
Reviewer rating: Very Good

Review by JH Beitchman, MD
Toronto, Ontario

This book is part of the Sage Publications series on developmental clinical psychology and psychiatry. According to the series editor, the author is to present the latest theory and research on specific types of dysfunction, diagnostic and treatment approaches, and special problem areas that affect adjustment. Authors are asked to bridge potential theory, research, and clinical practice and to outline their current status and future directions. This book’s theme is the relation of language and communicative impairments to development and psychopathology. Its author, Dr. Nancy Cohen, has more than fulfilled the editor’s expectations.

Cohen summarizes a vast array of material, bringing to bear both her knowledge of the literature and her experience as a clinician, educator, and researcher. Organized into 7 chapters and using a developmental framework, this book encompasses the definitions and terminology of language and communicative disorders; the associated conditions; the relation to development, attachment patterns, emotional regulation, and other key social and emotional processes; and assessment and intervention. Each chapter ends with a brief summary of key points—a handy reminder and reference for readers. The book is liberally spaced with clinical vignettes that enrich and enliven the text.

The section dealing with social and emotional development nicely illustrates the relevance of language and communication to affect regulation, attachment, social cognition, and play. It provides a framework for understanding social relationships in atypical behaviour of children and adolescents that will be especially useful to practising child psychiatrists and other child clinicians.

This book should be required reading for those less familiar with the relevance of language impairments to psychopathology. One of its key messages is the high frequency of unsuspected language disorders among children referred to mental health clinics. As an example of the overlap, Cohen provides a table of the psychiatric disorders in which the psychiatric symptoms could indicate or be a reaction to language and communication impairments. She lists 7 disorders that range from attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder to selective mutism and childhood schizophrenia. Clinicians need to consider these possibilities when formulating their diagnoses and treatments.

This volume has a great many strengths. It provides an up-to-date single source for most of the literature on language impairment that is relevant for mental health clinicians. It superbly describes and summarizes much child development literature. The sections on infancy and preschoolers are particularly good and should be required reading for residents in psychiatry and trainees in other mental health disciplines.

The chapter on assessment will interest clinicians and researchers: it offers excellent source material and ideas for language and developmental assessments. This chapter employs a comprehensive, multidimensional framework for assessing children and adolescents. It moves from the initial interviews with parents, teachers, and the children themselves to the assessment of cognition, achievement, social cognition, play, and socioemotional functioning. It lists appropriate assessment tools, and tables illustrate some of the key concepts discussed, such as symbolic play development or the levels of interpersonal negotiation strategies. Psychiatrists may be unfamiliar, or only vaguely familiar, with many of the tools and concepts described in this chapter. However, if clinicians are to fully appreciate, understand, and be of maximum assistance to children and adolescents with psychiatric disorders, knowledge of the key issues in this chapter is a must. In many instances, psychiatrists will need to collaborate with other mental health professionals, such as speech-language pathologists or psychologists, to ensure that children receive comprehensive assessments. Psychiatrists should at the very least be aware of these issues and know when to refer for a more comprehensive assessment.

The chapter on treatment summarizes various approaches that may help children with language and communicative problems. These include interventions to improve social emotional competence in infants, children, and adolescents. Strategies to enhance social competence or conversational skills or to identify and label emotions are some of the techniques illustrated as part of a broad treatment approach to children with language and communicative problems.

This book concludes by emphasizing 3 major theses: 1) the value of a lifespan approach to understanding the interface between language, communication, and socioemotional behaviour disorders; 2) the importance of knowing the child’s language and communicative competence, so that diagnostic understanding and treatment is appropriate to the needs and competencies of the child; and 3) the importance of building collaborative relationships across professional disciplines.

All clinicians who are serious in their desire to help children and adolescents should be familiar with the contents and ideas discussed in this book. As a paperback, it is a little on the expensive side.
Nevertheless, it is well worth owning. It is excellent.

**Gender Issues**

![Image](image.png)


Reviewer rating: Very Good

**Review by** Gail Erlick Robinson, MD, DPsych, FRCPC Toronto, Ontario

This comprehensive overview of women’s mental health was designed to offer a combined psychobiological, psychosocial, and policy perspective to guide clinical practice and research. It is aimed at all levels, from beginners to those with a experience in this field. Dr Kornstein and Dr Clayton are known experts in this area, and the authors they have assembled range from locally prominent to internationally known experts.

The book has 5 major sections covering women’s psychobiology and reproductive life cycle, assessment and treatment of psychiatric disorders in women, psychiatric consultation in women, sociocultural issues, and research and health policy. All 37 chapters end with conclusions that vary from detailed and useful summary to brief and vague paragraphs. Despite having 37 chapters authored by different groups, the work is uniformly well written and readable.

The first 2 chapters focus on basic science, discussing the sex differences in neuroendocrine and neurotransmitter systems and psychopharmacology in women. The concise summaries of the effects of sex hormones and reproductive cycles on stress and anxiety are detailed enough to be interesting and useful without overwhelming nonspecialists in this area. It is important for health care professional to learn more about the differences in absorption, metabolism, and distribution of psychotropic drugs—not just between men and women but across the menstrual cycle. As well as presenting information on CYP450 isoenzymes, the authors present practical information about the use of antipsychotics, benzodiazepines, and antidepressants.

The remaining chapters of Part 1 deal with the psychiatric aspects of the menstrual cycle, including the premenstrual period, pregnancy, postpartum, and menopause. The chapter on premenstrual syndrome (PMS) has a useful decision tree for premenstrual complaints. This, as well as the postpartum chapter, includes excellent tables summarizing the research on treatment and prevention. However, the pregnancy chapter focuses almost exclusively on psychopharmacology, with little attention paid to psychosocial issues, and is disappointing. The chapter on psychiatric aspects of hormonal contraception reviews in detail the efficacy and side effects of various types of contraceptives. It also discusses the noncontraceptive benefits of these medications, such as the decreased risk of ovarian and endometrial cancer. The authors discuss the medications’ effects on mood, anxiety, and sexual functioning and include practical information on drug interactions.

Part 2 covers the assessment and treatment of psychiatric disorders such as depression, schizophrenia, and anxiety. Again, the approach varies, with a detailed review of all the etiological theories of anxiety but no attention to causation of schizophrenia. However, the chapter on schizophrenia does include important and seldom-addressed topics, such as the vulnerability of women with schizophrenia to abuse and the need to consider sexuality and fertility issues in these women. The chapter on sexual dysfunction takes a very biological stance, only briefly mentioning psychological factors. The editors have also included chapters on such less commonly covered topics as sleep disorders. The information on complementary and alternative medicine is important: many women are seeking out these treatments. Again, however, I wish that more detail had been provided.

The section on Psychiatric Consultation reviews the psychological aspects of various other medical specialties, such as cardiology, gastroenterology, and rheumatology. These chapters remind us that women’s health includes more than gynecology. Women may present with different symptoms that are too frequently ignored or treated less than adequately. Ironically, the chapter on gynecology seemed less comprehensive, with only minimal information about important issues such as infertility. Once again, the editors have included information on less commonly described issues—cosmetic surgery, migraine, and multiple sclerosis.

Part 4, Sociocultural Issues, includes chapters on developmental perspectives, marriage, careers, and special groups (for example, women of colour, elderly women, and lesbian women). The chapter on trauma and violence was disappointing: it discusses posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) but contains little information on specific problems such as sexual assault or domestic violence. As well, probably because it was written by a psychologist, it extensively covers the psychotherapy of PTSD and only a casually mentions the use of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), which have been found to effectively treat this disorder.

Part 5 discusses the problems related to the lack of research in women’s mental health. The authors look at the methodological issues in clinical trials that are related to sex and gender and suggest several psychopharmacology topics requiring special evaluation in women. Unfortunately, I found the last chapter, on health policy, to be repetitious and covered better in earlier sections.

This book’s comprehensive approach is both a strength and a problem. It gives a broad overview of the field of women’s mental health, covering many areas that other texts often overlook. Conversely, this format requires that the information be presented in a very compact form, which can lead to significant sections...
Neuropsychiatry


Reviewer rating: Very Good

Review by Erwin K Koranyi, MD Ottawa, Ontario

This work comprises 8 well-researched and informative chapters, an 18-page appendix containing neurological and psychiatric clinical assessment scales, 46 pages of references, and a useful subject index. After a brief introduction, the authors present the epidemiological, clinical, and therapeutic aspects of Parkinson’s disease (PD), characterizing it as a dopaminergic denervation process at the pre- and postsynaptic level. They highlight the alarmingly high prevalence and the malignant course of the disease, particularly its akinetic-rigid subform. They profile 5 stages of severity and the clinical heterogeneity and describe the cardinal symptoms. While the cause of the PD is still unknown, its neurodegenerative process and metabolic, environmental, histopathologic, and genetic factors are well detailed. The modern neuroimaging studies, well sketched in the text, contribute to the understanding of PD. These are followed by an account of the physiology of dopamine receptors, including the differential distribution of the D1 and D2 receptors in the striatum, the neurochemical mechanisms, and the well-demonstrated hypometabolism in the premotor and prefrontal areas. This chapter closes with a discussion of the physical treatment aspect of PD, including the different surgical approaches to relieving various symptoms. Unfortunately, the authors fail to mention the current status of stem-cell research, which may well be the most promising procedure for the future.

Chapter 3 deals with the differential diagnosis of PD vs parkinsonism, reviewing in detail the diagnostic soft spots between PD and progressive supranuclear palsy, multisystem atrophy, dementia with Lewy bodies, and drug-induced and toxic parkinsonism.

Chapter 4 deals with the cognitive deficit occurring in many patients with PD and with the inequalities of the different diagnostic systems, pointing out that while dementia prevalence was 3.1% according to the ICD-10 system, it became 29.1% when the DSM-III criteria were applied. The authors outline Cummings and Benson’s cortical-vs-subcortical forms of dementias and their differences in relevance to PD. Here, they discuss the magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) alteration of the hippocampal volumes, current single photon emission computed tomography (SPECT) studies, specific cognitive deficits in PD, visuospatial deficits, and speech and language problems prevalent in PD. The importance of cortical and limbic Lewy bodies are emphasized.

Chapter 5 offers a detailed discussion of the psychosocial dimensions, the neurotransmitter deviations, and cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) findings in PD patients with depression (which occurs with a frequency of some 40%). The authors detail treatment approaches, indicating the optimal medications and discussing the use of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) and effective supportive social and psychotherapeutic measures. Chapter 6 provides further commentaries on the premorbid personality, anxiety, phobias, and apathy occurring in PD.

In a pivotal Chapter 7, the authors describe the psychiatric side effects of antiparkinsonian drugs—the visual and other types of hallucinations, delusions, deliria, vivid dreams, and transient psychoses—along with their causes, mechanisms, and treatment. The following and final Chapter 8 deals with the treatment of psychiatric disorders in PD. As noted above, the Appendix offers useful scales for clinical assessment.

The authors’ expertise regarding the neurological and psychiatric domain of PD is beyond question, and their research is impressively thorough. Their work is to the point, and their language is well focused and distinct. The book abundantly meets their objectives and provides the reader with an up-to-date panorama of PD and many other neurodegenerative issues. The book is well organized, and the layout is appealing, but the bright yellow hard cover does not go well with the seriousness of the topic. The price is fair. I highly recommend this book.

Estimation du critique : excellent

Revue par Paul Beaudry, MD, FRCP

M. Yanick Villedieu est journaliste scientifique et animateur de l’émission « Les Années-lumière » à Radio-Canada. En 1976, il publiait un livre intitulé Demain la santé dans lequel il brossait un tableau de l’état de santé de la population et du système de santé québécois, à l’époque. Quelques années après l’instauration du régime d’assurance-maladie public et universel, et malgré des investissements massifs dans le secteur de la santé, il concluait que l’état de santé de la population restait stationnaire; que toujours plus d’hôpitaux, de médicaments n’étaient pas synonymes de mieux-être et qu’il « serait plus profitable de planifier la santé que de subventionner la maladie… inventer une nouvelle médecine plus chaleureusement humaine que froidement technologique, sans toutefois perdre les acquis scientifiques sur lesquels elle repose actuellement ». À cette époque, ce livre avait suscité son lot de controverses, surtout de la part de la profession médicale peu habituée aux critiques et remises en question publiques, qui l’accusait d’être anti-médecin.

Vingt-cinq ans plus tard, M. Villedieu récidive avec un deuxième livre sur le même thème, Un jour la santé. Après plusieurs crises et de multiples réformes, réorientations et restructurations, quel est l’état de notre système de santé? Son bilan est le même : « Le virage qui nous ferait mettre le cap sur le mieux-être physique, psychologique et social se fait toujours attendre. Le système semble en crise permanente, touché par un sempiternel malaise, celui du financement. »

Dans les dix-huit chapitres qui constituent ce livre, M. Villedieu analyse de façon systématique et fort bien documentée tous les différents paramètres biologiques, psychologiques, sociaux, politiques et financiers déterminant le niveau de santé de la population en général, l’évolution des maladies et de leurs traitements, et la planification et l’organisation des soins et services de santé.

Reconnaissant les bonds énormes que la science biologique et la médecine scientifique ont fait au cours du dernier quart de siècle (augmentation de l’espérance de vie, maladies moins dévastatrices, limitations, dysfonctionnements et handicaps de toutes sortes fortement atténués ou réparés, urgences médicales ou chirurgicales, plus particulièrement les accidents avec traumatismes graves mieux traités, meilleure maîtrise de la douleur, prolongation du nombre d’années de vie face à certaines affections graves comme le cancer), M. Villedieu nous rappelle que certaines maladies infectieuses comme le sida ont fait leur apparition et sont à la hausse, de même que l’asthme et les allergies, le diabète, les troubles de l’alimentation, l’obésité, les problèmes de santé mentale, la détresse psychologique des jeunes, les suicides ainsi que les maladies reliées à la dégradation de l’environnement. Citant de nombreuses études fort convaincantes, l’auteur nous montre comment plusieurs de ces affections sont fortement influencées par les déterminants « sociaux » de la santé, tels le niveau de richesse, le niveau d’instruction, les modes de vie et les habitudes personnelles.

Devant l’apparition de ces problèmes de santé chroniques, les besoins médicaux d’une population âgée grandissante et les problèmes reliés aux facteurs socio-économiques et culturels, M. Villedieu prône, comme bien d’autres d’ailleurs, la réorganisation d’un système moins hospitalocentrique. Pour ce faire, il faut miser davantage sur la santé et la prévention, et pas seulement sur le traitement de la maladie; augmenter l’efficacité des services de première ligne en assurant, par l’entremise d’équipes multi-disciplinaires, une rapidité d’accès (le 24/7) et une continuité dans les soins; développer des services bien structurés de soins à domicile et enfin, réintroduire au coeur du système de soins un sens de l’éthique du service public. Considérant la santé comme un bien public, l’auteur défend le maintien d’un système de santé public, gratuit et universel afin de garantir que les enjeux sociaux de la santé (équité et égalité sociale), ne seront pas soumis à une simple logique économique caractéristique du privé.

Sans nier l’importance du curatif et la nécessité de poursuivre les recherches scientifiques, le développement de nouvelles technologies et la mise au point de nouveaux traitements, M. Villedieu nous met en garde contre un activisme technologique, une médecine de l’exploit, qui artificialise le corps humain. Bien que les découvertes biomédicales fondamentales demeurent illimitées, nous serions peut-être en train d’atteindre un certain plateau quant à leur effet réel et mesurable sur la santé de la population.

Ce bref résumé ne rend pas justice à la profondeur, la rigueur et l’efficacité avec lesquelles l’auteur aborde le sujet fort complexe de la santé. Je ne peux qu’en suggérer la lecture à toute personne pour qui la santé et le système de soins d’une
Psychotherapy


Reviewer rating: Fair to Good

Review by George A Fraser, MD Ottawa, Ontario

Because the dual diagnosis of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance abuse is rather common (according to this book the figures are 12% to 34% for women and 30% to 59% for men), I was pleased to discover a book that focuses on this specific area. The author notes, “most clinical programs treat PTSD and substance abuse, but rarely both. The majority of patients with PTSD and substance abuse do not receive PTSD-focused treatment.” The inspiration for the book is apparent from the observation, “Treatments that are effective for PTSD or substance abuse separately may not be advisable when the two disorders occur together.”

This book is essentially a workbook for both therapist and the patient, or client, who suffers this combination of disorders. The program that is presented is the result of extensive research trials with clinical groups, involving patients at McLean Hospital (Belmont, Massachusetts), as well as collaboration with many of the author’s colleagues. Much work appears to have gone into developing the therapy program that this book offers. The therapy focuses on cognitive, behavioural, and interpersonal domains. The title of the book derives from the philosophy of the treatment: “when a person has both active substance abuse and PTSD, the most urgent need is to establish safety.” The book challenges the old belief that these conditions should be treated sequentially (that is, treat the substance abuse first, then the PTSD or vice versa). Instead, an integrated model is recommended as the treatment of choice (which most centres do not perform yet).

The workbook focuses on 25 therapy topics that can be used on either an individual or group basis. Each topic, essentially a chapter in length, can be conducted as a therapy session. The topics include detaching from emotional pain (grounding), when substances control you, coping with triggers, and healing from anger. The therapist can choose the most suitable order to introduce these topics. Each topic has suggestions for the therapist for that particular session, as well as handout pages to photocopy and to present to the patient, or client, (that is, safe coping skills and ideas for commitment, in which old ineffective solutions are written and then compared with new ways that the therapy session hopefully produced).

I am impressed with the work and thought that has gone into this publication. It is a fairly comprehensive work on how to manage the dual disorders of PTSD and substance abuse. Early in the book, the author points out that this program can be carried out in conjunction with psychopharmacology, but the reader who looks for ideas in this latter area will not discover a discussion of medications. I am unsure, however, whether all therapists would be enthusiastic about this book. Some experienced therapists may view many of the ideas as old maxims, merely presented in a new way. Many may feel uncomfortable with the recommended format of having patients, or clients, fill in forms and commitments (homework). Others may object to perhaps too much of a cookbook approach, being essentially told what should be discussed at each session. Yet for others, this format may be the ideal guide to a more organized and comprehensive therapy. I did give a few dual diagnosis patients the assignments and literature and asked for their replies. The answers varied from “this is great stuff” to “I found this too elementary and insulting to my intelligence.”

Likewise, therapists will have diverse opinions about this book. I suspect that those who deal with group and community-based programs will find the book helpful. However, it may not be the same for psychotherapists who are experienced in individual therapy. Being in this latter group, I suspect that the book will not significantly impact my practice. Even so, at the same time, I see much that is positive, and for some therapists, this will be a very valuable contribution. Perhaps, someone involved in such groups should also be invited to review this book. In my rating, I use “fair” for experienced one-on-one therapists and “good” for those involved in group therapies, especially if they are relatively new in the field of PTSD—a field that is gaining much more recognition and understanding.

Mood disorders


Reviewer rating: Very Good

Review by Sagar V Parikh, MD, FRCPC, Toronto, Ontario

Both from a prevalence viewpoint and from a review of continuing medical education (CME) requests, treatment-resistant mood disorders constitute the most vexing problem for psychiatrists. Thus, an authoritative treatise on the topic is most welcome, and the distinguished editors complement their own
prominence as outstanding investigators with an impressive array of internationally acclaimed scientists and clinical researchers. The book comprises 5 parts, including a short description of the clinical problem of defining treatment-resistant mood disorders, a review of the biological basis for these disorders, a general treatment section, a special populations' anthology, and a brief conclusion on issues of economics and ethics.

The first section, surprisingly, is the weakest section of the book, because multiple definitions of treatment-resistant depression, in particular, are trotted out. Surely, the editors could have imparted some wisdom here, encouraging the chapter authors to ultimately recommend a definition for most contributors to respect; instead, in this section and in the treatment section, the authors use their own classification of response and ultimately use this to make therapeutic recommendations. Further, basic issues such as revisiting the diagnosis and exploring comorbid conditions as complications relevant to inadequate treatment response should have been flagged in the introduction and not left for later in the book. In contrast, the basic science section shines as a lucid, compelling summary of key preclinical findings that integrate smoothly with clinical data. Key neuroendocrine findings are sensibly organized, and the chapter on neuroimaging provides a compelling overview of recent advances.

The treatment section has some uncomfortable aspects, which is unfortunate because it is the section that most readers will consult. Each chapter is allowed to define its own aspects of response and to use its own criteria for judging the merit of specific data—and does so in a repetitive fashion. I suspect some chapters were completed early, as their references suggest, thus leaving us with several clearly dated recommendations. For instance, 2 chapters independently cite early data, promising the utility of pindolol as an augmentation strategy; a third chapter correctly includes more recent double-blind data that deny the efficacy of pindolol. It would have helped if the editors had reduced the redundancy and emphasized the most recent results. As often happens, bipolar disorders receive insufficient attention; therapeutic strategies for treatment-resistant mania and mixed manic episodes were omitted. This is really a book about depression with some bipolar issues addressed sporadically, except for one marvellous chapter on bipolar depression.

Included in the treatment section are 2 chapters that address treatment modalities at either extreme of the continuum; namely, electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) and psychosocial interventions. The ECT chapter, however, reads too much like an editorial, with adequate references but a style that does not do justice to the evidence it cites. Many of the chapters about medications include tables with summaries of relevant studies that are scholarly, helpful, and ultimately more convincing than a single-sentence conclusion with all the correct references. ECT proponents will be unable to easily marshal data advancing ECT use from this chapter. In contrast, the “Cognitive Therapy and Psychosocial Interventions” chapter is much more specific about the evidence, both in text and in table form, and provides specific suggestions for modifying interventions for refractory disorders.

The anthology on special populations is again extremely well done, with outstanding reviews on depression during pregnancy, bipolar depression, and comorbidity in treatment-resistant depression. The breadth of special populations covered, including all age groups, is also much appreciated. In the same way, aspects that deal with the medically ill are also very useful. The final 2 chapters on economics and ethics are marginally useful; the economics chapter provides some useful statistics from earlier studies and a significant new calculation of the overall health care cost impact of inadequate medication use.

In summary, this is a very good book. Its individual chapters are well written, the layout is clean, and it is free of typographical errors. Chapters by Price and others about drug combination strategies, by Stowe and others about depression in pregnancy, by Alpert and others about comorbidity, by Post and others about bipolar depression, as well as the biological basis chapters, are particularly superb and would be suitable as key references for psychiatrists at all levels. The remaining chapters are all well done and serve further as comprehensive reviews of the pertinent literature. More active editing to achieve some progress in the definitions and approaches would have assisted in helping to advance the field. Likewise, it would have been extremely effective educationally to use more clinical case scenarios. Compared with some texts, the price is rather reasonable. Every major psychiatric department should consider purchasing this text, and residents in psychiatry will find this tome very useful.