

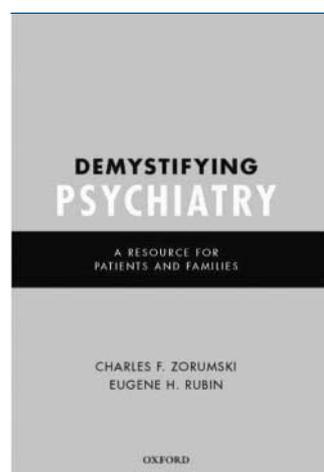
questionnaires and diagnostic interviews are provided in an appendix for practical use. Each chapter is well laid out, beginning with a summary and followed by a list of contents, which makes the text easy to use as a reference book. It is somewhat disappointing, therefore, that the final index is patchy and it is difficult to locate specific items.

There are a number of excellent features in this book, but also some shortcomings which could easily be ironed out in future editions. First, it is extremely wordy and repetitive, which is most marked in the first section. In parts it appears that sentences and paragraphs have been copied from earlier in the book. In addition, there are a number of errors and contradictions in the text. Also, the authors seem to put excessive detail into relatively small areas at the expense of others. For example, there is a chapter plus another section covering psychogenic excoriation and separate detailed sections on cosmetic phalloplasty and vaginoplasty, whereas psychopharmacological treatment is relegated to a short chapter and an extremely practical section in the treatment manual.

In summary, this is a timely publication which has many useful components and would be a helpful addition to any psychiatrist's or therapist's bookshelf. Our criticisms mainly relate to the first half of the book, which could be drastically cut and made into a more relevant reference section. Generally, however, this is a very positive addition to the bibliography which we would recommend to anyone interested in the subject.

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Demystifying Psychiatry: A Resource for Patients and Families

By Charles F. Zorumski
& Eugene H. Rubin.
Oxford University Press USA. 2009.
£19.99 (hb). 240pp.
ISBN: 9780195386400

Demystifying Psychiatry is an impressively fluent compilation, cleverly converting the specialist knowledge of two American professors into a succinct overview of the many dimensions of psychiatry. Zorumski and Rubin have successfully deployed a writing style that details both clinical and scientific concepts in a surprisingly accessible manner. They have endeavoured to strive away from producing yet another mundane patient resource and to embrace the realm of the 'expert-patient'; relevant, to the point and, most importantly, not patronising or overwhelming. *Demystifying Psychiatry* will not disappoint.

The chapters are titled as questions orienting the reader from the outset. The arrangement of content is such that psychiatric disorders (common conditions, warning signs) and the role of

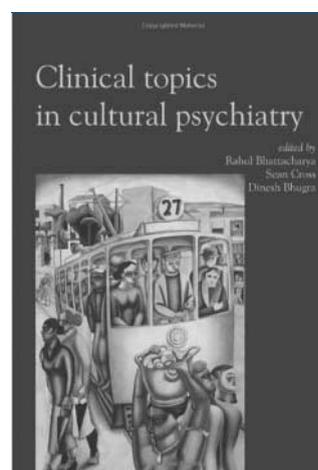
psychiatrists (psychiatric training, patient assessment) are tackled at the start. The remainder of the book deals with the theories underlying psychiatric disorders (biological mechanisms) and principles of treatment (medications, psychotherapies, brain stimulation, psychosurgery). The final sections focus on issues such as patient and family involvement in treatment, and advise patients how to approach the American consumer-oriented medical market. The book finishes with a reflection of psychiatry as a historical, yet dynamic, field with an exciting future.

The preconceptions that form the mist in psychiatry are objectively challenged; electroconvulsive therapy is regarded scientifically, a contrast to its often false portrayal in film. Delirium is explained as 'something like the brain crashing' and the benefits of psychotherapy as being 'magical'. Scientific jargon is minimal and all information is fully explained in a fluid narrative. The case examples are particularly useful; through 'Larry' who misuses substances and 'Mark' who hallucinates the reader can appreciate the reality of psychiatric disorders, and indeed draw on personal experience.

Despite being aimed at 'patients and their families', medical student, trainee psychiatrist and even long-practising consultant will find *Demystifying Psychiatry* a satisfying read. It definitely 'demystifies' the prejudice that up-to-date psychiatric science is only available in an unapproachable textbook.

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Clinical Topics in Cultural Psychiatry

Edited by Rahul Bhattacharya,
Sean Cross & Dinesh Bhugra.
RCPsych Publications. 2010.
£30.00 (pb). 454pp.
ISBN: 9781904671824

This well written, multi-authored book delivers everything that its title promises, and much more! It includes chapters previously published as articles in *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, updated with recent references, and some new chapters as well. The authors and editors are acknowledged experts in the field of cultural psychiatry, who have all contributed significantly to the understanding of this important area.

The book is divided into three sections – 'Theoretical and general issues', 'Specific mental health conditions across cultures' and 'Management issues in the cultural context'. Clinically relevant, important work in cultural psychiatry is covered in a very readable and understandable format. Several authors make reference to the same papers and it is interesting to see how they approach the same subject from differing angles.

The chapter on the mental health of refugees and asylum seekers is especially helpful as clear definitions highlight the

implications for access to resources and treatment. Despite media hype, only 20% of the world's refugees are being hosted by high-income countries. Worryingly, 44% of refugees and asylum seekers are below the age of 18. The implications for psychiatrists include ensuring that the sensitivity of personal information is not compromised, establishing trust with people whose basic value systems have been destroyed, and promoting engagement with other agencies. Individualising care packages and taking language and culture into consideration are also necessary. Sadly, arrival in another country does not necessarily give refugees peace of mind. Satisfying basic human needs such as food, shelter and money through employment continue to promote well-being.

The chapter on schizophrenia in African–Caribbean people is especially commended, not least because it incorporates information from the most recent sources. The consistently higher-than-expected rate of schizophrenia in people of African–Caribbean descent is acknowledged. Various hypotheses to explain this discrepancy are reviewed, including biological and social factors, and an attempt is made to look at the role of institutional racism, even though some professionals find this terminology unfashionable. The proposition that living in proximity to others from the same culture is protective against serious mental illness is also helpful.

The call for training in cultural diversity to be made available for all healthcare professionals, including psychiatrists, is loud and clear. Unless there is clarity about what constitutes cultural diversity, training will not be effective and runs the risk of merely becoming a tick-box exercise. Having a culturally competent workforce must remain the top priority of all trusts' chief executives, particularly at a time when health ministers and governments are worryingly tiptoeing away from established and accepted approaches regarding multiculturalism. The discussion about lip service, political correctness and cultural sensibility is sensitively explored, with clear suggestions about how clinicians can establish reflective practices.

This book is highly recommended to all professionals working with refugees, asylum seekers and people from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. It will also be of considerable value to anyone interested in how to incorporate cultural psychiatry issues into clinical practice.

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