

Book Reviews

Families, illness and disability: An integrative treatment model.

John S. Rolland. New York: Basic Books, 1994. 320 pp. ISBN 0-465-02915-9.

Reviewed by: Marcia Beaulieu

John Rolland has consolidated and elaborated several of his previously published ideas into a generic model that practitioners may use to enhance the competence and mastery of families faced with any chronic illness. The major premise of the resulting Family Systems-Illness model is that both health professionals and families need to understand how dimensions of illness interact with family variables. An overview of the model is presented in the introduction of his new book. Part one describes the two main features of the model's illness component—a psychosocial typology and time phases of illness. The concept of uncertainty overarches both. The psychosocial typology of illness is derived from the assumption that different combinations of the onset, course, outcomes and incapacitation of illnesses make different demands on families. The crisis, chronic and terminal time phases are thought to pose additional challenges to those brought on by an illness' natural history. Thus, the terminal phase of a life threatening illness that began with an acute onset and rapidly deteriorating course, will have quite a different effect on families than a relatively stable illness with a gradual onset and long remissions.

Part two focuses on the model's second major component—features of families that mediate the impact of illness. Here Rolland describes family processes and influences such as family health beliefs, family life cycle and intergenerational factors that may impinge on families' adaptability to chronic illness. His skilful assessments and interventions effectively remind the reader that his systems approach includes illness, individual, family and health professional. Part three deals with issues of treatment and intervention.

The model's strengths lie in its theoretical and clinical underpinnings, its conceptual coherence and a level of complexity that does justice to the phenomenon under study. Rolland has masterfully integrated and built on existing empirical and theoretical literature on the family from anthropology, sociology, nursing, social work, psychology and psychiatry, often in quite innovative ways. For example, he creatively fuses Levinson's life structures and transitions with notions of periods of greater or lesser family cohesion. He then considers

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variations in the impact of chronic illness when different combinations of these factors are operating. His choice of concepts and their interrelations are well grounded in his personal family experience and clinical consultations with some six hundred families. From the literature and his sensitive observations he convincingly constructs a richly complex but coherent whole. Finally, the model is sufficiently well articulated so that others could further test it clinically to evaluate its strengths and limitations.

This should prove a valuable sourcebook for both seasoned clinicians and beginners in any health discipline. It is well illustrated with examples, case studies, diagrams, tables and interesting suggestions for applications of the model. Although Rolland writes with great clarity, the multi-textured character of the model invites frequent reflection during reading. It is a book that one will surely return to often and find more with each reading.



***La Santé et la Famille—Une approche systémique en soins infirmiers.* Sous la direction de Fabie Duhamel. Montréal: Gaëtan Morin, 1995. 259 pp., index. ISBN 2-89105-559-4.**

Recension par Suzanne Caty

Les infirmières ont toujours reconnu le rôle important que joue la famille dans l'expérience de la maladie de l'un de ses membres ainsi que l'impact de cette maladie sur la famille. Ce livre longtemps attendu élabore, d'une façon claire, une approche systémique qui guide l'infirmière dans les soins auprès de la famille faisant face à une problématique de santé. L'auteure principale, nous présente un livre sur la santé et la famille, livre qui sera utile à toutes les infirmières travaillant auprès des familles francophones.

Le volume est divisé en deux parties. Dans la première partie on y retrouve quatre chapitres écrits principalement par Duhamel. Ces chapitres visent à nous familiariser avec les connaissances théoriques et les recherches sur lesquelles s'appuie l'approche systémique. Au premier chapitre, l'auteure utilise des écrits pertinents et récents pour décrire la relation entre la problématique de santé et la famille. Elle élabore, très tôt dans le chapitre, une définition claire de la problématique de santé. Au deuxième chapitre, nous retrouvons l'élaboration des concepts majeurs que l'infirmière doit utiliser dans l'approche

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systémique auprès de la famille. L'auteure y discute brièvement des théories qui sous-tendent cette approche.

Au troisième chapitre, l'auteure décrit en détail le modèle d'évaluation familiale de Calgary ainsi que les théories qui ont inspiré le développement du modèle. À travers ce chapitre l'auteure utilise aussi des écrits pour expliquer les différentes composantes du modèle de Calgary. À la fin du chapitre nous retrouvons des exemples de questions qui peuvent être utilisées dans des entrevues avec des familles. Au quatrième chapitre, l'auteure décrit des interventions systémiques que nous pouvons employer. Ces interventions sont basées sur la croyance que la famille a la capacité et la compétence pour résoudre les difficultés auxquelles elle fait face. Au cinquième chapitre, Bell et Wright nous lancent le défi d'axer notre recherche sur l'efficacité de nos interventions avec les familles. Ces auteures utilisent des exemples de leurs recherches et interventions auprès des familles pour appuyer leur position.

Ces premiers chapitres sont très bien écrits et sont relativement faciles à suivre. Ce texte sera sûrement très utile aux étudiantes du deuxième cycle. Il est possible que les étudiantes au niveau du baccalauréat aient quelques difficultés à comprendre certaines parties de ces chapitres. Il serait alors important que les professeures qui utilisent ce livre dans un cours en soins infirmiers auprès des familles trouvent des moyens pour faciliter la compréhension de cette approche.

Dans la deuxième partie, neuf auteures ont collaboré dans le développement de situations cliniques où l'approche systémique est employée auprès de familles faisant face à une problématique de santé. Ces exemples sont liés à différentes étapes du cycle de la vie familiale et à différents domaines cliniques. Pour chaque situation clinique, les auteures ont situé la problématique de santé dans le contexte de théories et d'écrits pertinents. Les exemples sont très bien élaborés et nous aident à voir comment l'approche systémique et les théories sous-jacentes ressorties dans la première partie du livre peuvent être utilisés dans notre pratique. Les étudiantes, les cliniciennes et même les professeures profiteront sûrement de ces exemples.

En résumé ce livre répond à un besoin très réel dans les soins infirmiers. La réforme des soins de santé qui met de plus en plus l'accent sur la participation active des familles dans les soins de santé exige que nous soyons conscientes de la relation entre la problématique de la santé et la famille. Ce livre nous permet d'augmenter nos connaissances et nos habiletés sur ce sujet.



***Sourcebook of Family Theories and Methods: A Contextual Approach.* P. Boss, W. Doherty, R. LaRossa, W. Schumm, & S. Steinmetz (Eds). New York: Plenum Press, 1993. 748 pp. ISBN 0-306-44264-7.**

Reviewed by Kathleen M. Rowat

This book might best be described as a "gold mine" for those with an interest in the family. Following on the earlier works of Christensen (1964), Burr et al. (1979) and Sussman and Steinmetz (1987), the editors of the present volume aim to "capture the spirit of family studies in the 20th century" and to prepare researchers, practitioners, and educators for the century to come. Seventy-three contributors, representing a wide variety of disciplines, have assisted in the preparation of this work.

As noted in the preface, a number of features differentiate this book from previous efforts of "stocktaking" family studies. First, there is a focus not only on family theories but also on research methods and the relationship between the two. Secondly, the reader is provided with the sociohistorical context within which the theory and method were developed. A further unique feature of the volume is the inclusion of chapters dealing with the application or implementation of the theories for practice, education and policy. Finally, issues such as age, ethnicity, race, and gender, which to a large extent have been overlooked in previous compilations of family theories, are addressed.

The book is divided into seven parts. Part I provides an overview of the sociocultural and historical contexts within which family theory and associated research methods developed in the twentieth century. Graduate students, in particular, will welcome those sections dealing with definitions and types of family theories and the criteria by which such theories might be judged. While acknowledging the possibility of factions developing within the field of family study and the ever present temptation to reject the past, the authors of this first chapter call for an openness and flexibility of thinking in order that Family Science move forward. It is on this optimistic note that the reader is led to explore the history of the development of Family Science up to and including the 1980s.

Part II discusses the emergence of family theories and methods beginning with the classics. The reader is taken through an exciting historical journey of the roots of family theorizing, beginning with the writings of Plato, Aristotle

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and Rousseau. The remaining five sections of the book are organized chronologically, looking at family theories and methods as they emerged during the decades beginning with 1918 and concluding with the 1980's. The inclusion in the final section of the book of topics such as the place of feminist theories in the development of Family Science and the biosocial perspective on families underscore the completeness and comprehensiveness of this volume.

As suggested by the title of this book, this is indeed a Sourcebook. Although readers would be wise to read Part I of the book i.e. the Overview, in order to acquaint themselves with the overall orientation and organization of the book, the subsequent sections essentially can stand alone allowing, therefore, the family scholar to delve into those topics of particular interest to him/herself. This book should be considered a must for those concerned with the development of Family Science.