



Henri Fantin-Latour, *The Two Sisters*
1859, oil on canvas, Saint Louis Art
Museum 8: 1937.

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The Dyslexia Debate

Julian G. Elliott, Durham University
Elena L. Grigorenko, Yale University

The Dyslexia Debate examines how we use the term “dyslexia” and questions its efficacy as a diagnosis. While many believe that a diagnosis of dyslexia will shed light on a reader's struggles and help identify the best form of intervention, Julian G. Elliott and Elena L. Grigorenko show that it adds little value. In fact, our problematic interpretation of the term could prove to be a major disservice to many children with difficulties learning to read. This book outlines in detail the diverse ways in which reading problems have been conceptualized and operationalized. Elliott and Grigorenko consider the latest research in cognitive science, genetics, and neuroscience, and the limitations of these fields in terms of professional action. They then provide a more helpful, scientifically rigorous way to describe the various types of reading difficulties and discuss empirically supported forms of intervention.

Contents:

- Preface; Foreword by Frank Vellutino
- 1. What is dyslexia?
- 2. Explanations at the cognitive level
- 3. The neurobiological bases of reading disability
- 4. Assessment and intervention
- 5. Conclusions and recommendations

Key Features:

- Taps into a topic of significant interest to a very large number of people across the world
- Draws upon a complex scientific literature that has often proven to be inaccessible to non-specialists
- Is unique in drawing upon expertise in genetics, neuroscience, cognitive science and education to demonstrate the limitations of the dyslexia construct

Advance Praise:

"Every decade or two, a book will emerge that is able to synthesize the past and present research on dyslexia in such a way that the future of where we need to go next is illumined and propelled. *The Dyslexia Debate* is such a book. Elliott and Grigorenko have provided a breadth of topics and a depth of coverage to the complex issues surrounding dyslexia that should be read by researcher, practitioner, and parent. After reading their book, I feel enriched in all three categories."

Maryanne Wolf, John DiBiaggio Professor of Citizenship and Public Service, Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development, Director, Center for Reading and Language Research Miller Hall Tufts University

"No term has so impeded the scientific study of reading, as well as the public's understanding of reading disability, as the term dyslexia. The retiring of the word is long overdue. Elliott and Grigorenko provide an impressive review of the evidence on why this is the case. I highly recommend the book for reading practitioners."

Keith E. Stanovich, Professor of Applied Psychology and Human Development, University of Toronto

"Difficulties in acquiring fluent reading skill are seen in large numbers of children in all languages and reading disability constitutes a significant educational and societal challenge. Over the last several decades there has been an explosion in multi-disciplinary research on the genetic, neurobiological, and cognitive bases of reading disability, and while there has been much progress in each domain, definitional (and theoretical) consensus remains elusive. In this beautifully crafted book, Elliott and Grigorenko, provide a sober and scholarly introduction to definitional debates and the ways in which emerging research on gene-brain-behavior pathways in reading disability might inform these debates. In my view, it is a must read for researchers, clinicians and educators looking to gain access to the current state of the art."

Ken Pugh President and Director of Research, Senior Scientist, Haskins Laboratories, CT, Professor, Dept. of Psychology, University of Connecticut - Associate Professor, Dept. of Linguistics, Yale University Associate Professor, Dept. of Diagnostic Radiology, Yale University School of Medicine Director, Yale Reading Center

"This is a thought-provoking book that rigorously examines the scientific evidence and ends up challenging many assumptions about the concept of dyslexia. Elliott and Grigorenko do not wish to deny the reality of children's reading difficulties, but they do cast doubt on the usefulness and validity of our current diagnostic constructs. Essential reading for anyone interested in neurodevelopmental disorders."

Dorothy Bishop, Professor of Developmental Neuropsychology, University of Oxford

"This book provides a comprehensive and insightful analysis of all aspects of dyslexia. The assessment and intervention chapter is particularly important for parents, educators, and policy makers. A tour de force!"

Gordon F. Sherman, Executive Director, The Newgrange and Laurel Schools, Princeton, NJ

"This book represents a significant contribution in the field towards addressing key issues that underlie dyslexia. Expert insights are provided on issues related to assessment and intervention. Particularly insightful is the authors' examination of the role of cognition in the classification and intervention process. In general, the book more than succeeds in a quest to address several complexities related to the construct of dyslexia."

H. Lee Swanson, Distinguished Professor & Peloy Chair, University of California-Riverside.

