BOOK REVIEW: HAIR AND JUSTICE: SOCIOLEGAL SIGNIFICANCE OF HAIR IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE, CONSTITUTIONAL LAW, AND PUBLIC POLICY BY CARMEN M. CUSACK

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Carmen Cusack, Ph.D., J.D. presents an excellent and extensive overview of the use of hair characteristics and DNA in court cases, including the differences in cultural expectations, prison rules regarding hairstyle, and the use of animal hair for forensic determinations. Cusack’s book dares to document how hairstyles speak volumes about an individual’s status in the community in terms of class, educational level, and political associations, and stipulates at length why biases not affiliated with race are permitted in legal contexts, which is why attorneys are acutely aware of hairstyles in terms of their clients and the impact it has on jurors. Despite tackling tough issues, Cusack’s writing is not insensitive. She expresses tremendous sensitivity toward victims. This well-documented text is both
thorough and compelling in exploring the many facets of hair in the courtroom and community.