

BOOK  
DASH

## The parasomnias and other sleep-related movement disorders

Thorpy MJ, Plazzi G (Eds). Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2010. Hardback: 356. ISBN: 9780521111577.

The area of Sleep Medicine has undergone rapid expansion over the last two decades. With the explosion of sleep-disordered breathing, a concomitant evolution in the less common manifestations of sleep disorders has come of age. This text is both timely and sufficiently detailed to fill a substantial space in this most fascinating group of disorders.

The text is divided into six easily digestible sections grouping the conditions according to common themes. Within each section are carefully crafted chapters each separately authored by renowned experts covering a diversity of material from 'The Medico-Legal Consequences of Parasomnias' to the rare and unusual variants such as 'Fragmentary Myoclonus' and 'Propriospinal Myoclonus'.

With such vast ground to cover, one often expects some gaps or areas of more cursory depth. In truth, however, this text finds ample balance between depth and breadth. Quite an editorial achievement!

While a general historical perspective is chronicled as a short history in the initial chapter, many subsequent chapters provide their own unique recount of history germane to the topic. Often drawing on historical recordings and observations of past authors, there is a seamless integration of a multitude of parallel

disorders and the relationship to the topic of interest.

This approach was both textually elegant and made often tough science easy to digest. 'Sxosomnias' is a wonderful example. Ranging from the initial observations of Albrecht Langeluddeke to the single photon emission computed tomography (SPECT) studies of Bassetti et al., it is a walk through the evolution of this condition from psychopathy to pathology.

Each chapter is carefully crafted with considerable attention to graphic representation of tables and polysomnographic tracings. Each author seems to have taken particular care to choose references of most important and scientific weight to punctuate the chapter so as not to clutter the text with countless footnotes and reference tags. The bibliography at the end of each chapter is likely to serve as a priceless starting point for those wanting more specific detail or reading in the given area.

This reviewer was a little disappointed at the lack of colour images integrated into each chapter, although they are referenced and printed elsewhere, this does tend to diminish the continuity of the book in general.

The final chapter on 'Therapies of Parasomnias' likely to be of most value to clinicians practicing in the area and crucially includes sub-sections on non-pharmacological approaches to

treatment including stress management, hypnosis and psychotherapeutics.

The detailed descriptions of therapies less commonly experienced by physicians such as: image rehearsal therapy, systematic desensitization and lucid dreaming therapy are remarkably well described for those without prior knowledge and are sufficiently supported by evidence-based studies to substantiate or question their role.

The pharmacological therapeutic armamentarium is well covered and includes a well 'referenced' chapter on novel agents (such as melatonin) and their potential action and role in treatment.

Overall this book is very well written and collated. It has not attempted to cover topics outside the brief it states in its title. It is tight, and focused, and is at times refreshingly current for an area in such rapid evolution. The key authors are to be commended for contributions and the editors lauded for recognizing and meeting a substantial need in this fast growing field.

**David Joffe**

Respiratory and Sleep Medicine, Royal North Shore Hospital, Woolcock Institute of Medical Research (Sleep Group), Sydney, NSW, Australia

Acta Neuropsychiatrica 2011; 23: 50  
© 2011 John Wiley & Sons A/S  
DOI: 10.1111/j.1601-5215.2010.00516.x