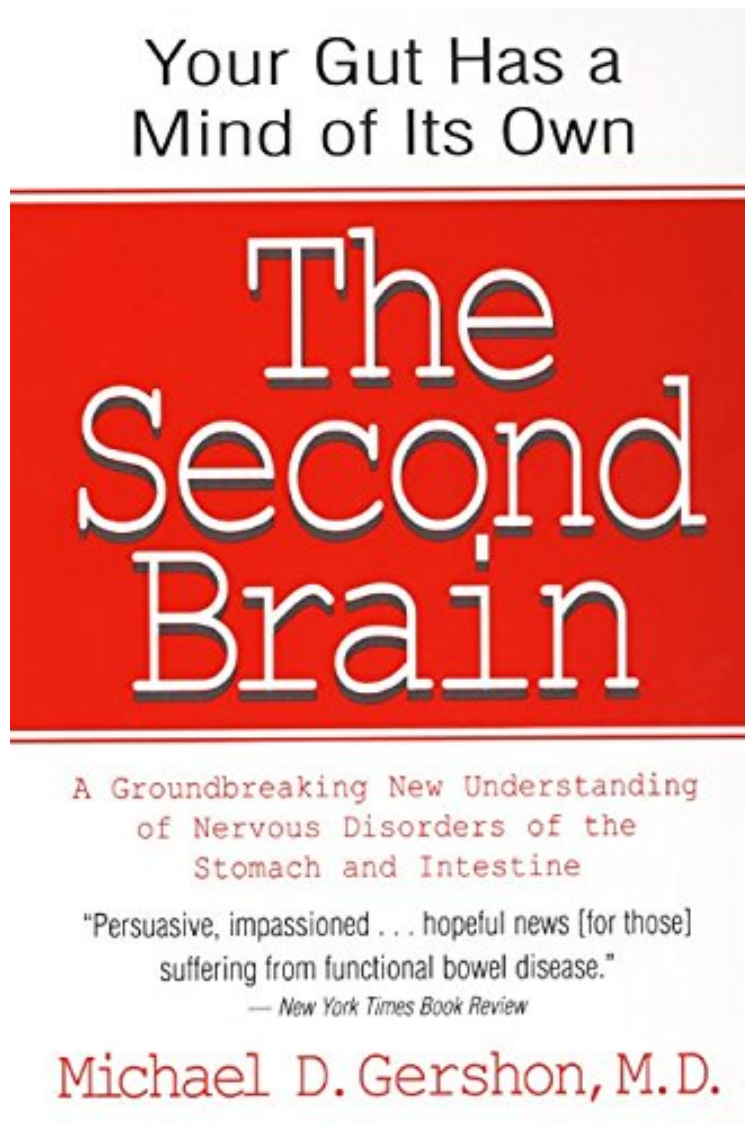


(Free pdf) The Second Brain: A Groundbreaking New Understanding of Nervous Disorders of the Stomach and Intestine

The Second Brain: A Groundbreaking New Understanding of Nervous Disorders of the Stomach and Intestine

Michael Gershon

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#38876 in Books Michael Gershon 1999-11-17 1999-11-17 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .76 x 5.311, .53 #File Name: 0060930721336 pages Second Brain A Groundbreaking New Understanding of Nervous Disorders of the Stomach and Intestine | File size: 50.Mb

Michael Gershon : The Second Brain: A Groundbreaking New Understanding of Nervous Disorders of the Stomach and Intestine before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Second Brain: A Groundbreaking New Understanding of Nervous Disorders of the Stomach and Intestine:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A great book! By Jean A Morrow Having been a scientist all of my adult life, I understood the book completely, and it's outstanding! I just think that many of the terms when newly introduced should be highlighted for the sake of the lay audience. I also think there should be more illustrations, but that's just stingy publishers..... A great book! 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Gutsy Read! By Micki Smith Interestingly written by a scientist--perhaps that's a first! Information was very helpful in understanding the way serotonin acts in our bodies. 23 of 23 people found the following review helpful. This is a 300 page scientific paper. A rather unreadable book. By Abacus I am used to reading very dry working papers in mathematics, medical research, econometrics and other scientific endeavors. Usually, such papers are 20 pages or less. A few are up to 50 pages. However, this book is pretty much a 300 page scientific paper! In other words, it is rather unreadable. There is way too much detail to impart the key information to a general audience. As an example, the entire Part I of the book that covers 80 pages can be summed up in the following paragraph. In Part I, the author discloses that he rediscovered that human beings have essentially a third nervous system or rather nervous/motor system. The first one is the voluntary skeletal one whereby your brain essentially controls all your voluntary actions through orders transmitted with the acetylcholine neurotransmitter among many others. The second one is the involuntary automatic one that controls most of your physiological necessities and responses (breathing, cardiovascular system functioning, glands, visceral muscles, etc.). It is governed by the peripheral central nervous system (spinal cord, etc.). This system is subdivided into two. One is the sympathetic one that responds to the neurotransmitter norepinephrine (a precursor of adrenaline) and is responsible for the flight-or-fight mechanism among many other reflexive reactions. The other one is the parasympathetic nervous system that responds to the acetylcholine neurotransmitter that governs many physiological activities. In addition, the author's contribution to the field is his rediscovering a third and pretty independent nervous system: enteric nervous system governing your digestive system (your gut) through the neurotransmitter serotonin. He states that he rediscovered the enteric nervous system because it was first discovered by an earlier set of scientists a long time ago. Bayliss and Starling came up with the Law of the Intestine in the 1890s; Langley publishes his seminal book on the subject *The Autonomic Nervous System* in 1921. Both treaties described the workings of the enteric nervous system in detail. And, Gershon graciously gives them full credit for their work. If you find the above paragraph too heavy going, this book is not for you. The above paragraph is a piece of cake compared to the real thing: an 80 page Part I with many more details describing cellular level physiological reactions entirely unfamiliar to a lay public. Also, the author imparts some drama regarding the rather Galilean reception he got from other neuroscientists for re-advancing the theories of the gut having its own independent nervous system. Later, when he is able to turn things around and finally convince the world that the enteric nervous system is real, he spends an entire 33 pages on a single event, a neuroscientist convention workshop that took place in Cincinnati, where he presented his theories and they were finally well accepted. He describes in extensive details his friends and foes participants at this convention. It is interesting to a certain point. Lay readers will probably feel that this topic warranted no more than 8 pages instead of 33. The remainder of the book, beyond Part I, continues to read as something like a graduate school biochemistry textbook. The *New York Times Book Review* that is quoted on the cover page as stating regarding this book: Persuasive, impassioned hopeful news [for those] suffering from functional bowel disease has most probably had no staffer actually reading this book. That's because it has very little practical health advice. It mentions that modern antidepressants (SSRIs) are really bad for your intestine because their reuptaking serotonin does reduce the amount of serotonin generated by your intestine and greatly affects your digestive function. Also, dietary fiber is really good for you because it enhances the muscular fitness of your colon. And, that's it as far as practical health advice goes. As far as Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), the author goes on an entire chapter (chapter 8. A Bad Bowel) how that disease is really ill-defined and is a catch all for all sorts of digestive ailments that the medical profession does not understand and does not know how to cure. In view of that the anthological comments by *The New York Times Book Review* are really inaccurate.

Dr. Michael Gershon has devoted his career to understanding the human bowel (the stomach, esophagus, small intestine, and colon). His thirty years of research have led to an extraordinary rediscovery: nerve cells in the gut that act as a brain. This "second brain" can control our gut all by itself. Our two brains -- the one in our head and the one in our bowel -- must cooperate. If they do not, then there is chaos in the gut and misery in the head -- everything from "butterflies" to cramps, from diarrhea to constipation. Dr. Gershon's work has led to radical new understandings about a wide range of gastrointestinal problems including gastroenteritis, nervous stomach, and irritable bowel syndrome. *The Second Brain* represents a quantum leap in medical knowledge and is already benefiting patients whose symptoms were previously dismissed as neurotic or "it's all in your head."

"Persuasive, impassioned... hopeful news [for those] suffering from functional bowel disease." -- *New York Times Book Review*
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About the Author Michael D. Gershon M.D., is chairman of the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons at the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center in

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