Movement disorders: what lies beneath?

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The term extrapyramidal has been ascribed to the founding editor of JNNP, Samuel A Kinnier Wilson (figure 1), to incorporate all effrent mechanisms involved in the control of movement, apart from the pyramidal tract. As an alternative lay approach, Wilson would group these regions together in what he referred to as the ‘dark basement of the brain’.

From this seemingly limited early concept of movement and the role of the brain, Wilson set about trying to understand how the various components of motor control came together. His knowledge of neuroanatomy, combined with neurophysiology doctrine acquired from Charles Sherrington, led his acolyte Macdonald Critchley to refer to Wilson as the Marco Polo of the extrapyramidal system. To draw parallels between the Macdonald Critchley to refer to Wilson as Charles Sherrington, led his acolyte neurophysiology doctrine acquired from the edge of neuroanatomy, combined with motor control came together. His knowledge of how the various components of the brain, Wilson set about trying to understand the different regions together in what he referred to as the pyramidal tract. As an alternative lay approach, Wilson would group these regions together in what he referred to as the ‘dark basement of the brain’.

The journal’s history in the development of understanding movement disorders and clinical treatments is long and distinguished; from publishing landmark manuscripts, through to the sustained and ongoing presence of international authorities on our Editorial Advisory Boards. Furthermore, a former Editor of JNNP, David Marsden, was the first to declare Kinnier Wilson as the father of basal ganglia research.

Perhaps then, JNNP has been that most loyal conduit of dissemination, from the origins of a movement disorders entity, through metamorphosis to a known state and into current understanding. As such, it seems timely for JNNP to launch a special issue covering the widespread progress across all territories of movement disorders through the realms of clinical neuroscience: the combined approaches of neurology, neuropsychiatry and neurosurgery.

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Competing interests Matthew Kiernan is Editor-in-Chief of JNNP.

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REFERENCE