

**Abnormal Psychology (4<sup>th</sup> ed.)**  
**Susan Nolen-Hoeksema**  
**McGraw Hill ([www.mcgraw-hill.com](http://www.mcgraw-hill.com))**  
**2007. 829 pp. \$125.31 (hardcover)**

Dr. Susan Nolen-Hoeksema has put together a remarkable text titled Abnormal Psychology that is equal to or, in some respects, exceeds comparable texts on this subject area. Her text is highly readable, provides all of the latest technology and learning and teaching strategies, and is user-friendly. Dr. Susan Nolen-Hoeksema's text emphasizes an integrative approach to describe, organize, and treat mental disorders that is informed by latest empirical research using the contextual lens of culture and gender. Dr. Nolen-Hoeksema adds to her contextual approach the latest understanding of the influence of biology on disordered behavior including providing "new standardized brain diagrams" (p. XXI). Thus, the author features an "integrative bio-psycho-social model of mental disorders" (p. xxi). Students will find this text very useful. There is an abundance of learning tools such as a study guide, a Mind-Map CD-ROM, and an online learning center for students.

There is a myriad of instructor tools available as well to ease the teaching load of the often-harried professor who has a full plate. For example, auxiliary offerings include an Instructor's Manual Test Item File, Power Point Lectures, and Classroom Performance Systems that provide instant feedback regarding what material the students retained from the lecture. Other teaching aides that increase student interest include a set of video tapes titled "Faces of Abnormal Psychology" along with a series of video clips of individuals who have experienced a disorder. In addition, the publisher even has an online learning center for instructors with links to the New York Times and other teaching resources.

This is a classy book. The font is very readable; the writing style clear and personal. Each chapter is designed to enhance student learning. Each chapter begins with a colorful work of art and pithy saying that highlights the chapter's theme. There is an overview of the chapter at the beginning and a summary at the end followed by a list of key terms. Each chapter also has illustrative case history of a person with a mental health disorder although the material covered in the text is fairly standard and comparable to similar texts on Abnormal Psychology. The author "personalizes" the chapters by asking and answering pertinent questions from the student's perspective. Adding to the text's readability, there are frequent sub-summaries within the text of the chapters. Moreover, the text is spiked with frequent pointed quotes and additional case histories, which adds to the book's interest.

While readable, the book does not shy away from complex explanations of abnormal behavior. It is thorough and expansive. There are 18 chapters including breakout chapters concerning suicide, eating disorders, and lifespan issues. Given its large number of chapters, (most semesters are only 13 weeks long, with a week for orientation and a week for finals), this book could be used for two semesters. Alternatively, instructors might prefer a smaller more succinct and condensed text, or to selectively choose a specific set of chapters for their course. Dr. Susan Nolen-Hoeksema brings her knowledge, understanding and critical insights to her text. She is a renowned author and researcher in her own right. She is currently a professor at Yale University. Her research focuses on eating disorders, mood regulation and gender differences in mental illness. Dr. Nolen-Hoeksema has been the recipient of several large national grants and has two major teaching awards.

Dr. Nolen-Hoeksema's book, *Abnormal Psychology, Fourth Edition*, is clearly in the top tier of textbooks on abnormal psychology. Her text is well crafted and loaded with the latest information. She views mental illness through the integrative lens of the bio-psycho-social approach. Her writing style is fresh, and lively; yet she is scholarly in her content and analyses. I would award her book four \*\*\*\* out of four.

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