Bibliographical review

Neurosciences and forensic psychopathology: contributions to law and the administration of justice

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García-López, E., Ostrosky, F., Laveaga, G., & Esbec, E. (2016). Psicopatología Forense. Derecho, Neurociencias y Sistema de Justicia Penal [Forensic Psychopathology, Law, Neuroscience and Criminal Justice System] Madrid: Wolters Kluwer.

In a convincing manner and with ample conceptual and empirical evidence, Dr. García-López presents the book *Forensic Psychopathology, Law, Neuroscience and Criminal Justice System*, where he introduces the Neurolaw concept in an innovative way in the context of Latin American publications, being one of the first texts on the subject written in Spanish. This book proves to be an indispensable source of consultation for all those interested in the knowledge areas of psychopathology, law and neurosciences. But it is even more important for those professionals committed to the practical exercise of psychology and law, since it is based on proven scientific and methodological bases.

In chapter one, the author explains clearly and precisely the relationship between neuroscience and law. He introduces and addresses the concept of *Neurolaw* and its importance for the justice system, making a detailed analysis of its definition, its different denominations, its applications and the current research that is carried out in this interdisciplinary field. He even makes a comprehensive and useful review to identify the current state of the concept by providing interesting data on the number of publications analyzing the neuroscience-law relationship, institutions and bodies using the *Neurolaw* concept, and some figures that allow acknowledging the use of neurosciences in the justice system.

In addition, in this chapter, García-López offers three outstanding approaches that deserve careful reflection: first, the proposal of an obligatory association that certifies and accredits the psychologist's practice in the field of administration of justice. Second, the urgent need to unify criteria and select a common code of communication among mental health professionals involved in the judicial system (being ICD-10 the author's proposal). And third, the importance of using standardized psychometric instruments - with high levels of validity and reliability - in the exercise of forensic practice to guarantee the benefit to the evaluated persons and the expert, and contribute to the objectivity of the forensic psychological performance in the judicial system.

In chapter two, Dr. Feggy Ostrosky addresses in depth the topic of neuropsychological assessment, its importance and use in Mexico. It offers the reader an explanation on the different methods and neuropsychological techniques of greater use and contribution to the legal field. She expounds the main neuropsychological findings in delinquents, psychopaths and violent personalities, and explains the fundamental contributions that neuropsychology can offer to psychology and its practice in the forensic field. In her chapter, the author offers a strong overview on the contribution of neuropsychological evaluations and methods of electrophysiological measurement to the different actions of the psychologist in the justice system. And presents precise tools and sufficient evidence on the effectiveness of neuropsychological techniques to understand criminal behavior and provide the justice administration system with more objective and reliable criteria for the correct judicial decision-making.

In chapter three, *Neurosciences: an introduction for lawyers,* Professor Gerardo Laveaga makes an important reflective analysis on the contributions of neurosciences to the exercise of law. He presents a brief historical and epistemological view on the classical questions that law has posed itself and whose answers can be found in other disciplines and new fields of investigation, such as neurosciences. The author reflects on the need both to integrate the contributions of this and other behavioral sciences to the exercise of law, as well as to form new professional profiles and interdisciplinary groups in response to the process of imminent change currently occurring in law and in the different judicial apparatus.

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In chapter four, *Assessment of the psychopathological basis of imputability*, Dr. Enrique Esbec, a well-known psychologist and medical examiner, makes a critical analysis of the concept of imputability, the way in which different countries approach it in their Penal codes and, from the diagnostic manuals and recent research, offers a clear and timely explanation of the psychopathological disorders commonly related to unimputability and their repercussion in the forensic field. On the other hand, and without neglecting the importance of diagnostic criteria, necessary as a common language and basic evaluation guidelines among mental health professionals, the author calls for reflection on the need not to fall into rigid categorization or labeling of assessed people. On the contrary, he emphasizes the importance of rigorous and case-specific evaluation processes.

To conclude in a masterful way, Eric Garcia-Lopez, together with Enrique Esbec makes a state-of-the art chapter on the relationship between psychopathology and law. It is an exciting chapter that integrates bibliographical references of different psychological approaches, theories, cases and diverse data, as well as contributions that are intertwined and structured to generate categorical and essential conclusions in the understanding of the practical and theoretical exercise of the psychologist who works before the courts of justice.

Undoubtedly, *Forensic Psychopathology, Law, Neuroscience and Criminal Justice System* constitutes an innovative compendium of major theoretical and scientific contributions to a broader understanding of law, neuroscience and the important contributions of behavioral sciences to the achievement of the objectives of justice, reparation and reintegration.