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Textbook of Family and Couples Therapy: Clinical Applications, *edited by G. Pirooz Sholevar, M.D., with Linda D. Schwoeri, Ph.D. Arlington, Va., American Psychiatric Publishing, 2003, 948 pp., $59.00.*

This edited book attempts to provide a broad overview of family and couples therapy that covers the wide spectrum of theoretical approaches. Although this is laudable, it provides us with too many appetizers and an unsatisfying meal. The field of family and couples therapy is difficult to cover because, in the absence of any encompassing theoretical framework, a patchwork of conflicting theories attached to charismatic clinicians has developed. In addition, family therapy began during a period of disillusionment with established authority following World War II and the Vietnam War and relied on philosophical underpinnings without much scientific validation.

Dr. Sholevar says that one can be eclectic and combine all of the family therapy approaches, which is clearly clinically incompatible. He starts this book by stating that family therapy is "an umbrella term for a number of clinical practices based on the notion that psychopathology resides in the family system rather than individuals." This statement denying pathology in the patient reflects the perspective of many systemic family therapists. In the concluding chapter, however, he agrees with the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill that schizophrenia is a biological illness and "there is no clear evidence that some of the stressful family interactional patterns such as communication deviance, expressed emotion, and affective style predated or followed the symptomatic behavior in the schizophrenic patients." These polarized statements contradict one another, and both are inaccurate. The long-term Finnish Adoptive Family Study of Schizophrenia by Pekka Tienari et al. (1) indicated that both a youngster's genetic loading and a family with high communication deviance are necessary for schizophrenia to develop. We also know from neurobiology research that genes are strongly influenced by the environment; both are important.

Chapter 3, "Constructing Therapy" by Scott Browning and Robert-Jay Green, mentions the work of Mara Selvini Palazzoli on systemic family therapy. At a conference in Heidelberg in the 1980s, Dr. Selvini Palazzoli stated that she would drop a bomb: that schizophrenia could be cured by the parents leaving a note on the kitchen table that they were going out. Unfortunately, the bomb exploded in her hands, destroying her credibility. No critique of this event is presented in this book. In addition, the book states that Gregory Bateson rejected the incorporation of his ideas by systemic family therapists because he remained an anthropologist. Bateson was one of my teachers, and he objected to therapists, some of whom were not trained in mental health, taking a controlling stance to effect change. There are some other areas of misinformation. Object relations family therapy was not developed in England, as stated in this book, but in the United States. I published the first book on object relations family therapy (2), and others later expanded this approach. In addition,

Stephen Fleck's name is misspelled as Flick. Finally, in chapter 32, "Family Intervention With Incest," the editors say that the therapist should not believe patients with borderline personality concerning incest because of the patients' cognitive distortion. Clearly, the therapist cannot discount the believability of the patient. In fact, many clinicians find that borderline personality disorder is frequently attributable to incest and consider it a posttraumatic stress disorder from childhood (2, 3).

Despite these criticisms, there are many excellent chapters that are accurate and deal with their topics in depth. These include, among others, "Family Life Cycle" by Joan Zilbach, "Diagnosis of Family Relational Disorders" by David Miklowitz and John Clarkin, and "The State of Family Therapy Research: A Positive Prognosis" by John Clarkin, Daniel Carpenter, and Eric Fertuck. Unfortunately, the book lacks sufficient depth and does not fulfill its mission of providing an accurate and consistent account of family or couples therapy that is helpful to clinicians.

References

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CONSULTING PSYCHOLOGY

The California School of Organizational Studies Handbook of Organizational Consulting Psychology: A Comprehensive Guide to Theory, Skills, and Techniques, *edited by Rodney L. Lowman. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 2002, 836 pp., $100.00.*

If psychology is the study of human behavior, then human behavior in organizations and the organization's effect on behavior represent core topics. Even the seminal psychologist of the individual patient, Sigmund Freud, recognized the unique phenomena of group dynamics. Yet, psychologists typically intervene at the level of the individual or, at most, with families and small groups. Over the course of an entire career, therapists may treat a total of 200 to 300 patients, all the while yearning for a wider impact. What if each of our interventions influenced an entire organization composed of thousands of individuals?

I read Rodney Lowman's comprehensive *Handbook of Organizational Consulting Psychology* nurturing just such a fantasy. Here were psychologists whose interventions transformed major Fortune 500 corporations. Not only did they increase the company's bottom line, they also saved or created jobs for countless people. (In my fantasy, the exorbitant fees they charge are hardly noticed on the company's balance sheet, in contrast to my patients, who can barely afford my modest fee for psychotherapy.) Most importantly, organiza-

tional psychologists gain leverage because they focus on people's work lives—a domain too often overlooked by the typical clinician who might consider work "conflict-free."

Although this handbook is not likely to turn me from clinician into organizational consulting psychologist, it certainly heightened my appreciation for the sophisticated and diverse interventions that are routinely applied in this field. Divided into eight parts and 31 chapters written by eminent practitioners and scholars, the handbook covers major theories, individual and organizational levels of application, consulting techniques, measurement approaches, and professional practice issues, including ethics and training. I was particularly engaged by the case histories, especially one chapter written by Harry Levinson, who makes organizational interventions based on a psychoanalytic understanding of the leaders' strengths and weaknesses. In one case, the chief executive officer had to prepare the company for a change in leadership; in another, the company had to change focus due to a downturn in the business environment; in yet another, a passive chief executive officer was having a deleterious effect on the entire company. In these case histories, as with psychotherapy, Levinson became the object of transference and had to finesse the issue of whether to "support" the company leadership or analyze the weaknesses. As in psychotherapy, the consultant had to prepare the organization for the disappointment, loss, and anxiety associated with termination. Although this is the workplace, issues regarding attachment, dependency, intimacy, and power (also sex) are pervasive. There are also conflicts of interest, confidentiality concerns, and boundary issues (i.e., who is the identified client?).

Some chapters are less narrative and more scientific, describing quantitative approaches to the analysis of business organizations. Many authors ground their interventions in elaborate systems theory; others base them on more specialized knowledge. Some authors focus on the qualities of the individual leader or how human resource departments can evaluate the best candidates during recruitment. Others analyze tables of organization and quality improvement approaches. This is a diverse field with the same kinds of theoretical and applied divisions that we find in other areas of psychology.

Lowman has collected an excellent compendium with almost no redundancies, even though chapters on related topics are written by different authors. I was especially interested that most authors, who are on the faculty at business schools rather than in medical schools or schools of arts and sciences, do not assume the role of helping professional. They have invented and defined a field of organizational consulting psychology that parallels, but does not fundamentally resemble, that of clinical psychology. Lowman's handbook is a good overview and textbook.

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