

Special Book & Video Review Supplement

In This Issue:

Book Reviews

- *Improving Children's Mental Health Through Parent Empowerment: A Guide to Assisting Families*
- *Adoption in the United States: A Reference for Families, Professionals, and Students*
- *Competence in the Law: From Legal Theory to Clinical Application*
- *Supervision in Clinical Practice: A Practitioner's Guide, Second Edition*
- *Children of Methamphetamine Involved Families: The Case of Rural Illinois*
- *Privacy: The Lost Right*
- *Diversity Issues in the Diagnosis, Treatment, and Research of Mood Disorders*

Video Review

- *PTSD & Veterans: A Conversation With Dr. Frank Ochberg*





Books

Improving Children's Mental Health Through Parent Empowerment: A Guide to Assisting Families, by Peter S. Jensen & Kimberly Eaton Hoagwood. Published by Oxford University Press, New York, 2008. 188 pages, \$29.95.

This is not a dense book, but rather a guide for practical application. All of the information and advice is based on real-life experiences intending to inform future actions and decisions of parents navigating mental health systems. The authors are self-described as being driven by experience as a result of their roles as parents, mental health consumers for their own children, and citizens committed to making a difference in children's lives.

The guide serves as a pillar beyond professional scope in order to overcome feelings of powerlessness. This is to say that despite professional knowledge, sometimes accessing appropriate and adequate services is still a challenge that requires parental utilization of the tools provided in this book. Parental expertise in active engagement necessitates both emotional and informative support.

The book is not just for reading. It requires an active engagement, which includes the completion of an initial self-assessment and self-study questions at the conclusion of each chapter. The self-assessment helps the reader to focus on the parts of the book that may be most useful to them, and the chapter questions increase knowledge and ability to implement suggestions. The guide highlights the necessary elements for an individual to change, including knowledge, beliefs, rehearsal, understanding, and access. The exercises completed by the reader enforce these elements. The authors stress that parent empowerment is not a product, but rather a process that this guide serves to facilitate.

Social workers, educators, students, and clients could benefit from reviewing the book's essential knowledge regarding mental health evaluation and diagnosis, mental health system of care, childhood mental health disorders, the school system and system of education options, and education laws and processes. Acquiring and applying this information

has the potential to empower the parents. Empowering the parents in order to empower their children results in improved mental health for all.

The guide is full of recommendations for obtaining accurate information about mental health conditions and treatment, which is vital for a successful parent-provider partnership. The book reviews some of the most common child mental health disorders and their treatments, including disruptive behavior disorders, anxiety disorders, and substance abuse. The appendices contain valuable resources, such as information on advocacy groups, training programs, and Web resources. Parent handouts and important points for parent advisors are also provided.

Two chapters are dedicated to special education, an often frustrating system to navigate. The guide explains the differences between an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and a Section 504 Plan, which stem from two different federal laws and have different requirements. The overview of federal education law and policy informs about the educational rights of children and their families.

The guide encourages a change in the old fashioned professional view of the parents as being problematic, to being the solution. The parent empowerment framework comes from two sets of knowledge, which are practical expertise from the parent support field and scientific studies that have identified effective strategies. This demonstrates that parents are a crucial element in obtaining the mental health needs of their children. This guide is an excellent resource explaining the process.

*Reviewed by Laura J. Middleton, MSW
candidate at SUNY Albany specializing in*

clinical practice, with a focus on children and families.

Adoption in the United States—A Reference for Families, Professionals, and Students, by Martha J. Henry & Daniel Pollack. Published by Lyceum Books, Inc, Chicago, 2008. 250 pages, \$39.95.

Adoption in the United States: A Reference for Families, Professionals, and Students by Martha J. Henry and Daniel Pollack delivers an informative perspective on adoption. This book is an excellent resource to students, educators, and clients. *Adoption in the United States* is a user-friendly book. It clearly presents the process of adoption in the United States.

The authors provide detailed information on adoption. The organization of the book allows the reader to easily follow the evaluation of the adoption process. The reader is taken on a journey through the entire process of adoption. The book is divided into eight chapters, and each chapter is filled with enriching information. All chapters provide continuity throughout the volume and provide a reader into the world of adoption. The hidden treat of this book is that it concludes with an appendix, glossary, suggested readings, selected resources, index, boxes, and tables. This format spotlights the key process of adoption.

The construction of the book meshes well with its content topic and lends itself successfully to the study of adoption. Practical information is provided about individuals who were instrumental in the history of adoption, use of respectful language, and the laws that surround the adoption process. Overall, this detailed account of the adoption process is written in a readable style. This text is a must for students, educators, and clients, but

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especially for individuals who are actively involved in the adoption process.

Reviewed by Donna Parrish, MSW, doctoral student at Clark Atlanta University, Whitney M. Young, Jr., School of Social Work with a concentration in research, policy, and administration.

Competence in the Law: From Legal Theory to Clinical Application, by Michael L. Perlin, Pamela Champine, Henry A. Dlugacz, & Mary Connell. Published by John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ, 2008. 312 pages, \$75.00.

Competence in the Law: From Legal Theory to Clinical Application demonstrates and reaffirms that the most problematic aspect of current judicial proceedings is the issue of competence. At first glance of the title, one is likely to believe that the authors are addressing competence as a defendant. However, the authors cover a surprisingly vast arena in both criminal and civil courts. Specifically, the authors examine the following:

- Competency to stand trial
- Competency to plead guilty
- Competency to waive counsel
- Competency within the pretrial process
- Miscellaneous competency issues
- Competency after the trial
- Competency to plead insanity
- Competency to plead guilty but mentally ill
- Competency of a sexual predator
- Competency to be executed
- Competency for an involuntary civil commitment
- Competency to refuse treatment
- Competency within an institution (nonprison)
- Competency within a prison
- Competency related to tort actions
- Competency and civil contracts
- Competency related to wills, trusts, and donations
- Competency and guardianship
- Competency and domestic relations

The amount of information seems a bit overwhelming, and some topical areas are covered more thoroughly than others. In fact, each of these topical areas is worthy of its own book. “Criminal Competencies” is the central focus of the

book and is the most comprehensive section, whereas issues related to civil law are much less thorough.

The intended audience for this work includes forensic mental health professionals who are expected to be or already are expert witnesses. Thus, emphasis is placed on psychology students and seasoned psychologists, psychiatrists, and lawyers (plaintiff and defendant). In addition, the authors contend that judges will find their work useful. Lastly, they recommend their work to jurors. However, I doubt that most citizens who are eligible for jury duty will have the legal vocabulary to comprehend most of this text. Although *Competence in the Law* can hold an interested reader’s attention, it does not read like a novel—it is not something I would recommend to the general public.

Although the authors do not include social workers as part of their intended audience, I suspect that clinical social workers who anticipate becoming expert witnesses within a competency hearing will find the work valuable. In the non-clinical arena, the *Competence in the Law* work has several shortcomings. As a practicing gerontological social worker with a substantial number of years in dealing with Medicaid and “spend-down” regulations, I found that the authors failed to offer adequate detail. However, the amount of information needed by a gerontological social worker would require an entire book of information. Another aspect of this work that would be of great interest to social workers is the short discussion of the ethical problem of client definition faced by a psychologist (see page 17). Since the 1973 publication of Pincus and Minahan’s *Social Work Practice: Model and Method*, the issue of client definition is much less problematic for social workers than for psychologists.

The authors continually stress that the assessment of competency is an unresolved judicial quandary several centuries old. Although most of the book addresses legislative standards and court activity related to competency, the authors also include current remedies for the determination of competency. Here, the authors provide citations for at least four practical protocols for assessing competence. Standardized measurement tools are critical for the contemporary clinician. Unlike the recent past, courts are currently demanding standardized

objective tools for assessing and determining competence for a wide range of legal decisions. The author contributions in this respect are quite helpful.

The major weakness of *Competence in the Law* is the index. Most of the index lists court/legal dispositions. A small portion includes concepts that would be of interest to clinicians. For example, the authors address (in several different locations) the competency issues related to accepting/rejecting psychotropic medications. However, one cannot use the index to revisit these discussions. Because of the dominance of court cases, the index is much more useful to lawyers and judges rather than clinicians.

The authors do an exceptionally good job of explaining historical events that led up to court decisions. These rationales will help clinical social workers. Frankly, I was quite surprised at the logical processing of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Based on the authors’ description, some Supreme Court justices do not seem to know the difference between mental retardation and mental illness. These justices, led by Scalia, have expressed concern regarding a defendant’s ability to “fake” retardation. Diagnosing mental retardation does not have the problem of reliability as diagnosing mental illness. In addition, all jurisdictions mandate multiple objectives measured over time—which makes “faking” extremely difficult. Lastly, unlike many mental illnesses, mental retardation can be identified via current medical scanning devices. The authors force the reader to assess the infallibility of our judges.

In general, *Competence in the Law* is an exceptionally good book for addressing criminal issues. Clinical social workers who will become expert witnesses for assessing competencies in criminal cases will find this work helpful. Academic libraries that serve MSW programs with clinical specialties should have this work on their shelves.

Reviewed by Stephen M. Marson, Ph.D., ACSW, Professor, Social Work, University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

Supervision in Clinical Practice: A Practitioner’s Guide, second edition, by Joyce Scaife, with contributions from Francesca Inskipp, Brigid Proctor, Jon Scaife, & Sue

Walsh. Published by Routledge, London and NY, 2009. 410 pages, \$44.95.

In the second edition of *Supervision in Clinical Practice: A Practitioner's Guide* (formerly titled *Supervision in the Mental Health Professions*), Joyce Scaife sets out to incorporate new ideas and developments in the theory and practice of supervision into her comprehensive overview of this essential component of the clinical process. Ms. Scaife and her co-authors cover a wide range of topics, from a comparison of supervisory frameworks and a discussion on contracting to more current topics, like supervision and diversity and incorporating new technologies into the supervisory process.

The authors stress the importance of good supervision to the development of new clinicians, describing supervision as “the central strategy for enhancing learning in the next generation of recruits,” and repeatedly distinguishing between pre- and post-registration supervisees. Although I find that distinction useful given that I provide supervision and consultation for social work interns, social workers preparing for licensure, and licensed social workers, I am also a bit confused by it. Not being British-born like the authors, I am left guessing as to the meaning of those terms, along with such unfamiliar concepts as “O level passes” and “National Service Frameworks.”

Discussions about British policies relating to mental health practice and references to oversight organizations and the social welfare system in the U.K. were also less useful to me, and I found myself skipping over these sections. The authors might want to consider an American edition of this book, although the bulk of the text needs no modification because of its emphasis on core principles that are universally relevant.

As a practicing supervisor who has never received much formal training in supervisory techniques, I appreciated the broad view the authors take on this subject and the detailed focus on such relevant topics as frameworks for supervision, the impact of varied therapeutic interventions on supervisory practice, ethical dilemmas, and group supervision. I have already found myself approaching my supervisory sessions in a more thoughtful and self-aware manner, and I have directly asked some of my supervisees about their preferred approaches to supervision, a conversation we perhaps

should have had long ago. After finishing the book, however, I did find myself wishing for more practical information and less emphasis on theory. The overly pedantic discussion of supervision and learning in the second chapter made this a difficult read for me initially, especially since I was hoping for a more nuts-and-bolts description of supervisory dilemmas, such as engaging resistant clinicians, working with individuals who don't necessarily view their roles as clinical in nature, and offering support and assistance to staff who deal with trauma, loss, and acute grief on a daily basis.

This text would be an excellent resource for a supervisor working with clinicians whose primary responsibility is to provide psychotherapy, and perhaps for anyone who has recently assumed a supervisory role within the social services field and wishes to get a good overview of the nature of the supervisory relationship and the responsibilities inherent in that essential role. Even though I am not new to this role, *Supervision in Clinical Practice: A Practitioner's Guide* reinforced for me the impact I can have on my supervisees, the critical importance of supervisor self-awareness and ongoing reflection, and the responsibility we hold toward the clients we indirectly serve.

Reviewed by Cathleen M. Kelley, LICSW, Senior Social Worker at Fletcher Allen Health Care in Burlington, VT.

Children of Methamphetamine Involved Families: The Case of Rural Illinois, by Wendy Haight, Teresa Ostler, James Black, & Linda Kingery. Published by Oxford University Press, New York, 2009. 264 pages, \$35.00.

Children involved with parental substance use are deeply affected. How deeply they are affected and what interventions are effective are the main themes in *Children of Methamphetamine-Involved Families: The Case of Rural Illinois* (Haight, Ostler, Black, & Kingery, 2009). This book examines parental methamphetamine misuse in rural Illinois and how it affects children and families. Specifically, the authors were looking to answer four questions: what external conditions exist for children, how well children function psychologically, what are implications for treatment, and how effective is the intervention.

The authors also examine sociocultural issues related to policy, the legal system, the mental health system, and the child welfare system. Although this book is focused specifically on methamphetamine use in the rural Midwest, the general information can be applied to other substance misuse and populations.

This book is divided into three phases. Phase One highlights perspectives of methamphetamine use and describes areas for change on a micro and macro level in the social work field. The authors also give an overview of the research program and the intervention utilized. Phase Two provides the reader with narratives and case examples written by professionals (a Midwestern child welfare worker and a psychiatrist), recovering mothers, and children's experiences. These narratives highlight the importance of the intervention and describe the cultural sensitivity to working with families in the Midwest. Phase Three describes the Life Story Intervention. This is described utilizing three case examples written by the community clinician performing the intervention. Results of the three children are included, but results of the rest of the study are not. The authors do state the “empirical assessment of life story intervention will be forthcoming in future publications” (page 222). The book concludes with a summary of the research and highlights the importance of utilizing evidence-based practice in the social work field.

Overall, I found this book to be informative for social workers who are interested in both treatment and policy level issues associated with methamphetamine use. At the individual level, it demonstrates how the effects of methamphetamine use can quickly turn into community and regional level problems. However, the main focus is on giving insight into treatment options for children and their families. This book is thought-provoking, and I recommend it for social workers and policy makers interested in the treatment and prevention of substance abuse.

Reviewed by Nicole Fisher, LMSW, Intensive Case Manager, Substance Treatment Services, Department of Veteran Affairs.

Privacy: The Lost Right, by Jon L. Mills. Published by Oxford University Press, New York, 2008. 362 pages, \$52.00.

In an age when privacy seems elusive, everyone is experiencing some pressure or threat to privacy. As social workers, we are often responsible to protect the privacy or confidentiality of our clients, as well. Jon Mills, professor of law at the University of Florida and a former Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, has written an extremely useful book to help us understand and cope with the challenge.

Written for the layperson with a minimum of legal jargon, the book's main premise is that technology has created a situation in which, at any given time, we can be observed by others. In effect, we are living in a virtual Panopticon, a prison where everyone can be easily observed. This type of situation creates a climate in which one may be fearful about sharing information even when it is necessary. And ironically, it may also create a situation in which we share too much in the wrong places and times.

As social workers, we not only encounter this phenomenon with our clients, but we experience it ourselves. Our clients may be reluctant to share information out of fear that what they reveal in therapy will be disclosed elsewhere, and as social workers, we often fear that our records will be subpoenaed and used against us or our clients in courts or other venues. At the same time, many of our clients and many of us, as well, share more than is wise about ourselves and others on social networks, bulletin boards, and listservs.

Mills offers us a very useful paradigm of how our private information can get into the public domain. He takes us through the four sources of intrusion when it comes to privacy: the government, the press, business, and other citizens.

Examples include subpoenas/court orders of private information; investigative journalism; collection of data by businesses for marketing purposes; and simple snooping by family, friends, and neighbors. These intrusions often are legal, and other times they are not. However, once private information becomes public, even if it was originally made public through illegal means, we often lose any further expectations of privacy.

Others are then free to further disclose that same information, making it more available to a wider public. Without contractual obligations, you can't tell people to forget they heard something or forbid them to tell others about what they heard.

Perhaps the most important point that Mills reminds us about is the fact that a great deal of our loss of privacy is voluntarily. We ourselves release a substantial amount of our private information in any number of ways for a variety of reasons, including convenience. When we do so, we in effect abandon any expectation of privacy. These days, the primary way most of us do this is to publish information about ourselves on social networks such as Facebook, MySpace, bulletin boards, discussion groups, and listservs. If it once was private, it is no longer once we make it public.

The implication for social workers is that when we discuss our work online with colleagues, we not only tend to reveal a good deal of information about ourselves, but we also often disclose information about clients, which then no longer is private.

The only way to truly protect what may be left of this lost right is to understand the factors that impinge on our privacy and take appropriate precautions. In this regard, *Privacy: The Lost Right* is an invaluable resource.

Reviewed by John A. Riolo, PhD, LICSW, retired mental health practitioner, host of educational Web sites and blogs for consumers and practitioners of mental health, which include: Civil Discourse Blog, The Insider, Your Advocate Online, Law and Ethics In Mental Health, and Listen to the Insider Podcast Series.

Diversity Issues in the Diagnosis, Treatment, and Research of Mood Disorders, edited by Sana Loue and Martha Sajatovic. Published by Oxford University Press, New York, 2008, 307 pages, \$69.95.

As social workers, our profession constantly challenges us to be able to relate to a diverse population and to think "outside the box" in order to be effective in providing services. The social work approach of a person in the environment values the importance of considering internal as well as external

factors to fully understand the whole person.

In the book *Diversity Issues in the Diagnosis, Treatment, and Research of Mood Disorders*, the editors Sana Loue, JD, PhD, MPH and Martha Sajatovic, MD, address the importance of diversity in the mental health field, particularly with people who have mood disorders. Whereas the book was not written from the social work perspective per se, it validates a core value of the social work field: the importance of considering the environment as an important factor when working with diverse populations.

The book consists of fifteen chapters and includes an index. Each chapter focuses on how diversity can be integrated to different levels of care, from micro to macro, when we work with individuals of diverse backgrounds who have mood disorders. Topics of discussion include diagnosis, assessment, epidemiology among minority populations, treatment modalities, health care, complementary and alternative medicines, barriers in working with diverse populations, role of family, models for the delivery of care, outcome measurement, psychopharmacology, legal and ethical issues, recruitment and retention of minority populations, and training of professionals.

The editors of the book were successful in compiling a useful overview of the topic, and they convey the necessary sensitivity that professionals need to have, whether the professional role is direct or indirect, when working with people of diverse backgrounds with mood disorders. The book is easy to read and can be read as a whole or in parts without losing its purpose. There is a considerable amount of statistical and research information, as well as case examples. The editors incorporate discussions of the limitations and barriers, as well as provide useful suggestions. The reader is challenged to think "outside the box," and the book discusses topics such as how we conceptualize what is a mood disorder and who is considered to be a minority group. The case examples are useful to gain a better understanding of how to incorporate the suggestions given in a more tangible manner. As a clinician, I appreciated the visual addition titled "an algorithm for cross cultural care" in the discussion of treatment modalities that explained how to incorporate diversity in clinical work.

The book is a useful resource for students and professionals and presents an important topic that is important for professionals to consider. The book can also be utilized by professors who would like to entice further discussion of the topics addressed in the book. It is through these considerations and discussions that we, as social workers, can keep our values fresh by understanding the people we treat as complex individuals who are affected by multiple factors.

Carmit Zur, MSW, ACSW, received her BA from the University of California, Los Angeles and graduated with honors from the University of Southern California School of Social Work with a mental health concentration. She is currently working for Jewish Family Service with the older adult population as a case manager and as a therapist.



PTSD & Veterans: A Conversation With Dr. Frank Ochberg, DVD, 57:41 minutes, Gift From Within. List price: \$60 individual, \$120 institution/group.

The producers of the DVD *PTSD & Veterans: A Conversation With Dr. Frank Ochberg* state that this video interview answers the question, "How do we help our veterans who are returning from war with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)?" They describe its purpose as "provid(ing) an intimate conversation with Dr. Frank Ochberg, as he shares his experiences, seasoned insights, and suggestions."

This DVD was created to assist mental health therapists who have treated a variety of clients. Dr. Ochberg suggests this area of practice (PTSD) is best suited for the mid-career clinician who has treated a range of problems, including depression, intimacy and avoidance issues, trauma such as sexual assault or abusive relationships, disasters such as September 11th, and other violent crimes. Ochberg lists the treatment areas, including returning to civilian life, starting a new career or family, and facing the beginning of adulthood, as important concerns for therapists to address. He feels that seasoned therapists will certainly have the skills and ability to translate their clinical work and experiences toward working with veterans

returning from war with PTSD. He views the role of the therapist as one of explaining, interpreting, and instructing veterans. He believes a trauma therapist is already dealing with all these elements, such as work, sense of self, important relationships, faith, and reason for living. However, Dr. Ochberg cautions that this challenging population and difficult diagnosis is not an appropriate area for social work students or brand new therapists. He welcomes seasoned therapists to this burgeoning practice area and believes working with returning men and women veterans as they adapt to civilian life will prove to be an exciting and rewarding treatment specialty for those who choose to pursue it. He notes that counseling veterans is a privilege, and he speaks of his experience working directly with soldiers from the Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq wars.

Dr. Ochberg's interviews on various topics include:

- Unique Challenges
- Tools of the Trade
- The Loss of Emotional Tone
- Remittent Depression
- Family Issues
- Military Sexual Trauma
- Patient & Therapist Relationship
- Counting Method

About This Supplement

This is a special book and video review supplement to the Spring 2009 issue of *The New Social Worker* magazine. There are so many new social work-related books and videos coming out all the time, and we want to help you keep up to date on them. So, we are considering continuing with this expanded review format, in which we can review more new books and videos for you each quarter.

Please let us know what you think of this new format. Do you want us to continue it, or would you rather have the reviews in the pages of the magazine itself? Also, let us know if you would like to be a reviewer. Contact editor Linda Grobman at lindagrobman@socialworker.com with your feedback and reviewing interests.

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The DVD provides a lot of interesting and important information. It is clear Dr. Ochberg is an authority on the topic of interest, but the current format is a bit dry and not always accessible or easy to incorporate into practice. It would have been valuable to have an accompanying booklet spelling out some of the interventions discussed here.

Given the relevance of this subject, this DVD seems an important resource for those mental health practitioners seeking assistance in serving veterans. It not only provides a background context, but also recommends starting points to consider when working with this population. All in all, this DVD is an interesting reference for clinical social workers or therapists working with veterans, and it should prove valuable for educators and students interested in learning from an expert in this specialty.

Reviewed by Kate Alson, ACSW, MSW, Associate Clinical Social Worker offering therapy to individuals, couples, and families in a private practice in Torrance, CA under supervision while she works toward becoming an LCSW. Kate previously worked at the West Los Angeles Veterans Administration in a dual diagnosis residential treatment program. She can be reached at <http://www.katealson.com> or kate@katealson.com.

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The video reviewed in this issue's supplement is available through Gift From Within (<http://www.giftfromwithin.org>).

Thanks for reading!

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Publisher/Editor: Linda May Grobman, ACSW, LSW

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