

The Impact of Psychology and Psychiatry Upon the Criminal Justice System

We will begin our learning experience by understanding the difference between competence (to stand trial) and legal responsibility (sanity). The history of the insanity defense and the four rules currently used to judge the guilt or innocence of a person using an insanity defense will be presented.

In the second and third sessions, trials in which the insanity defense was employed will be presented and discussed. Some are well known; i.e., John Hinkley, Jr. (the man who shot President Ronald Reagan); Andrea Yates (the woman who drowned her five children in the bathtub), Jack Ruby (the man who killed Lee Harvey Oswald), Ted Kaczynski (the Unabomber), Richard Speck (who tortured, raped, and killed eight nurses in their dormitory), and Winnie Ruth Judd (found not guilty of murder and committed to a psychiatric hospital, she escaped numerous times, and at one point was at large for 7 years. When found, she was employed and no longer mentally ill.) Additionally, some little-known cases will be presented.

The fourth and fifth sessions will feature guest speakers, one a prosecutor and the other a defense attorney.

In the sixth session, the duties and responsibilities of psychologists and psychiatrists employed in forensic psychiatric hospital will be presented.

The seventh session presents the functions of psychologists and psychiatrists employed by the courts, correctional facilities, and the parole board. As New Jersey law provides presumptive parole, great weight is given to pre-parole psychological examinations.

In the eighth session, we'll review the four rules for judging legal responsibility used by each of the forty-six states that permit the insanity defense (four states Idaho, Kansas, Montana, and Utah have abolished the insanity defense) and by the federal courts.

There are no assigned readings. Students who are interested, will be able to find thought provoking experiences by googling: Giuseppe Zangara, Charles J. Guiteau, and Lorena Bobbitt. For those so motivated, the following books, available through the reference desk of the Mercer County Public library, are recommended:

Bonny, Jeffries, and Low. *A case study in the insanity defense, The trial of John Hinkley, Jr.*

O'Malley, *Are You There Alone? The Unspeakable Crime of Andrea Yates*

Holloway, PhD, Editor. *Dallas and The Jack Ruby Trial Memoir of Judge Joe B. Brown, Sr.*

Leader: GH Friedlander is a retired forensic psychologist who has been accepted to testify as an expert witness in the U.S. Third Circuit Court, District of Eastern Pennsylvania, several County Courts in Pennsylvania, and Superior Courts in New Jersey.

Wednesdays: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, 8 weeks: September 27 through November 15.

Location: Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville.