

the practice of medicine, complex and challenging, but at the same time rich and fulfilling’.

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### Innovations in Global Mental Health

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The coalescing of the diverse fields of transcultural psychiatry, public mental health and international mental health under the rubric of ‘global mental health’ occurred relatively recently. Research activities that had been going on for several decades in these diverse areas and that would have been labelled under each area have now come to be grouped under ‘global mental health’. This labelling transformation has led to two related problems. First, a generally accepted definition of what constitutes global mental health has not been achieved. Second, the boundaries of constituent areas of knowledge and of research are blurred. Exemplifying that blurring of boundaries is this two-volume book. Thus, while

*Innovations in Global Mental Health* joins a growing list of volumes on global mental health, including a previous edited compilation by the same author, this new book more clearly exemplifies the way Global Mental Health has evolved in recent years.

Even though the grouping of topics in the various parts is not always intuitively clear and some topics dealing with essentially similar themes are grouped in different parts, the 17 parts into which the book is divided nevertheless cover what could be regarded as some of the major recent innovations in global mental health. Thus, for example, Part II deals with challenges and opportunities, Part IV is on advocacy, policy and legislation, Part VI is on access to care, Part VII on the role of technology and Part XI on community mental health programmes.

It is no surprise that a book of this size will be composed of chapters of varied richness in the amount of information provided. Readers will find the account of the developments in the field in the chapter by Pringle and colleagues (‘Evidence for action: stimulating research to address the global mental health treatment gap’) very informative, given the pivotal influence of the support provided by the National Institute of Mental Health for global mental health research in the past decade or so. A few of the chapters offer a polemic flavour. For example, the chapter by Hickling & Walcott (‘The Jamaican LMIC challenge to the biopsychosocial global mental health model of Western psychiatry’) seeks to ‘negate the psychology of five hundred years of racism and colonial oppression and to create a psychosocial decolonization blueprint of global mental health suitable for LMICs’ and describes the basis for and the rudiments of an innovation that questions orthodoxy in the biopsychosocial approach to mental healthcare.

This book should be a valuable reference for researchers, advocates, mental health service developers and policymakers with interest in expanding mental healthcare, especially to populations residing in poorly served parts of the world. Also, students pursuing programmes in global mental health, many of which have sprung up in different parts of the world in recent years, would find the book a good resource for information about how the field has evolved and hints of where it may be heading.

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