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Public Mental Health. William W. Eaton, Ed. Reviewed by David Mechanic.

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Book Reviews

William W. Eaton, Ed., *Public Mental Health* (2012). Oxford, Oxford University Press. \$89.99 (hardcover).

Mental and behavioral health disorders account for only a modest proportion of national health expenditures, but they constitute an enormous public health problem, contributing to much suffering, community burden, disability, and increased mortality. Attention over the years has focused on an individual approach. A broader public health approach is needed with thoughtful attention to social, environmental and biomedical determinants. This volume represents the first comprehensive effort to present such a perspective.

The book, edited by William Eaton, an eminent researcher and Professor and Chair of the Department of Mental Health of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and his colleagues, includes eighteen chapters covering these important disorders, methods, descriptive epidemiology, risk mechanisms, the relevant service systems and prevention and future directions. This collection is unusual in its inclusion of the efforts of some 48 researchers from this unique and outstanding research-oriented department, and thus is more integrated than one typically finds. The authors' discussions, spanning issues from genetics and the brain to world mental health systems, is evidence-based and sophisticated, inclusive of research well beyond the United States, and sensitive to uncertainties and gaps in our knowledge. The treatment of issues is predominantly population-based with serious efforts to provide reviews of the best epidemiological studies and analyses in the world literature. This volume is an enormous effort and any reader will come away learning a great deal. It undoubtedly will be an important inspiration and reference source for years to come.

In this short review, I can only briefly communicate the content of the many excellent chapters by choosing some

examples to convey the scope of this volume. The book begins with a chapter by Eaton and colleagues' examining the prevalence of some 17 disorders, estimated on the basis of numerous studies, and illustrating the large cumulative burdens, especially those resulting from autism, major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, dementia, and personality disorder. Paul McHugh, a brilliant psychiatrist, and for many years chair of Johns Hopkins psychiatry department, presents an astute critique of the limitations of DSM, its checklist atheoretical approach and the need for an alternative conceptualization structured around etiological pathways. Two excellent chapters introduce students to epidemiological and quantitative methods particularly relevant to a public health orientation. Similarly, a chapter by Zandi and colleagues provides an excellent primer for social work students introducing them to the importance of genetics, a topic typically neglected among non-medical practitioners. But the social receives its due attention with thoughtful chapters on the importance of social forces including SES, race and ethnicity, marital status and urban living, stress and the life course, and adaptation.

For the social work practitioner, the section on the services system is especially valuable. I particularly liked the chapter by Mojtabai and colleagues on pathways to care and assessing need. Ron Manderscheid and colleagues do their usual excellent job in bringing together important data on services and costs. In the final chapter, Leaf and colleagues do a nice job of reviewing the important challenges ahead, addressing such important issues as enhancing population resilience, advancing the current focus on recovery, better increasing coordination and integration of services, and implementing the Affordable Care Act that offers many opportunities to greatly improve mental health services.

From the perspective of social work students, the book's strengths also pose some limitations. In its broad coverage and extraordinary detail, it offers more an encyclopedic coverage to dip into for illumination on specific topics than an integrated story line to inform practice and policy. Thus it should be in every serious social work library but may not be the most successful text for all but the most advanced students. The authors deserve our appreciation for a masterful volume that

will do much to advance understanding of mental health as an essential public health challenge.

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Susan Chandler & Jill B. Jones, *Casino Women: Courage in Unexpected Places* (2011). New York: Cornell University Press. \$29.95 (hardcover).

Chandler and Jones' *Casino Women: Courage in Unexpected Places* describes a chapter in labor history that has yet to be fully explored: how women in the lowest rungs of highly profitable service organizations, many of them immigrants, have overcome the odds, fought for their rights in the workplace, and often won. Chandler and Jones signal early on that their book is "hopeful," rather than bemoaning the sad state of union density (roughly 7% in the private sector according to 2011 Bureau of Labor Statistics figures) or the exploitation and injustices experienced by immigrants in the Western states in the lower rungs of the labor market. They focus on how organizing has transformed the lives of a largely female workforce both on and off the job. Organizing in "company towns" has shaped U.S. labor history and the consciousness of union members, their families and communities. Like mill workers in Lawrence and Lowell Massachusetts, meat-packers in Wisconsin and Illinois, steel workers in Pittsburgh, auto workers in Detroit, and clerical workers at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, casino workers in Nevada gain power in numbers through their pivotal role—as exploited workers, essential fuel for the engine of the local economy, and members of immigrant and/or minority populations trying to gain a foothold in the U.S.

Casino Women is the product of ten years of talking to women mainly in Nevada about their lives and experiences as casino workers in highly unionized Las Vegas and barely unionized Reno. Workers from other casinos in nearby Indian reservations and Lake Tahoe also contributed. The authors' methods included: interviews with workers and union activists (many with the Culinary Workers Union); focus groups with former