

Book Reviews

Addressing Cultural Complexities in Practice: A Framework for Clinicians and Counselors

P.A. Hays. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2001, 275pp.
ISBN: 978-1-43380219-5, price: not specified.

The main goal of the author was to make therapists realize the complexity of cross-cultural psychotherapy and to move beyond one-dimensional conceptualizations of identity to an understanding of the complex, overlapping cultural influences that form each of us. The author suggests a systemically oriented approach in order to understand the complexities of the identity of individuals, couples and families.

The author suggests a framework as a guideline for better recognition and understanding of cultural influences on identity. Identity is considered by the author to be a multidimensional combination of age, developmental and acquired disabilities, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, indigenous heritage, native origin and gender. Therapists are encouraged to use the acronym ADDRESSING as a guide. They should begin with an exploration of their own identity, values and influences. During the interpersonal work they are invited to gather information and to obtain an understanding of the values, beliefs and worldview of their client. They should deepen their knowledge by seeking out “newer sources of information that enable him or her to learn from and with (not simply about) people of diverse cultures.” This enables the therapist to correctly diagnose and then choose the appropriate therapy for his client.

The book has a universal approach and presents a framework that can be used with a person of any cultural identity. The author uses some excellent case examples that explain and demonstrate the rationale of this book.

The book is an important contribution to therapists and everyone who wishes to better understand the complexity of human diversity.

Doron Mazeh, Bat Yam

Medical Basis of Psychiatry

Edited by: SH Fatemi and PJ Clayton.
Humana Press, 2008, 3rd Ed.
ISBN: 978-1-588-29-917-8
\$185.00

802 pp. 101 illus., 14 in color.

New advances in genetics, biochemistry, neuroanatomy and pharmacotherapy of mental disorders have brought us closer to a better understanding of complex disorders like schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression and even autism. As stated by the publishers: “...the major goal of the previous edition of this classic book was to update the busy clinician, psychiatric resident and medical student with the most up-to-date information on etiology, diagnosis and treatment of psychiatric disorders.”

This goal remains the focus of the third edition of this book. In this updated and expanded edition, the reader is provided with the most contemporary information and literature supported by a close survey of the field. Several new chapters dealing with new concepts in biology and treatment of mental disorders have been added. The book is divided into four sections covering the following topics: I – Syndromes in adults such as amnesic syndrome, schizophrenia, antisocial personality disorder and sexual disorders; II – Child psychiatry including disruptive behavior and anxiety; III – Symptom clusters including mood, catatonia and coarse brain disease and finally, IV – Special areas encompassing diverse areas such as genetics, suicide and history.

The text is very different from the “more-of-the-same” books where the chapters follow the pattern set long ago by respected teachers. I found the editor’s fresh approach exciting and provoking thought in areas that have gathered dust since my student days.

The writing is clear and concise, the illustrations relevant and the overall sense as one thumbs through the pages is that the book was created with love and attention. I have placed it prominently among my private collection of texts I use to consult when searching for solid and novel data.

Yoram Barak, Bat Yam