

Editorial

Forensic Psychology (Criminal Psychology)

There are stories as we turn on television and pick up the newspaper that relates directly to the field of forensic psychology. Now a day, blockbuster movies focus on the issues that are related directly to the field of forensic psychology, which probes profiling of serial killers, selecting jury members, or determining someone's sanity. The way in which forensic psychology portrayed in media is inaccurate, though forensic psychologists often carry out the sorts of tasks that are depicted in the movies. In narrow definition, forensic psychologist focuses mainly on clinical psychology application within legal issues. They study the memory of eyewitnesses, examine the decision-making processes of jurors, and evaluate the effectiveness of offender treatment programs. However, in broad, the forensic psychologist conduct research that examines aspects of human behavior directly related to the legal process and practice psychology within legal system that embraces both civil and criminal law. Furthermore, forensic psychology focuses on the research connected with the forensic area, such as social, cognitive, personality, and developmental psychology that is required to inform applied practice.

CLINICAL FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST

Clinical forensic psychologists assess and treat people with mental disorders within the context of law. On the research side, they validate the assessment tool that has been developed to predict the risk of an offender being violent. On the practical side, they assess and assist in making an accurate determination of whether that offender is likely to pose a risk to the community if released. Furthermore, they are interested in divorce and child custody mediation, determinations of insanity and fitness to stand trial/plead guilty, provide expert testimony in court on questions of a psychological nature, conducting critical incident stress debriefings with police officers, and designing and conducting treatment programs for offenders.

EXPERIMENTAL FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST

Experimental forensic psychologists are concerned with mental health issues as they pertain to the legal system, and they can be found in a variety of criminal justice settings. They show more interest in examining the effectiveness of risk assessment strategies, determining what factors influence jury decision-making, developing and testing better ways to conduct eyewitness line-ups, evaluating offender and victim treatment programs, studying the impact of questioning style on eyewitness memory recall, and examining the effect of stress management interventions on police officers. They differ from clinical psychologists in terms of training, would have undergone Ph.D. level graduate training.

LEGAL SCHOLAR FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST

Legal scholar forensic psychologists are interested with scholarly analyses of mental health law and psychologically oriented legal movements. They would most likely center

around policy analysis and legislative consultation. Their role is less common than the role of clinician or researcher.

NEED FOR FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

Forensic psychology can be a very important piece of the puzzle when trying to solve a criminal case. Professionals in this field often help to narrow down the suspect list or at least provide a motive for a crime. Sometimes, they may be a last piece of the puzzle when trying to convict a criminal. This field also helps to prevent crime, provide rehabilitation of criminals to make the criminals as law-abiding citizens. Experimental psychology helps to pinpoint certain types of people who might possibly commit crimes before they actually do.

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST

Individuals pursuing forensic psychology careers should make sure that their education is focused on psychology, criminology, and forensics. A student can earn a bachelor's degree in psychology with a focus on criminology or criminal justice or a bachelor's degree in criminology or criminal justice with a focus on psychology. Then can earn a master's, doctorate degree to pursue as a professional. An opening to the dentist interested in forensic sciences can earn bachelor's degree and master's degree through online program accredited by the American Psychological Association which concentrates on behavioral and social sciences.

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