

**SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES
OF MENTAL HEALTH
AND ILLNESS**

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AMAZON

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PREFACE

This book aims to inform readers on conceptual, substantive, and policy aspects of mental health and illness. The substance of mental health inquiry is largely focussed on the study of developmental processes of social stratification and important social institutions such as the family, the labor market, and work. Social and epidemiological surveys have become the main tools for many of these studies that seek to understand human development and social behavior across age cohorts and historical periods while being sensitive to the crucial way in which biological predispositions interact with social context and the environment.

Dealing effectively with mental health and illness involves many sectors from general medicine to the criminal justice system, but there is little effective coordination or integration. Some of what we already know have been implemented in a constructive way, but far too much of what we have learned remains to be applied. Whether we are concerned with broad social determinants such as extreme poverty, child abuse and neglect, poor schooling, and stigmatization on the one hand or lack of access to mental health services and a lack of appropriate balance in treatment among medication, supportive care, and rehabilitation services on the other, there remains a great gap between what we know and what gets done. Some positive changes have occurred, such as the growing acceptance of mental health as an important aspect of health, and more accessibility to treatment

and trained mental health professionals. But as this book makes clear, the social determinants of mental health problems and their management will continue to remain a challenge for scientists, professionals, and policy makers.

Kat, G.U.

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