

# Royal College of Psychiatrists

## Pan American

## Division Newsletter



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**Sophia Frangou**  
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Dear Colleagues

Over the past year, there have been a number of thought provoking developments in the field of genetics.

Researchers have applied a method of genome editing called CRISPR to human embryonic cells. The purpose of CRISPR is to “normalise” the function of gene variants implicated in disease. It has the potential of changing DNA of embryos prior to implantation in the womb to treat genetic disorders. In a recent paper published in [Molecular Therapy](#), researchers from China used a variation of CRISPR known as a base editing in seven human embryos to correct the pathogenic FBN1 genotype that causes Marfan syndrome, a connective tissue disorder that can affect the heart, bones, and joints. Importantly, no “off-target effects” or unwanted modifications were detected in the genomes of the modified embryos, none of which was implanted. The clinical and societal implications of this breakthrough are immense. Even if heritable editing proves to be safe and useful in correcting genetic syndromes, it could potentially be used for human enhancement. The Nuffield Council on Bioethics is the first body to produce a report on the ethical and societal considerations of human genome editing. The full report can be found [here](#).

In a fascinating paper, [Boyle, Yang and Pritchard](#) put forward a new conceptual model for the heritability of complex traits and diseases. The authors performed novel analyses on existing datasets to and conclude that genome-wide association studies that focus on common single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) may not provide genetic targets useful for treatment. They use height as an example to show that more than 100,000 SNPs appear to contribute to this trait. They also show that the bulk of the heritability falls outside the known pathways. Based on these observations the authors propose an Omnigenic model that “...predicts that virtually any variant with regulatory effects in a given tissue is likely to have (weak) effects on all diseases that are modulated through that tissue.”

We hope you find these studies interesting and informative.

As always we want to hear from you! Email us at [panamericandivision@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:panamericandivision@rcpsych.ac.uk)

**Sophia Frangou**

**Kenneth Kaufman**

**Allan Tasman**

# 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.

## ✳️ Medical Training Initiative ✳️

The Medical Training Initiative (MTI) is designed to enable a small number of International Medical and Dental Graduates to enter the UK to experience training in the NHS for up to two years before returning to their home country. For more details including how to apply please visit the College's website at <https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/workinpsychiatry/internationalaffairsunit/medicaltraininginitiative.aspx>

## ✳️ 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

### What is Real?

*By Adam Becker (Basic Books 2018)*

### Previously featured

#### Advice for a Young Investigator

*By Santiago Ramón y Cajal (translated by Neely and Larry W. Swanson) (A Bradford Book; 1st edition 2004)*

#### The Knife Went In: A Prison-Doctor on Britain's Dark Side

*By Theodore Dalrymple (Gibson Square Books Ltd, Revised edition 2018)*

#### Maps of Meaning: The Architecture of Belief

*By Jordan Peterson (Routledge; 1<sup>st</sup> edition March 1999)*

#### The Maudsley Prescribing Guidelines in Psychiatry, 13th Edition

*By David M. Taylor, Thomas R. E. Barnes and Allan H. Young (Wiley Blackwell, 2018)*

This is the updated edition of the word-leading and essential reference book for the prescribing of drugs for patients with mental health disorders.

#### Neuroexistentialism

*By Gregg Caruso and Owen Flanagan (Oxford University Press, 2018)*

#### Soul Made Flesh: The Discovery of the Brain--and How it Changed the World

*By Carl Zimmer (Atria Books; Reprint edition, 2005)*

#### Dreamland: The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic

*By Sam Quinones (Bloomsbury Press; Reprint edition 2016)*

**Behave: The Biology of Humans at Our Best and Worst**  
*By Robert M. Sapolsky (Penguin Press, 2017)*

**Against empathy: A case for rational compassion**  
*By Paul Bloom (HarperCollins, 2016)*

**The Unity-Based Family: An Empirical Study of Healthy Marriage, Family, and Parenting**  
*By HB Danesh and Azin Nasserri (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017)*

**Brain Apps: Hacking Neuroscience To Get There**  
*RG Best and JM Best (Booklocker.com, 2017)*

**The Grey Zone: A Neuroscientist Explores Border Between Life And Death**  
*By Adrian Owen (Scribner, 2017)*

**When Breath Becomes Air**  
*By Paul Kalanithi (Random House, 2016)*

**Brainwashed: The Seductive Appeal of Mindless Neuroscience**  
*By Sally Satel, Scott O. Lilienfeld (Basic Books, 2015)*

**The Ministry of Utmost Happiness**  
*By Arundhati Roy (Knopf, 2017)*  
For all of you who love India and "The God of Small Things"

**The Mask of Sanity**  
*By Jacob Appel (Permanent Press, 2017)*

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

**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**

### **2018**

Canadian Psychiatric Association, 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Sep 27 - 29, Westin Harbour Castle Hotel, Toronto, Canada. Visit the congress website for details: <http://www.cpa-apc.org>

European College of Neuropsychopharmacology, 31st Congress, October 6-9, Barcelona, Spain, Visit the congress website for details: <http://www.ecnp-congress.eu/>

XXVI World Congress Of Psychiatric Genetics, Oct 11- 15, Glasgow, Scotland, Visit the congress website for details <http://www.wcpg2018.org/>

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 65th Annual Meeting, October 22-27, Washington State Convention Center and Sheraton Seattle, Seattle, WA

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)