Substance and Behavioral Addictions: Concepts, Causes and Cures

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The significance and transience of pain have evolved with the times. Although Kugelmann attempts to thoroughly capture social evaluations of pain through this approach, the bulk of perspectives gathered are representative of only a small sector of society—namely, of academic circles. While the views of prominent figures such as Descartes, Bentham, and Henry Rutgers Marshall offer valuable insight about past beliefs, including voices of non-academics and of people outside of the western world would provide a fuller and more well-rounded account of the understandings of pain.

In part two of the text, Kugelmann establishes the importance of an interdisciplinary construction of pain by exploring the subjective experiences of individuals gathered from his own research. Although these narratives provide compelling insight into individual experiences with pain, in light of how personal each experience is, Kugelmann’s methods of extracting meaning from these narratives to form generalizable conclusions about social evaluations of pain is somewhat questionable and not thoroughly convincing.

Additionally, although Kugelmann’s progression of ideas demonstrate profound thoughtfulness and reasoning, his writing may be less accessible to clinicians with limited background in psychology. At times, the jargon and prose, to some degree, detracted from the meaningful arguments presented. Nevertheless, the insights that Kugelmann presents in this book would be valuable for health care team members to gain an understanding and appreciation of the ever-evolving, polymorphous nature of pain.

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Substance and Behavioral Addictions: Concepts, Causes and Cures addresses a subject matter that is pervasive in society. Addiction is often highlighted in the media in the context of celebrities’ struggles, but the disease indirectly or directly affects the general population on a daily basis. The author discusses the complexity of the development of addiction through the lens of the “PACE model” (pragmatics, attraction, communication, expectations). The 11 addictions that are covered in the book include: tobacco use, alcohol use, hard drug use, food eating, gambling, Internet and other electronic media, shopping, love, sex, exercise, and work.

The content of the text is organized in to three different sections that touch on various aspects of addiction. “Part I: Addiction and Addictive Effects” introduces the titular concepts, as well as appetitive needs, the variables the increase that likelihood of developing addiction, and the consequences of addiction. In “Part II: Types of Addiction,” a general overview of addictions is provided. Additionally, the prevalence and co-occurrence of substance and behavioral addictions is reviewed, followed by a chapter that talks about the 11 focal addictions introduced earlier. In the last section, “Part III: Resolving the Problems of Addiction and Future Directions,” general principles of issues associated with addiction are highlighted. There is an exploration of approaches to prevention and cessation, on both intrapersonal- and extrapersonal-levels. The last chapter examines future considerations for substance and behavioral addictions and how the “translation-transdisciplinary research matrix” can be utilized to develop a better understanding about the topic.

The book is designed for upper-level undergraduate and graduate students, researchers, and practitioners who want to learn about the basis and scope of addiction. The biological, chemical, and evolutionary aspects of addiction are considered by the author, who relays the information from a multidisciplinary perspective. The material of this book provides greater knowledge about the background and implications of addiction, which is relevant for patients and providers alike. Readers will find Substance and Behavioral Addictions: Concepts, Causes and Cures substantive and digestible, and a worthwhile source as a whole.

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