

# Royal College of Psychiatrists

## Pan American

## Division Newsletter



April 2017 (Issue 28)

Dear Colleagues



Dhanapal Natarajan  
Chair

The March issue of a Lancet has a series of articles dedicated to the concept of Syndemics (Lancet Vol. 389, No. 10072). This is an important attempt to highlight and reconceptualise multimorbidity in the context of our physical and social environments. A syndemic is a synergistic epidemic that is defined by the presence of two or more disease states that adversely interact with each other, increasing the severity of each other's course, and are further exacerbated by the social context in which they occur. Many elements of the syndemics concept are closely aligned with the biopsychosocial (BPS) model that has been part of the psychiatric "[orthodoxy](#)" since it was introduced by [Engel](#) in the 1970s. Perhaps what distinguishes the syndemics concept is that it applies BPS principles to conditions traditionally considered outside the purview of psychiatry and goes beyond providing a framework for understanding the complex circumstances in which diseases arise. Syndemics emphasize the need for action at the level of population health and service delivery and clearly articulates the need intervene to improve the burden of the social risk factors.



Sophia Frangou  
Vice Chair

The syndemics concept seems to be motivated by the globalization of social and environmental forces relevant to multi-morbidity that are further compounded by large population movements particularly in Europe and In the USA. Amongst non-communicable diseases, the Lancet focuses on the relationship between [type 2 diabetes and depression](#). The two disorders share biological links in terms of increased inflammatory load and alterations in glucose metabolism. The risk for both disorders appears to be increased amongst people who experience poverty, migration, discrimination, and chronic and acute trauma, including inter-personal violence and childhood abuse. The implication for health systems is that their focus and structure would need to adapt in order to integrate mental and physical care to enable early detection and appropriate treatment that address the totality of the patients' problems.



As always we look forward to your thoughts and comments at [panamericandivision@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:panamericandivision@rcpsych.ac.uk)

Nhanapal Natarajan

Sophia Frangou

Kenneth Kaufman

# This and That

## ✳️Job Board✳️

The Job Board can be accessed at [http://jobs.rcpsych.ac.uk/home/index.cfm?site\\_id=16082](http://jobs.rcpsych.ac.uk/home/index.cfm?site_id=16082) The site accepts job postings from employers and allows job seekers to search for jobs and create personalized alerts based on their interests. Please note that the **postings are international** (not just UK) and include clinical and academic posts at all levels of seniority.

✳️ **RCPsych PanAm Book club** ✳️ The book club features books (recommended by our members). The topic has to be relevant to psychiatry and neuroscience from either a scientific, literary or societal perspective. Self-nominations by authors who are college members are welcome. Please provide a brief comment for each recommendation but this is optional. Any ideas? Please send them in at [panamericandivision@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:panamericandivision@rcpsych.ac.uk)! NB: Inclusion of a book in the PanAm Book Club does not imply endorsement or promotion by the RCPsych.

## Book of the Month

**Introduction to Syndemics: A Critical Systems Approach to Public and Community Health**  
*By Merrill Singer (Jossey-Bass, 2009)*

### Previously featured

**Head in the Cloud: Why Knowing Things Still Matters When Facts Are So Easy to Look Up**  
*By William Poundstone (Little, Brown and Company, 2016)*

**Walking the Medicine Wheel: Healing Trauma & PTSD**  
*By David Kopacz and Joseph Rael (Beautiful Painted Arrow)*  
*Millichap Books/Pointer Oak, 2016*

**Re-humanizing Medicine: A Holistic Framework for Transforming Your Self, Your Practice, and the Culture of Medicine.**  
*By David Kopacz (Ayni Press, a division of John Hunt Publishing, 2014)*

**The Emotional Life of Your Brain**  
*By Richard J. Davidson, Sharon Begley*  
*Avery; Reprint edition (December 24, 2012)*

**Journeys into the Bright World**  
*by Marcia Moore and Howard Alltounian (Para Research, 1978)*  
*Freely accessible at <http://pdf.textfiles.com/books/journeysbrightworld.pdf>*

**The Doors of Perception**  
*By Aldous Huxley (Harper Perennial Modern Classics 2009)*

**The Age of Wonder: The Romantic Generation and the Discovery of the Beauty and Terror of Science,**  
*by Richard Holmes (HarperCollins, 2008)*

**Marijuana: The Unbiased Truth about the World's Most Popular Weed**  
*By Kevin Phill (Hazelden 2015)*

**Algorithms to Live By: The Computer Science of Human Decisions**  
*By Brian Christian and Tom Griffiths (Henry Holt and Co 2016)*

**Why You Love Music: From Mozart to Metallica--The Emotional Power of Beautiful Sounds**  
*By John Powell (Little, Brown and Company 2016)*

### **Introductory Textbook of Psychiatry, Sixth Edition**

By Donald W. Black and Nancy C. Andreasen (APA 2014)

(Comment by Sophia Frangou: A good textbook for residents and students updated to reflect changes in the DSM5)

### **Sacred Pathways: The Brain's role in Religious and Mystic Experiences**

By Todd Murphy; Foreword by His Holiness The Dalai Lama and A. Persinger; 2015

### **NeuroTribes: The Legacy of Autism and the Future of Neurodiversity**

By Steve Silberman (Penguin 2015); Winner of the 2015 Samuel Johnson Prize for non-fiction

### **The Digital Doctor: Hope, Hype, and Harm at the Dawn of Medicine's Computer Age**

By Robert Wachter (McGraw-Hill Professional 2015)

### **The Well-Tuned Brain: Neuroscience and the Life Well Lived**

By Peter Whybrow (WW Norton & Company 2015)

### **The Heart and the Bottle**

By Oliver Jeffers (HarperCollins Publishers 2015)

(Comment by Sophia Frangou: An unbelievably tender book that helps children understand death and loss; it is also available as an animated film read by Helena Bonham-Carter: <https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/heart-bottle-for-ipad/id407795360?mt=8>)

### **Gratitude**

By Oliver Sachs (Knopf 2015)

### **A Passion for Science: Stories of Discovery and Invention**

By Suw Charman-Anderson (Editor) (Kindle ebook 2015)

### **Furiously Happy: A Funny Book About Horrible Things**

By Jenny Lawson (Flatiron Books 2015)

### **Brain Renaissance: From Vesalius to Modern Neuroscience**

By Marco Catani and Stefano Sandrone (Oxford University Press, 2015)

### **Shrinks: The Untold Story of Psychiatry**

By Jeffrey A. Lieberman and Ogi Ogas (Little, Brown and Company, 2015)

### **The Future of the Brain: Essays by the World's Leading Neuroscientists**

By Gary Marcus and Jeremy Freeman (Princeton University Press, 2014)

### **Drugs, Without the Hot Air**

By David Nutt (UIT Cambridge, 2012)

# Meeting Announcements

## 2017

Society of Biological Psychiatry, 72nd Annual Scientific Meeting and Convention, May 18-20, Hilton San Diego, San Diego, CA, USA

American Psychiatric Association, 170th Annual Meeting May 20-24, San Diego, CA, USA

World Federation of Societies of Biological Psychiatry, 13th World Congress of Biological Psychiatry, 18-22 June, Copenhagen, Denmark. Visit the congress website for details: <http://www.wfsbp-congress.org/welcome2017.html>

International Congress of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, June 26-29, Edinburgh International Conference Centre, UK. Visit the congress website for details: <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/congress>

European College of Neuropsychopharmacology, 30th Congress, September 2-5, Paris, France, Visit the congress website for details: <http://www.ecnp-congress.eu/>

Canadian Psychiatric Association, 67th Annual Conference, 14 – 16 September, Shaw Centre, Ottawa, Canada. Visit the congress website for details: <http://www.cpa-apc.org>

World Psychiatric Association, 17th WPA World Congress of Psychiatry “Psychiatry of the 21st Century: Context, Controversies and Commitment” 8-12 October, Berlin, Germany. Visit the congress website for details: <http://www.wpaberlin2017.com>

XXV World Congress Of Psychiatric Genetics, Oct 13- 17, Orlando, Florida, US, Visit the congress website for details <http://www.wcpg2017.org/>

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 64th Annual Meeting, October 23-28, Marriott Wardman Park and Omni Shoreham Hotels, Washington, DC

## 2018

European Psychiatric Association, 26th Congress, 3-6 March, Nice, France. Visit the congress website for details: <http://www.epa-congress.org/>

**Please feel free to submit information on meetings or teaching events you may be organising nationally or locally and which may be of interest to the Pan American Division members to [panamericandivision@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:panamericandivision@rcpsych.ac.uk)**