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Social Support and Health: An Annotated Bibliography

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pects," that is, the standard methods currently used in the treatment and prevention of family and individual problems. It suggests therapeutic and educational techniques, which probably do have value, but which are not new and which are in no way derived from the research at the heart of the book.

Social Support and Health: An Annotated Bibliography, John G. Bruhn, Billy U. Philips, Paula L. Levine, and Carlos F. Mendes de Leon, New York and London, Garland Publishing Co, 1987, 504 pps. \$64.00

An Appreciation by David J. Kallen

The concept of social support has been receiving increasing attention in the social science and medical literature since the early 1970s. This volume, edited by an Associate Editor of this Journal and his colleagues brings together in one place an annotated bibliography of over 1200 publications in social support which appeared in the literature between the early 1970s and 1986.

The book is organized into seven main sections: 1) Social support theories, 2) Social networks, 3) Social support, physical health and illness, and rehabilitation, 4) Social support, mental health and mental illness, 5) Social support and life cycle issues, 6) Social and cultural factors and social support, and 7) Social support strategies and applications. Each area is further subdivided by topics (i.e. specific disease categories in section 3). There is an author index and a topic index.

The book has the strengths and weaknesses of an annotated bibliography. There is no clear theoretical orientation; rather the selection seems to be relatively comprehensive and eclectic. Each selection includes a brief statement of the audience most likely to be interested in the particular publication. The index is comprehensive enough to be helpful in looking for fairly specific topics (i.e. elderly service programs, work environment). At the same time, the researcher or practitioner interested in general topics will need to look carefully through a number of pages in order to make sure that all relevant articles are found.

This is a useful book for practitioners and researchers concerned with issues of social support. Having these citations in one volume will save hours of library searching, or of searching of electronic data bases. The summaries and interpretations are useful guides for which articles might be obtained and read and which are not relevant to the interests of the particular reader of the book. Bruhn and his colleagues have provided a real service in bringing these materials together.