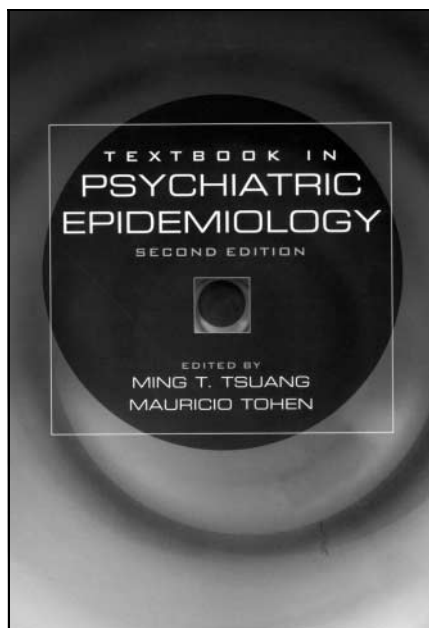


Book reviews

EDITED BY SIDNEY CROWN, FEMI OYEBODE and ROSALIND RAMSAY

Textbook in Psychiatric Epidemiology (2nd edn)

Edited by Ming T. Tsuang & Mauricio Tohen.
New York: Wiley-Liss. 2002.
722 pp. £92.95 (hb). ISBN 0 471 40974 X



This is the second edition of a textbook first published in 1995. Like the first, it developed out of the Harvard Program in Psychiatric Epidemiology and Biostatistics. Like all second editions, it has expanded: from 483 pages to 722 and from 20 chapters to 24. Continuity has been maintained between the editions by having most of the original authors provide updates to their chapters.

This is clearly an American textbook. At one level this is entirely reasonable, as the USA is easily able to assemble authors of the highest quality in this, as in every other, mainstream academic field. However, it was a criticism aimed at the first edition that it had a strong, perhaps over-strong, American focus. The editors have tried to remedy this (6 of the 48 authors are now European, of whom 4 are based in Britain). However, the American slant remains. It is apparent in the studies referenced and in the theoretical positions

adopted. Thus, the only references to the British and Australian national surveys of psychiatric disorder are in Jane Murphy's chapter on methodology whereas the American National Comorbidity Survey, for all its difficulties, has a chapter to itself. There is also something of a biological preference, which Europeans in particular are probably moving away from. This is illustrated in the (generally very good) chapter on the epidemiology of schizophrenia, where the evidence regarding the impact of stress on the development of psychosis is considerably downplayed. The chapter on methods in psychiatric genetics, by Faraone *et al*, stands out by its open-handedness regarding the role of the environment.

For readers from Europe or elsewhere outside the USA, the North American focus probably does not matter, as they will be exposed to other viewpoints and other studies. It may, however, matter for the American reader who will not be encouraged by this book to see outside the circle.

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Drugs and Addictive Behaviour. A Guide to Treatment (3rd edn)

By Hamid Ghodse. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2002. 520 pp.
£75.00 (hb). ISBN 0521 00001 7;
£43.00 (pb). ISBN 0 521 81354 9

In a world of electronic media and evidence-based medicine, the role of the single-author textbook has been questioned. Once a staple educational tool for trainees and practising psychiatrists alike, such books are said to lag behind current practice and so are no longer useful reference sources. This issue has been acknowledged in the

latest edition of this well-known British textbook on drug misuse. As a nod to evidence-based medicine, references have been included in the text for the first time and, overall, this new approach provides a useful stimulus to further study. However, this is not the reason that this book deserves a place on the bookshelves of anyone with an interest in helping to tackle the problems of drug misuse.

The author is well-known to British and international audiences for his contributions to both the research and political agendas within the drug treatment field. However, it is the wealth of clinical experience that he conveys in the text that I found most useful. Not only does the book contain standard chapters on assessment, complications of drug misuse and methods of intervention, but also it adapts this information to real-life settings. A chapter devoted to 'special problems' covers practical issues such as drug-dependent patients on medical wards, in the accident and emergency department and in police custody. An excellent description of the various biological and psychological modalities of treatment is accompanied by 'fine detail' such as advice to give patients about driving licences or the legal implications of travelling abroad with prescription medication. The section on the drug-misusing doctor is both relevant and timely.

The book is unashamedly British in its outlook, but this is essential in a field where many key issues are not easily transported from elsewhere. However, the author is able to draw on his extensive knowledge of international issues in the substance misuse

