

Schizophrenia: Current Science and Clinical Practice

edited by Wolfgang Gaebel; Chichester, England,
Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, 272 pages, \$86.99

Harry J. Sivec, Ph.D.

Editing a text that offers updates in the field of schizophrenia research and practice can be a daunting task because of the numerous areas of subspecialty and research that spans many decades. A work of this type could easily involve a large volume of edited chapters, so I was pleasantly surprised to learn that *Schizophrenia: Current Science and Clinical Practice*, edited by Wolfgang Gaebel, was relatively brief (254 pages, including references). This book is the first volume in a new series, *Current Science and Clinical Practice*, by the World Psychiatric Association. As the series title suggests, the authors strive to provide readers with a review of “new scientific findings and their translation into clinical applications.”

The text offers a review of seven areas of schizophrenia research—diagnosis and classification systems, pathophysiology, neurocognition, genetics, early recognition and prevention,

pharmacological treatment, and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)—and a final chapter reviewing a variety of other topics (such as rehabilitation and management). The primary stated goals of this text are to summarize new scientific information and to describe the realized or potential impact of the new research in clinical settings. To this end, each chapter follows a consistent format, beginning with an Information Box to highlight key points, followed by succinct summaries of the literature. Most authors also developed well-designed tables and graphics that serve as highly effective summarizing tools. In short, the authors provide current information in well-organized, easy-to-follow chapters.

I found this book relevant for expert and nonexpert readers. Chapters containing a great deal of technical language (such as pathophysiology, pharmacology, and genetics) are within the reach of the nonexpert (mainly with the aid of summary tables and figures). For content areas with which I am more familiar (CBT), the authors provide clear descriptions of key concepts and a careful review of the strengths and limitations of current

research. The reference lists appear current and comprehensive.

Most chapters generally offer excellent, concise and readable summaries, but the discussion sections sometimes lack depth, especially with regard to applicability of findings in clinical settings. To be fair, a full review of the effectiveness of currently proposed applications may be beyond the scope of this book. However, I would have liked additional coverage of the practical implications for professionals who work with individuals who have schizophrenia. For example, more information and discussion would have been helpful on such topics as psychosis risk syndrome and medication interventions for first-episode psychosis, in that these are areas of significant current interest and debate in the literature. The final chapter closes with an important reminder that mental health practitioners developing treatment approaches should consider their own perceptions and attitudes about individuals who experience serious and persistent mental illnesses. Overall, I would recommend this book to graduate or medical students and professionals alike who wish to obtain a general overview of schizophrenia research or to update their knowledge of the field.

The reviewer reports no competing interests. ♦

Dr. Sivec is clinical assistant professor of psychiatry and consultant-trainer for the Best Practices in Schizophrenia Treatment Center, Department of Psychiatry, Northeast Ohio Medical University, Rootstown.