Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience: A Primer
by Charles F. Zorumski, MD, and Eugene H Rubin, MD, PhD.

For the past several decades, psychiatry has had a number of theories regarding the etiology and pathophysiology of mental disorders. These theories have largely been “chemical” in that alterations of neurotransmitter function and of the neurotransmitters themselves have provided the basis of these hypotheses.

Zorumski and Rubin have written a delightful volume proposing a new and intriguing theory regarding the pathogenesis of mental disorders. They first review the recent literature, especially regarding neuroimaging studies of people with mental disorders. Their theory then follows from these studies (and others) and proposes that intrinsic connectivity networks (ICNs) and their function/malfunction underlies psychopathology. Zorumski and Rubin also cite studies of behavioral neurology to support their theory, and their book incorporates genetic and biochemical research produced thus far into their hypothesis. They then marshal the evidence that major mental disorders, such as depression, psychosis, and anxiety, result from alterations in these ICNs.

Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience comprises 14 chapters and an excellent index. An appendix provides terms and color maps of selected brain areas. Each chapter is summarized by key points and also a list of “suggested readings” (mostly books related to the topic) and “other references” (mostly journal articles).

This book is stated to have been written to influence young physicians and scientists to enter into careers related to mental health. It certainly presents an impressive summary of research into brain function and structure compiled thus far and discusses areas of future research. Additionally, I think Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience should be a must-read for psychiatric residents and those clinicians who want to peek into the future. I found the arguments compelling and was excited to read this book!

David L. Dunner, MD
didunner@comcast.net

Author affiliations: Center for Anxiety and Depression, Mercer Island, Washington.
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