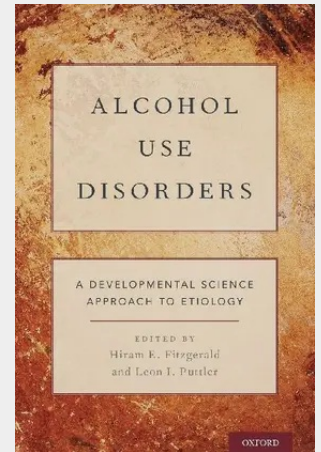


Alcohol Use Disorders

A Developmental Science Approach to Etiology

Alcohol Use Disorders takes a life-span/developmental approach to understanding the etiologic processes that heighten risk or resilience factors for alcohol use disorders (AUD). Contemporary understanding benefits from thirty years of longitudinal studies that were specifically designed to assess pre-onset origins, predictors of onset, and outcomes through early adulthood. The overriding theme of the volume is that the origins and expression of AUD are best understood within the context of developmental processes and dynamic systems organization and change. Such dynamic systems give rise to diverse pathways that are characterized by multi-finality and equi-finality due to the exchanges among genes, epigenetic processes, and the complexities of the individual organism's experiential world. For some individuals, these dynamic processes lead to risk cumulative or cascade effects that embody adverse childhood experiences that exacerbate risk, predict early onset drinking (or smoking), and are highly likely to lead to AUD during the transitions to adolescence and emerging adulthood. In other cases, protective factors within or outside of the individual's immediate family enable embodiment of normative stress regulatory systems and neural networks that support resilience and prevention of AUD and other addictive behaviors.

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