



Black Families in Therapy: A Multisystems Approach

Nancy Boyd-Franklin Ph.D.

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This pioneering work is the most comprehensive book on Black families in therapy to appear in the clinical literature. It is unprecedented in its attention to the cultural diversity among Black families, its emphasis on the utilization of cultural strengths in therapy, and on its application of the concept of clinical empowerment. Dr. Boyd-Franklin also gives thoughtful attention to the therapist's use of self and the subtleties which are often involved in the treatment process.

Highlighting the diversity among Black Afro-American families, the author's first five chapters explore a number of cultural issues including racism, racial identification, and skin color; extended family patterns and informal adoptions; role flexibility and boundary confusion; religion and spirituality. Numerous case examples provide rich illustrations of these topics. The latter part of the book further explores socioeconomic differences with specific chapters on poor inner-city, single-parent, and middle-class Black families.

An important contribution of this work is its elaboration of the Multisystems Model which allows family therapists to intervene

with Black families at multiple levels including the individual, the family, the extended family, church and community networks, and the social service system. Dr. Boyd-Franklin's clear straightforward presentation of this model will allow the practicing therapist to apply it to even the most complex treatment realities. In addition, this Multisystems Model has applicability to many other ethnic groups and treatment situations.

For training programs that include ethnicity, culture, and the treatment of Black families in their curriculum, this book provides a comprehensive syllabus. It is essential reading for family therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, medical practitioners, pastoral counselors, educators, and public agency administrators. For students and practitioners in these fields it provides a scholarly, incisive analysis that sets a standard for ethnicity studies in the therapeutic arena.

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