ARTICLES


L. Donald McVinnie

This article examines selected social work literature that has been published in mainstream social work journals in the United States from 1950 to 1959 in order to deconstruct how alcoholism and alcoholics have been historically constructed within the social work profession. The theoretical framework employed is that of social constructivism and deconstruction. The methodology is qualitative re-search, specifically historical analysis. The findings of this article are discussed for their relevance to social work practice and social work education.

KEYWORDS: Alcoholism, alcoholics, social constructionism, social work history, epistemology
Assessing Social Work's Contribution to Controlled Outcome Studies in the Alcohol Dependence Treatment Literature

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Alcohol use disorders are among the most prevalent and disabling conditions encountered by social work practitioners. Although a substantial body of research findings has accrued evaluating the effectiveness of available alcohol dependence treatments, few efforts have been made to assess the contribution that social work has made to this database. Thus, this study examined the contribution of social work to the alcohol dependence treatment outcome research literature over the past half-century. Controlled investigations of alcohol dependence treatments published between 1950 and 2000 were analyzed by publication outlet type and primary author’s professional affiliation. Comprised of bibliographic searches of medical and social science databases were conducted and a manual search of 13 core social work journals to identify controlled studies of alcohol dependence interventions. Results indicate that researchers affiliated with schools or departments of social work as well as authors contained within core social work journals have contributed little to knowledge development, with respect to controlled studies, in the alcohol dependence treatment literature. Greater social work involvement in chemical dependency research would contribute much to current efforts to promote evidence-based practice and clinical guideline development in this important practice area.

KEYWORDS: Social work research, alcohol studies, evidence-based practice

Assessing Social Work's Contribution to Controlled Studies of Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment

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Findings from a review of social work's contribution to the adolescent substance abuse treatment outcome literature between 1990 and 2001 are presented. Social work involvement in adolescent substance abuse treatment was evaluated through a comprehensive bibliographic search of medical and social science databases and a manual search of 13 core social work journals. Results indicate that social work has contributed little to knowledge development in adolescent chemical dependency treatment. Investigators affiliated with a department or school of social work accounted for three of 15 controlled treatment outcome studies. Only one report was published in a core social work journal. Efforts to develop clinical guidelines in this important practice domain will be aided by a sufficiently directive body of practice-relevant research endeavors to guide evidence-based substance abuse treatment for adolescents.

KEYWORDS: Adolescence, substance abuse treatment, treatment outcome study
Assessment of the Psychometric Properties of a New
"Acceptance of an Alcoholic Identity" Instrument
Justine Pinewskicz

This paper describes the design and psychometric testing of a new instrument, the Acceptance of an Alcoholic Identity Instrument (AIAI), for assessing alcoholic subtypes. Subtypes include Denial, Shame, Self-Efficacy, Sufferer, Gratitude, and Love Affair with the Drug. When quantified, the response yields a profile of the subject’s acceptance of an alcoholic identity. Individually, various items highlight aspects of the acceptance of such an identity, and indicate whether the individual is still struggling with specific aspects comprising the instrument. The use of the AIAI instrument can help clinicians establish a treatment plan that includes mastery and defined objectives aiding in the transformation and solidification of an acceptance process of being an alcoholic. The AII is designed for use at any stage of recovery and is expected to provide an opportunity for personal insight and change for the recovering alcoholic.

KEYWORDS: Alcoholism, acceptance, recovery, psychometric instrument.

Asking About Sexual Orientation During Assessment
for Drug and Alcohol Concerns: A Pilot Study
Angena M. Barbour

Gloria Chaim

An assessment tool was designed to assist service providers in identifying lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) clients who present for assistance related to substance use concerns. Items were designed to facilitate self-disclosure of the individual’s sexual orientation and identify concerns of LGB clients that may be relevant to treatment planning for substance use concerns. Therapists in general assessment and LGB-specialized services of large treatment agencies were asked to use the tool. This paper presents client and therapist comments made during the pilot study regarding the use and value of the assessment tool.

KEYWORDS: Sexual orientation assessment tool, lesbian, gay, bisexual, addiction, substance use assessment.

SPECIAL TOPICS: REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

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