

Reaching Down the Rabbit Hole: A Renowned Neurologist Explains the Mystery and Drama of Brain Disease

Dr. Allan H. Ropper, Brian David Burrell

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"Tell the doctor where it hurts." It sounds simple enough, unless the problem affects the very organ that produces awareness and generates speech. What is it like to try to heal the body when the mind is under attack? In this book, Dr. Allan Ropper and Brian Burrell take the reader behind the scenes at Harvard Medical School's neurology unit to show how a seasoned diagnostician faces down bizarre, life-altering afflictions. Like Alice in Wonderland, Dr. Ropper inhabits a world where absurdities abound:

- A figure skater whose body has become a ticking time-bomb
- A salesman who drives around and around a traffic rotary, unable to get off
- A college quarterback who can't stop calling the same play
- A child molester who, after falling on the ice, is left with a brain that is very much dead inside a body that is very much alive
- A mother of two young girls, diagnosed with ALS, who has to decide whether a life locked inside her own head is worth living

How does one begin to treat such cases, to counsel people whose lives may be changed forever? How does one train the next generation of clinicians to deal with the moral and medical aspects of brain disease? Dr. Ropper and his colleague answer these questions by taking the reader into a rarified world where lives and minds hang in the balance.



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