

Book review

Psychological Medicine, (2015)
doi:10.1017/S0033291714002621
First published online 10 November 2015

Mental Health Issues and the University Student. By D. Iarovici. (Pp. 264, ISBN: 9781421412382; \$59.95.) The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore. February 2014.

The back cover of this book contains the lofty claim that this book should be 'required reading for all clinicians in college mental health and is indispensable for those teaching and supervising psychiatry residents and graduate psychology and social work students within the student mental health setting' (Jerald Kay, Past Chair of the American Psychiatric Association Committee and Caucus on College Mental Health). After reading the book, I agree wholeheartedly. This comprehensive and well-written text covers the many challenges facing college students today, and, importantly, provides practical advice for how to address these challenges. Through the use of engaging vignettes, personal examples and experiences, and extensive reference to the literature, the author provides practical guidelines and suggestions for working with students with mental health challenges. She successfully achieves the delicate balance of acknowledging the many extraneous and unique circumstances that necessarily surround any individual case, while providing recommendations for how to move forward despite these uncertainties.

The first section of the book, Part I The Student in Context, begins with basic information about the scope of the problem and potential reasons for the increase in mental health challenges on college campuses. The material is not new, but it provides a succinct, well-written overview. The short, focused chapters make for an easy and enjoyable read. In addition, the author includes information that is not as widely discussed, such as how generational issues can affect mental health dynamics on college

campuses. The fourth chapter 'The Psychiatrist's Role in College Mental Health' begins to focus the book to the area where it really shines in terms of making new and important contributions to the literature, as it begins to navigate the complexities involved in attending to mental health issues among college students. However, I would argue that the title of this chapter is somewhat misleading in that it gives the impression that the content is narrowly applicable to psychiatrists. The author does such a nice job of presenting the complex web of issues, ranging from balancing normal developmental issues associated with emerging adulthood with more severe clinical concerns, to navigating insurance and multiple care providers, to the unique circumstances that surround college students, that it is immensely helpful information for anyone who works with college students.

Part II of the book contains a series of chapters that are each devoted to a particular 'clinical challenge'. It covers the major classes of psychiatric and substance use disorders (alcohol use, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, etc.), but also other conditions that may create unique challenges in college students, such as loneliness, relationships, perfectionism, and cultural issues with international students. In a series of concluding chapters, the author addresses important campus considerations, such as non-traditional students, how to handle emergency situations on the campus, and the unique challenges that exist when treating students, both because of their life stage, and because of the logistics that surround student status (e.g. how counseling centers interact with local police, hospitals, treatment facilities).

In short, *Mental Health Issues and the University Student* is a well-written, comprehensive, well-researched, and practical guide to addressing mental health issues in college students. It is a highly valuable resource for any mental health provider who works with this population.

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