

BRIEF COMMUNICATION

Eponyms in Psychiatry

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Abstract

There are several types of terms that are used in the nomenclature of psychiatry disorders, one of which is the eponym. The aim of this mini-review is to discuss the use of eponyms in psychiatry and provide brief information on the men behind them.

Keywords: Diseases, Eponyms, Psychiatry

Several types of terms are used in the nomenclature of psychiatric disorders. Eponyms, one such type, have been reviewed. Table 1 lists selected eponyms in psychiatry [1-53]. One can find several synonyms to a given eponymous term in psychiatry. For example, Cotard delusion is also known as *délire de négation généralisée* ("delusion of negations"), delirium of negation, Cotard syndrome, and walking corpse syndrome. In the international literature, the terms "nihilistic delusion" and "Cotard syndrome" prevail over "delusion of negations" and "Cotard delusion."

Certain eponyms have been replaced by other terms and are not used in the current literature. Some eponyms are not as accessible as the alternative term for a

given disease. For example, "sympathetic pregnancy" is simpler to the public than "Couvade syndrome." Similarly, restless legs syndrome is preferred over Willis-Ekbom Disease.

As in other branches in medicine, several eponymous terms in psychiatry do not reflect those who first described the disease or are misnomers. The presence of a name of a scientist in an eponym of more than one disorder may be puzzling. For example, confusion can arise between "Clerambault syndrome" and "Kandinsky-Clerambault syndrome."

There is a real need to generate a consensus with regard to the nomenclature of disorders in psychiatry and medicine in general.

Table 1. Selected eponyms in psychiatry

Selected eponyms in psychiatry	Remarks
Blocq Syndrome [1]	Classified as a conversion disorder. The Greek term <i>astasia-abasia</i> literally translates to the inability to stand and walk.

	<p>First considered by Paul Blocq (1860–1896), a French pathologist. He described this phenomenon as the inability to maintain an upright posture, despite normal function of the legs in bed.</p>
Capgras Syndrome [2,3]	<p>Classified as a delusional misidentification syndrome.</p> <p>Characterized by the delusional belief that a familiar person has been replaced by a visually similar imposter or replica. Rarely, the delusional focus may be objects rather than people.</p> <p>Named after Joseph Capgras (1873–1950), a French psychiatrist.</p>
Charles Bonnet Syndrome (CBS) [4,5]	<p>Also known as visual release hallucinations.</p> <p>An organic brain syndrome of the elderly, with visual deficits and complex recurrent visual hallucination in conscious patients. It was noted for the first time by Charles Bonnet, in his grandfather, in 1760.</p> <p>Charles Bonnet (1720 –1793), a naturalist, was born in Geneva into a French family.</p>
Cotard delusion [6-9]	<p>In this disorder, the affected person holds the delusional belief that he is already dead.</p> <p>Named for Jules Cotard (1840–1889). Cotard syndrome is not mentioned in the current classification systems (ICD-10, DSM-5).</p>
de Clerambault syndrome [10-20]	<p>Another name for erotomania.</p> <p>Closely related to Othello syndrome.</p> <p>Erotomania was described by Clérambault in a treatise, titled "Les psychoses passionnelles" (1921). Gaëtan Henri Alfred Edouard Léon Marie Gatian de Clérambault (1872 – 1934) was a French psychiatrist. His name is also linked to another psychiatric syndrome: Kandinsky-Clérambault syndrome.</p>
Diogenes Syndrome (DS) [21-23]	<p>DS describes gross self-neglect in elderly reclusive individuals. Typically, patients live in filthy conditions, refuse any offers of help, may hoard rubbish, and are seemingly unconcerned, apathetic, and socially withdrawn.</p> <p>Noah syndrome is a variant of DS. The name derives from Diogenes of Sinope, an ancient Greek philosopher.</p>
Ekbom Syndrome [24-30]	<p>Ekbom syndrome may refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delusional parasitosis • Wittmaack-Ekbom syndrome, a synonym of restless legs

	<p>syndrome (RLS).</p> <p>RLS is a common neurological condition affecting a substantial portion of the population. It can be an idiopathic disorder or one that is secondary to another cause.</p> <p>In a monograph from 1861, Wittmaack referred to a condition called “anxietas tibiaram,” thought of as a manifestation of hysteria. Theodor Wittmaack (1817-1873) was a German physician with neurological interests.</p> <p>Karl-Axel Ekbom (1907-1977) was a Swedish neurologist. Thomas Willis (1621-1675) was an English doctor.</p> <p>A debatable diagnostic entity known as Morgellons disease was introduced, describing a dermatologic disorder characterized by a crawling or stinging sensation, finding fibers on the skin, and various rashes or sores. This entity is mostly believed to be a manifestation of delusional parasitosis.</p> <p>A related syndrome is delusory cleptoparasitosis, in which the individual believes the infestation is in his dwelling.</p> <p>A third syndrome bearing the name “Ekbom” is pleurothotonus or Pisa syndrome, which has been described as antipsychotic-induced extrapyramidal symptoms.</p>
Elpenor syndrome [31-33]	<p>Though benign in the majority of cases, sleepwalking sometimes causes injuries due to falls, among other causes.</p> <p>Life-threatening sleepwalking (Elpenor syndrome) comprises a set of symptoms, including semi-automatic behaviors during incomplete awakening after deep sleep.</p> <p>This syndrome is sometimes called "sleep drunkenness." It is characterized by mental confusion and spatial and temporal disorientation. It can present with risks if the subject carries out dangerous activities. The best-known example is that of Paul Deschanel, President of the Republic , who fell from a train in his pajamas on May 24, 1920, near Montargis.</p>
Frégoli delusion [34-36]	<p>Also known as the delusion of doubles.</p> <p>Belongs to the group of delusional misidentification syndromes, with the belief that a familiar person is disguised as a strange person by taking a different physical appearance but remains the same person psychologically.</p> <p>The condition is named after the Italian actor and stage star Leopoldo (Luigi) (1867 –1936), who had great skill in changing his facial expression.</p>

Ganser Syndrome [37-38]	<p>Ganser syndrome is a rare dissociative disorder.</p> <p>A rare and controversial condition, the main and most striking feature of which is the generation of approximate answers (or near misses) to very simple questions. For instance, asked how many legs a horse has, Ganser patients will reply "5," and answers to plain arithmetic questions will likewise be wrong but only slightly off (e.g., $2 + 2 = 3$).</p> <p>The disorder was first described in 4 criminals in 1898 by Sigbert Josef Maria Ganser (1853-1931), a German psychiatrist.</p>
Geschwind syndrome [39-41]	<p>Also known as Gastaut-Geschwind and Waxman-Geschwind-Gastaut Syndrome. It describes the interictal personality (eg, epileptoid personality) and remains a debated entity.</p> <p>Named for one of the first individuals to categorize the symptoms, Norman Geschwind, (1926-1984), a pioneering American behavioral neurologist.</p> <p>The syndrome has been linked to chronic temporal lobe epilepsy and manifests as religiosity, hypermoralism, hypergraphia, hyposexuality, viscosity, rigidity, egocentricity, seclusiveness, pedantism, obsessionalism, and circumstantiality.</p>
Kempf Syndrome [42]	<p>Homosexual panic is a term coined by psychiatrist Edward J. Kempf in 1920 for a condition of "panic due to the pressure of uncontrollable perverse sexual cravings."</p>
Klüver-Bucy Syndrome (KBS) [43-45]	<p>In 1937, Heinrich Klüver (see below) investigated the drug mescaline and its effect on the brain of monkeys. He asked Paul Bucy (see below) to perform temporal lobectomies in rhesus monkeys for his ongoing studies. A fruitful collaboration ensued.</p> <p>Heinrich Klüver (1897-1979) was a German and American psychologist. Paul Bucy (1904-1992) was an American neurosurgeon and neuropathologist.</p>
Koro syndrome [46,47]	<p>Koro, as a culture-bound syndrome, is predominantly reported from Asian countries. It is also known as shrinking penis and genital retraction syndrome.</p> <p>The name could be derived from a river, its surrounding valley, and a local tribe of the same name, located in northwestern Sulawesi, Indonesia.</p>
Munchausen Syndrome [48]	<p>In this disorder, patients may hope for a laparotomy (laparotimophilia migrans) or present with bleeding (hemorrhagica hysterionica), false heart attacks (cardiopathia fantastica), or curious fits (neurologica diabolica). Patients present with plausible, often</p>

	<p>dramatic scenarios that include extensive pathological lying (pseudologia fantastica) with a lack of personal rapport. Symptoms are intentionally generated voluntarily (pathomimicry).</p> <p>It was named in 1951 by Richard Asher after Karl Friedrich Hieronymus, Baron Münchhausen (1720-1797), a German nobleman, who purportedly told many fantastic and impossible stories about himself.</p> <p>In Munchausen-by-proxy, a caregiver makes up or causes an illness or injury in a person under his or her care.</p>
Othello Syndrome (OS)49	<p>OS is a type of paranoid delusional jealousy, characterized by the false absolute certainty of the infidelity of a partner.</p> <p>As in Othello, the play by Shakespeare, the syndrome can be highly dangerous and result in the disruption of a marriage, homicide, and suicide. Othello syndrome was named by the English psychiatrist John Todd (1914-1987).</p>
Simenon syndrome [19]	<p>A delusional, romantic preoccupation with another person, often a public figure. Simenon syndrome is named after the novelist Christian Simenon, as the condition was in one of his novels.</p> <p>Georges Simenon , the French novelist and mystery writer, considered becoming a psychiatrist but was unable to study medicine and turned instead to literature. By coincidence, in one of his short stories ("Mr. Monday," published in 1944), he described in clinical detail the syndrome now known as De Clérambault syndrome. The story was written by Simenon shortly before or simultaneously with De Clérambault first clinical description of the signs and symptoms that constitute the syndrome.</p> <p>One of the authors corresponded with Simenon and learned that the genesis of the story came from his imagination and was not the product of research on the topic. It has been suggested that the syndrome be renamed Simenon syndrome.</p>
Ulysses Syndrome [50-53]	<p>The mental health consequence of forced migration is named Ulysses syndrome.</p> <p>The syndrome is named after the ancient Greek hero Odysseus (Ulysses in Latin), who suffered involuntary migration and traveled for 10 years throughout the Mediterranean to return home from the decade-long Trojan War.</p>

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