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Police Science Book Reviews

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POLICE SCIENCE BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by

Ralph F. Turner*

LIE DETECTION AND CRIMINAL INTERROGATION. By *Fred E. Inbau* and *John E. Reid*. The Williams & Wilkins Company, Publisher, Baltimore, Md., 1953. Pp. 235. \$5.00.

During the winter of 1929-30, I accepted for publication in the *American Journal of Police Science* (Northwestern University Press) Leonard Keeler's first article on lie detection, "A Method for Detecting Deception," (Vol. 1, no 1, Jan.-Feb., 1930). As managing editor of the publication, the launching of which was undertaken at the instance of the late Dean John Henry Wigmore of Northwestern University Law School, I was most anxious that our initial offering be a success, and made every effort to embody in it an outstanding group of articles.

For the modern version of the same Journal (it was fused in 1932 with its elder brother, the *Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*), this review is being prepared. Much water has gone over the dam since Keeler produced his 1930 paper. Not long after it appeared he joined the staff of the Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory of Northwestern University, of which I was managing director from its establishment in 1929 until my resignation in 1934. I thus became closely associated at Northwestern with him and also with Fred Inbau.

During some of those years Vollmer and Larson held posts at the University of Chicago, and I came to know these pioneers also. I have followed, if somewhat vicariously, the increasingly comprehensive literature on the lie detector, so well referenced in the new Inbau-Reid volume (as also in earlier editions) and very completely covered (to the year 1939) by P. V. Trovillo.¹ However, the reader of the present work is forced to search through almost endless footnotes if he hopes to acquire a fair idea of that literature. I recommend that future editions include a bibliography immediately preceding the index. Let the footnotes remain, but make a good bibliography available as well. The serious student will find this endlessly helpful.

What does this (third) edition offer that is lacking in the two preceding (1942 and 1948)? In answer we cannot do better than quote from Inbau's preface to the current printing, viz:

The present publication represents an extensive revision and enlargement of the previous 1948 edition.

Part I, dealing with the lie-detector technique, is almost entirely new. This major change was made necessary by the development and refinement of a better test procedure than the one previously described and discussed. That fact also constitutes the reason why I invited my good friend and former colleague, John E. Reid, to join me as co-author, for it was his research and experimentation that effected this advancement in the lie-detector technique. In fact, the "control question" test procedure he devised and developed should render obsolete the conventional "relevant-irrelevant question" method of conducting a lie-detector test.

Another very material revision of the second edition is contained in

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1. A History of Lie Detection, *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 29; (6) (Mar.-Apr., 1939) and 30; (1) (May-June, 1939).

the discussion of the law concerning criminal confessions. Since 1948 a considerable change in the law has resulted from several decisions of the United States Supreme Court. These decisions are all analyzed and discussed in the present edition.

The material in Part II on interrogation tactics and techniques is essentially the same as in the previous editions, although it too has been enlarged and re-arranged to some extent.

With respect to size, the new offering presents about 25 percent more text than does its predecessor. Of the total of 242 pages, Part I ("The Lie Detector Technique") embraces 141, leaving but 90 for Part II ("Criminal Interrogation"), 3½ for an Appendix and a scant six for an Index. By contrast, the 1948 edition runs to 95 pages in Part I, 87 in Part II, no appendix, and a 9-page index. Thus most of the expansion is reflected in Part I, which has indeed largely been rewritten. Here we now meet a broad discussion of the "Control" question test procedure as evolved by Reid. Considerable space is also devoted to the "Guilt Complex" question and its value in a lie detection test. Both of these procedures receive attention in the 1948 edition, but not nearly so much as in the current. Indeed it is obvious that Reid feels that he has developed them to a point where the old practice of confronting the subject simply with a series of "relevant-irrelevant" questions will soon be obsolete. The relevant and irrelevant are still employed, but Inbau and Reid hold that by adding those in the field of "control" and "guilt-complex" the matter of interpreting correctly the subject's response becomes greatly simplified. (Incidentally, that old stalwart, the "peak of tension" test, continues to enjoy favor, without modification.) One factor newly stressed, and wisely so, is the importance of having the examiner know the answers to his irrelevant inquiries, not merely assume that he does. Otherwise, he can be seriously misled in his interpretation of the subject's responses to these.

Lie detector operators will doubtless be curious to compare the efficacy of Reid's employment of "control" and "guilt complex" questions vs. Lee's alternative system which involves elaboration on the conventional "peak of tension" test, as outlined in the "Crime Analysis Guide" on p. 195 et seq. of his current volume.² He appears to offer this tentatively, and subject to confirmation upon more extended trial, whereas Inbau and Reid seem satisfied that the latter's techniques are already past the experimental stage.

As outlined in the excerpt from the preface, Part II of the Inbau-Reid volume ("Criminal Interrogation") follows closely the text of the 1948 edition, with added comments on a number of U. S. Supreme Court decisions released since the appearance of the earlier printing. Many of these decisions have caused the average criminal interrogator a bad time. Fortunately, however, current trends in Supreme Court thinking appear to be toward affording the investigator-interrogator the same latitude which he enjoyed prior to 1943, when the first of a series of decisions seriously affecting his activities was pronounced.

The little Appendix (on Dr. Mackenzie's British polygraph) interested me because of Inbau's expressed surprise (see footnote at bottom of his p. 5) at learning in 1948 of the existence of this instrument and of its production and use as early as 1908. I personally purchased one of these from Mr. Shaw, the maker, in a small town near Manchester, England, in January 1920,

2. Lee, Clarence D., *The Instrumental Detection of Deception*. C. C. Thomas, pub., Springfield, Ill. 1953.

bringing it back to the U. S. with me later that year where I employed it to record various cases of cardiac arrhythmias. After a year or so I sold it to a Baltimore cardiologist who, to my best knowledge, still owns it. Although it is stated in the Appendix that "To record the respiratory movements a bag can be substituted for the receiver, E," I know of no instance of this adaptation having been made. Indeed, I much doubt whether a satisfactory pneumograph tube then existed. Lacking it, the instrument does not become a "lie detector" in the sense in which we employ the term today.

The fact that the Index which follows the Appendix has been reduced to 6 pages in the present edition from 9 in the preceding,—to my mind a very undesirable change, has already been noted. To expand the text by 25 percent and cut the index by 33, just doesn't make sense.

As one who has been an editor of *something* since 1929, the 20-odd split infinitives which I encountered scattered through this little work, stuck heavily in my craw. Doubtless the average reader will fail entirely to note them.

This volume offers a great improvement over the last edition in the matter of typography. Headings and sub-headings are clearer, bolder, more arresting. It presents a lucid and concise account of what the lie detector is, how it operates, and how to achieve successful results in its operation. (The same may be said of its discussion of the art of criminal interrogation.) Armed with a copy, a good instrument, a sound educational background, and a willingness to learn, anyone of reasonably high intelligence should be able to master the intricacies of both techniques. I commend it unreservedly to serious students in both fields.

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HANDWRITING. A KEY TO PERSONALITY. By *Klara G. Roman*. Pantheon Books, Inc., Publisher, New York. 1952. Pp. 382.

"The psychologist working with projective techniques, is well equipped not only by a thorough knowledge of dynamic psychology but also by specific professional training. Unfortunately, the graphologist still labors in an undefinable limbo: there is no specific course of training, no set academic standards, and no degree or certificate to test the scientific background and reliability of the handwriting analyst."

The author, a former director of the Budapest Institute for Psychology of Handwriting, did extensive research, especially on the problem of pressure in handwriting, for which she used her own device, the graphodyn. Her book, written in a highly lucid style, is at present the best available text because it shows the scientific bases for those rules that today form the body of graphology. In scribbling, doodling and handwriting, the same elementary laws of movement apply. The author is careful to point to further research and to the necessity of interchange between graphology on the one hand and projective psychology, psychiatry and neurology on the other. Any one interested in our present accumulation of knowledge, and in problems of professional standards in this field, should turn to Klara Roman's book.

New York

W. G. ELIASBERG

HOW TO RECOGNIZE TYPE FACES. By *R. Randolph Karch*. McKnight & McKnight Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois, 1952. Pp. 265. \$6.00.

The author has prepared a very concise and usable book dealing with the recognition and identifying of printing type faces in use in the United States today. Examiners of questioned documents and police laboratories will welcome this reference text as a valuable addition to their libraries.

In his Preface, he states that there are in use today almost 1500 faces of type. He has successfully prepared a tabulation which allows the reader to locate and identify any type face in a very short period of time. Included with the samples of type is information on who makes it and the available sizes.

The first 44 pages of the text set forth the method of using the two tables in order to identify the unknown specimen. This introductory material is clearly and concisely written. Ample illustrations are available to assist the student in understanding terms and methods of procedure.

The balance of the book is made up of two sets of tables. The first (32 pages) consist of the key designs which are to be compared with the unknown specimen. From this table one enters directly into the second table which gives actual specimens of different fonts of type and with further comparison allows final identification.

Problems involving the identification of printed material arise somewhat rarely in a questioned document practice. However, when one is called upon to give information regarding any printed document, it may be very important to be able to accurately identify a design of type and to know who its supplier is. Here is a reference book which with proper study and practice will aid in the determination of these facts.

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ORDWAY HILTON

THE PSYCHOPATHIC DELINQUENT AND CRIMINAL. By *George N. Thompson, M.D.* Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Springfield, Ill. 1953. Pp. 157. \$4.50.

The title of this book, as well as the position of the author and the statements regarding the purpose and "promise" so prominently displayed on the jacket of the book, would tend to make it tempting to buy. This is especially true as workers in any field having contact with so-called "psychopaths" and delinquents need all the help they can get. Unfortunately, the promises are handled in the manner of campaign promises. If anything this book only adds to the confusion already existing on this perplexing medico-legal problem.

It is apparent that Dr. Thompson's definition of "psychopathic personality" or "psychopath" is not in accord with that of most of recent psychiatric and legal thinking. The question of "motivation" which has come to play an important part in recent thought on this and related subjects is not handled by the author. In fact it is rather pointedly ignored. Since the investigation of motives is vital to prophylaxis, treatment as well as understanding of any mental aberration, it becomes difficult to divine what purpose this monograph really has.

The term "psychopath" happens to be about the most abused term in the psychiatric lexicon. Yet this author attempts to establish still another definition and classification both of which are on a most superficial descriptive level. Perhaps real understanding of the underlying factors of psychopathic behavior does not as yet exist, but a student of this behavior should be able to attain more understanding than is shown by name-calling on a phenomenological basis.

Dr. Thompson protests his "complete objectivity" and reminds the reader