

Evans, III, B. F., Hass, G. (2018). Forensic Psychological Assessment in Immigration Court. New York: Routledge.

Edited by Barton F. Evans III, Giselle A. Hass

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This guidebook by Barton F. Evans III and Giselle A. Hass, published in the US this year, has been written by two experts in the field. Barton F. Evans III, Ph.D, a clinical and forensic psychologist as well as a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and Giselle A. Hass, Psy.D., ABAP, a licensed psychologist and a diplomate by the American Board of Assessment Psychology. Both of the authors have had long-standing professional careers in the area of assessments for immigration courts in the United States of America.

The book is an essential, specialized guide for psychologists and clinicians who work with immigrants. It is an attempt to draw together the authors' knowledge about forensic psychology, psychological assessment, traumatology, family processes, and national and international political forces to present an approach to effective and ethical practice of forensic psychological assessment in courts.

The book consists of three parts. The first part of the book gives an insight into the conceptual background, such as, culture, gender, credibility etc. The second part offers numerous applications of forensic assessment approaches to common areas of immigration law practice. In the third part, the use of psychological tests and methods, report writing and expert testimony for the immigration courts are explained. This approach leads the reader, via theory to practical information about carrying out an evaluation and delivering the results to both customer as well as the court. Personal reflections and experiences and practical examples about the cases the authors have been dealing with are also included throughout the book.

There are many key messages that the keen reader can discover and benefit from. For example, in Chapter 1, principles of forensic psychology and how they are relevant to the immigration court (IC) are clarified. In this framework, it stresses the fundamental differences between the forensic assessor and the mental health clinician that should be kept in mind. The most important difference is that the forensic assessor must take an objective, neutral stance in the evaluation which is different from the supportive, accepting, empathic, and confidential relationship critical to good clinical treatment. The evaluator should therefore always remain

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neutral and be able to back-up findings with scientific, well-acknowledged tools and methods. Chapter 2 explores cross-cultural, gender, and language perspectives. The authors remind us to understand issues of race, ethnicity and culture. For example, the emotional impact of abuse and discrimination on account of race, ethnicity and culture is further aggravated when immigrant workers are forced by necessity to accept jobs of a lower status than they would have in their native countries. One aspect of this issue has to do with limited English proficiency and acculturation which, according to the authors, is unfortunately rarely assessed in forensic assessments.

The main value of the book certainly lies in Part III—Methodology which consists of three chapters (Diagnostic Interviewing and Trauma-Specific Instruments in Immigration Evaluations, Rorschach and Performance-Based Measures in Immigration Evaluations, and Report Writing and Expert Testimony) which are comprehensive, appropriately detailed and practical. Chapter 9 explains that psychological assessment instruments include clinical interviews, symptom-specific tests, and comprehensive personality tests. Several tests are introduced and described with respect to their content, usability and value. Chapter 10 attempts to highlight how the Rorschach and other Performance-Based Measures can be used in evaluations in the context of relevant legal issues by the appropriately trained assessor in forensic evaluation in the IC. The section concludes with useful practical tips for writing a report and presenting it. This being so, Part III is very helpful for those who are interested in or have to start practising in, or exploring the area. Parts of it act like

a manual in that, on certain occasions, it takes a step-by-step approach.

Table 2.1 is quite inspirational, giving a long list of recommendations when using interpreters. At the same time, as the book generally appears to be aimed at those who have at least some knowledge about this issue, the list could be considered too basic.

Readers are reminded about the importance of the evaluator's professionalism in such proceedings and Chapter 2 and Figure 2.1 are very helpful in this regard as they provide an overview of the main necessary competences as well as a tool for self-reflection for those who are already active in the area. This level of detail might in fact attract novices to purport to have more skills than they actually have and follow tools detailed in the book without the appropriate professional background. Another important, but often neglected area is the need for self-care for evaluators. Supervision, peer-support etc are crucial for working fruitfully and efficiently on this field.

Despite the aspects to recommend it, the book lacks a common approach and style. It mixes personal stories and reflections; scientific research in forensic medicine and psychology; lots of statistics, numbers and facts; overviews and assessments of tools; checklists and so on. All three parts of the book are absolutely different—starting from a collection of quotations in the first one, ending with very practical tips in the last one. Even the individual chapters are written in an un-unified way. Doubtless, there is much information available about immigration, evaluations, and hardships that people who have had to cut their roots are facing, but I am not sure all this needs to be included with science, stories and tools.

This raises the question: who is the addressee of this book? It fails to be a

practical guidebook for practitioners precisely because of its lack of systematism and the absence of an easy-to-use format. At the same time, it does not qualify as academic as it does not provide synthesis and new approaches. Some parts of the book are written in a well-structured way, whilst other parts use a different style and content, with even minor technical things like references being put in different ways. Perhaps the real beneficiary of this book is the possible “examinee” who could (by skipping the first theoretical parts) get rather a good idea on how to pass proceedings with “clean records”?

After Deportation: Ethnographic Perspectives

Edited by Shahram Khosravi

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In *After Deportation: Ethnographic Perspectives*, thirteen chapters by different authors provide strong accounts of what happens when migrants and rejected asylum seekers are deported from countries in which they have resided for shorter or longer periods. This anthology highlights a phase of deportees’ lives that is seldom ethnographically studied when compared to the much larger interest given to immigration detention and deportation. The ethnographies highlight post deportation phases from different geographic, gendered and social perspectives. Some of the narratives include deportation from EU countries to countries such as Nigeria, Cameroun, Mali and Togo, while other chapters analyze experiences of deportees from the United States to the Caribbean, from Australia to Samoa, or even from Iran to Afghanistan. The authors show how the very different circumstances in which people are deported shape their constraints and possible strategies.

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