

Perspectives, Russil Durrant and Jo Thakker suggest that cultural-historical perspectives on drug use enrich the current understanding of why people use drugs and provide salient information for the purposes of prevention and treatment.

The book begins by looking at the nature and scope of substance use in the world, providing prevalence data and describing patterns of use. In an effort to explain why substance use is omnipresent throughout history and across cultures, the book explores whether humans are innately predisposed to seeking and consuming psychoactive substances. Because modern beliefs about drug-taking behavior cloud current perspectives, considering the functional and beneficial nature of drug use as an evolutionary adaptation is particularly fascinating. *Substance Use and Abuse* provides a brief history of drugs, highlighting their common beginnings as medicinal agents, religious vehicles, social mediums, and agents of economic gain. Durrant and Thakker explain patterns of drug use and increasing levels of abuse and drug-related harm in terms of these changing functional contexts, with emphasis on various economic, legal, political, educational, and philosophical influences.

The authors further explore the differences in the way substances are used across cultural and ethnic groups, providing data on the prevalence of drug use, arrests, prosecutions, and sentences while emphasizing the importance of sociocultural factors, such as discrimination, marginalization, and poverty. They conclude that the dynamic interrelationship between social norms, peer reinforcement and role models, values, expectations, and social identity greatly influence attitudes toward substance use.

The last portion of the book provides an integrated cultural-historical perspective in an analysis of current conceptions of substance abuse and dependence as well as of modern therapeutic initiatives. Through this lens, the authors endorse treatment and prevention approaches that focus on the identified substance use group

with attention to what is most likely to influence that population. They promote standard assessments that include cultural and historical factors and treatment programs that incorporate cultural elements and systematically address inequalities in society. The authors suggest that the success of measures in reducing drug-related harm is dependent on informal social and cultural proscriptions that reinforce laws and encourage compliance.

Substance Use and Abuse is a valuable contribution to the addictions

field, expanding on traditional biopsychosocial theories and treatment models to encourage the adoption of a more interdisciplinary approach. Written for psychologists, sociologists, and public health professionals, the book emphasizes areas of influence that are frequently left to the backdrop. The reader is left with mixed feelings—hopeful that new, innovative approaches to prevention and treatment are possible and discouraged that current approaches are not more sensitive to the cultural-historical perspective.

Handbook of Depression

edited by Ian H. Gotlib and Constance L. Hammen;
New York, Guilford Press, 2002, 624 pages, \$65

Michael B. Sheikman, M.D., Ph.D.

This well-written handbook provides a concise overview of many of the key domains of investigation into a devastating psychiatric disorder that, according to the authors, will be a major cause of disability worldwide by 2020, second only to ischemic heart disease. Currently, major depression is a common, costly, and recurrent psychiatric disorder associated with considerable morbidity and excessive mortality. *Handbook of Depression* provides an excellent overview of major progress in the treatment of depression over the last several decades of the 20th century. The main topics covered by the book include epidemiology, genetics, psychology, psychotherapy, and pharmacotherapy among children, adolescents, adults, and seniors, with promising implications for both prevention and treatment. Altogether 66 contributing authors from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany participated in the writing of this book.

The handbook is divided into four clearly organized sections. Part 1 offers in-depth coverage of the epidemiology, course, and outcome of

depressive disorders as well as current issues in classification, assessment, and diagnosis. The chapters in part 2 describe models developed to explain vulnerability and risk for depression, including psychological and biological perspectives. Part 3 is of particular interest to practitioners. The chapters in this section address issues of prevention and treatment of depression, including current approaches to pharmacotherapy. Twenty-four currently prescribed antidepressants are discussed, including selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, novel antidepressants, tricyclics and related compounds, and monoamine oxidase inhibitors.

Part 4 examines the experience of depression in particular demographic groups, defined by age, culture, and gender differences, as well as the assessment and management of suicidality. Throughout the book authors offer current ideas and research findings. They also identify some key questions that remained unanswered at the beginning of the 21st century. The editors conclude with a chapter featuring an integrative summary, reviewing major issues addressed in the book and highlighting important directions for future research in this field for the next decade.

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The chapter about marital and family therapy for depression is of particular interest. This chapter demonstrates that there are currently effective ways to intervene with families of depressed patients. Marital and parenting relationships in the families of depressed patients are fraught with many difficulties, even after individual pharmacologic treatment. These problematic relationships can be repaired through efficacious, targeted interventions as documented in this chapter.

Handbook of Depression provides a synthesis of current knowledge about depressive disorders and is a concise overview of recent investigations in this field. It is a valuable sourcebook not only for practitioners and researchers but also for graduate students, interns, and residents. Many highly respected researchers in the area of depression provide the reader with a comprehensive review of current knowledge of depression.

placed on those providing care for the elderly.

The complex relationship between depression and medical illness is appropriately addressed in a review of specific disease entities that uses a conceptual framework to describe the interaction of physiological, psychological, and psychosocial factors. This review is followed by a succinct chapter on a topic of great research interest in the field of geriatric psychiatry—vascular depression. Magnetic resonance imaging studies and clinical and neuropsychological correlates of this relatively newly described entity complete the section.

The clinical applicability of this text is contained in the second section titled “Therapeutic Interventions and Outcomes.” These chapters provide specific details on the optimal and appropriate management of depression with the use of evidence-based pharmacotherapy, electroconvulsive therapy, and psychotherapy with older adults. This latter chapter uses reconstructed exchanges between the patient and the therapist to more clearly demonstrate differences in theoretical models as adapted for the geriatric population.

While some clinicians may choose to use this volume as a reference guide when confronted with specific challenges, others will want to read it from start to finish. It is an informative, thought-provoking, and highly relevant assessment of an important subspecialty within psychiatry that will appeal to clinicians and students from all disciplines. Geriatric educators should consider *Depression in Later Life* as recommended reading for all multidisciplinary trainees specializing in the care of older adults.

Depression in Later Life: A Multidisciplinary Psychiatric Approach

edited by James M. Ellison, M.D., and Sumer Verma, M.D.; New York, Marcel Dekker, 2003, 333 pages, \$165

Stephen L. Pinals, M.D.

Finding a text to share on the subject of late-life depression may not ordinarily seem like cause for celebration, but, in fact, this new addition is worthy of such excitement. The recent arrival is the 23rd volume of the impressive Medical Psychiatry Series, written and edited by leaders in the field of geriatric depression. This latest volume brings together a broad range of authors writing in their respective areas of interest and specialty. The editors have assembled this thorough text for clinicians from every discipline to use in the recognition and appropriate management of depression among older adults.

Depression in Later Life: A Multidisciplinary Psychiatric Approach opens with an engaging account of the epidemiologic challenges in defining and measuring depression in later life, complicated by comorbid illness, psychosocial losses, environmental influence, and cultural bias. Here the reader is introduced to themes running throughout the text outlining the tragedy of under-

recognized and undertreated depression in our aging population. Successive chapters describe the complexity of diagnosing depression and nonmajor depressive syndromes among older adults. There is growing evidence that depressive syndromes in late life are distinct from those found among younger adults. Clear descriptions of emerging concepts such as subthreshold major depression, subsyndromal depression, and minor depressive disorder help the reader to unravel the limitations of our current nosology and fill in the mosaic of depressive syndromes that are especially relevant to older adults.

Among my favorite chapters was the one titled “Bereavement and Depression in Late Life,” in which the authors thoughtfully examine the entwined nature of these distinct phenomena. Even seasoned clinicians will profit from reading this eloquent analysis of grief and depression. Likewise, there is a very useful chapter on caregiver depression that includes detailed case studies and provides ample resources for caregivers and providers alike. This book provides geriatric clinicians with information on the enormous burden—with physical, financial, and emotional consequences—

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