

BOOK REVIEWS

Alcohol Problems among Adolescents: Current Directions in Prevention Research, by Gayle M. Boyd, Jan Howard and Robert A. Zucker (Eds.). Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1995, 257 + ix pages, \$39.95 (cloth).

Understanding, let alone effectively intervening with, the all but ubiquitous use of alcohol by adolescents is a challenge faced by most counselors, educators, psychologists and other human service professionals who work with this population on a regular basis. Recognizing this, Boyd, Howard and Zucker have edited a text that serves as an overview of current directions in prevention research with adolescents.

This book is a collection of previously published articles (from the June 1994 issue of the *Journal of Research on Adolescence*) and original essays intended to address concisely the topic of adolescent alcohol use. The eight published articles, re-edited and expanded to permit additional discussion of their research findings, are supplemented by three conceptual essays written specifically to complement the text. The result of these efforts is an 11-chapter compendium that will make for interesting reading for the serious social scientist with research interests in the area of adolescent alcohol use and abuse prevention.

Alcohol Problems among Adolescents is divided into two parts. First, chapters 1 through 5 provide an overview of the general issues within the book's titled focus. Particular notice is given to the issues of familial influence on adolescent alcohol use with special emphasis on black and white adolescents. The process by which decisions about alcohol and drinking are made, as well as the role that personal expectations play in adolescent drinking, is reviewed as part of the first section's consideration of current prevention efforts. The second section addresses the topic of intervention by considering specific strategies by which professional counselors and social scientists can mount effective interventions with adolescents whose drinking has become problematic. Family-based and school-based interventions are outlined, with research related to specific experimental approaches presented. The involvement of parents and the creation of a harm-reduction approach to intervention are considered as well. The editors offer six focused "how to" chapters on intervention whose focus ranges from individual and family strategies to those that mobilize entire schools or communities.

The reader is advised that this text is not intended for any and all who are interested in alcohol use, abuse and the adolescent. The majority of the chapters are presented in a traditional research journal style, and counselors unaccustomed to reading research conducted according to the scientific

method are likely to be frustrated with this text's obvious attention to methodological details. However, this book is an excellent source for the serious social scientist and her/his students.

Having instructed counselors on both the undergraduate and graduate levels, I would recommend that this text not be used as required reading for the traditional undergraduate student unless it was to be discussed thoroughly in class. While there are specific chapters that would be useful for undergraduates (e.g., "Adolescent Alcohol Decisions" by Baruch Fischhoff and Marilyn Jacobs Quadrel; "Community Strategies for the Reduction of Youth Drinking: Theory and Application" by Alexander C. Wagenaar and Cheryl L. Perry; and "Preventing Alcohol Abuse in College Students: A Harm-Reduction Approach" by G. Alan Marlatt, John S. Baer and Mary Larimer), the typical undergraduate student, especially one who is not a counseling major, will be lost in the detail of these chapters.

This text will be of most interest to a specialized audience interested in its specific focus on preventing and intervening with alcohol abuse and its attention to detail when reporting empirical research conducted on these topics. However, the paucity of specific programming ideas will likely limit the number of readers to whom this text will appeal directly—this is not a "cookbook" for effective prevention programming. Nonetheless, *Alcohol Problems among Adolescents* will be an excellent addition to the collection of a university library, professor of counseling or graduate student in counseling.

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Addiction and Recovery in Gay and Lesbian Persons, by Robert J. Kus (Ed.). Binghamton, N.Y.: Harrington Park Press, 1995, 118 + xxiii pages, \$9.95 (paper).

Since the early 1980s, several books and collections of articles have been published concerning chemical dependency and recovery within the gay and lesbian community. Ziebold and Mongeon edited the first such collection of articles, *Alcoholism and Homosexuality*, in 1982. *Dual Identities: Counseling Chemically Dependent Gay Men and Lesbians*, by Finnegan and McNally (1987), was the first book on treating chemically dependent gay men and lesbians, and *Lesbians and Gay Men: Chemical Dependency Treatment Issues*, edited by Dava Weinstein, was published in 1993.

Addiction and Recovery in Gay and Lesbian Persons, an edited volume, continues along the lines of the previous publications in this area. The book comprises eight chapters authored or co-authored by 11 contributors who have long histories of providing services to the gay and lesbian community, including several contributors who are openly gay or lesbian themselves. The chapters cover a wide range of issues relevant to professionals working with this population.

In the first chapter, Bickelhaupt reviews seven empirical studies on the incidence of chemical dependency in gay and lesbian persons. Six of these studies were conducted in the United States and one in the Czech Republic. All of the research findings indicate a high incidence of chemical dependency in the gay and lesbian community, with an average of 25% of such persons experiencing drug and/or alcohol abuse problems. Bickelhaupt did not include a study by McKirnan and Peterson (1989) that surveyed a larger number of participants ($N = 3,400$) than the studies he reviewed; however, McKirnan and Peterson's findings are similar to those reported here.

Pohl provides a good overview of HIV infection/AIDS including basic information on transmission, testing and treatment, as well as an exploration of the complications encountered when a client is gay or lesbian, chemically dependent and HIV-infected. Kominars describes a broad framework for exploring homophobia. He looks at how the internalized homophobia of a chemically dependent gay or lesbian person can jeopardize the recovery process and how this issue can be addressed in treatment to increase self-acceptance on the part of these clients. Kominars also examines the underlying reasons for homophobia in our society, how it affects both homosexuals and heterosexuals, and actions we can take to eliminate it.

Negative religious messages about homosexuality as the basis of shame and self-loathing for many gay and lesbian persons is the focus of a chapter by Booth. An important part of his work with gays and lesbians is to help them identify the negative messages they have heard about homosexuality, God and spirituality. Through this process, Booth guides clients to self-acceptance. Hetherington has written an overview of the dysfunctional patterns in relationships that chemically dependent gay and lesbian persons often experience, such as losing contact with their own needs, goals and feelings, trying to be perfect, fears of being alone or losing control, and avoiding conflict. She goes on to suggest ways therapists can help clients change dysfunctional patterns in relationships by talking about their history, learning to express anger in an open and constructive way and increasing self-awareness.

The final three chapters in this volume focus on the variety of resources available for the recovery and treatment of gay and lesbian chemically dependent persons. Kus and Latcovich describe the historical content and current types of gay men's groups in Alcoholics Anonymous as well as the positive aspects and limitations of such groups. While the advantage of such groups is that they help gay men overcome their internalized homophobia, it may be hard for some newly sober gay men to attend these group meetings and they may prefer to go to regular AA meetings early in their sobriety.

Kus and Smith provide a chapter on resources for therapists working with these chemically dependent clients. These authors identify some of the special problems this population may experience (e.g., internalized homophobia; HIV/AIDS issues; and relationship, mental health and legal problems). Included is a discussion of organizations and publications available to both clients and treatment providers, and how professionals decide when to treat and when to refer, based on the professional's expertise and clients' needs.

Finally, Finnegan and McNally, co-founders of the National Association of Lesbian and Gay Alcoholism Professionals (NALGAP), have contributed a chapter describing NALGAP's inception in 1979 and its accomplishments as an advocate for the progressive treatment of addiction in gay and lesbian people.

Thus, the range of issues covered in *Addiction and Recovery in Gay and Lesbian Persons*, and the expertise and sensitivity of the contributors to the volume, make it a solid addition to the growing literature on the treatment of gay and lesbian chemically addicted clients.

References

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