

BOOK REVIEW

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MEANINGS OF PAIN VOLUME 2: COMMON TYPES OF PAIN AND LANGUAGE

Author/s: Simon van Rysewyk (Editor)

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BOOK REVIEW:

Meanings of Pain Volume 2: Common Types of Pain and Language is the second instalment of a three-part series from Simon van Rysewyk following the 2016 release of *Meanings of Pain*, the first book devoted to studying the meanings of pain. There is a prominent and consistent theme of using first-person experiences to fully describe the impact of chronic pain. The foreword from Marc Russo sets this theme right from the beginning, discussing how his own experiences as a pain clinician and researcher have been influenced by a triple level spinal fracture and a C6 radiculopathy.

The early chapters of the book continue this theme, providing detailed narratives from people with pain about their pain and recovery. Later chapters highlight the common themes experienced by people with pain regardless of the cause, including spinal pain, arthritis-related pain, endometriosis-associated pain, labour pain, complex regional pain syndrome, cancer pain, and diabetic peripheral neuropathic pain. The chapter on labour pain was of particular interest, exploring concepts relating to



the reconceptualisation of labour pain to improve the likelihood of positive experiences associated with labour pain and reduce the need for pharmacological intervention.

The final four chapters of *Meanings of Pain Volume 2: Common Types of Pain and Language* change tact, shifting focus to discuss topics such as how the connotations of pain fit into a socio-psycho-biological framework, whether a diagnosis of chronic pain is meaningful, and the meanings of pain expression and communications. These chapters feature excellent contributions from Australian

Pain Society members John Quintner, Milton Cohen, and Melanie Galbraith. The chapter discussing the upcoming revisions to the International Classification of Diseases, 11th edition (ICD-11) and the inclusion of chronic pain within this coding system highlights the potential diagnostic, therapeutic, and administrative benefits. Yet it also discusses the constraints of the continued link between tissue damage and pain and the negative impact this may have on the plight of people with pain where tissue damage cannot be demonstrated. Discussions such as these are particularly relevant in the current environment, considering the recent proposed changes to the definition of pain from the International Association for the Study of Pain.

In their praise for the first volume of *Meanings of Pain* Christin Bird, former Assistant Editor of this eNewsletter, stated that it was “a ‘must have book’ for those

looking after patients with chronic pain.” After reading the second volume of van Rysewyk’s work I must agree with those words—this substantial undertaking is brilliant resource for healthcare providers, researchers, individuals living with chronic pain, and their family members. It continues to highlight the impact that chronic pain has on the lives of many and the importance of being able to understand the meaning of pain both for the experiencer and the observer. *Meanings of Pain Volume 2: Common Types of Pain and Language* builds upon the strong foundation set by the first volume and leaves those with an interest in pain eagerly waiting the third and final volume of the series.

Declaration

Lincoln Tracy has nothing to declare.