Media and Book Reviews

THE NEUROPSYCHIATRY OF EPILEPSY, SECOND EDITION

Edited by Michael R. Trimble and Bettina Schmitz,
221 pp., Cambridge University Press, 2011, \$99

The complexities of the mind–brain interface are fascinating for the clinical neurologist, but also challenging. Epilepsy, with its electrophysiologic underpinnings and its high rate of anxiety and suicidality, provides a prime example of a disease that is as much of the mind as it is of the brain. Though neurologists feel generally adept at identifying and localizing epileptiform discharges on an EEG, many of these same well-trained neurologists feel poorly equipped to manage an epileptic patient with significant psychiatric comorbidities. *The Neuropsychiatry of Epilepsy* provides a nuanced diagnostic and management approach to the cognitive and psychiatric problems affecting epilepsy patients, and in doing so, serves as a means by which the practicing neurologist can begin navigating the murky mind–brain borderland.

This book aims to tackle this interdisciplinary question by recruiting a constellation of neurologists, psychiatrists, and psychologists to serve as contributing authors. These experts address, to varying degrees, the following 5 questions: 1) What are the psychiatric risk factors for development of epileptic and nonepileptic seizures? 2) In what ways can the ictal or peri-ictal state manifest as psychiatric or cognitive disturbances? 3) How can the medical and surgical treatment of epilepsy contribute to psychiatric and cognitive pathology? 4) What interictal cognitive and behavioral pathologies are disproportionately prevalent among patients with epilepsy? 5) How can we use our knowledge of the anatomic basis of altered consciousness in epilepsy to inform our broader understanding of the neural correlates of conscious states?

To answer these questions, the book occasionally employs animal studies, but, by and large, the book is

grounded in human clinical data. The chapters tend to provide exhaustive reviews of the relevant literature. This detailed review is at once this book's strength as well as a potential weakness. On one hand, it allows the reader to understand the broader landscape of academic inquiry not limited to the opinion and anecdotal experience of the chapter's author. Conversely, the level of detail can sometimes lead the reader to lose the forest in the trees.

What *The Neuropsychiatry of Epilepsy* does unquestionably well is comprehensively answer important clinical questions that have rarely been broached elsewhere. The other 2 books that seem comparable in depth and scope are the first edition of *The Neuropsychiatry of Epilepsy*¹ (2002) and Dorothea Trenitv's *Behavioral Aspects of Epilepsy*² (2008). The second edition of *The Neuropsychiatry of Epilepsy* builds on the topics that were discussed previously in these other works and also provides updates from more recent literature.

One cannot overstate the importance of the clinical questions addressed in these texts. In fact, a cited reason for the high risk of suicide among epilepsy patients is “the failure of specialists to appreciate the importance, in the context of epilepsy, of psychiatric symptoms as targets for treatment.”³ *The Neuropsychiatry of Epilepsy* provides a unique opportunity for training and practicing neurologists to no longer fail our patients in this highly consequential way.

Reviewed by Michelle Bell, MD

The author reports no disclosures relevant to the manuscript. **Go to Neurology.org for full disclosures.**

Copyright © 2012 by AAN Enterprises, Inc.

REFERENCES

1. Trimble M, Schmitz B. *The Neuropsychiatry of Epilepsy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2002.
2. Trenitv D, Schachter S, Holmes G. *Behavioral Aspects of Epilepsy*. New York: Demos Medical Publishing; 2008.
3. Trimble M, Schmitz B. *The Neuropsychiatry of Epilepsy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2011:186.

Note to Book Publishers: *Neurology*[®] provides reviews of books of interest to the clinical neurologist. Please send any books for possible review in the journal to: Robert A. Gross, MD, PhD, FAAN, Editor-in-Chief, *Neurology*, 201 Chicago Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55415. Inquiries can be directed to: Journal@neurology.org. Please note that not all books received are chosen for review. We do not return books.

Neurology®

Media and Book Reviews: The Neuropsychiatry of Epilepsy, Second Edition

Michelle Bell

Neurology 2012;79:e45

DOI 10.1212/WNL.0b013e31826171a7

This information is current as of July 30, 2012

Updated Information & Services

including high resolution figures, can be found at:
<http://n.neurology.org/content/79/5/e45.full>

Permissions & Licensing

Information about reproducing this article in parts (figures, tables) or in its entirety can be found online at:
http://www.neurology.org/about/about_the_journal#permissions

Reprints

Information about ordering reprints can be found online:
<http://n.neurology.org/subscribers/advertise>

Neurology® is the official journal of the American Academy of Neurology. Published continuously since 1951, it is now a weekly with 48 issues per year. Copyright © 2012 by AAN Enterprises, Inc.. All rights reserved. Print ISSN: 0028-3878. Online ISSN: 1526-632X.