

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have contributed a great deal to this project. Although a simple mention in this acknowledgments does not do justice to their invaluable contributions, I hope they accept this in the spirit in which it is intended.

To begin, I would like to thank those who contracted for my services to participate in this forensic process: the members of the defense team. All of them took a chance in bringing art therapy into their defense, and they trusted me with helping their cause. Even after the hearing was over, and their work with the defendant was complete, they were willing to help me, making themselves available for interviews and providing missing information and details. The lead attorney—who in this book is referred to as Jackie Chief—was especially helpful, allowing me to call at any time whenever I needed information or advice. Although all the defense attorneys must remain nameless, they know who they are, and I hope they realize the importance of their contribution.

As well, the chief deputy prosecutor, who worked hard to disprove my worth in public, and the judge who presided over the case were extremely helpful in making themselves available. They, too, must unfortunately remain anonymous, but without their perspectives, feedback, and support, I would have been able to tell only half a story.

I even appreciate the defendant, his horrific deeds aside, for allowing me to use his art and his case to demonstrate the value of art therapy in the legal arena.

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hours on the phone with them, and they provided me with extremely rich information. They entrusted me with their stories, and I hope they feel that I did them justice. I do not think it is too much of an exaggeration to say that without their allowing me to tell their stories, I would not have been able to tell mine.

I would also like to thank Marcia Sue Cohen-Liebman, who I consider—and I believe the field would concur—to be the leading authority in the field of forensic art therapy. She was always available when I needed help in untangling various ideas and was a wonderful sounding board as I worked through the manuscript. Her work paved the way for this book to be written. I look forward to continuing our work together as our paths continue to intersect.

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Most acknowledgments conclude with the obligatory thanks to all the countless people who have helped make a book a reality but remain unnamed because of space and time constraints, and this one is no different. However, I truly am thankful to all of them, and to thank them all would . . . well . . . require another book.

ART ON TRIAL

INTRODUCTION

Assessments, Art Therapy, and Forensics

- A man kidnapped, beat, raped, and killed three women in the Midwest over a 3-year period in the 1980s. A fourth would-be victim escaped. The defendant, Benjamin Stevens,* was convicted of three counts of murder and four counts of rape. His prison term has since been commuted to six consecutive life sentences.
- In the early 1980s, a jury in the Midwest convicted Randy Thomas of having murdered two people. Originally sentenced to death, he appealed and his conviction was commuted.
- In the early 1990s, three people were shot to death at a convenience store; exactly one week later, three more were killed at a nearby pizza parlor. Edward Ronalds was tried and convicted of all six murders. He remains on death row.
- Kevin Ward murdered his elder child and attempted to murder his younger. He was sentenced in 2009 for these crimes. Although the prosecution originally sought the death penalty, ultimately Ward was sentenced to a prison term of 95 years.

Although very different cases in four separate states, the defendants had one thing in common—art therapists served on their defense teams. The final case became the impetus for this book.

Art therapists have provided forensic support and expert testimony in court hearings (Cohen-Liebman, 2003; Gussak & Cohen-Liebman,

*With the exception of the three art therapists whose work is discussed in chapter 7, the names of all those connected with legal cases have been changed throughout this book.