



Neuroscience for the Mental Health Clinician

By Steven R. Pliszka MD, Steven Pliszka

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As scientific knowledge grows about the role of the brain in mental disorder, no clinician can afford to be uninformed about neurobiology. This accessible primer provides the basic grounding in neuroscience that all contemporary mental health professionals need. Readers are first guided through the fundamentals of neuroanatomy, neurochemistry, and psychiatric genetics. Chapters then illuminate the neurobiological underpinnings of a range of frequently encountered disorders--including ADHD, substance abuse, mood and anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, and learning and cognitive problems--giving particular attention to the impact of psychosocial risk factors on the brain. Also examined are ways that both pharmacological and psychological interventions have been shown to alter brain chemistry as they bring about a reduction in symptoms.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Neuroscience for the Mental Health Clinician is a unique book. In it, Pliszka expertly explains complex concepts from laboratory-based neurosciences in a cogent and readily accessible fashion. What is particularly noteworthy about this work is its adroit descriptions of ideas that are often difficult to grasp. Although it covers a wide array of topics from the basic neurosciences, the book never loses its clinical focus. Deftly bridging the gap between clinical and laboratory science, this book should be a welcome read for experienced and novice clinicians alike."--Robert L. Findling, MD, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, University Hospitals of Cleveland

"This volume will be invaluable to clinicians who work with patients with a range of different psychiatric disorders. Readers will benefit from the clear organization of the text and Pliszka's ability to explain very complex neurochemical issues to the non-MD practitioner. This much-needed book will be well used over time as both a reference and teaching tool. This book will work well as a text in graduate-level psychopathology courses."--Margaret Semrud-Clikeman, PhD, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Texas at Austin

"I have read and struggled with a number of books on brain functions and mental health. This is the first such in-depth book I've read that is user-friendly to mental health professionals who do not have formal medical training. It includes what is often missing in other technical publications--interesting, attention-getting descriptions of the relationships of brain functions to real-life experiences. The reader gets a coherent, progressively unified picture rather than being left with a multitude of details. Dr. Pliszka makes it easy to understand the neurological underpinnings of anxiety, ADHD, and depression, and the epilogue offers one of the best summaries of the state-of-the-art in mental disorders I have read. The book also ties current scientific knowledge to other theoretical interpretations of human behavior, such as Freud's structural theory. Written in a straightforward, conversational style, this book has given me a deeper appreciation of how truly marvelous the brain is. It is ideal for graduate-level psychology courses as well as for medical school education and psychiatric residencies."--Michael J. Manos, PhD, Director, ADHD Center, Children's Hospital at the Cleveland Clinic

"...this is an excellent book....the author ties his presentation of neurobiology and of genetics directly to topics of enormous clinical interesttopics such as memory, fear, pleasure, and aggression. And more than that, he explains the neurobiological bases of both the symptomatic presentation and the successful treatment of disorders ranging from depression and mania through personality disorders."

(Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic 2004-10-01)

"Strengths of the book include Dr. Pliszka's extensive use of the literature in a laudable synthesis of research, presenting each topic concisely and clearly. He does not short-change any area he addresses and has highlighted the role of important scientists with summaries of key findings where relevant....Dr. Pliszka has made an important contribution in helping mental health clinicians to orient themselves to the imperatives of neuroscience and the possibilities for future advancement."

(Community Mental Health Journal 2004-10-01)

"An excellent introductory guide to neuroscience and its relationship to mental illness. The author has done a commendable job."

(*Psychological Medicine* 2004-10-01)

"This book is well written and crafted in an engaging style that captures the reader's attention....Highly recommended for all mental health professionals. It is also a great introductory text for teaching in psychiatric residency programs, particularly for residents who are interested in the study of genetics and mental illness."

(*Archives of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy* 2004-10-01)

About the Author

Steven R. Pliszka, MD, is Associate Professor and Chief of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. He was the recipient of a Career Development Award from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and currently has an NIMH grant to study attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder using neuroimaging techniques. Dr. Pliszka has a very active clinical practice and teaches neurobiology to Child and Adolescent Psychiatry residents. He is coauthor of *ADHD with Comorbid Disorders*.

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Jennie Miller:

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Suk Barry:

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Gary Lund:

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