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## BOOK REVIEW

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Mickey C. Smith and Albert I. Wertheimer, eds. *Social and Behavioral Aspects of Pharmaceutical Care*. New York and London: Pharmaceutical Products Press, an imprint of The Haworth Press, Inc., 10 Alice Street, Binghamton, NY, 1996. xxxiii + 835 pp. \$89.95 (hardcover).

*Social and Behavioral Aspects of Pharmaceutical Care* is not a primer on pharmaceutical care. Rather, it is a collection of 30 original chapters written by 43 contributors who "take pieces of the complex web of pharmaceutical care, describe the known microcosmic components of such care, and then relate the pieces back to the integrity of the web" (p. xxxi). Diverse, and sometimes competing, viewpoints are presented in a way that challenges the reader to question the current status of pharmaceutical care and to ponder its future.

The sections of the book weave through (1) concepts of health and illness, (2) patient responses to symptoms, (3) choosing a source of care, (4) choosing a therapeutic agent, (5) medication-taking behavior, (6) outcomes of pharmaceutical care, (7) special classes of patients, and (8) a review of useful concepts and models. This is not a traditional textbook that is unified under one theory or set of accepted principles (such as an introductory chemistry text). Thus, students early in their pharmacy training might find this book frustrating if used for an introductory course. On the other hand, senior BS pharmacy students, Pharm.D. students, and graduate students may find this text to be a thought-provoking resource. In addition, teachers and researchers in the area of pharmaceutical care may find this a valuable text for their personal use.

*Social and Behavioral Aspects of Pharmaceutical Care* has several strengths that should be noted. First, it is well-referenced and indexed and will serve as a valuable resource for students, teachers, and researchers.

The authors of each chapter base their arguments on published sources and provide additional readings for the instructor and for the student. The index is comprehensive and contains keywords that are sufficiently specific to be of great value to the reader.

Another strength is that many contributors use theory-based approaches in their chapters. A limitation, however, is that some theories presented in the book are old, and updated versions of these theories, published elsewhere, should be consulted. Nonetheless, a theory-based approach provides a strong historical context in which future ideas can be tested and discussed.

A third strength is the Instructor's Manual that accompanies this text. Most of the chapters have corresponding exercises and sample test questions. The exercises are particularly thought-provoking and can be useful for faculty who are developing innovative teaching techniques in the classroom.

A fourth strength of this book relates to the collective expertise of the contributors. The editors have assembled a group of experts that provide great credibility to the book. A brief biographical sketch is given for each contributor, with information about how to contact these individuals. Readers will find this valuable for the purpose of networking and obtaining more information about particular topics.

Finally, the tone of the book is timely and appears to have been considered carefully. Dr. Wertheimer poignantly summarizes the tone of the book in comments he makes about the epilogue he wrote for the text: "This epilogue does not offer answers. Rather, it is written in the hope that considering pending issues and mentioning some of the more significant trends will and can stimulate the reader to think of individual defensive strategies for progressive change and progress with a focus on the patient" (p. 808). This perspective is pervasive throughout the book in that the authors provide challenging and sometimes unorthodox ideas about our profession.

In this reviewer's opinion, *Social and Behavioral Aspects of Pharmaceutical Care* does not focus on a straightforward discussion of pharmaceutical care, nor should it. This book presents issues that challenge our profession and makes us think creatively about the future of pharmaceutical care. In today's dynamic and uncertain health care environment, a text that provides more questions than answers can be instrumental in strengthening the teaching and research provided in pharmacy today.

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