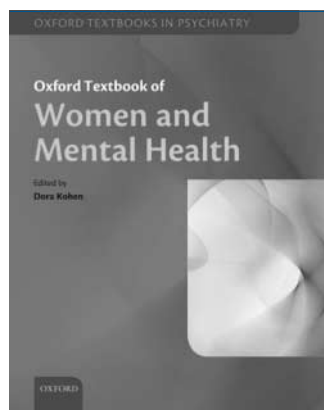


given for using light therapy alone, wake therapy plus light therapy and wake therapy plus light therapy plus sleep phase advance. There are informative sections on the use of melatonin and the practicalities of light therapy, including recognition that motivated and knowledgeable night nurses are required to competently implement some of the chronotherapeutic techniques with in-patients.

Overall, I feel that clinicians who work with patients with affective disorders should gain new and significant insights from reading this book.

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Oxford Textbook of Women and Mental Health

Edited by Dora Kohen.
Oxford University Press. 2010.
£75.00 (pb). 352pp.
ISBN: 9780199214365

I wanted to like this book; I knew and respected Professor Kohen although I did not always agree with her. Healthy debate has, however, always formed an important part of the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Women in Psychiatry Special Interest Group, to which Professor Kohen brought her extensive intellect and unique perspective.

The book is advertised by the publisher as including chapters by leading experts in their respective fields providing 'the most authoritative information available'. There are contributions from academics in Canada, England, India, Ireland, Switzerland and Turkey. Some are indeed leading experts; however, others are not and despite their best efforts in some chapters this shows.

Although I enjoyed reading many of the chapters, I found the overall structure of the book rather confused. Part 1 focuses on 'Fundamental aspects: women and mental health'. This was an enjoyable section covering issues such as stigma, violence and ethnicity. I was pleased to see a chapter on lesbianism and mental health, an area much neglected in contemporary research despite the health inequalities experienced by lesbians. I particularly enjoyed the useful introduction to biological sex differences relating to mental health, but was disappointed that this was not followed up with specific coverage of gender differences in prescribing (although this was actively considered in the section on intellectual disability later in the book).

I found Part 2, 'Clinical aspects: women and mental health', less coherent. Under the heading of mental illness a number of disorders such as anxiety, depression, borderline personality disorder and schizophrenia are considered, yet post-traumatic stress disorder is not; this was addressed as a 'special clinical topic' in Part 3. There is a specific section on perinatal psychiatric disorders and, importantly, parental psychiatric disorders are also considered. Specific focus is also given to substance misuse, eating

disorders and women with intellectual disabilities. I was surprised not to find a section on the mental health difficulties and challenges faced by older women.

I support the arguments of this book; it highlights, from a multidisciplinary perspective, some of the essential issues facing women in the context of their daily lives and how these issues relate to their mental health. I welcome an approach that considers women's different roles as carers, parents, workers and partners. Overall the chapters were succinct, well written and comprehensive. I accept that no book can cover all areas of such a broad topic, but in parts the coverage was lacking. If you expect a 'practical' text focused on service delivery, then you will be disappointed but if you accept that this is not a practical guide, then this book is a noteworthy addition to the literature.

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Schizophrenia: Who Cares?

By Tim Salmon.
Artaxerxes Press. 2010.
£12.00 (pb). 178pp.
ISBN: 9780956507006

I found this book to be a bit of a long gripe at times, but nonetheless a salutary one. Before embarking on it I kept in mind three questions: Will it provide comfort/advice/guidance to other carers? Will it make mental health professionals more aware of the plight of the carer? Will it offer insights on what carers actually need in terms of support? The answer to all three questions is yes, in parts.

The book relates a 20-year history of a father not only struggling to come to terms with his son's schizophrenia, prompting guilty, soul-searching questions, but also having to cope with the idiosyncrasies of the caring system, which apparently often failed both him and his son. Father deserves admiration for the courage, resilience and sheer utter resolve not to abandon a son in distress, even when he behaved in an appalling, bewildering and risky manner, living between the extremes of 'constant worry, increasing anxiety and heart-in-mouth horror'. Salmon describes the incomprehensible institutional routines, the Kafkaesque bureaucratic system, constant changes in policy and personnel, and the 'impersonal system of care', which fails to take into account the inability of a person with a mental illness to navigate its forms and procedures, constantly fails to deliver despite good intentions and high-sounding but empty rhetorical words (consultation, empowerment, normalisation, accessibility, flexible pathways,