



Conversations With Neil's Brain: The Neural Nature Of Thought And Language

By William H. Calvin, George A. Ojemann

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In a series of stories before, after, and even during neurosurgery, an epileptic patient, Neil; his surgeon, George Ojemann; and neuroscientist William Calvin work together to remove a portion of Neil's temporal lobe. If they do it right, they will have a good chance of putting an end to Neil's seizures. If they slice too far to the left or right, they will wipe out essential parts of Neil's memory, or his ability to follow a joke to the punch line, or maybe his ability to recognize his wife's face. In essence, they can erase or alter parts of Neil. *Conversations with Neil's Brain* takes us inside the operating room and allows us to be part of this eerie process of discovery, using it to provide a unique window on human consciousness and the nature of human identity. The mapping of Neil's brain brings to life as never before the astounding specificity by which the brain operates, making clear why language, memory, and decision making are so complex, and why the cures for such ailments as learning disabilities, mental disorders, Alzheimer's, and strokes continue to elude the world's best medical efforts. In the context of this unique surgical drama, *Conversations with Neil's Brain* unfolds as an intensely compelling read.

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