

## Book Reviews

Michael H. Ebert, M.D., Editor

### **Handbook of Religion and Mental Health**

*edited by Harold G. Koenig. San Diego, Calif., Academic Press, 1998, 408 pages, \$79.95.*

Harold Koenig, a major researcher at Duke University Medical Center in the field of religion and coping, introduces this volume of mostly insightful and well-constructed entries that explore the relationship between religion and mental health as a "book for mental health professionals, religious professionals, and counselors that is designed to meet the need for information about how religious beliefs and practices relate to mental health and influence mental health" (p. xxix). These 26 entries are arranged in 6 sections. The first, "Historical Background," begins by surveying the winding narrative of this relationship and then discusses current interests in ethics and psychiatry. "A New Research Frontier" contains essays on this relationship from the perspectives of sociology, personality theory, neuropsychology, and, in perhaps some of the finest essays in the volume, the findings of many empirical studies. The section "Religion and Mental Functioning" examines the relationship between religion and depression, anxiety, psychoses, drug dependency, and the phenomenon of coping, a growing field of study. "Religious Perspectives on Mental Health" examines the particular understandings afforded the mental health/religion relationship by particular religious traditions—Protestant, Catholic, Mormon, Unity Church, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim—and takes a look at the phenomenon of "Christian Psychiatry" in a thought-provoking essay followed by challenging comments from the editor. The section "Clinical Applications" surveys the role of religion in verbal psychotherapy, the role of clergy in mental health care, and ways in which mental health professionals may cooperate with clergy. The concluding section, "Education of Mental Health Professionals," suggests curricular and conceptual changes in order to educate practitioners about the relationship between mental health and religion.

So what is the relationship? In their entry, McCullough and Larson simply conclude: "To date, there are few replicated, well-demonstrated 'facts' about the relationship between religion and mental health on which most experts would agree" (p. 96). Even a meta-analytic study by Bergin in 1993, which concluded "that religiousness maintains moderate but positive associations with psychological outcomes" (p. 36), leaves a "bland" aftertaste owing to the diversity of measures it employs. A 1991 study by Gartner et al. also seems somewhat flat: "Monolithic statements about the relationship between religion and mental health are clearly unwarranted; religious commitment can influence mental health in very different ways" (p. 98). The point of these authors and the editor is clear: more empirical research is needed.

Not only is more empirical research of this relationship needed, but, as the authors of the different entries demonstrate, a more empathic understanding of the quality of this relation-

ship is required as well. This well-conceived and well-executed handbook provides some means for achieving this understanding. The contributors in general, and Koenig in particular, have no illusion about the resistance among mental health professionals that prevents an understanding of how religion works for and against psychic well-being. In many ways, the authors of this volume offer ways to work through that resistance.

Kudos are due to Koenig for his editorial work. There is little overlap in subject matter among the entries, and a uniform quality of thought and writing pervades most of them. The section "Religious Perspectives on Mental Health," however, does contain a few disappointments. Some of the entries are very short; for example, only 6 pages of text on "Religion and Mental Health From the Protestant Perspective" are included from a researcher who knows much more about the topic than what appears in this volume. A few of the other entries about the nature of mental health in specific religious traditions fail in their promise to provide insight into the way the traditions construe mental health and mental health care. This is most disappointing since clinicians often see persons who are not religious in general but religious in very particular ways. But, again, as the very thrust of this volume indicates, much more research in this and other areas is needed. I recommend this volume because it offers direction for such research.

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### **Bipolar Disorder: A Guide for Patients and Families**

*by Francis Mark Mondimore, M.D. Baltimore, Md., Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, 277 pages, \$16.95 (paper).*

Francis Mark Mondimore, M.D., has clearly accomplished his goal of providing a valuable educational resource for individuals with bipolar disorder and the people who care about them. The author assists the reader in his or her journey through the text with a clear and concise writing style, using a minimum of technical terms. He seeks to establish a dialogue with the reader by presenting historical background, case reports, and other information in a supportive setting.

The book is organized into 4 main sections, with chapters subdividing each section. "Symptoms, Syndromes, and Diagnosis" is the first section, which begins with an exploration of the differences separating normal from abnormal moods. This sets the groundwork for the subsequent discussion of mania, hypomania, depression, and mixed mood states. The second and third chapters focus on these mood disorders and include a brief introduction to DSM-IV and its multiaxial components.

The second section in the text is simply labeled "Treatment," but entails broad-based coverage of this subject, beginning with an overview of neurons and neurotransmitters and followed in subsequent chapters by discussions of mood stabilizers, antidepressants, antipsychotics, and other potential pharmacologic interventions as well as a look at electroconvulsive therapy and transcranial magnetic stimulation. In addition to the above-mentioned therapies, Mondimore also includes the essential role of psychotherapy as a treatment component in bipolar disorder. He wisely cautions the reader to have patience with psychiatric treatment and states that many medications may take weeks to have noticeable effects.

In the third section of the book, "Variations, Causes, and Connections," a wide range of other issues in bipolar illness are explored, such as the differences in presentation of bipolar disorder in children and adolescents compared with adults, variations in cause and presentation in women compared with men, and substance use and the dual-diagnosis patient population.

As a reviewer, I found the fourth and concluding section to be perhaps the most valuable portion of the book. In "Getting Better and Staying Well," Mondimore encourages patients to be active participants in their care by collaborating with their physicians in formulating their treatment plan and in implementing their treatment. Other vital recommendations address the specific issues of planning ahead for emergencies, building a support system, and promoting family participation in the wellness process.

In terms of reader audience, this book is not intended for medical students, psychiatric residents, or psychiatrists. I highly recommend it for patients and their family members and friends as an enlightened, pragmatic, and empathic resource for this very complex and challenging illness.

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### **Handbook of Attachment: Theory, Research, and Clinical Applications**

*edited by Jude Cassidy, Ph.D., and Phillip R. Shaver, Ph.D.*  
New York, N.Y., Guilford Press, 1999, 925 pages, \$85.00.

The *Handbook of Attachment* is a comprehensive and scholarly review of a critically important issue in development—attachment. The book shows that attachment theory is central for understanding not only early parent-child relationships, but also child maltreatment, bereavement, romantic relationships, psychopathology, and therapeutic change. This well-edited volume includes high-quality contributions from leading theorists and researchers in psychology, psychiatry, and child development.

The book is divided into 6 logical sections, with a total of 36 chapters and an epilogue by Mary Main. Cross-referencing throughout the book helps readers to identify related chapters of

interest. The first section provides a nice overview of Bowlby's and Ainsworth's views about attachment theory and is a useful introduction for novices as well as more experienced scholars. It is especially helpful to have a chapter written by Bretherton and Munholland on the sometimes confusing construct of "internal working models."

The next section on biology and evolution demonstrates the broad applicability of attachment theory beyond human infants. The 2 chapters on evolutionary theory are thoughtful and provocative. Suomi's chapter on attachment in rhesus monkeys is intriguing and especially fun to read.

Although the next 3 chapters constitute a section on attachment in infancy and childhood, they really are central to most other chapters in the book. Readers might consider approaching these chapters earlier, particularly the one by Solomon and George that describes the measurement paradigm used in most studies of early attachment. The chapters by Belsky and Thompson address questions frequently asked of attachment theorists about individual variability and continuities across development, respectively.

Attachment, of course, continues to impact development beyond early childhood. The fourth section includes discussions of adolescent attachment, pair bonds, and various kinds of romantic relationships. In addition, 2 chapters carefully review the complexity of assessing attachment in adolescents and adults.

Psychopathologists and clinicians will find the next section especially informative. The first 3 chapters provide an excellent framework for understanding how development goes awry, particularly how attachment problems contribute to the development of psychopathology across the life span. Although the chapters on therapy do not delineate specific intervention techniques, they may help clinicians formulate client problems from an attachment perspective. In addition, the numerous references are a tremendous resource for those interested in learning more about the interventions presented.

The last section of the book is more topical. Although the specific chapters might not hang together as well as some of the earlier sections, each expands our thinking about attachment with regard to broader issues such as multiple caregivers, cross-cultural differences, emotions, religion, and public policy. Finally, the epilogue by Mary Main details an excellent blueprint for future research directions. Not only will graduate students discover rich ideas for dissertations, but experts also will find new and sophisticated proposals for further studies that can advance the field.

In sum, there is much to commend in this volume. Academicians, graduate students, and clinicians will be informed and stimulated by this encyclopedic review. The *Handbook of Attachment* really is a "must" reference for anyone seriously interested in attachment theory and its role in development across the life span. Although not every chapter has direct clinical application, enough do, so that practitioners who use attachment theory in their clinical work will find it enlightening.

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