



Messengers of the brain

by Arvid Carlsson and Lena Carlsson

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Review by Krister Kristensson

Psychopharmacological drugs are often used, but sometimes emotionally tinged words in public debates. A book, which in an easy and clear way describes what today is known about the working mechanisms of these drugs, fills an important need. "Messengers of the brain" is a personally written book by the Swedish Nobel Laureate Arvid Carlsson, whose research about these messengers was a great breakthrough for treatments of patients with both neurological and psychiatric disorders. For the first time it was possible to understand not only how some drugs influence the brain, but also how to use them for studying the different functions of the brain. Since then the knowledge about the brain and its functions has grown enormously; most messengers between the cells have probably been identified and the signal systems inside the cells described. Now, when the human genome is described, the much greater task to understand how all these cells in the brain communicate in a meaningful way will probably follow. This book gives a useful summary of what is known today and gives insight in some of the exiting research in the subject which might take place in the years to come. This inspiring book is easy to read thanks to the cooperation between the scientist, Arvid Carlsson, and the science journalist, his daughter Lena Carlsson.

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