals who pursue joint degree training—they earn both a PhD or a master’s degree in psychology and a degree in law—a JD—at the same institution. This is a less common route to take, and it is offered at about 12 universities. The joint degree, though not necessary for forensic psychologists, is a good option for graduate students feeling a strong pull toward both psychology and law. (See Perspective 1-1, in which Dr. David DeMatteo discusses the benefits of obtaining a joint degree.)

It is a mistake to believe you need a degree specifically in forensic psychology to work in the field, however. Many graduate programs in clinical psychology, counseling psychology, and criminal justice, among others, have forensic concentrations that provide students with academic and training opportunities in forensic psychology, whether through specific course work or internships. Furthermore, many psychologists recommend a broad background in psychology, such as would be obtained by a clinical or counseling degree, rather than a degree in forensic psychology. The choice one makes can depend upon numerous factors: the availability of a mentor, the content of courses offered,

Table 1.1 Representative Clinical PhD and PsyD Programs in Forensic Psychology*

Programs Offering a PhD

University of Alabama, Alliant University, University of Arizona, Fresno State, University of California–Davis, Drexel University, Fordham University, University of Illinois, Chicago, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska, Nova Southeastern University, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology, Sam Houston State University, Simon Fraser University, Texas Tech University, West Virginia University

Programs Offering a PsyD

Alliant University, Argosy University, Carlos Albizu University, Chicago School of Professional Psychology, University of Denver, Forest Institute of Professional Psychology, Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology, Nova Southeastern University, Pacific University, Widener University

Programs Offering Joint Degrees in Psychology and Law or Legal Studies

University of Arizona, Arizona State, Drexel University, University of Nebraska, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology, Widener University

*Note: Not included are schools offering a nonclinical PhD (e.g., in social psychology with a law concentration) or schools offering a master’s but no doctoral degrees, including joint degrees at the master’s level. For a complete list, see Burl et al., 2012.

the opportunity for internships, funding, the geographic area, and the reputation of the program, among many considerations. In reality, there are different avenues through which to work in forensic psychology, as you will see when you read the essays written by professionals throughout this text.

Most of the graduate programs in the United States concentrate on either clinical or counseling psychology or on social psychology as it relates to legal psychology or psychology and law. Formal programs offering specific degrees in police psychology are virtually nonexistent in the United States and Canada, although there are several programs called “investigative psychology” in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, now that police and public safety psychology has been recognized as a specialty, it is likely that more academic concentrations in this area will be developed. Academic and research institutions in Canada have long supported research in correctional psychology, and the curricula in Canadian forensic programs reflect this strong research or empirical emphasis. Interestingly, forensic programs in the United States have been criticized for not giving sufficient attention to corrections and the skills needed to practice in that area (Magaletta et al., 2013).

It is important to mention, also, that students with psychology backgrounds often enroll in doctoral programs that confer degrees in criminal justice, criminology, sociology, and social work, such as the distinguished programs at the State University of New York at Albany, the University of Cincinnati, and the University of Maryland. Although they are not psychologists, the professors, practitioners, and researchers with such doctoral degrees make significant contributions to this field. Moreover, these graduate programs often include PhD psychologists on their faculty.

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE . . .

Source: Author.



The Benefits of Joint-Degree Training

David DeMatteo, JD, PhD

One of the more common questions I get asked by prospective students is whether they should pursue joint-degree training or instead focus on one degree. Despite having a JD and a PhD and directing a joint-degree program, my answer to this important question is, “It depends.” This answer seems to surprise many, who apparently expect me to uniformly recommend joint-degree training for all students. The reality, though, is that joint-degree training, like any specialized training, is not for everyone. Whether joint-degree training is the right choice for someone depends on several considerations. Before describing those considerations, I will explain why I pursued joint-degree training, what I have done with my degrees, and the benefits of such training.

As a freshman in college, I knew with absolute certainty that I wanted to become a lawyer and practice law . . . until I started taking psychology courses. Despite my long-standing interest in pursuing a legal career, I fell in love with psychology. I loved its utility and broad scope. I loved the idea of helping people and society through psychological research and practice. A few short months after entering college, the pendulum of my career interests had swung from one side (law) to the other (psychology), and I decided to pursue a career in psychology. Admittedly, I was lucky; many people change majors multiple times before settling on a career choice.

Eventually, however, I realized that my true interests were not entirely in psychology or in law, but at

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the intersection of psychology and law. As my college career progressed, my interests evolved and matured, and I became interested in conducting methodologically rigorous research aimed at helping legal decision makers and policy makers make better-informed decisions, and evaluating criminal offenders and civil litigants so that attorneys and courts could make better decisions. Given these interests, I found myself gravitating toward a career in psychology, because lawyers do not typically conduct research and certainly do not perform clinical evaluations. I found myself in a quandary. I no longer wanted to practice law, but I still wanted to learn about the law. I also wanted to be able to think like a lawyer and have the analytical skills of a lawyer, and I wanted to use those attributes to enhance my work in the psychology field. Fortunately, I found out about a joint-degree program offered by MCP-Hahnemann University and Villanova Law School—one of only a few joint-degree programs in the United States at that time—that would enable me to pursue advanced training in both psychology (PhD) and law (JD).

If we fast-forward to when I was approaching graduation from the joint-degree program, the next major question I faced was how to use both degrees in a meaningful way that satisfied my career interests. My main interests—conducting policy-relevant psycho-legal research and working with offenders and litigants—remained intact, and other interests, such as teaching and consulting, had emerged. I needed to find a job that satisfied these diverse interests. As many people find out, getting the right job is an iterative process—i.e., your first job will likely not be your final professional stop. The goal should be that each successive job satisfies more of your career interests. I first obtained a position as a research scientist at the Treatment Research Institute (TRI), which is a nonprofit research institute that works closely with the University of Pennsylvania, where I satisfied my interest in conducting sophisticated and policy-relevant drug-policy research. My work at TRI focused on drug-involved criminal offenders, and our research examined the

effectiveness of drug courts, the ethics of obtaining consent from individuals to participate in drug abuse research, and the development of interventions for offenders with less severe substance use problems. However, I had little opportunity to teach or consult, and I wanted to use my clinical skills and work more closely with students. After 4 rewarding years at TRI, I was hired as a faculty member in the Department of Psychology at Drexel University.

Over the past 7 years in academics, I have been able to put both of my degrees to good use. I spend my time conducting research aimed at influencing policy and practice in several areas; teaching courses to undergraduate, graduate, and law students; mentoring undergraduate and graduate students; conducting forensic mental health assessments of juveniles and adults; consulting with attorneys, courts, and other agencies; sitting on various committees and editorial boards; and publishing and presenting my research. Moreover, as director of Drexel's JD/PhD program, I helped develop a law-psychology training curriculum and serve as a mentor to the next generation of law-psychology professionals. My days are professionally fulfilling and not always predictable. Depending on the day, I might be in my office, in the classroom, in a jail, or in a courtroom. I might be developing a new course, writing a book, conducting research, working on a forensic report, or meeting with students to advance their education and training. The varied nature of my job is something I truly enjoy.

Before returning to the original question of whether joint-degree training is a good idea, let me address the other question I routinely get asked—i.e., whether my joint-degree training has helped me in my career. Fortunately, the answer to this question is an unequivocal "yes." To my knowledge, no jobs *require* having both degrees (perhaps with the exception of being director of a joint-degree program), but having both degrees provides a unique skill set, increased marketability, and a multitude of professional options. Although I initially believed that having a law degree would be most beneficial in terms of my forensic assessment work, which

requires interacting with attorneys and having some amount of legal knowledge, it has actually proved more beneficial in my research. Much of my research is conducted with justice-involved individuals, and having a law degree has enhanced my credibility with those from whom we need permission to conduct such research (e.g., judges, court administrators). Further, having both degrees enabled me to be appointed to the American Psychological Association's Committee on Legal Issues (COLI). As Chair of COLI in 2011, I assisted in drafting three *amicus curiae* briefs submitted to the U.S. Supreme Court, with the briefs focusing on psychological research that was relevant to the issue the Supreme Court was addressing in each case. Two of the Supreme Court cases dealt with the reliability of eyewitness identification, and the third case focused on predicting future dangerousness in death penalty cases.

So, let's return to the original question of whether joint-degree training is a good idea if you have interests in both psychology and law. As stated at the outset, it depends on several factors, including the availability of joint-degree programs (fewer than 10 at this time), the level of funding being offered, how much time one has for education/training (most joint-degree programs range from 6 to 9 years of post-graduate work), and professional goals. Focusing on professional goals deserves additional comment. Students should ask themselves what they would like to do primarily, and whether having joint degrees will help them to do it better.

Most people who receive joint-degree training work either in law or psychology, and then use the

"other" degree to enhance their primary work. For example, some are practicing lawyers—they need a law degree but of course are not required to have a doctoral degree in psychology—but they practice in areas of law in which having psychology training can be particularly helpful (e.g., family law, mental health law). Some individuals with joint-degree training mainly use their doctoral degree in psychology (e.g., academics, research, forensic assessment work), and they use their law degree to enhance their functioning in these areas. In essence, joint-degree training may be right for you if you are interested in becoming a scientist-practitioner who will produce legally sophisticated social science research to aid the legal system to make empirically based decisions; a lawyer-psychologist who will participate in the development of more empirically and theoretically sophisticated mental health policy; or a clinician who can contribute to the advancement of forensic psychology in areas such as criminal law, family law, and mental health law. Joint-degree training is a long but rewarding journey, and it can greatly assist those whose goals are consistent with such training.

Dr. DeMatteo is an Associate Professor of Psychology and Law at Drexel University, where he is also Director of the JD/PhD Program in Law and Psychology. His research interests include psychopathy, forensic mental health assessment, drug policy, and diversion, and he also maintains a private forensic assessment practice. He enjoys reading, running, and spending time with his wife and two children.

In addition to obtaining a doctorate, some clinicians become certified or become diplomates in forensic psychology. A **diplomat** is a professional designation signifying that a person has been certified as having advanced knowledge, skills, and competence in a particular specialty. Diplomat certification in forensic psychology attests to the fact that an established organization of peers has examined and accepted the psychologist as being at the highest level of excellence in his or her field of forensic practice. The psychologist must be licensed to qualify for diplomat status.

In approximately 17 states, forensic psychologists must obtain licenses or state-issued certificates in order to engage in forensic practice, such as conducting competency evaluations for the courts or assessing sexually violent offenders who may be subjected to civil commitment proceedings. Virtually all of the laws relating to certification in

various states were passed after the year 2000, which is testament to the growth in this field. Heilbrun and Brooks (2010) have published a helpful table summarizing these statutes.

Another level of certification is “board certification,” which can add stature to an individual’s credentials if he or she is called to testify in court. On a national level, the predominant organization that provides board certification in forensic psychology (as well as 12 other specialty areas) is the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP). In addition, the American Board of Forensic Psychology (ABFP) has provided board certification since 1978 and is now affiliated with the ABPP (Heilbrun & Brooks, 2010). Another certifying body is the American Board of Psychological Specialties (ABPS), which is affiliated with the American College of Forensic Examiners (ACFE). Criteria used by the various boards and organizations to grant credentials or titles vary widely (Otto & Heilbrun, 2002). According to Heilbrun and Brooks, with regard to board certification, the ABFP “appears to be the most rigorous, requiring a credentials review, a work sample review, and the passing of both a written and an oral examination for all candidates” (p. 229).

Research and Practice Careers in Forensic Psychology

We now discuss briefly the five major areas in the research and practice of forensic psychology to be covered throughout the text, along with two related “subareas,” family forensic and forensic school psychology. Although examples of what psychologists do in each of these areas were listed earlier in the chapter, this section offers additional details.

Police and Public Safety Psychology

Police and public safety psychology is the research and application of psychological principles and clinical skills to law enforcement and public safety (Bartol, 1996). The goal of this specialty is to assist law enforcement and other public safety personnel and agencies in carrying out their mission and societal functions with effectiveness and safety. Psychologists who work in law enforcement and public safety are involved in the following four areas: (1) assessment (e.g., screening and selection of personnel, fitness-for-duty evaluations [FFDEs]; special unit evaluations); (2) clinical intervention (post-shooting incidents, line-of-duty deaths counseling, deep undercover stress reactions); (3) operational support (e.g., hostage negotiation; criminal activity analyses); and (4) organization consultation (e.g., gender and ethnic/minority issues; excessive force concerns, police corruption problems, workplace stressors).

Police psychologists are sometimes left out of the umbrella category of forensic psychologist, and—like correctional psychologists—some do not consider themselves such. As noted above, this field also has achieved APA recognition as a specialty of its own. However, because of the overlap between forensic and police psychology, we continue to treat it as a branch of forensic psychology for organizational purposes.

In the early years, the term *police psychology* was used, but this has given way to the broader term, which encompasses the many professions that are associated with public safety concerns, such as deputy sheriffs, fish and wildlife agents, airport security, immigration agents, marshals, constables, and many other types of state and federal agents.

The relationship between psychology and law enforcement has waxed and waned over the years, with considerable forensic psychology involvement—such as in candidate screening—followed by a period of quiescence. The police community has been characterized as “tight-knit, paramilitary, and rigid and . . . not given to innovation” (Scrivner, Corey, & Greene, 2014, p. 444). Scrivner et al. add that, “Initially, the tradition-clad agencies were uncertain about the need for psychological services, and psychologists had an uphill battle to gain credibility and develop an understanding of the law enforcement culture.” Overall, though, as law enforcement agencies have become more professional and psychologists more appreciative of the demands of law enforcement work, relations between the two professions have improved and become mutually respectful. “There is little question today that psychologists have made a difference and have had an impact on the delivery of law enforcement services across the country” (Scrivner et al., 2014, p. 444). As noted earlier, they perform preemployment psychological assessments, fitness-for-duty evaluations, special unit evaluations, hostage team negotiations, and deadly force incident evaluations. They also may be asked to do investigative-type activities, such as criminal profiling, psychological autopsies, handwriting analysis, and eyewitness (or earwitness) hypnosis. “Cop docs,” as they are sometimes called, also provide support services to officers and their

families. Larger police departments usually hire full-time, in-house police psychologists, whereas the smaller departments typically use psychological consultants.

Currently, there are no formal graduate programs in the United States specifically focused on police psychology, but as mentioned above, with recent recognition as a specialty, this may happen soon. It is best for students entering the field to earn a doctorate in psychology (especially clinical, counseling, or industrial/organizational) and, while in the graduate program, to work with a faculty member who is involved in police psychology and has worked with the law enforcement community if possible. It is also advisable to complete a doctoral or postdoctoral internship in an agency or organization that deals directly with police organizations. Regardless of the career path taken, it is critical that a person interested in police psychology become highly familiar with the nature of police work, its policies and procedures, and gain an understanding of police culture. (See Chapter 2 for additional suggestions from Dr. Joel Fay, a police officer for 30 years who later became a police and public safety psychologist.)

Legal Psychology

Legal psychology is an umbrella term for the scientific study of a wide assortment of topics reflecting the close relationship between psychology and the law, particularly but not exclusively the courts. These topics include—but again are not limited to—competencies and criminal responsibility (insanity defense), civil commitment, jury selection, jury decision making, child custody determinations, family law issues, eyewitness identification, and the effects of pretrial publicity on court proceedings. As treated here, legal psychology includes both research and application of behavioral and social science to criminal and civil courts.

Once they have earned their PhD or PsyD degree (or a joint JD/PhD), people with a background in legal psychology often obtain postdoctoral positions in various agencies and research facilities like the Federal Judicial Center, the National Center for State Courts, the FBI, the National Institute of Justice, or the National Institute of Mental Health.

A caveat is in order, however. It is not unusual to see the terms *legal psychology*, *psychology and law*, and *forensic psychology* used interchangeably in academic and professional literature. Although we use *legal psychology* here as a subarea of forensic psychology, we recognize that this is not a universal approach. We also recognize the considerable overlap between legal psychology and the other subareas we have carved out. Eyewitness identification, for example, a rich research area for legal psychology, is of intense interest to police and public safety psychologists, who might be advising the law enforcement community on lineup procedures or the reliability of eyewitness testimony. In fact, we discuss these topics in Chapter 3, which deals with police investigative procedures. The legal psychologist is more likely than the police and public safety psychologist to be conducting *research* in these areas, however. Likewise, legal psychology and victimology intersect when psychologists perform risk assessments and some custody evaluations. The point here is that the various subareas of forensic psychology are not mutually exclusive.

One of the numerous topics holding considerable interest for legal psychologists is the psychology of false confessions, a topic we also discuss in Chapter 3. Most people are aware that suspects—for a wide variety of reasons—sometimes confess to crimes they did not commit. A suspect may be afraid, may be coerced into confessing, may desire to protect the real perpetrator, may think that no one will believe in his or her innocence, or may even want the notoriety associated with being blamed for the crime. What surprises many people, however, is this: Some suspects who are truly innocent come to believe they are truly guilty. Research strongly suggests that skillful manipulation by law enforcement officers can lead to this form of false confession (Kassin, 1997, 2008; Kassin, Goldstein, & Savitsky, 2003; Kassin & Kiechel, 1996; Loftus, 2004). Loftus observes that “we have every reason to believe that some people who are presented with false evidence that they committed a crime might actually come to believe that they did” (p. i). Legal psychologists have been at the forefront of studying this bizarre phenomenon.

Family Forensic Psychology

Many forensic psychologists are becoming increasingly involved in family law, so much so that specializing in **family forensic psychology** is a good career option. The family has changed dramatically, even over the past 20 years. The 2000 census indicated a major increase of cohabitating, single-parent, and grandparent-led families as well as increases

in families formed by gay and lesbian parents and their children (Grossman & Okun, 2003). In 2007, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that 39.7% of all births in the United States were to unmarried women. In 2012, this figure rose to half of all births (Adam & Brady, 2013). In 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed that legally married gay couples were entitled to federal benefits (*United States v. Windsor*, 2013) and also supported gay marriage in a different case (*Hollingsworth v. Perry*, 2013) by refusing to overturn a California court's decision to strike down a law that would have prohibited it. Currently, 17 states and the District of Columbia now honor marriage equality. Put another way, in these states, gay couples are allowed to marry and to have legal protections and benefits given to heterosexual couples. Increasingly, federal courts have ruled that states that have *not* recognized marriage equality, either through court decisions or in their statutes, must extend rights and benefits given to couples legally married in other states. These changes affect the formation of families; family maintenance and dissolution; and numerous legal issues relating to children, medical and employment benefits, and even end-of-life decisions.

Family forensic psychologists, then, are concerned with adoption; alternative families; child support; divorce, including custody, relocation, and conflict resolution; abuse; elder law, including estate planning; family business; guardianship; juvenile justice; paternity; reproductive and genetic technologies; and other areas such as termination of parental rights. Family forensic psychology is involved in civil and criminal cases when the understanding of family dynamics and family systems is essential, for example, in cases involving visitation to prisons, release programs, and the impact of sentencing on family members (Grossman & Okun, 2003, p. 166). The best-known areas of family forensic psychology involve child custody, family violence, and the assessment and treatment of juveniles, all topics that will be covered in some detail later in the book.

Psychology of Crime and Delinquency

The **psychology of crime and delinquency** is the *science* of the behavioral and mental processes of the adult and juvenile offender. It is primarily concerned with how antisocial behavior is acquired, evoked, maintained, and modified. Recent psychological research has focused on a person's cognitive versions of the world, especially his or her thoughts, beliefs, and values and how those that are inconsistent with leading a lawful life can be modified. It assumes that various criminal behaviors are acquired by daily living experiences, in accordance with the principles of learning, and are perceived, coded, processed, and stored in memory in a unique fashion for each individual.

Criminal psychology examines and evaluates prevention, intervention, and treatment strategies directed at reducing criminal behavior. Research in crime and delinquency has discovered, for example, that chronic violence usually develops when children do poorly in school, do not get along with peers, have abusive parents, and attend schools that do not control disruptive and violent behavior (Crawford, 2002). Research has also found that social rejection by peers and others can lead to serious, violent offending: "A great deal of psychological functioning is predicated on belonging to the group and enjoying the benefits, both direct and indirect, of that belongingness" (Benson, 2002, p. 25). When this sense of belongingness is removed or restricted, a feeling of isolation and social exclusion occurs that tends to produce significant changes in behavior, such as an increase in aggression, violence, and other maladaptive behaviors. Under these conditions, human behavior may become impulsive, chaotic, selfish, disorganized, and even destructive. School shooters, for example, frequently express a sense of social isolation and rejection.

Researchers have also found, however, that well-designed and carefully executed prevention programs can prevent violence and a lifelong career path of crime. For example, the Fast Track Prevention Program, developed by researchers at Duke University, Pennsylvania State University, Vanderbilt University, and the University of Washington, has shown highly promising results in reducing juvenile crime. We will further discuss such programs in the chapters on crime and delinquency. Of late, applied psychologists working in school settings have found an increased need for their services, as we noted above. This has led to a keen interest in a new subdivision of school psychology.

Forensic School Psychology

A major area of research interest and practice today is **forensic school psychology**, which relates to the intersection of psychology, the educational system, and the legal system. Forensic school psychologists may not call themselves

such—they may think of themselves simply as psychologists or school psychologists. However, if they routinely interact with a multitude of legal issues, we would consider them deserving of that special title. Forensic school psychologists may work with local schools concerning school suspensions and expulsions, as well as possible placement of a youth into a residential school program and its concomitant implications for the youngster's home school district. They also perform a wide variety of assessment services, including assessing gifted students or those with special needs, such as intellectual or emotional difficulties. They face issues relating to the limitations of client privilege; tactics during contested special education cases; and expectations of judges, attorneys, and facility staff pertaining to mental status and the client's potential placement in institutional settings (Crespi, 1990).

Educational programs are required for young people in correctional and psychiatric facilities throughout the country, and some states have established special school districts within these facilities (Crespi, 1990). The challenges for forensic school psychologists within these contexts are considerable. Although the primary focus of public and private schools in the community is obviously education, such education in most correctional or psychiatric settings may be secondary to the reasons for confinement.

Rehabilitation of the juveniles—which includes but is not limited to education—is crucial. Consequently, assessment and counseling services are critical roles for the school psychologist within these settings. Although many forensic school psychologists primarily work with mentally disordered offenders and youth in correctional facilities, they also work with public and private schools on issues that potentially relate to the legal system. For example, a psychologist in a public school setting might be asked to assess a student's potential for violence after being suspended from school temporarily as a result of sending threatening letters to his teacher.

The need for additional consultation with school psychologists within the public and private school systems across the United States took on chilling urgency in the late 1990s when a rash of school shootings made headlines. Communities across the nation that had previously had a low profile—West Paducah, Kentucky; Jonesboro, Arkansas; Pearl, Mississippi; Springfield, Oregon—suddenly became well known because of the violence that erupted within their schools. Since then, sporadic episodes of a student taking a gun to school or a student killing a school principal have been publicized.

The December 2012 school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, where 20 first graders and six adults were killed—was horrifying but an unusual instance of someone outside the school entering the premises. Other school shootings have involved a student opening fire on fellow students, teachers, or administrators. The most striking of such cases was the killing of 12 students and 1 teacher at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, in April 1999. Twenty other students were injured, some seriously, during that incident. The two teenage boys who were responsible for the shootings also died. To the public and news media, the shooters appeared to be two ordinary boys from normal middle-class families living in a suburb of Denver. As more information became public, however, the shooters were described as isolated teenagers who were fascinated by weapons and often ridiculed by other students. Although there had been a number of school shootings prior to Columbine (at least 10 school shootings between 1996 and 1999), the Columbine incident prompted a great deal of alarm and concern from parents across the United States. The person responsible for the Newtown shooting was said to have been fascinated with the Columbine case, and other subsequent shooters apparently were as well. In one case, the shooter had traveled to Colorado to interview the principal of Columbine.

In light of the increasing attention paid to school violence, threat assessments to identify youth who are potentially dangerous have become more common. Such an assessment would occur, for example, when a student makes a spoken or written threat to harm classmates or teachers. Once a youth has been assessed, he or she may then be counseled in the school setting or in the community or may even be expelled. As noted above, that assessment task often falls to the school psychologist. We discuss threat assessments in more detail in Chapter 8.

Despite the media attention directed to Columbine, Newtown, and the other school tragedies, it is important to keep school violence in perspective. The school shootings described occurred during a time when juvenile violent crime was decreasing nationwide, and it has continued to decline. Nonetheless, additional incidences of violence have occurred, usually involving one student who brings a weapon to school and threatens or shoots one or two people. In an incident in April 2014, a 16-year-old student in Pennsylvania allegedly stabbed or slashed 19 high

school kids and one adult; he was initially charged with 4 counts of attempted homicide and 21 counts of aggravated assault. Whenever the news media highlight certain events and dramatize their significance, the events seem to be more widespread and frequent to people than they really are. This phenomenon is called the **availability heuristic**. In reality, although these shootings and stabbings are terrible and tragic, they are not representative of the juvenile crime picture as a whole. Nevertheless, there are disturbing indications that such incidents may be increasing, largely due to the availability of guns.

Victimology and Victim Services

Victimology refers to the study of persons who have experienced either actual or threatened physical, psychological, social, or financial harm as the result of the commission or attempted commission of crime against them. The harm may be direct or primary (experienced firsthand) or indirect or secondary (experienced by family members, relatives, survivors, or friends because of their closeness to the victim) (Karmen, 2013).

Violent victimization of children, such as terrifying abductions, school shootings, and sexual attacks, can disrupt the course of child development in very fundamental ways and can be associated with emotional and cognitive problems over the course of the life span (Boney-McCoy & Finkelhor, 1995). In adults, there is strong evidence that the effects of criminal victimization—such as assault, robbery, and burglary—are both pervasive and persistent (Norris & Kaniasty, 1994). Until recently, psychological services were received by a very small fraction of crime victims (2%–7%) (Norris, Kaniasty, & Scheer, 1990). In fact, it has only been within approximately the past 40 years that criminal victimology has become recognized as a scientific and professional field of study (Karmen, 2013). Increasingly, psychologists are beginning to play major roles in the research, evaluation, and treatment of crime victims from diverse cultural contexts and age groups. These activities will be covered in greater depth in Chapters 10, 11, and 12.

Students wishing to pursue a research career in victimology probably should obtain a research doctorate in psychology, criminal justice, social work, or sociology. Those desiring careers as practitioners in the field would be advised to obtain a doctorate in clinical or counseling psychology or an MSW (master of social work). However, there are other training opportunities and career paths as well.

Over the past 25 years, for example, the field of victim services has become a rapidly growing profession, and not all of these services are given directly to crime victims. Today, there is greater understanding of victims' issues due to legislation enacted to support victims' rights, increased funding for victim services, efforts by victim advocates, and active research in victimology. Victim services concentrating on victims of sexual assault; domestic violence; and partner, child, and elder abuse have especially grown in recent years, and legislation has broadened the scope of understanding and services for victims. Colleges and universities now routinely offer courses, majors, and concentrations in victimology.

The National Victim Assistance Academy (NVAA), funded and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Victims of Crime (OVC), has led the way in developing curriculum standards to be used at the national and state levels. The NVAA currently offers two distinct levels of training and education: (1) the Foundation-Level Academy and (2) the Advanced Topic Series. The Foundation-Level Academy, which began in 1995, is a comprehensive, 40-hour, academic-based course of study in victimology, victims' rights, and victim services for victim services professionals and allied professionals. The Advanced Topic Series involves workshops consisting of 20 to 24 hours of academic-based training in selected concentrations, such as program management, specific training/education, skills, and techniques.

Correctional Psychology

Correctional psychology is a vibrant branch of forensic psychology, broadly defined, and one in which multiple career opportunities are available. However, like police and public service psychologists, many psychologists working in corrections prefer to not call themselves forensic psychologists. Rather, they are *correctional* psychologists. Some are also concerned that PhD programs in forensic psychology or those with forensic psychology concentrations do not adequately prepare people for the many varied responsibilities they must assume in both institutional and community

corrections. According to a recent publication, “Among the leading scholars in the field [of correctional psychology] . . . the distinction between corrections practice and psychology-law or forensic training has been consistently observed, increasingly noted, and unfortunately, ignored” (Magaletta et al., 2013, p. 293). This criticism is not directed only at forensic programs, but at doctoral-level programs in psychology in general. Magaletta et al. also note,

Few empirical studies allow us to know specifically how graduate programs introduce corrections as an area of study or a venue for practice, making it difficult to understand the link between academic programs and a psychology services workforce in corrections. (p. 292)

In their own study of 170 training directors of APA-accredited doctoral programs, Magaletta et al. found that only one in three programs reported they had one or more faculty members interested in corrections, and only 6% of the programs offered a corrections course. This is a valid point that should be taken into consideration by all directors of doctoral programs. (See Perspective of Dr. Kayleen Islam-Zwart, who describes obtaining valuable experiences in corrections through undergraduate study and graduate internships.)

At the end of 2012, there were almost 7 million adults under correctional supervision in the United States (Glaze & Herberman, 2013). This includes adults who were in prison, in jail, or supervised in the community, as on probation or parole. The overall figure represents a decline since 2009, when a decrease in the population was first noted. Nevertheless, the year 2012 represented the smallest yearly decline (0.7%) since 2009. Placed in a different context, the official statistics indicate that 1 in 35 adults is under some form of correctional supervision, 1 in 50 adults is supervised in the community, and 1 in 108 is in jail or prison (Glaze & Herberman, 2013).

Virtually every detainee, prisoner, or offender serving time in the community requires or could benefit from one or more of the services offered by correctional psychologists, including assessment, crisis intervention, substance abuse treatment, or reentry planning, to name but a few. Recent meta-analyses of studies also indicate that mental health treatment results in improved mental health functioning as well as better adjustments and coping skills of offenders (R. D. Morgan et al., 2012). In addition, the large number of mentally disordered persons in the nation’s jails and prisons is of increasing concern to psychologists as well as other mental health professionals.

As the number of opportunities for psychologists in corrections has proliferated, correctional psychology has emerged as an exciting, rewarding, and challenging field. Yet, according to Magaletta et al. (2013), many positions remain unfilled, again partly because graduate schools have not adequately promoted this career option or sufficiently prepared doctoral students through relevant coursework.

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE . . .



Source: Author.

The Rewards of Teaching, Research, and Practice

Kayleen Islam-Zwart, PhD

When I started my academic training, most people did not opt to become forensic psychologists, though this is now a more frequent career path. I wish I could say

I planned and carefully chose what I was going to do when I was an undergraduate, but I am not sure I even knew then what it meant to be a forensic psychologist.

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While completing my bachelor's of science in psychology, I quickly became aware of the need to pursue graduate education and was fortunate to connect with Dr. Daniel Houlihan, who took me under his research wing. His specialty was child psychology, and I vividly remember him not-so-subtly pushing me into that field, commenting that there was nothing quite like having to sit in a room with an adult sex offender and feel like there was no hope. Despite his urging, I knew I intended to pursue a doctorate in clinical psychology and work with adults, but that was where my insight ended.

Probably by chance, but what I like to consider a premonition, I decided to complete a minor in corrections while finishing my undergraduate degree. I was then accepted into the PhD program at Idaho State University, where I became one of the first doctoral students involved in a practicum and research under the supervision and mentorship of Dr. Peter Vik at Idaho's only prison for women. It was at this point I knew the path I wanted to follow.

Many hours of my doctoral training were spent at the prison, evaluating women's reactions to initial incarceration, their cognitive impairment, and their parole eligibility; providing individual therapy, and conducting relapse prevention groups for women with substance misuse histories. In that prison, I gathered data for my dissertation and a subsequent publication looking at the adjustment reaction of female prison inmates as a function of their history of sexual victimization (Islam-Zwart & Vik, 2004). Results revealed a complex and somewhat surprising picture about the impact early trauma could have on adaptation to prison for women. Specifically, women with a history of sexual victimization exclusively as adults showed the greatest initial adjustment difficulties in prison, but the fastest adaptation compared to women with no victimization history or victimizations as children and adults. Women with a lifelong history of sexual victimization reported the least discomfort, insomnia, and anger upon incarceration, and that pattern tended to persist. At that time, little attention was

paid to the experience of women in prison, and it was invigorating to feel like I could contribute to the profession in a meaningful way.

Following this extensive training with female offenders, I completed my degree through an internship placement with the Bureau of Prisons at a men's institution in the Midwest. There, I engaged in many of the same clinical activities with the male offenders, and I had additional responsibilities of conducting federal competency, insanity, and risk evaluations. This was an important year for me, as I discovered what a rarity it was to have worked with female offenders and just how different prisons could be. It was also an important year for building professional confidence. I will never forget when one client, a man who had been in prison for many years as a function of his part in multiple armed robberies, told me he had been concerned about me at first because I was soft-spoken and reserved. After seeing me walk around the prison grounds, however, he was no longer concerned. He indicated that I held my head high, looked others in the eye, and walked with such confidence that the other prisoners just parted when I came through. Although I do not think my presence had quite the grand impact his comments suggested, I have often shared this story with my students interested in working with offenders to communicate the importance of self-confidence and the impression cast to others.

As my year of clinical internship was coming to a close, the process of finding a job moved to the forefront. I interviewed for a variety of academic and clinical positions, and decided to accept a position as assistant professor of psychology at Eastern Washington University (EWU). EWU had never had a professor with a forensic focus, and I was excited to share my experiences with students. In my first year as a professor, I developed a course called Psychology and the Legal System that exposed students to the background information important for both forensic and correctional psychologists. I still teach this course, and I always start by telling students that I hope many of them will pursue a forensic path, but also that my

course might help them know when that type of career is *not* right for them. One of the things I appreciate about my professorship is that I have been able to pursue my interests in forensic and correctional psychology in a variety of capacities.

A day in the life of a professor is varied and enriching. My primary responsibility at this regional and teaching-focused university is to offer approximately six different courses over the academic year. I have been able to continue my focus on incarcerated women by developing a course called *The Care and Custody of Female Offenders* and continuing to conduct research to help better understand the experiences of women in jail and prison. Much of my day is spent teaching and interacting one-on-one with students to talk about degree completion, graduate school, and careers.

My students have gained valuable practical experiences. They have assisted with providing relapse prevention groups for male offenders at a nearby state prison. We have also conducted a number of research studies looking at malingering as well as adjustment to incarceration. My teaching and research are supplemented by a clinical practice in which I evaluate individuals for eligibility for state and federal disability benefits due to mental or cognitive impairment.

The rewards of the job are many. One of my favorite things is to watch students complete their bachelor's

and master's degrees and go on to doctoral programs and careers. Another of the most inspiring is the opportunity to present at national and international conferences. Each year, I accompany a small group of students to a professional conference, and this is where I witness the practice of psychology come alive for students. I have the opportunity to work with students while they are sampling the field and trying to find their own paths. Finally, I believe, more than other positions, the professor is a lifelong learner, be it through course development, continuing education, peer reviews of journal articles, or interaction with students and other professionals. I have no doubt that the academic climate and the need to repeatedly update and renew my understanding of the ever-changing and expanding field of psychology enhances my clinical skills. The clinical practice in turn encourages me to investigate uncharted, or minimally charted, areas and brings those classroom teachings to reality.

Dr. Islam-Zwart is currently Professor of Psychology and Director of the Psychology at Bellevue College program for Eastern Washington University. She recently presented at the International Congress on Law and Mental Health as part of a symposium looking at Victimization and Women Offenders. In her free time, she enjoys camping with her husband and two daughters.

Research psychologists who are not necessarily working within the correctional system often study the psychological effects of correctional systems on prisoner behavior. Topics include the general effect of imprisonment on special populations of offenders, such as the mentally disordered or the elderly, the effects of crowding, the effects of isolation, and the outcome of various rehabilitative programs.

Juvenile corrections is a related but also distinct area in which psychologists play important roles, as we discuss in the last chapter of the book. Juvenile corrections, both in institutions and in the community, should focus on rehabilitation—thus, assessment and treatment strategies are paramount. However, juvenile corrections also raises some of the same concerns as adult corrections, specifically, the effects of crowding and isolation; substance abuse programs; and work with special populations of offenders, such as juvenile sex offenders and juveniles with mental disorders and intellectual deficiencies.

Interestingly, psychologists who practice in adult as well as juvenile correctional settings are sometimes criticized for aligning themselves with prison administrators, and they may be confronted with ethical quandaries, such as when asked to perform custody-related functions like supervising or restraining inmates. In death penalty states, psychologists may be asked to assess the risk of future dangerousness of a person facing a potential death sentence. Lawyers

representing prisoners on death row also may argue that they are not competent to be executed, because they are either seriously mentally ill or intellectually disabled. These determinations require input from mental health professionals. Psychologists in recent years also have been asked to perform evaluations of sexual offenders at the end of their sentences, to determine whether they are eligible for civil commitment under sexually violent predator laws. The above are all controversial topics that will be covered in later chapters.

Psychologists working in and as consultants to correctional facilities often join associations representing their common interests. Examples are the American Correctional Association (ACA) and the International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychologists (IACFP). The latter is guided by a series of standards (Althouse, 2010) that provide the minimum acceptable levels for psychological services offered to offenders, whether they are adults or juveniles held in local, state, or federal facilities, as well as in the community. The standards cover a wide range of principles as well as services, including staffing requirements, confidentiality issues, mental health screening, professional development, informed consent, segregation, and a host of other topics relating to this work.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As recently as 30 years ago, the term *forensic psychology* had barely been introduced into psychological or legal literature. Today, as we have seen, it is a commonly encountered term, but it still defies definition. It is often used interchangeably with legal psychology and psychology and law. Although some favor a narrow definition limiting it to clinical practice offered to the legal system, the contributions of research psychologists may be undermined by such an approach. The most recently adopted *Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology* (APA, 2013c), as well as the writings of prominent forensic psychologists (e.g., DeMatteo et al., 2009; Heilbrun & Brooks, 2010), recognize the importance of contributions from researchers, although there continues to be emphasis placed on practice. In other words, the researcher is not a forensic psychologist if he or she does not communicate the results of that research to the legal community in some form. Furthermore, in some jurisdictions one must be certified as a forensic psychologist to practice in certain arenas, such as court settings.

In addition, though, it is important to consider the context in which psychology is practiced. Limiting forensic psychology to work with civil and criminal courts does not recognize well enough the law-related functions performed by psychologists working with law enforcement, corrections, or victims. Finally, the many contributions of psychologists who study the psychology of crime and delinquency deserve to be included in this field, as long as they communicate their findings to the legal system. The legal system surely can benefit, for example, from research on adolescent development and decision making or research on the prevention and control of sex offending. As we note throughout the book, and as illustrated in many of the Perspective boxes, researchers on such topics often testify in court as expert witnesses and consult with lawyers and judges on a regular basis.

We have persisted, then, in advocating for a broad definition of forensic psychology, one that might divide it into the five subareas covered in this chapter, although other organizational divisions are possible. In each of the areas discussed, numerous career opportunities exist. Both undergraduate and graduate programs have rapidly seen the need for preparation for careers in forensic psychology, whether by offering degree programs in the field or by offering concentrations within a broader program, such as a doctorate in clinical, counseling, or developmental psychology. Furthermore, professionals themselves are regularly offered opportunities for licensing, certification, and continuing education as well as guidelines for practicing their profession.

In sum, the field of forensic psychology, as we define it broadly, provides ample opportunities for psychologists interested in interacting with some aspect of the law. It is an area of specialization that has developed rapidly and shows no signs of stagnation. Many of the scholars who are cited and featured in this book began their studies at a time when forensic psychology was not prominent and was not widely considered a career choice. Moreover, as recently as the turn of the 21st century, a relatively small group of forensic specialists devoted themselves full-time to

this field, whereas a much larger group of psychologists provided occasional forensic services or provided such services only within a circumscribed area, such as child custody evaluations (Otto & Heilbrun, 2002). Otto and Heilbrun predicted then that the field would grow, and they argued that the field must develop a plan to ensure that forensic practice overall was well-informed and competent. This plan was especially needed in the area of forensic testing and assessment.

More recently, Heilbrun and Brooks (2010) commented on the remarkable expansion of the field over the past decade, noting that there has been substantial progress. In proposing an agenda for the next decade, they emphasize the need for interdisciplinary and intercultural collaboration; continuing improvement in the quality of forensic mental health assessments; a better integration of science and practice; and better outreach to a variety of settings, many of which are covered in this text.

KEY CONCEPTS

American Psychological Association (APA)	Forensic psychiatrists
Association for Psychological Science (APS)	Forensic psychology
Availability heuristic	Forensic school psychology
Computer evidence recovery	Forensic social workers
Correctional psychology	Legal psychology
Diplomate	Police and public safety psychology
Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (EPPCC)	Psychology of crime and delinquency
Family forensic psychology	Questioned document examination or analysis
Forensic entomology	Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology
	Victimology

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Contrast the narrow and broad definitions of forensic psychology.
2. Contrast forensic psychology with other forensic sciences.
3. Identify the five subspecialties of forensic psychology covered in this text, and provide illustrations of the contributions of forensic psychologists in each one.
4. Explain the difference between the PhD and the PsyD degrees.
5. What are the pros and cons of obtaining a joint degree in psychology and law?
6. What are the six applied branches or specialties in psychology, as recognized by the APA?
7. What is meant by the term *prescription privileges* when applied to psychologists? Briefly discuss the progress psychologists have made in obtaining these privileges, and discuss possible objections that might be raised.