
Current Diagnosis & Treatment: Psychiatry, 2nd ed

edited by Michael H. Ebert, MD; Peter T. Loosen, MD, PhD; Barry Nurcombe, MD; and James F. Leckman, MD. In book series: A Lange Medical Book. McGraw-Hill Medical, New York, NY, 2008, 739 pages, \$69.95 (paper).

In the current era, when medical journals are available at all hours online and a medical student or resident can access the world's medical literature using a hand-held personal digital assistant outside a patient's room, one might ask why we still bother with textbooks. If we teach our students to practice evidence-based medicine, is not reading initial papers on a subject the right way to go?

Clearly, reading original articles and learning how to evaluate them is a critical task for each physician whatever his or her field. But prior to reaching this level of expertise, the student of medicine, or in this case, more narrowly, the student of psychiatry, needs first to obtain an overview of the field. Medical students, psychiatry residents, and medical residents do not have the time to struggle to learn with professors how to understand the complex

psychiatry literature. They must be immediately prepared to address complex clinical issues; the disorders that psychiatrists treat are multifactorial and involve many different systems. The term *biopsychosocial assessment* is shorthand for the way in which we organize our data regarding our patients. By this, we mean that we assess our patient's behavior by looking at 3 different systems. We then parse out the systems that we feel are most important in understanding a given patient and then develop a treatment plan.

Current Diagnosis & Treatment: Psychiatry gives readers the context and knowledge to assess their patients. It gives clear and concise reviews of the critical areas of psychiatry. The material is framed in a way that will help the clinician address the basic issues of practice. The text is supported by a set of demanding editors, and there are contributions from an esteemed faculty representing experts in the broad range of psychiatry. There are longer texts than this one, but the beauty of this book is that it provides readers, in a concise format, the basic information that will foster their clinical practice and inform them in a parsimonious fashion. From the knowledge obtained in this text, readers are then additionally prepared, if they wish, to assess our field's literature.

This text is a welcome addition for the new student of psychiatry, as well as for the seasoned practitioner. It gives the new student an opportunity to learn about the broad field of psychiatry and gives the seasoned practitioner reviews of areas of our field in which we have made significant advances, but with which the seasoned practitioner might not be familiar. This text will give these practitioners critical new knowledge. *Current Diagnosis & Treatment: Psychiatry* is a welcome addition to every psychiatrist's library.

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