

CONTEMPORARY CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Second Edition

Thomas G. Plante
Santa Clara University and
Stanford University



JOHN WILEY & SONS, INC.

Contemporary Clinical Psychology

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For Lori and Zachary,
who make everything worthwhile

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The goals, activities, and contributions of contemporary clinical psychology are very appealing to many who are fascinated by human behavior and relationships. The enormous popularity of psychology as an undergraduate major; of clinical psychology as a career option; and of popular press psychology books, movies, and television shows is a testament to the inherent interest of clinical psychology. The goal of clinical psychology is noble: to use the principles of psychology and our understanding of human behavior to promote health, happiness, and quality of life.

Contemporary clinical psychology is changing and growing at a rapid pace. The advent of managed health care, the changing needs of a multicultural society, changes in training models, the shift from primarily a male to a female profession, technological and other scientific advances, complex problems in today's culture, all have greatly impacted both the science and practice of contemporary clinical psychology. Some of these changes are very positive; some are negative. Despite the challenges confronting clinical psychology, the field remains a fascinating and exciting endeavor with tremendous potential to help individuals, groups, and society.

As more research evidence emerges concerning the interplay of biological, psychological, and social influences on behavior, contemporary clinical psychologists must incorporate new knowledge to develop better applications in their efforts to understand and help others. Biopsychosocial integration in many ways best reflects contemporary clinical psychology, expanding the range and usefulness of its efforts.

This book provides students an overview of contemporary clinical psychology from an integrative biopsychosocial perspective. The book highlights the various activities, roles, and responsibilities of the contemporary clinical psychologist as well as provides a foundation of the discipline through a detailed review of its history, scientific underpinnings, and theoretical orientations. An overview of contemporary issues in clinical psychology serves as a road map for those interested in pursuing clinical psychology as a career option.

Each chapter includes a highlight of a contemporary clinical psychologist who provides a frank reflection on the pros and cons of contemporary clinical psychology as well as their view of the future of the field. A typical schedule is also provided so that you get a sense of what a day in the life of a contemporary clinical psychologist might be like. The psychologists were chosen to reflect the broad range of people who are clinical psychologists. Some of the psychologists are well known; others are not. Several work in colleges and universities conducting research and teaching. Several work in solo or group private practice. Some work in hospitals, government agencies, or university

counseling clinics. One works in the U.S. Senate. Some combine work in several diverse settings. Some work part-time while raising a family. Psychologists from all over the United States, from diverse training programs, from both genders, a variety of ethnic groups, and with disabilities are represented. The range of activities, roles, and responsibilities of these psychologists reflects the diversity of careers open to the contemporary clinical psychologist.

Each chapter includes a detailed list of key points and terms to help enhance understanding. Each chapter also includes a section entitled *The Big Picture*, which provides a “bottom line” or “take home message” summary of the chapter as well as a look toward the future of the topic covered in that particular chapter. Each chapter also provides several questions readers have had after reading each chapter. Each chapter also includes one or more Spotlights on a contemporary issue in clinical psychology.

A great deal of clinical case material is presented throughout the book as well. Several cases such as Mary, a 60-year-old woman with a long history of panic attacks, are discussed in several chapters for the reader to trace the theoretical conceptualization, assessment, and treatment of one case in some detail. All of the patients presented are based on actual clinical cases. All of the examples from testing, therapy, consultation, and ethics are also based on actual cases. However, the details have been altered to protect patient and psychologist confidentiality.

This book uses an integrative biopsychosocial approach throughout. This approach best reflects the perspective of most contemporary clinical psychologists. Less emphasis is placed on traditional theoretical models such as behavioral, psychodynamic, and humanistic approaches since most contemporary clinical psychologists integrate these and other

approaches and orientations rather than using only one. An emphasis is placed on the real world of clinical psychology to provide a window into how the science and practice of clinical psychology is actually conducted. I have attempted to provide the reader with a realistic, practical, and current portrayal of the contemporary clinical psychology field in many different settings. Finally, this book provides a separate chapter on ethics and a separate chapter on the consultation, administration, and teaching responsibilities of clinical psychologists. One chapter deals with 10 common questions asked about psychotherapy. Finally, emphasis is placed on contemporary issues in clinical psychology such as diversity, empirically supported treatments, managed health care, and other hot topics.

The instructor’s guide that accompanies this book provides faculty with a detailed book outline, multiple choice and essay examination questions, transparencies for class use, a list of references, web sites, popular and educational films, class activities, and a sample course syllabus. The instructor’s guide is available online.

The book assumes that students have already completed undergraduate courses in introductory and abnormal psychology. The book is appropriate for upper division college students who are likely to be psychology majors or first-year graduate students in clinical psychology. The book might also be a helpful reference for those who provide career guidance for students potentially interested in a career in psychology or related fields.

I welcome comments about the book from both students and faculty. These comments will be used to create improved future editions. You can contact me at tplante@scu.edu or check my web site at www.SCU.edu/tplante. Thank you for reading this book and welcome to the exciting, fascinating, and

ever-changing world of contemporary clinical psychology.

Acknowledgments

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