

Psychopathology: From Science to Clinical Practice

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The editors have positioned *Psychopathology: From Science to Clinical Practice* as a top tier choice for consideration as a graduate level textbook in psychopathology. Clinical psychology graduate students should find this book especially appealing as it reviews research on the assessment, diagnosis, typical course and outcome, epidemiology and etiology for most major psychological disorders. The chapter authors then synthesize this information and consider the implications for existing psychological treatments and case formulation. Evidence and empirical findings thoroughly undergird each chapter, but the editors allowed for interesting speculations based on recent findings that have not yet made their way into treatment outcome studies to this point.

The editors also made sure that chapters incorporated influences on each disorder such as comorbidity, biological and psychological vulnerability factors, cultural issues, key developmental factors, demographics, interpersonal factors, ethnicity, and sexual orientation as they seemed relevant. Well known experts in the field were selected to write each chapter. Reviewers of texts often note when editing seems “tight.” In this case, the editing was so seamless that many chapters had the feel of having been written by the same author.

Thus, the quality of the writing as well as the masterful integration of science and practice opens up an entirely different readership for this book; namely, practitioners in the field whether experienced or not. I would surmise that reading a textbook on psychopathology does not lie high on most practitioners’ list of priorities. And all too few stay current on the very latest treatment strategies across a broad swath of disorders. *Psychopathology: From Science to Clinical Practice* could go a long way toward updating this potential audience.

Even a brief review of the fourteen chapters in this book lies well beyond the scope of this review. But I can say that the initial chapters are unusually strong and the quality does not drop off significantly for any of them. Most readers, even seasoned clinicians and academicians, will find at least something they didn’t know in most of the chapters.

An additional, unexpected strength of this book was the consistent coverage of interpersonal issues as they relate to psychopathology of most types. Chapter after chapter made note of how each disorder can lead to relationship problems of various sorts as well as the ways in which relationship problems can contribute to psychopathology. This coverage helped explain the inclusion of a chapter on a “V code” disorder, specifically, Marital and Relational Discord. The extent of this coverage should remind many practitioners of the value of collecting information about their clients’ relationships which could at times include bringing in collateral informants at least for assessment if not treatment purposes.

I found myself intrigued by the overview of treatment efficacy for various disorders. Although effect sizes were not uniformly presented, when they were, generally the magnitude of those effect sizes favored CBT (and occasionally other psychotherapy approaches) over that of medication. This difference was not usually described as statistically significant. However, when one considers the numerous cases of researchers' financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry as well as the frequently reported cases of biased reporting in this literature, I found myself wondering if the authors' had dealt with medication efficacy with a sufficiently critical eye.

Finally, the book concludes with a nice chapter written by the editors, on broad conclusions and general recommendations, citing various factors that should be considered across diagnostic categories. For example, among other issues, this chapter cites the increased suicidal risk that a wide variety of disorders entail. The editors also noted the chronic nature of most psychopathology and the fact that such pathology usually entails considerable distress, great complexity, and extremely common comorbidity. I would have liked to have seen the related constructs of self-focused attention, self-absorption, and rumination discussed in greater depth; however, these risk factors were given relatively slight attention through the text. Since various psychologists such as Roy Baumeister, Susan Nolen-Hoeksema, and Rick Ingram have cited these as important vulnerability factors that cut across much, if not most, psychopathology, somewhat greater attention to these variables may have been warranted.

In summary, *Psychopathology: From Science to Clinical Practice*, belongs on the bookshelves of graduate students, practitioners, and academics with an interest in psychopathology. It is one of the very best textbooks I have read in a long time. I wish the publisher had allowed for more pages and even more in depth coverage, but what the editors did with 447 pages was amazing. I must end this review now because my reading of this book has alerted me to about 250 articles that look like must reads.

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