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## **Mental Disability Law, Evidence and Testimony** **A Comprehensive Reference Manual for Lawyers, Judges and Mental Disability Professionals**

**John Parry and Eric Y. Drogin**

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CHICAGO, May 17, 2007 -- The American Bar Association Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law has published a new resource on the complex interaction between law, psychology and psychiatry that addresses the needs of the legal and mental health communities. [\*Mental Disability Law, Evidence and Testimony: A Comprehensive Reference Manual for Lawyers, Judges and Mental Disability Professionals\*](#) guides lawyers, judges, law students, and forensic and other mental disability professionals through the maze of civil and criminal laws, standards, evidentiary pitfalls, and forensic practices that characterize this area of the law. Moreover, it summarizes what empirical evidence exists to support or raise concerns about these legal standards and forensic practices when they are introduced in the courtroom.

“This manual is another marvelous example of the thoughtful and leading edge effort that continues to help Americans with mental and physical disabilities,” said ABA President Karen J. Mathis.

Written by ABA Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law Director John Parry, J.D. and forensic psychologist Eric Y. Drogin, J.D., Ph.D., *The Reference Manual* represents more than 10 years work, and is part of the accumulated knowledge that is reflected in the many publications that the Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law has produced since 1976, the foremost of which is the *Mental & Physical Disability Law Reporter*. *The Reference Manual* also is a descendent of *The Mentally Disabled and the Law* (1985), published by the American Bar Foundation, which received the 1987 Manfred S. Guttmacher Award from the American Psychiatry Association and the American Academy of Psychiatry and Law.

The book is divided into seven parts: Legal Overview; Clinical; Criminal and Civil Competency; Diminished Culpability and Mitigation; Dangerousness; Standards of Care and Treatment; and Mental Impairment and Mental Harm.

The *Reference Manual* also includes a glossary of key terms, court decisions, legislation, and an index.

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With more than 413,000 members, the American Bar Association is the largest voluntary professional membership organization in the world. As the national voice of the legal profession, the ABA works to improve the administration of justice, promotes programs that assist lawyers and judges in their work, accredits law schools, provides continuing legal education, and works to build public understanding around the world of the importance of the rule of law in a democratic society.

**Title:** [\*Mental Disability Law, Evidence and Testimony\*](#)  
**Publisher:** American Bar Association Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law  
**Pages:** 467  
**ISBN 10:** 1-59031-832-3  
**ISBN 13:** 978-1-59031-832-4  
**Size:** 7 x 10  
**Binding:** paper  
**Price:** \$95; \$85 ABA member price  
**Orders:** [www.ababooks.org](http://www.ababooks.org) or call 800-285-2221

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