

BOOK REVIEW

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Review of: *Methamphetamine Use, Clinical and Forensic Aspects*

REFERENCE: Yudko E, Hall HV, McPherson SB, editors. *Methamphetamine use, clinical and forensic aspects*. CRC Press LLC, Boca Raton, FL, 2003, 326 pp.

This volume is part of a series from the Pacific Institute Series on Forensic Psychology, edited by Harold V. Hall. The organization of the book takes the reader through the history of methamphetamine use through the treatment of the abuser. In total there are six major sections covered in 17 chapters. Additionally, there is an extensive glossary including medical, clinical, legal, behavioral and psychological terminology.

Section 1 of the book provides a history of methamphetamine starting with ephedra use in the distant past. It continues with a brief description of the epidemiology of methamphetamine in the second chapter. The third chapter deals with the Middle East and the politics of methamphetamine. This chapter did provide information which helps the reader understand the global aspect of methamphetamine use and was interesting in that respect. Chapter 4 was devoted to MDMA and provided a good introduction to this very topical drug.

Section 2 moved into the physiological, pharmacological and diagnostic aspects of methamphetamine. Chapter 5 moved through the basics, beginning with neurotransmitters and controlling mechanisms. This chapter then discussed the effects of methamphetamine and the concepts of tolerance and sensitization concluding with toxicity issues. Chapter 6 keyed on the hypertensive and neurotoxic effects of methamphetamine that can lead to injury and death and the fact that this drug can be very unpredictable in its actions. This section concluded in chapter seven with the diagnosis of methamphetamine use and abuse.

Section 3 moved into the clinical aspects of methamphetamine use dealing in Chapters 8 and 9 with aggression in both anecdotal and empirical manners. Chapter 8, the anecdotal section, seemed to ask more questions than it answered, and left me wanting more. Chapter 9 was very informative, citing animal studies that demonstrated this aspect of methamphetamine use.

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Section 4 gave a great deal of information about the way the courts deal with methamphetamine, starting with testimony about the drug. Chapter 10 provided references to U.S. Supreme Court rulings dealing with methamphetamine. It then moved into the *Daubert* decision and testimonial aspects to methamphetamine. This part would be interesting to clinical professionals in particular. Chapters 11 and 12 dealt with sentencing issues. There were numerous case presentations that would be of interest to those professionals who would be evaluating the mental status of individuals and may testify later to their opinions.

Section 5 was entitled "Forensics" though in its chapters dealt more with psychological issues than any scientific or analytical aspects. Here were discussed such topics as the ability of a person to confess to crimes or take responsibility for criminal offenses and later proceed through the trial process. Again, use of actual case information aided in the presentation of these topics.

Section 6 concluded the textual portion of this work with information about models of treatment for methamphetamine abuse. This was a natural conclusion to the text providing again the information and references to aid the reader in understanding the topic.

There were five appendices of which I found three of interest. Appendix 3 was a case history of a methamphetamine abuser from the point of view of the abuser. Appendix 4, while short gave a time line of a methamphetamine experience and Appendix 5 gave instructions to approach safely and deal with someone who is "tweaking."

This work is well referenced and provides in the text an introduction to topics with the references listed allowing the reader to go further should they need to. I feel it will well suit those who want an introduction to this drug while providing the references necessary for more in depth knowledge and reading. It will suit those who are more clinically involved with this drug than analytical personnel, but the information provided is in a form that will allow an understanding of the psychological aspects even for those who are not psychologists.