

# Book Review

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## Psychiatry in the New Millennium

*edited by Sidney Weissman, M.D.; Melvin Sabshin, M.D.; and Harold Eist, M.D. Washington, D.C., American Psychiatric Press, 1999, 366 pages, \$52.00.*

This book is a veritable tour de force! The list of names of the 3 editors and the contributors to this book reads like a who's who in the field of American psychiatry, and their effort is no less impressive than their names. By no stretch of the imagination is this a "standard" psychiatric text. It is not a book that catalogs diagnostic categories and the most current status of their management, nor does it attempt to espouse a particular modality of treatment or approach to clinical issues. Instead, it takes a step back and critically examines the currents that have steered psychiatric practice into the new millennium. Not that there is something magical about the millennium, but it "allows us to examine psychiatry and use a universal date as our marker" (p. xxiii). The last century saw psychiatry change from dogma to a discipline with a basis in molecular biology. The last decade of the last millennium was aptly referred to as the "decade of the brain," and more is known today about the biological basis of psychiatric illness than at any time in the past. The same decade regrettably saw a continued erosion of the role of interpersonal therapies that had provided the discipline with its identity. It is necessary then, to examine how the practitioners of our profession reached this point.

What were the forces and tensions that provided impetus for the change? And most importantly, where will the future take us? Will psychotherapy survive, and will psychiatrists be the ones to provide this treatment? Will internists, neurologists, and psychotherapists of many disciplines replace psychiatrists? Where will the workforce be recruited from, and how will they be educated? These are but a few of the questions that this volume addresses. Despite the fact that the various authors have influenced and been influenced by American psychiatry, there is enough in the book that will generalize to the continued evolution of psychiatry as a clinical discipline in other countries.

The book is organized into 4 sections. It begins by examining the conceptual, organizational, philosophical, and research issues that have fashioned psychiatry to this point. Two excellent chapters by Joseph Coyle and Sidney Weissman examine the convergence of the paths of neuroscience and psychoanalysis in bringing mind and brain closer together. There are excellent chapters by Daniel Offer on what constitutes "normality" and Lois Flaherty on factors that have fueled the emergence of subspecialties in psychiatry. The first section ends with a review by Steven Hyman on how genetic mechanisms and molecular biology allow nature and nurture to interface and another review by Joseph Callicott and Daniel Weinberger of the rapidly evolving area of functional neuroimaging.

The second section examines factors that have influenced the way that psychiatry is practiced today and factors that will continue to shape its further development. John McIntyre et al. review the processes that have led the American Psychiatric Association (APA) to develop practice guidelines that allow us to

assure the quality of professional practice. Glen Gabbard provides an outstanding chapter on the teaching and practice of the slowly diminishing role of psychotherapy. Alan Schatzberg uses depressive illness as a model for understanding psychopharmacologic research and reconnects with the prior chapters by Coyle and Hyman. Steven Sharfstein follows with a brilliant chapter that reviews the history of mental health care through to the present attempts by managed care to contain costs. This chapter is perhaps the most balanced and eloquent view that I have ever read on economic realities and the troubling aspect of the allocation of resources to this most vulnerable population of human beings. The third section looks at the psychiatric workforce and its education. James Scully reviews the social, economic, and political forces that have shaped the workplace in American medicine. He looks at issues such as what determines federal policies in decisions about the over- or undersupply of physicians in various specialties and how these decisions impact training positions and the entry of international medical graduates into the workforce. Richard Balon, Rodrigo Munoz, and Nyapati Rao explore the impact of international medical graduates on American psychiatry and their role in a workforce that seems to draw fewer graduates of American medical colleges. What will the impact be on the provision of care if immigration of international medical graduates is restricted or curtailed? The section ends with an excellent review by Carolyn Rabinowitz of ways we might respond to the realities of funding and reimbursement and the changes in practice patterns in designing new teaching technologies and shaping curricula for the practitioner of tomorrow.

The book ends with 2 chapters that speculate on what the future may bring. Steven Mirin reviews the economic forces that have shaped the current practice of psychiatry and have future implications for "the mentally ill and those who care for them" (p. 321). Finally, Melvin Sabshin, a man who has influenced psychiatry the world over for the latter part of the last century, takes the various themes that have been expressed in this book and synthesizes a vision for the future. What is most significant is that in this last chapter, the authors return us to the most fundamental issue, the care of the individual patient. When all is said and done and when we have finally completed the human genome project, Sabshin reminds us that we still have a long way to go to remove the stigma against mental illness.

This book should be required reading for all psychiatrists. I have not come across a book in recent memory that has so completely captivated me. For some of us who have been in the field for many years and have been part of these changes and advancements, this book is a chronicle of our times. For those among us who will shape the future of our discipline, it will serve as a road map for that future. Whether the assumptions and speculations outlined in this book will become reality will be determined by those who will guide the ship in the years that come but it can safely be said that those that do not learn from the past may be condemned to repeat it in the future.

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