

Forensic Psychology and Correctional Psychology: Distinct but Related Subfields of Psychological Science and Practice

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This article delineates 2 separate but related subfields of psychological science and practice applicable across all major areas of the field (e.g., clinical, counseling, developmental, social, cognitive, community). Forensic and correctional psychology are related by their historical roots, involvement in the justice system, and the shared population of people they study and serve. The practical and ethical contexts of these subfields is distinct from other areas of psychology—and from one another—with important implications for ecologically valid research and ethically sound practice. Forensic psychology is a subfield of psychology in which basic and applied psychological science or scientifically oriented professional practice is applied to the law to help resolve legal, contractual, or administrative matters. Correctional psychology is a subfield of psychology in which basic and applied psychological science or scientifically oriented professional practice is applied to the justice system to inform the classification, treatment, and management of offenders to reduce risk and improve public safety. There has been and continues to be great interest in both subfields—especially the potential for forensic and correctional psychological science to help resolve practical issues and questions in legal and justice settings. This article traces the shared and separate developmental histories of these subfields, outlines their important distinctions and implications, and provides a common understanding and shared language for psychologists interested in applying their knowledge in forensic or correctional contexts.

Keywords: forensic, correctional, specialty, proficiency, ethic

Supplemental materials: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/amp0000227.supp>

Forensic and correctional psychology emerged historically at about the same time—almost as early as psychology itself—and developed into discrete subfields ushered in by executive, legislative, and judicial branch activities in the 1950s and 1960s. Early scholarly writings did not clearly differentiate them, instead lumping them together with descriptors such as “psychologists in criminal justice settings” and “psychology and the legal system” (e.g., American Psychological Association (APA) Task Force on the Role of

Psychology in the Criminal Justice System, 1978; Brodsky, 1973; Monahan, 1980; Tapp, 1976).¹ Nevertheless, over the ensuing decades, they evolved into unique subfields not yet widely understood or recognized in psychology. This article provides definitions, traces the shared and separate developmental histories of these subfields, and outlines their important distinctions and implications.

¹ The seminal works by Monahan et al. (APA Task Force on the Role of Psychology in the Criminal Justice System, 1978; Monahan, 1980) and Brodsky (1973) considered the unique ethical issues involved for psychologists working in forensic, correctional, and police settings with chapters devoted to each of these topics in both works. However, the primary contribution by Monahan’s group (1978 Task Force) did not differentiate forensic from correctional psychology. Brodsky’s (1973) edited *Psychologists in the Criminal Justice System* volume almost wholly revolved around correctional psychology, despite the two (of 14) chapters about forensic and police psychology. Police and public safety psychology, including for example the science and practice of psychology in policing and public safety contexts (such as Secret Service and other agencies) also evolved into a discrete subfield under the broad umbrella of “psychology-law,” but is not covered in the current article. Other contexts, such as military psychology, likely have parallels to the forensic and correctional distinctions in this article, but these other contexts with unique practical and ethical concerns are not the focus of this article.

This article was published Online First February 12, 2018.

Thank you to Jessica M. Salerno (Arizona State University), Stanley L. Brodsky (University of Alabama), Thomas Grisso and Ira K. Packer (University of Massachusetts Medical School), Philip R. Magaletta (Federal Bureau of Prisons), Robert D. Morgan (Texas Tech University), and Jennifer L. Skeem (University of California, Berkeley) for providing insightful feedback on earlier versions of this article. This article was presented at the 2016 annual conference of the American Psychological Association in Denver, Colorado.

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Definitions

The relationship between science and practice in psychology has a storied past (see, e.g., Baker, McFall, & Shoham, 2008; Belar & Perry, 1992). The two strong core identity elements of science and practice in psychology reflects its richness and diversity, but also create challenges for coherence (e.g., Kimble, 1984; Lockman, 1964). The definitions of forensic and correctional psychology in this article are intentionally broad to include both science and practice—to reflect the actual scientific and practice activities of psychologists in these areas as well as to reflect the dual nature of the parent discipline itself.

What Is Forensic Psychology?

Forensic psychology is a subfield of psychology in which basic and applied psychological science or scientifically oriented professional practice is applied to the law to help resolve legal, contractual, or administrative matters (APA, 2013; Committee on Ethical Guidelines for Forensic Psychologists, 1991; Grisso, 1987; Otto & Heilbrun, 2002). Any type of psychologist (e.g., clinical, counseling, developmental, social, cognitive, community) can engage in forensic psychology by applying the scientific, technical, or specialized knowledge of psychology to the law to assist in resolving a given matter (APA, 2013).

The word *forensic* comes from the Latin word *forum*, a place for public assembly and discussion—the precursor of “court” (“Forensic,” n.d.). Forensic psychology helps judicial, administrative, and educational systems make decisions about people when some question related to psychology is involved in the legal issue. Forensic psychology is

typically involved during the adjudication process, before the final formal judgment is made in the case.² The psychologist agrees to provide a service (presentation of research, assessment, treatment) explicitly for the purposes of informing the adjudication decision (e.g., evaluating a case for specific factors or providing a general summary of the research data about false confessions while the case is ongoing, performing a child custody evaluation to inform the court’s upcoming decisions in a divorce decree, providing competency restoration treatment so the defendant can be adjudicated competent and move forward with their ongoing legal case).

What Is Correctional Psychology?

Correctional psychology is a subfield of psychology in which basic and applied psychological science or scientifically oriented professional practice is applied to the justice system to inform the classification, treatment, and management of offenders to reduce risk and improve public safety (Ax et al., 2007; Magaletta, Butterfield, & Patry, 2016; Magaletta, Patry, Dietz, & Ax, 2007; Wormith et al., 2007). Any type of psychologist (e.g., clinical, counseling, developmental, social, cognitive, community) can engage in correctional psychology by applying the scientific, technical, or specialized knowledge of psychology to reduce offender risk and improve public safety.

The psychologist is involved typically postadjudication (such as conducting research on the psychological effects of prison or probation conditions; treating prison inmates; providing assessment services to inform management of offenders). These activities could also be conducted preadjudication, but they would not be correctional if conducted to inform a legal decision (Otto & Heilbrun, 2002). For instance, a psychologist providing crisis intervention for a preadjudicated suicidal person in jail (i.e., a correctional activity) should not be the same person hired to do a competency evaluation on that same detainee (i.e., a forensic activity), as having multiple relationships with a service recipient is strongly discouraged by professional ethics (APA, 2010; Greenberg & Shuman, 1997). Scientists who conduct research may not know in advance how their work will be applied, whether or not they had some initial intent in mind. The same science might be correctional when used in some circumstances (e.g., studies on how isolation affects

² *Black’s Law Dictionary* (Black & Garner, 2014) defines *adjudication* as the legal process of resolving a dispute or deciding a case. It defines *judgment* as the court’s final determination of the rights and obligations of the parties in a case, including any order from which a party could appeal. Thus, the adjudication process toward the final judgment, up to and including the final judgment (and any related appeals), includes many types of decisions made by a judge, jury, or administrative decision maker—all of which correspond with the forensic definition provided here. Disposition decisions in a case (e.g., sentencing in criminal cases) are part of the adjudicative process and are thus forensic according to the definitions provided in this article.

mental functioning to inform housing policies in a prison system), but forensic in other circumstances (e.g., when used in civil suit alleging unconstitutional punishment).

Timing and Purpose Matter for When an Activity Is Forensic Versus Correctional

Given these definitions, a particular kind of assessment, treatment, or program of study is not necessarily forensic or correctional per se. Neither does the place one works necessarily make one a forensic or correctional psychologist. Rather, the timing and purpose of the activity are key. For instance, a violence risk assessment could be forensic or correctional. If needed to inform a pending legal decision, it would be forensic. If needed for offender classification, case management, or release decision-making postadjudication, it would be correctional.³ Basic or applied research conducted to answer adjudication-relevant questions might be described as forensic, whereas research conducted to reduce offender risk and improve public safety might be described as correctional⁴ (see Table 1).

Forensic and Correctional Psychology as Descriptions Versus Labels

This article is not about labels: asserting that someone is a forensic or correctional psychologist is not the aim. Psychologists can retain their primary identities as clinical or social or developmental psychologists, even if they focus much of their work in forensic or correctional psychology. Nevertheless, this article provides a common understanding and some shared language for scientists and practitioners who apply their knowledge in forensic or correctional context and helps them understand the practical and legal implications of those applications for ecologically valid research and ethical practice.

These Distinctions Have Evolved Over Time

The differences between forensic and correctional psychology have evolved over the last half century. Psychologists began working in legal and correctional settings more than a century ago, but it was not until the 1950s and 1960s that these subfields began to emerge with their own character, foci, professional organizations, training traditions, and ethical guidelines and practice standards (e.g., International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology, 2010; APA, 2013).

Although some have asserted that correctional psychology is or was a subdiscipline of forensic psychology (e.g., Bartol & Bartol, 2014; Tapp, 1976; Toch, 1961; Watkins, 1992), this was never the case given the definitions of forensic and correctional psychology delineated in this article. The histories of forensic and correctional psychology have always been related but separate per these definitions.

Furthermore, correctional psychology scholars are clear that these are two discrete and parallel subfields of psychology (e.g., Magaletta, Patry, et al., 2007).

The definition of forensic psychology has undergone more of an evolution over the last half-century than correctional psychology. The umbrella term *psychology-law* encompasses both forensic psychology and correctional psychology, as well as police psychology, and other related areas. *Forensic psychology* has occasionally been used as an umbrella term for all of these associated areas—almost like a synonym for *psychology-law* for anything psychological related to the law (see, e.g., Bartol & Bartol, 2014), rather than the current narrower definition specific to the purposes of informing a legal decision. In addition, scientists and practitioners have argued about how to define forensic psychology (see Brigham, 1999; Neal, 2016). The current definition builds on this history.

Correctional psychology has not experienced these definitional struggles. In fact, most self-proclaimed correctional psychologists offer applied services (e.g., Andrews, Zinger, et al., 1990; Ax et al., 2007; Magaletta, Patry, et al., 2007), and much of the published science that might fit the definition of correctional psychological science has not been labeled as such (e.g., Aharoni et al., 2013; Haney, 2006; Haney, Banks, & Zimbardo, 1973; Kahn, Byrd, & Pardini, 2013; Skeem & Louden, 2006; Skeem, Louden, Polaschek, & Camp, 2007; Tangney, Stuewig, & Martinez, 2014; Wright, Pratt, Lowenkamp, & Latessa, 2012). In an effort to prevent the definitional struggles in correctional psychology that plagued forensic psychology, the definition offered in this article explicitly incorporates both scientific and practitioner activities and defines the unique attributes of those activities.⁵

The Need for Clarification

Despite the fact that these subfields have been distinct since nearly the beginning of psychology itself, their distinguishing attributes are not widely known or understood.

³ Some services might be by definition be forensic (e.g., competence to stand trial assessment) or correctional (e.g., prison classification assessment). And in some instances, release decision making postadjudication that would typically be correctional might become forensic again, such as when informing legal decisions about civil commitment of sex offenders at the end of their incarceration who may be mentally ill and dangerous.

⁴ Another distinction between forensic and correctional psychology is their legal scope, with forensic applications broadly across criminal, civil, and juvenile law, whereas correctional applications are narrowly in criminal law.

⁵ Another issue relevant to these definitional distinctions is that correctional psychology is far more interdisciplinary than forensic psychology—so much so that correctional psychology has struggled to find a distinct identity in the interdisciplinary realm of correctional research. Correctional research does not refer to a core academic discipline: parallel and often unintegrated streams of literature can be found in correctional psychology, criminology, criminal justice, sociology, medicine, and other disciplines (Magaletta et al., 2007).

Table 1
Examples of Psychological Science and Practice in Forensic and Correctional Contexts

	Psychological science	Psychological practice
Forensic		
Clinical	Experimental research to understand how people try to malingering mental illness (could be used for diagnostic decision making)	Psychologist evaluates a defendant and applies what is scientifically known about how people try to malingering mental illness (along with assessing other relevant abilities) to inform a judge's determination of whether that defendant is competent to stand trial.
Social	Experimental research to understand how the racial composition of small groups affects group decision making (could be applied to understand jury decision making)	Psychologist submits an amicus brief summarizing the science of how racial composition affects group decision making to inform a judge's adjudication of an appeal claiming that a particular racially imbalanced jury was unfairly biased against a defendant.
Cognitive	Experimental research to understand people's abilities to recognize objects and faces during stress (could be applied to eyewitness credibility)	Psychologist testifies about the science of human memory under stress to inform a jury's decisions about the credibility of a particular eyewitness's identification of a defendant.
Developmental	Experimental research to understand under what conditions (and at what age) children make things up and can distinguish fact from fantasy (could be applied to allegations of childhood abuse)	Psychologist testifies about how stressors affect children's abilities to distinguish fact from fantasy to assist a judge's determination of the veracity of a particular child's allegation of sexual abuse in the context of a divorce proceeding.
Correctional		
Clinical	Experimental research to understand whether various rehabilitative conditions of confinement reduce recidivism likelihood, and if that relationship is mediated by reduced symptoms of anxiety, trauma, and/or anger (could be applied to correctional housing)	Psychologist is hired by the BOP to implement a new evidence-based rehabilitation program developed through a collaboration of clinical-correctional psychologists and the BOP.
Social	Experimental research to understand the structural and interpersonal conditions under which powerful and powerless people interact that lead to abuse (could be applied to mitigate abuse in institutions)	Psychologist consults with prison systems to design evidence-based administrative policies regarding structural conditions and officer-inmate relations to reduce the risk of harm to officers and inmates.
Cognitive	Experimental research to understand how isolation affects mental functioning, learning, memory, attention, perception, reasoning, and moral decision making (could be applied to correctional housing)	Psychologist works with local lawmakers to create a new state law restricting the punitive use of solitary confinement in prisons.
Developmental	Experimental research to understand the effects of varying levels of restrictive confinement on adolescent development and recidivism likelihood (could be applied to juvenile justice housing)	Psychologist testifies before Congress about the effects of restrictive housing conditions on adolescents' recidivism likelihood to advocate a new policy mandating less restrictive and punitive conditions.

Note. BOP = Federal Bureau of Prisons. The simplistic division between science and practice in this table masks the complexity, diversity, and utility of actual research. Some of these examples could fit in both correctional and forensic contexts. For instance, the results of many of the examples described for correctional psychological science could be used in forensic contexts too (e.g., in legislation, policy, administration, testimony) — and the scientist conducting the work does not have to intend for that to be the case in order for the work to be used in a forensic or correctional context (although of course they can). These examples are more basic, but applied science is relevant too, like systematic program evaluation, scientific trial consulting, and evidence-to-practice implementation studies.

The distinctions drawn in this article are needed to inform the evolution of ethics in the field of psychology as a whole, as well as to inform psychologists, students, and the public about the role for psychologists in each subfield.

Forensic and Correctional Psychology Raise Distinct Ethical Issues for Psychology

The practical and ethical contexts of forensic and correctional settings are unique, with important considerations for ecologically valid research and ethically sound practice. These contexts challenge psychology's general ethical standards. The moral and ethical foundations of the legal system are different than in psychology, and when these competing ethical foundations intersect, multiple perspective must be

weighed (e.g., individual vs. societal rights; Candilis & Neal, 2014). For instance, forensic psychology largely serves the interests of law and society rather than individuals (e.g., providing information to resolve a legal issue to protect society may harm an individual defendant), and correctional psychology must serve both health and security missions that are not always compatible (e.g., sharing offender's sensitive communications in the interest of institutional safety; diagnostic assessments to determine whether an offender is well enough to be placed into solitary confinement). These examples demonstrate that the "do no harm" ethic is too simplistic to characterize ethical obligations in forensic and correctional psychology, and ethics are evolving in these subfields (Appelbaum, 1997; Candilis &

Neal, 2014). These differences between the forensic and correctional applications and psychology more generally can influence the public's perception of the entire profession of psychology.

In addition, there are distinct legal issues with profound implications for psychological science and practice in each of these subfields. For example, people in a preadjudicated legal status are not convicted: They retain their legal rights such as their constitutionally guaranteed Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination. This legal status has critical implications for the informed consent process a psychologist must go through with a forensic evaluatee and for the information disclosed by the psychologist in a forensic report and in testimony. In contrast, once a person is convicted of a felony, their legally recognized rights change: Postadjudicated convicted felons lose many individual legal rights. As such, offenders are in a particularly vulnerable position. Thus, the unique practical and ethical issues psychologists in correctional settings must contend with are distinct from what psychologists in forensic settings deal with, and they are distinct from the practical and ethical contexts of other areas of psychology as well.

Clarification Is Relevant for Education and Workforce Issues

A second reason the distinction is important is that there are clear implications for education and workforce issues. Some of the highest predoctoral internship and starting salaries for professional psychologist are offered by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) in clinical-correctional psychology.⁶ A search on the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) database (Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers [APPIC], 2017) for all predoctoral internships with the highest salaries available (>\$50,000 according to the search capabilities in the online directory) yields 23 internships.⁷ Twelve of them are at APA-accredited Federal BOP sites that offer at least a \$50,000 stipend to their interns. Of the remaining sites, 10 are military internships that require a subsequent 3-year service commitment as a commissioned military officer. The final site is a Canadian clinical health psychology internship not accredited by the APA.

The starting salary for a newly minted psychologist fresh out of internship and graduate school as a clinical-correctional psychologist with the BOP (no postdoc required) is roughly \$80,000 (Federal BOP, 2016).⁸ Only industrial-organizational psychologists hired into business have a higher starting salary according to the APA Center for Workforce Studies (Wicherski, Michalski, & Kohut, 2009).⁹ In contrast, psychologists interested in launching a clinical-forensic career must first complete postdoctoral training, with an estimated starting salary of \$67,000 once

they finish postdoctoral training (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016; Wicherski et al., 2009).¹⁰

Regarding the number of psychologists working in clinical-correctional and clinical-forensic careers, the most recent estimate available for correctional psychology is from Boothby and Clements (2000). They estimated that about 2,000 psychologists worked in state and federal prisons across the United States. Using as a denominator the roughly 100,000 licensed psychologists in the United States (Hamp, Stamm, Lin, & Christidis, 2016), at least 2% of health service providers in psychology are working in correctional settings. This same report (Hamp et al., 2016) identified 11% of licensed psychologists in the United States as reporting either a primary or secondary specialty in forensic psychology.

These Distinctions Are Not Yet Widely Known

Clear information about correctional psychology opportunities as distinct from forensic is not easily accessible. The APPIC lumps together forensic and correctional internships and postdoctoral training positions (APPIC, 2017). More than 40 different specialized forensic postdoctoral training programs are listed, but not a single specific formal correctional postdoctoral training program—though some of the correctional postdoctoral opportunities available are described as forensic. The APA's Division 41 (American Psychology-Law Society [AP-LS]) *Guide to Graduate Programs in Forensic and Legal Psychology* (Ruchensky & Huss, 2014) includes a few graduate programs with correctional specialties, but without identifying correctional psychology as a unique path or helping students navigate that path.

Forensic psychology undergraduate textbooks confuse forensic and correctional psychology—for instance, by introducing correctional psychology as “treatment in forensic contexts” (Huss, 2014, p. 36). Bartol and Bartol (2014) literally use the terms *forensic psychologist* and *correctional psychologist* interchangeably. The *Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology* (APA, 2013; Committee on Ethical Guidelines for Forensic Psychologists, 1991) assumes correctional psychology is part of forensic psychol-

⁶ The term *clinical* is used broadly to capture both clinical and counseling psychology throughout this article.

⁷ Search dated August 22, 2017. Excel file of results available from the author.

⁸ Psychologists can be hired at the GS-11 to GS-14 level, with salaries that range based on step (1–10) and location. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management sets the pay scale for grade, step, and location (www.opm.gov).

⁹ Psychologists hired into business reported a starting salary of \$80,000 in 2008 dollars (\$90,000 in 2016; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016).

¹⁰ The APA Doctorate Employment Survey collected in Spring 2008 reported forensic psychology with a starting salary of \$60,000 (Wicherski et al., 2009). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016) Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator was used to estimate the 2008 buying power of \$60,000 in 2016 dollars.

ogy, applying the forensic ethics to correctional psychology without explicitly considering the unique challenges associated with correctional psychology (cf. *International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology Standards*, 2010).

The closest distinction between forensic and correctional psychology in the literature is in Footnote 7 of *Otto and Heilbrun's (2002) American Psychologist* article:

The considerations of both population (to whom treatment services are delivered) and purpose (whether a legal decision will be part of the reason for describing or delivering the services) are important in our conceptualization of forensic treatment. Under this conceptualization, we regard group therapy delivered to prison inmates as falling more under the purview of clinical psychology or correctional psychology, as there is no legal decision clearly linked to the delivery of this service. However, we see the delivery of group therapy in a forensic hospital for the purpose of restoring trial competency as falling within the realm of forensic psychology as described in this article. (p. 14)

Although this footnote served as the bedrock of the current article, most of *Otto and Heilbrun's* article conflated forensic and correctional psychology. For instance, they described correctional psychology as the provision of “therapeutic services in what could be described as forensic settings” (p. 5), identified correctional organizations and publications as “forensic,” and implicitly presented correctional psychology as a subpart of forensic psychology rather than a distinct subfield with a unique history, role, and set of applied ethics.

The Shared and Separate Histories of Forensic and Correctional Psychology

The roots of forensic and correctional psychology took hold early in the history of psychology itself, with psychologists working in courts and prisons as soon as applied psychology branched out from the parent discipline. Psychologists continued to work in these settings throughout the 20th century, but it was not until the 1960s that forensic and correctional psychology evolved into today's modern subfields. Table 2 in the online supplemental materials documents important events in the shared and separate histories of forensic and correctional psychology.¹¹

Shared Historical Roots

In the late 1800s, both psychology and criminology were emerging as academic disciplines from a shared root in criminal anthropology and philosophy (*Brodsky, 1973; Haney, 2006*). Psychology began as a basic science in 1879, but an applied branch sprouted early (*Sobel & Corman, 1992*) and psychologists were applying the new field of psychology in forensic and correctional settings by 1908

and 1909, respectively (see Table 2 in the online supplemental materials).

Psychologists Work in Forensic and Correctional Settings Early in Psychology's History

The courts and correctional institutions were identified by *Magaletta and colleagues (2016)* as some of the first applied settings in which psychologists worked. By 1940, an APA survey of applied psychology identified 64 psychologists working in prisons (*Watkins, 1992*). A 1946 article published in the first volume of *American Psychologist* described the 28 occupations available to psychologists at the time by creating composite descriptions of types of jobs described by psychologists in a survey by the Office of Psychological Personnel of the National Research Council (*Shartle, 1946*). Five of those 28 types of jobs referenced forensic activities (e.g., court psychologist), and one was clearly correctional (i.e., prison psychologist).

Forensic and Correctional Psychology Evolve Into Discrete Professional Subfields

Both forensic and correctional psychology began maturing into their modern versions in the 1960s, fostered by interest and support from all three branches of the federal government. Rather than general psychologists who happened to work in forensic and correctional settings, the unique subfields of forensic and correctional psychology blossomed, developing their own cultures, professional organizations, ethical standards and guidelines, and training traditions.

The role of the executive branch. In response to social and political upheaval in the United States in the mid-1960s, President Lyndon B. Johnson established the Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice to study crime and criminal justice in the United States (*Johnson, 1965*). The 19-member commission, together with hundreds of consultants and advisors, published a number of task force reports calling for more education, better training of police officers, and increased research on crime. These task force reports provided the foundation for the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act, a bill President Johnson sent to Congress in 1967, as discussed next (*Feely & Sarat, 1980*).

The role of the legislative branch. Congress passed the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act in 1968, a

¹¹ Although the broad definitions of *forensic* and *correctional psychology* are proposed to encompass science and practice across major subfields of psychology, the coverage of forensic and correctional history in this table (and largely in this article) is restricted primarily to clinical/counseling psychology for a practical reason: most of the history is in clinical/counseling. Although this article does not focus in detail on the developments in social, cognitive, developmental, or community psychology that contributed to the growth of forensic and correctional psychology, there is rich history in these other major subfields as well (see, e.g., *Tapp, 1976*).

major element of which was the creation of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) to provide grant funding for training, research, equipment, and infrastructure (Feely & Sarat, 1980). The LEAA funded early research and training programs in correctional psychology, such as the Center for Correctional Psychology at the University of Alabama in 1971 as well as a doctoral program there for training correctional psychologists (Fowler & Brodsky, 1978). The LEAA was abolished in 1982 with other agencies absorbing some of its functions, such as the Office of Justice Programs and National Institute of Justice—both of which provide grant funding for forensic and correctional psychology research today. In roughly the same time period (the late 1960s), Saleem Shah became a leader fostering the development of both fields as a result of these executive and legislative activities, as discussed next.

Saleem Shah emerges as an important advocate of both subfields. In 1966, Saleem Shah—a clinical psychologist working at a forensic clinic in Washington, DC—became a consultant to the President’s Crime Commission and joined the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), where he was responsible for coordinating various programs that funded crime and delinquency research and training programs (Voit, 1995). In 1967, NIMH established the Center for Studies of Crime and Delinquency in response to the president’s pledge to apply science to crime, and Shah became the chief of the center in 1968 (National Institute of Mental Health, 2016; Voit, 1995). Shortly after becoming chief, Shah pushed for and obtained a dedicated budget and review panel for the Center, with funds appropriated by NIMH through Congress (Voit, 1995).

Shah subsequently served as a major force in the development of both forensic and correctional psychology (as well as other mental health–law subfields, broadly defined—including related disciplines outside of psychology; see Table 2 in the online supplemental materials; Brodsky, 1995; Voit, 1995). For example, the first modern prison classification system, developed in 1971, was funded by Shah and his center (Jesness, 1988). Brodsky’s organization of the Lake Wales Conference and the subsequent edited volume, *Psychologists in the Criminal Justice System* (Brodsky, 1973)—which is credited with ushering in the modern era of correctional psychology—were funded in part and supported by Shah. The first forensic assessment instrument, a trial competency screening instrument, was developed through funding by Shah (Laboratory of Community Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School, 1973). And Monahan’s early study of the problems with clinician’s predictions of violence—especially in legal settings—was funded by Shah (Monahan, 1981).

The role of the judicial branch. Meanwhile, the judicial branch also began welcoming behavioral scientists into the law and criminal justice systems, with several landmark legal cases from the 1950s to 1970s stimulating the growth

of forensic and correctional psychology (see, in Table 2 in the online supplemental materials, *Bowring v. Godwin*, 1977; *Durham v. United States*, 1954; *Jenkins v. United States*, 1962; *Wyatt v. Stickney*, 1971). These cases, among others, paved the way for psychologists to help answer psycho-legal questions for pending legal cases, and also provided Constitutional guarantees of the right to mental health treatment for people detained in both civil and criminal settings.

Judge David Bazelon of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit, a long-serving and well-respected jurist of wide influence, was the most powerful voice ushering in the modern era of forensic and correctional psychology. He saw the promise of what behavioral science could offer the law and authored several of these landmark decisions. But he later became disenchanted, criticizing psychologists for claiming they could do and know more than they actually could by going beyond their science (see, e.g., *United States v. Brawner*, 1972, where Justice Bazelon overturned his previous *Durham* decision, and *Bazelon*, 1973, a chapter he wrote for *Brodsky’s*, 1973 edited book after attending and lambasting correctional psychologists at the Lake Wales conference). Judge Bazelon’s initial enthusiasm over the promise of behavioral science for the law gave way to dismay about the apparent development of a guild of professional forensic and correctional psychologists.

Similar Developmental Experiences

Judge Bazelon was not alone in his criticism of the early form of modern forensic and correctional psychology. In fact, as these subfields began to mature into their modern forms, both experienced severe attacks by critics that threatened their demise. These attacks highlighted the need for a scientific foundation for both forensic and correctional psychology. The attacks provided energy, focus, and action items toward which to work. Although both subfields responded by working to develop their scientific foundation, there remains a deep need for each to develop stronger and more robust scientific foundations.

In forensic psychology, the primary attack came from Jay Ziskin—cofounder of AP-LS—in the form of his book *Coping With Psychiatric and Psychological Testimony* (Ziskin, 1970; see Table 2 in the online supplemental materials). Like Judge Bazelon, Ziskin saw great promise for the science of forensic psychology but was dismayed by the potential problems with unscientific forensic psychology. He wrote *Coping* to stimulate the subfield to establish a strong scientific foundation (Grisso, 1991). In correctional psychology, the primary attack came from *Martinson’s* (1974) article suggesting that “nothing works” in terms of the various correctional rehabilitation programs that had been developed to that point (see Table 2 in the online supplemental materials). His article became the flashpoint

for an antirehabilitation campaign that marshalled energy within correctional psychology to critically examine and strengthen its scientific underpinnings (see, e.g., Andrews, Zinger, et al., 1990; Gendreau & Andrews, 1990).

Professional Organizations

Distinct organizations within psychology emerged and evolved for correctional and forensic psychology. In 1953, the Society of Correctional Psychologists was founded (later called the American Association for Correctional Psychology, then the American Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology, now the International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology; see Table 2 in the online supplemental materials). Despite the association including the word forensic in its current name, its mission fits squarely within the definition of correctional psychology in this article. Furthermore, the activities, foci, and stated goals of this organization since its inception have been continuously devoted to correctional psychology (International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology, 2016). Under founding editor Stanley Brodsky, this organization began publishing the journal *Criminal Justice and Behavior* in 1974, which is today a high-impact and well-respected journal (see Table 2 in the online supplemental materials). *Criminal Justice and Behavior* was originally subtitled *An International Journal of Correctional Psychology*, but has since dropped the subtitle and become more interdisciplinary (Bartol & Freeman, 2005).

A second home for correctional psychology was established in 1975 with the creation of the Criminal Justice Section within Division 18 of the APA–Psychologists in Public Service (Baker, 2013). In the last decade, this Criminal Justice Section of Division 18 banded together with the Criminal Justice Section of the Canadian Psychological Association to host the North American Correctional and Criminal Justice Psychology Conference series for the sharing of correctional psychology science and practice.

An organization for both forensic and correctional psychology, AP-LS (Division 41 of APA), was founded in 1968 by early leaders in both subfields (see Table 2 in the online supplemental materials). Although it continues to be a professional home for both forensic and correctional scientists and practitioners, there are now more forensic than correctional activities represented at the annual conferences.¹² In 1977, a group of forensic practitioner members of AP-LS created the American Board of Forensic Psychology, later affiliated with the American Board of Professional Psychology (Grisso, 1991). Division 42 of APA—Psychologists in Independent Practice—also offers programming dedicated to forensic psychology practice.

Ethical Standards and Guidelines Specific to the Subfields

Distinct sets of ethical standards have evolved in correctional and forensic psychology. These standards augment—rather than supplant—national, state, and professional psychological association standards, and are designed for the issues relevant to each subfield. The development of these applied ethical guidelines fit with the recommendations put forth by the APA Task Force on the Role of Psychology in the Criminal Justice System (1978) that specific ethical guidelines for justice settings be developed (see Table 2 in the online supplemental materials; Monahan, 1980).

Correctional psychology was in the process of developing its set of applied ethics at just the time that APA Task Force published its recommendations. The first set of ethical standards for correctional psychologists was developed in 1980 by the American Association for Correctional Psychology (Levinson, 1980). These standards have been revised twice since then, with the most recent edition published in 2010 (International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology, 2010).

The first set of ethical guidelines for forensic psychology was developed in 1991 by AP-LS (Committee on Ethical Guidelines for Forensic Psychologists, 1991). Although these AP-LS guidelines purported to be for both forensic and correctional psychology, they were conceived and designed for forensic psychology. These forensic ethics guidelines were revised and vetted through the APA process of applied ethics development and were published in *American Psychologist* in 2013 (APA, 2013).

Various other applied ethics standards and guidelines apply to these subfields as well. Some differentiate forensic from correctional, such as the correctional *Standards for Mental Health Services in Correctional Facilities* (National Commission on Correctional Health Care, 2015) and the forensic *Guidelines for Child Custody Evaluations in Divorce Proceedings* (APA, 1994). Others do not, such as the American Bar Association's (1989) *Criminal Justice Mental Health Standards*, which offers guidance for psychologists' roles in working with people "charged with or convicted of a crime" (Standard 7–1.1, Part d).

Training Traditions

Training opportunities specific for these subfields began to emerge in the 1960s (see, e.g., Bersoff et al., 1997; Grisso, Sales, & Bayless, 1982; Ogloff, Tomkins, & Bersoff, 1996). Although the clinical and counseling areas of both of these subfields developed specialty graduate pro-

¹² A corrections committee dedicated to bringing correctional psychology "back" to AP-LS was established in the past decade, and has had an active role in growing the presence and awareness of correctional psychology within AP-LS (J. Skeem, personal communication, June 10, 2016).

grams, internships, and to some degree postdoctoral training fellowships, they follow the generalist training model that emerged at the historic national conference on training in psychology in Boulder, Colorado, in August 1949. That is, students do not go to graduate school or predoctoral internship to become forensic or correctional psychologists—they go to graduate school and internship to become psychologists. Subsequent training and on-the-job experiences equip them to engage in forensic or correctional psychology (Forensic Specialty Council, 2007; Magaletta et al., 2013; Packer, 2008).

That said, specialty psychology graduate programs and predoctoral internship rotations emerged for both subfields beginning in the 1960s. Doctoral programs with these emphases emerged in both correctional psychology (see, e.g., Fowler & Brodsky, 1978; Magaletta et al., 2013; Spielberger, Megargee, & Ingram, 1973) and forensic psychology (see, e.g., DeMatteo, Marczyk, Krauss, & Burl, 2009; Otto, Heilbrun, & Grisso, 1990; Ruchensky & Huss, 2014). Students in these programs essentially minor in and conduct theses and dissertations in forensic or correctional psychological science while fulfilling the APA accreditation requirements for a generalist training program. Distinct internship training opportunities in each of these subfields also emerged for trainees to begin to specialize at the internship level and develop the unique competencies needed for forensic and correctional psychology practice (e.g., Ax & Morgan, 2002; Bersoff et al., 1997; Magaletta, Patry, & Norcross, 2012; Otto et al., 1990).

Whereas the training tradition in clinical-forensic psychology has evolved to require postdoctoral education, clinical-correctional psychology has not. There are numerous resources for locating forensic postdoctoral training opportunities, such as the APPIC (2017) database and the various education and training resources available on the AP-LS website (American Psychology-Law Society [AP-LS], 2017). Although APPIC and AP-LS purport to identify forensic and correctional opportunities, both identify forensic opportunities to the exclusion of correctional programs and lump correctional under forensic opportunities (across all levels of training; see, e.g., APPIC, 2017; AP-LS, 2017; Ruchensky & Huss, 2014). It should be noted that most of the actual correctional postdoctoral training that occurs in practice today is on-the-job once psychologists are employed in these settings rather than in formalized postdoctoral programs (Magaletta, Morgan, Reitzel, & Innes, 2007; Magaletta et al., 2013).

Discussion

Despite the clear evolution of distinct forensic and correctional psychology subfields and the practical, legal, and ethical implications for each, misconceptions about the subfields and their relationships to one another abound due to the lack of explicitly available information about their distinctions. This

lack of information provides challenges for the field of psychology to have a voice in shaping the appropriate ethical conduct of work in these areas and impedes effective public awareness and mentoring of students and trainees.

Analyses of the applied ethics and practical realities of psychological activities in justice settings indicate that forensic and correctional psychology have unique challenges as distinct from other areas of psychology—and from one another. Their contextual ethics are critical for the broad field of psychology to think through and have a voice in shaping. These activities have occurred in both subfields, but to different extents and in different arenas. Attention within the broad field of psychology to the differences in the practical and legal distinctions between these contexts is important for ethical practice and ecologically valid research.

Although forensic and correctional psychology have had similar developmental experiences—and have been around for the same amount of time—they appear to be at different stages of development. There are many psychologists engaging in both types of activities, but forensic psychology appears to be further evolved than correctional psychology; that is, forensic psychology has worked through various mechanisms to define and establish itself as a recognized distinct subfield whereas correctional psychology has not to the same extent. For instance, forensic psychology petitioned the Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology to establish itself as an APA-recognized specialty (APA, 2013, 2017), went through the APA process for developing approved applied ethical guidelines (APA, 2013), and worked to affiliate the forensic board certification process with the American Board of Professional Psychology (see Table 2 in the online supplemental materials). Correctional psychology has not yet undertaken steps like these. Magaletta and colleagues (2013) noted that psychologists working in corrections are generalists and typically do not receive specialty postdoctoral training beyond the broad and general applied training at the doctoral level and on-the-job training. However, Magaletta, Patry, et al. (2007) described several unique competencies and skill sets that correctional psychologists must develop, including confrontation avoidance, working in a segregation unit, and interdisciplinary communication. Thus, correctional psychology might seek to formally organize into a uniquely recognized area.

The histories, current status, and futures of forensic psychology and correctional psychology are distinct but related. There has been and continues to be great interest in both subfields—especially the potential for forensic and correctional psychological science to help resolve practical issues and questions in legal and justice settings. Psychologists and students interested in these subfields can harness the information provided herein to better understand and differentiate between these subfields, as well as contribute to their further evolution.

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Received September 2, 2016

Revision received August 24, 2017

Accepted September 13, 2017 ■