

Book reviews

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D Capuzzi and DR Gross (eds), *Introduction to the counseling profession*, 6th edn. NY and Hove: Routledge 2013. ISBN 9780415660518 (hbk) £100.00; ISBN 9780415524964 (pbk); pp 508, £58.00.

Reviewed by: Oliver Bashford, *South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, UK*

This is an introductory textbook designed for students entering the field of counseling. This sixth edition includes several new chapters and has been brought in line with the 2009 US-based Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards. The American spelling of counselling is used in this review.

The book is divided into three parts. Part one gives an overview of the history of the counseling profession and introduces relevant core concepts, including ethical and legal considerations, the professional responsibility of self-care, research and writing in counseling and the role of technology. It was particularly interesting to read in the discussion about technology that the virtual world of *Second Life* is being used in counsellor education and that there have been studies looking at the use of robots to deliver therapy to the elderly.

Part 2 of the book focuses on counseling skills and gives a fairly comprehensive overview of theories and practices applied both to individual and group therapies. There is discussion on the use of creative media such as music, art and poetry, and sections on assessment, diagnosis and treatment planning.

The third part of the book reviews each of the main counseling specialties as recognised by CACREP. They are as follows: addictions, career counseling, clinical mental health, marriage, couple and family counseling, school counseling, college counseling and student affairs. Each section provides a history of the specialty, introduces the main concepts and discusses the relevant assessment tools. The differences between the specialties are discussed, and the readers are encouraged to consider whether each specialty appeals to them as a future career. This is useful because the differences are considerable. The role of a school counsellor supporting adolescents with their academic progress is very different to that of a mental health counsellor working with a client with a severe mental illness.

The strength of this book is that it is expertly written and very up to date and comprehensive in the breadth of topics covered. As the title suggests, there is an emphasis on the professional aspects of counseling, which makes it a useful guide for students entering the field. It is also a rich source of references. The writing is rather dense and technical in

places, and as such, it is not a light read, but the use of side-bars and case studies helps clarify key concepts and makes the text more user friendly.

Although it contains a great deal of universally relevant information, the book is written primarily for an American audience. The sections on legislation and the many references to the various accrediting bodies and other related organisations will be of little interest to readers outside the United States.

Overall, I would certainly recommend this book to American readers and particularly to those new to the counseling profession. International readers can find some useful information on the basic tenets of counseling, but may have to look elsewhere for locally appropriate information. Its price may put off some individuals, but it would be a good addition to any library.

David Stuckler and Sanjay Basu, *The body economic: Why austerity kills*. London, UK: Allen Lane, 2013.
ISBN 9781846147838; pp. xxi + 216. £20.00.

Reviewed by: Dinesh Bhugra, *Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London, UK*

Once in a while, unexpectedly, a book comes along which shakes your perceptions by getting you to think and look at things differently. This is such a book. In less than 150 pages, the authors – a statistician and a public health physician – have brought impressive evidence together to illustrate why austerity can kill. Using epidemiological data since the Great Depression of the 1930s and comparing this with the recent Great Recession, these authors provide easy-to-read and, more importantly, easy-to-digest information about the role economics plays in individuals' health. They make a clear distinction between Body Politic and Body Economic – the latter is defined as 'a group of persons organized under a common set of economic policies; a people whose lives are collectively affected by these policies'. They argue that economic policies are not the pathogens by themselves, but are the 'causes of causes' of ill health – the underlying factors to determine who will be exposed to the greatest health risks. They create vulnerabilities to which pathogens, be they psychological, social or biological, can infect. Economic forces affect not only the risk of developing illnesses but also remove some of the protective factors, such as housing, employment and social support. The debate as to whether cuts are beneficial to the economy and thereby to the health of people, or whether

investment is better for the population, is put under close scrutiny by the authors, who believe that austerity does kill. The evidence provided is convincing. They are able to demonstrate from various settings around the globe that economic cuts are bad for the population's health. They start with a number of case examples which bring a sense of purpose to their arguments. Their passion and seething anger is palpable right across the book.

Using data from the Great Depression, they point out that suicide rates went up but traffic accidents dropped – the simple explanation being that people could not afford cars or fuel. However, death rates also fell, and they point out that epidemiological transition may explain this variation across various states in the United States. They found that in 2010, traffic-related deaths dropped, largely due to less traffic on the roads. Not surprisingly, the policy debates related to alcohol and prohibition demonstrated reduction in deaths due to alcohol. The other policy shift was that the role of the government in economic investment and thereby in public health became more evident. Using examples from Russia's *mono-gorod*, they report

that unemployed males often disappeared from these townships after economic liberalisation in Russia. It was during this rapid shift to capitalism that men began to die at an increasing rate, which was dubbed 'the post-communist mortality crisis'. Deaths were due to heart attacks, alcohol poisoning, suicide and homicide.

Their evidence of increased HIV infections among sex workers and drug users in Greece, where the needle exchange programme has been virtually decimated, along with the return of malaria, makes one wonder where policy-makers' priorities lie. Government debt is not like domestic debt, with which politicians are very keen to compare, thereby creating further illusions. They illustrate success in investment from Iceland using a recent different approach to managing debt crisis. Providing valuable evidence from the fall of Asian tiger economies, they compare differing responses by governments in Thailand and Malaysia, proving that austerity is bad for populations as well as for governments. This book deserves to be read and appreciated widely and should be compulsory reading for policymakers.