Preface

We are very pleased to introduce this second volume of the *Advances in Psychology and Law* book series. As with Volume 1, the present volume helps to fill a long-standing gap in the field of law-psychology—namely, the absence of thorough reviews of existing research that can reveal policy implications and suggest important directions for future research. The chapters are virtually an honor roll of "hot topics" in psychology and law: interrogations and confessions, guilty pleas, how jurors deal with emotional or scientific evidence, gangs, and psychopathy, to mention but a few. Each chapter presents a "state of the science" summary for researchers, while also highlighting important policy implications. The chapters are deliberately interdisciplinary, integrating various psychological subdisciplines (e.g., developmental, social, cognitive), law, and other social science disciplines (e.g., sociology, criminal justice).

The overwhelming majority of convictions in the US are the result of guilty pleas. For a guilty plea to be valid, it must be made knowingly, intelligently, and voluntarily, and by defendants who are factually guilty. The first chapter on "The Validity of Pleading Guilty", by Redlich, examines the validity of pleading guilty, as well as the reliability of the methods used to ensure that guilty pleas are valid. According to her analysis, these methods, and consequently the guilty pleas themselves, often fall short of legal and moral standards.

When criminal defendants do not plead guilty, or when civil litigants fail to reach a settlement, the next step is usually a trial. The next six chapters deal with issues regarding trial procedures. First is a chapter by Yelderman, Peoples, and Miller which reviews the research on death qualification in capital trials. Jury selection in capital trials is unique in the extent to which the court explores jurors' attitudes toward case-relevant issues, namely the death penalty. Although it may seem perfectly reasonable to exclude jurors who would refuse to consider one of the relevant punishment options—for example, jurors who would oppose a death sentence under any circumstances—as Yelderman and colleagues show, death qualification calls the fairness of the entire process into question.

The following three chapters deal with specific kinds of evidence, all of which can lead jurors to make non-normative decisions. First, Nunez, Estrada-Reynolds,

Schweitzer, and Myers discuss the role of emotion in juror decision making. The law often expects jurors to act rationally and to ignore emotion, or to consider emotion only in a circumscribed way, but jurors cannot easily set their emotions aside. As the authors show, emotion in the courtroom implicates a number of general theories of emotions and decision making. The chapter by Devine and Macken addresses a type of evidence that is, in many respects, the polar opposite of emotional evidence, namely, scientific evidence, which is generally presumed to be detached, dispassionate, and objective. Yet just as with emotional evidence, jurors' comprehension of scientific evidence is limited, variable, and often inconsistent with legal guidelines. Similarly, and as explored in the chapter by Costanzo, Blandón-Gitlin, and Davis, jurors do not always appreciate the intricacies of evidence dealing with confessions and interrogation practices. The authors review the research literature on interrogations and confessions with an eye toward whether expert testimony on these issues can help jurors weigh confession evidence more appropriately. A common feature of all three of these chapters is that they offer recommendations for improving jurors' use of these different kinds of evidence.

Many evidentiary rules, which dictate the admissibility of various kinds of evidence, reflect a belief that they would protect against flaws in decision making by excluding some evidence while admitting other evidence that satisfies certain criteria. The next two chapters call some of these assumptions and practices into question. First, Kleynhans and Bornstein explain how some of the assumptions embodied in the Federal Rules of Evidence (FRE) are themselves flawed and can even result in greater disparity to the parties involved. Because evidentiary rules have such a broad scope, the authors also address areas that have not yet been examined in depth by psycholegal researchers, proposing avenues for future research. In the final evidentiary chapter, DeMatteo, Hodges, and Fairfax-Columbo review the scientific literature on the most widely used tool to measure psychopathic characteristics—the Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R)—to examine whether it satisfies the test for the admissibility of evidence. They conclude that the PCL-R has probative value in some contexts but not others. Courts therefore need to adopt a nuanced approach to this assessment instrument.

The next chapter, on "A Synthetic Perspective on the Own-Race Bias in Eyewitness Identification", by Wilson, Bernstein, and Hugenberg, addresses the own-race bias (or cross-race effect), which refers to eyewitnesses' tendency to be better at recognizing members of their own race/ethnicity/group than persons of other races/ethnicities/groups. The own-race bias raises a number of theoretical and applied issues, most prominently, what causes it and what can the justice system do about it. Wilson and colleagues discuss the cognitive and social mechanisms underlying the bias, as well as possible interventions for reducing it.

The final two chapters focus on populations of special interest to the criminal justice system. The chapter by Heilbrun, DeMatteo, King, Thornewill, and Phillips casts a relatively broad net. They address the potential of interventions to reduce the risk of subsequent criminal offending by "justice-involved" individuals—that is, anyone who has been arrested on criminal charges. Given the high prevalence of behavioral health disorders in this population, their discussion necessarily speaks to

the debate about whether such interventions should include a behavioral health component. As Heilbrun and colleagues make clear, the best possible interventions would both improve behavioral health and reduce criminal offending risk. The final chapter deals with a smaller population, but one that is nonetheless sizeable and extremely problematic. Wood, Alleyne, and Beresford review strategies for deterring gangs and reducing their impact on communities. A number of individual and group processes can help explain why many criminal justice anti-gang tactics are ineffective; by calling attention to those processes, the chapter by Wood and colleagues contributes both to research on gangs and to public policy efforts to combat them.

Many people helped to make this book a reality: Sharon Panulla and Sylvana Ruggirello, our editors at Springer; the Springer production staff; and the book series editorial board. We are grateful for their commitment to the book series and for being such a pleasure to work with. In addition, we have continually benefited from the efforts of our students—past, present, and future. They force us to clarify our thinking, pique our curiosity, challenge our assumptions, work with us side by side in conducting and writing up research, and enrich our lives in many tangible and intangible ways. We hope that this volume will inspire the research efforts of current students, future students, and established scholars.

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