



SINGAPORE. Dapunta Hyang: *Transmission of Knowledge*. 57th International Art Exhibition — La Biennale di Venezia, Viva Arte Viva. Photo by: Italo Rondinella. Courtesy: La Biennale di Venezia.

playground with musical instruments. On the first screen, a violin has been attached to the roundabout playing chords against the bow once a revolution. On the next screen a drum rolls down a hill, and the final screen had a tambourine rocking back and forth on a bouncing horse. Overall it made a beautiful tune, but was also very funny.

SIZE CAN BE EVERYTHING

The Italian pavilion over the last few Biennales hasn't ever really excited me, but this year was another story. Giorgio Andreotta has filled a vast room with scaffolding, making it initially dark and uninviting, but at one end is another grandstand that lets you look at the top of this strange structure, where you discover it is covered in water, giving you a perfect reflection of the beautiful, ancient roof above you as far as the eye can see. Nearby, Lisa Reihana for New Zealand has created an epic, panoramic film maybe 20 meters long that fills a vast space, with numerous vignettes recreating Captain Cook's men arriving on the Pacific islands 200 years ago. As the film unfolds it explains how they interacted with the natives. It is a very powerful reminder of our shared history.

This year the UK is represented by septuagenarian sculptor Phyllida Barlow, an artist who has remained largely forgotten and under the radar for the last 20 years while we obsessed about the YBAs. Now she has been 'rediscovered' and has produced a monumental show in the Giardini. Outside we find large painted concrete 'lollipops' on sticks; inside, the space is congested

with huge sculptures bisecting and dividing the rooms, reaching high up into the roof. The physicality of the work makes you feel uncomfortable and exhilarated, and it appears to be made of rubbish, recycled old wooden batons, cardboard boxes, and chunks of cement and polystyrene, all brightly coloured. It makes the building feel small and almost as though you are not visiting an art exhibition, but instead are a voyeur, stumbling upon something that has been there forever and you are having a sneak around.

So can you centre a holiday to La Biennale with a 5-year-old? Yes you can and we all enjoyed ourselves. We had made the conscious decision to stay on the Lido so had the beach a 5-minute walk away for 'non-art days'. We considered the *vaporetti* (water buses) essential for getting around town and they are a must for children with a fascination for all forms of transport. Most contemporary art is very accessible to children; my son would often point out details that we had not noticed and was just as enthusiastic as we were. His highlights of what we had seen each day were often the same as ours, although he loved taking charge of the map and ticking off what we had seen and where we were going next. I think we all came back mentally and physically refreshed. Roll on the next two chapters of this glorious year ...

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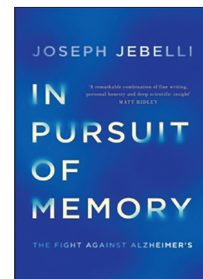
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In Pursuit of Memory: the Fight Against Alzheimer's

Joseph Jebelli

John Murray, 2017, HB, 320pp, £18.99, 978-1473635739



TANGLED UP IN HOPE

Joseph Jebelli is a researcher at the Institute of Neurology at University College London, working on rats genetically programmed to develop Alzheimer's disease — specifically, on immune stimulation of microglial cells in the hope that this will make some contribution to an eventual cure.

He begins with an account of the first formal description of the disease by Alois Alzheimer in 1906, whose presentation to a psychiatric convention was met with a distinctly uninterested response from his psychoanalytically inclined audience. His work was rewarded in 1910 when Kraepelin, in his *Handbook of Psychiatry*, used the term 'Alzheimer's disease' for the first time.

Moving on to describe the major research findings to date, we read about the discovery of plaques and tangles, the two microanatomical hallmarks of Alzheimer's, and the later discovery that acetylcholine activity was diminished in the brains of sufferers. Further work elucidated the significance of beta-amyloid, bolstered by the finding of a single nucleotide mutation on chromosome 21 in familial early-onset Alzheimer's, which causes the production of amyloid precursor protein (APP). The three overlapping but competing theories of causation include the beta-amyloid cascade theory, which contends that the deposition of amyloid is the primary precipitant; the apoprotein 4 theory, which focuses on the role of impaired glucose uptake in diseased brains; and the tau theory, tau (tubule-associated unit) being a protein found in tangles that disrupts intra-

neuronal transport and causes neuronal degeneration and death.

The section on prevention focuses on the usual suspects: stress, diet, exercise, brain training, and sleep. A gallop through the evidence leads to the predictable conclusion that, though none of these options offers any dramatic promise, in the author's words:

'... these lifestyle measures are good for us anyway, [so] play it safe ... follow a Mediterranean diet. Exercise. Avoid stress. Stimulate your mind. Sleep. You've got nothing to lose and everything to gain.'

The remaining chapters take us all over the globe, through a number of cutting-edge research projects in neurobiochemistry, and some tantalising possibilities. Plasma infusions can improve memory, perhaps through proteins that stimulate neurogenesis in the hippocampus. Prions, virus-like proteins that include the entities responsible for CJD and kuru, seem also to have some protective function. The observation that cancer susceptibility and Alzheimer's are negatively correlated has led to speculation about the possibility of using certain chemotherapeutic agents early in the disease. And the fact that the low prevalence of Alzheimer's in Iceland is due to a single protective mutation at the same site as the mutation that causes early-onset Alzheimer's offers some hope for drug treatment aimed at amyloid production and breakdown. A village in India provides a case study for the possible protective effects of turmeric, while a village in Colombia by contrast has a concentration of another familial form of the disease characterised by a distinctive form of 'cotton wool' plaques.

Jebelli exudes a sense of optimism, and believes that there will be an effective treatment for the disease within his lifetime. A lot of hope is pinned on gene modification, and in particular on the gene-editing tool known as CRISPR.

The author never loses sight of the human stories: those of the scientists dedicating their lives to defeating this horrible disease, but, more importantly, those of its sufferers and their families. His humanity complements his hopefulness, and his readers should be grateful for both.

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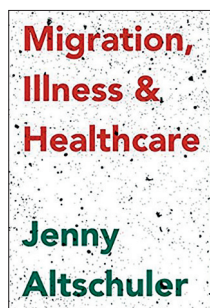
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Migration, Illness & Healthcare

Jenny Altschuler

Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, PB, 280pp, £24.99, 978-1137378507



A JOURNEY THROUGH MIGRATION AND ITS IMPACT ON HEALTH

Migrant health has never been more relevant. In 2016 an unprecedented 65.6 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide.¹ Providing equitable care presents enormous challenges, from the politics of healthcare policy to the nuances of cross-cultural consultations in daily practice.

Altschuler's new book is a timely and fascinating exploration of these issues and much more. She does not shy away from writing about the diversity of migrant experiences: from professional economic migrants choosing to work for the NHS, to how survivors of torture may struggle to trust clinicians in positions of power.

Working as an inner-city GP I recognise many of the patients and the situations. In one chapter Altschuler describes cultural dissonance between first- and second-generation migrants, and how this impacts on health and wellbeing. In another chapter the differences in the cultural constructions of illness and death are examined. She reminds us that Western concepts often fail to understand the 'spiritual' dimension of wellbeing. An example given is a study showing that Hindu women undergoing treatment for cervical cancer had a better psychological recovery if they believed the cancer was caused by God's will rather than linking it to their own bodily weakness or mental stress.

As healthcare professionals we are challenged to reflect on our own cultural beliefs and values, and on how these influence our ability to communicate with patients and provide sensitive care. Altschuler tackles politically thorny issues including restrictive healthcare policy and the barriers faced by vulnerable patient groups trying to access care.

The real appeal of this book lies in the narrative, into which Altschuler artfully weaves case studies, contemporary research, and her own personal experiences of migration. She is an adept storyteller and writer, and her expertise as a family psychotherapist is evident throughout, providing a compelling and accessible analysis of the topic.

This book is an invaluable resource for GPs, healthcare professionals, and readers interested in healthcare policy or the wider issues related to migration and health. It not only gives practical recommendations, but also raises questions about how as individuals and as a society we can provide more equitable health care.

Hannah Fox,

Locum, London.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp17X693797>

REFERENCE

1. UNHCR. The UN Refugee Agency. *20 people are newly displaced every minute of the day.* <http://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2016/> [accessed 24 Oct 2017].