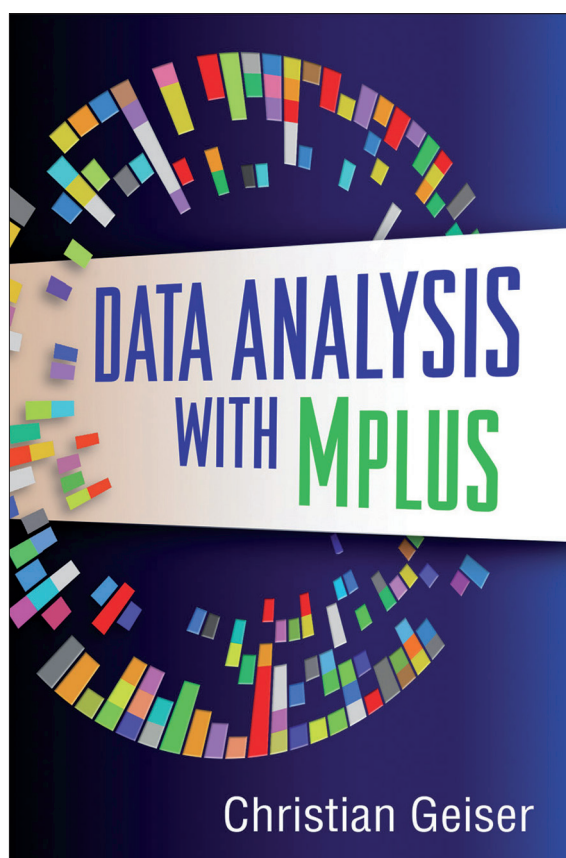# BOOK REVIEWS

C. Geiser
Data analysis with Mplus
The Guilford Press, 2013, 305 pp.
Paperback ISBN 9781462502455, Hardcover ISBN 9781462507825

Imagine, that you are a beginner Mplus user and you are left alone with your database and Mplus late at night in your office. Frustrating. Scary. Terrifying. Horrific! What you need is a freshly brewed cup of coffee and Christian Geiser's book, *Data analysis with Mplus*. Success is guaranteed. He can help you do the first steps quickly, systematically and professionally in a world full of Mplus mysteries. And of course not only are the first steps guaranteed to succeed, but the very final ones as well.

As Kline (2005) describes the process very adequately: "Learning to use and understand a new set of statistical procedures is like making a long journey through a strange land. Such a journey requires a substantial commitment of time, patience, and willingness to tolerate the frustration of some initial uncertainty and inevitable trial and error. But this is one journey that you do not have to make alone." Geiser is someone who can accompany you on the road, who can make you understand what the particular syntax means, someone who can teach you useful tricks never seen before. As he writes in the preface of the book "numerous screen shots and output excerpts guide the reader through analyses and the interpretation of the Mplus output in a step-by-step fashion". These analyses are the most fundamental and common ones that an applied (modern) researcher ever needs: linear structural equation models (i.e. simple linear regression analysis, latent regression analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, path models, and mediation analysis); SEM models for measuring variability and change (latent state analysis, autoregressive models, latent growth curve models); multilevel regression analysis and latent class analysis. With the directions of the author, you will have an idea how to model complex relationships between continuous variables at the latent level, you will be able to separate stable from time-specific influences on psychological measures in a longitudinal dataset. You will also be able to avoid biased results (underestimation of standard errors) if you have clustered or nested data structure (i.e. students in classes and schools), and you will have the superpower to classify individuals into homogeneous subgroups (latent classes, latent types) even if you have not seen Mplus before. The step-by-step fashion really is what it means literally. For every topic you can find a brief, but meaningful theoretical introduction that discusses the goals and the situation-specific effects of the given type of analysis including its shortcomings. The next step is the illustration of the analysis in the simplest form possible. At this stage the author applies path diagrams (instead of mathematical equations) that help the reader visualize the outlined relationships and associations within the particular model. The next step is the specification of a simple model (what could be easily generalized to a more complicated level), and the explanation of the input commands. After running your model you can see what you have done. If you are a well-trained Mplus user, you know that there are magic words for which we are praying, namely: *"The model estimation terminated normally"*. This book can give you the key to the relief of reading this sentence on your screen. It often happens – according to my several years of experience – that it is hard to generalize Mplus User's Guide's (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2012) examples to a particular problem of interest. The User's Guide is not a prolix one. One can easily end up making hundreds of trivial mistakes, just because mere mortal human beings are prone to do so. *Data analysis with Mplus* will help to avoid these trivial mistakes.

The notations of the most important parameters that are estimated in SEMs are the most common ones. In this book the author introduces these parameters in a straightforward fashion, which makes the text easy to follow and acquire. "Boxes" within each topic are especially useful, because they consist of summaries of the core characteris-

tics and special features of the particular analysis. At times the boxes also provide examples to practice. I might have hinted above that this book is a beginners' tutorial. Well, this is not entirely true. Actually, this book can help you at any stage of your professional career. You can use the book as a self-study guide and practice with the examples discussed in it. These datasets are all original ones, which can be downloaded from the companion website with the related input and output files *(http://crmda.ku.edu/guilford/geiser)*.

Christian Geiser, PhD, is an excellent teacher. In reality he is Assistant Professor at the Department of Psychology at Utah State University in Logan. He has the skills to bridge the gap between theory and practice, and he can translate and transform the meaning into palatable pieces. I had the impression that he knew exactly (by some extraterrestrial skills) where I had blanks in my knowledge. Farsightedly,

he made those blank and confused spots disappear. Warning! The book can give rise to enlightened moments!

REFERENCES

Kline, R. B. (2005). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (2nd ed.). New York, London: The Guilford Press.

Muthén, L. K. & Muthén, B. O. (1998–2012). *Mplus user's guide. Seventh edition*. Los Angeles: Muthén & Muthén.
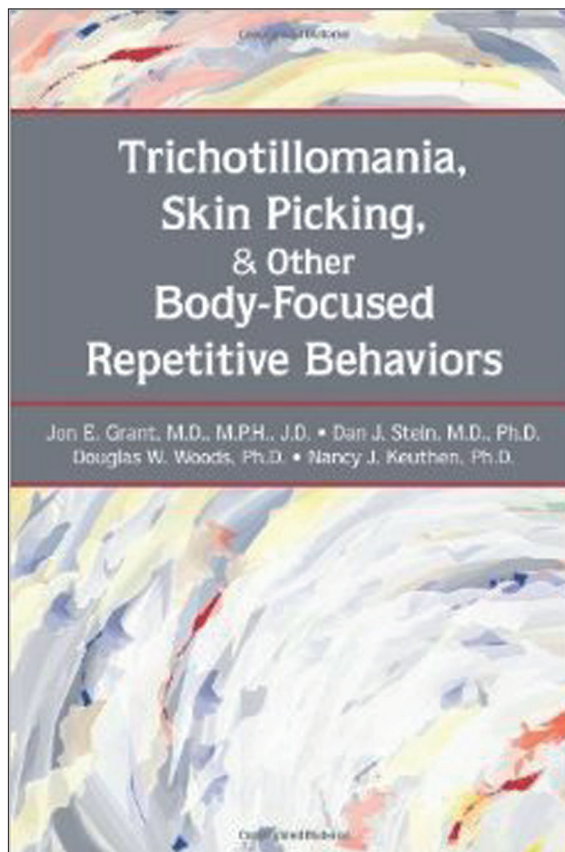
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J. E. Grant, D. J. Stein, D. W. Woods and N. J. Keuthen
Trichotillomania, skin picking, and other body-focused repetitive behaviours
American Psychiatric Publishing, Arlington, 2011, 268 pp.
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The highly acclaimed authors of the handbook compiled a volume on body-focused repetitive behaviours (BFRBs), which is a particularly useful guide for a wide range of readers. Clinicians and researchers as well as patients and their family members can find vital and new information about these mental disorders, which have recently gained increasing scientific attention. Over 20 contributors share their clinical and research knowledge from all over the United States of America and South Africa.

What would be most interesting for anyone contemplating conducting a research is that the book describes the clinical characteristics, the latest prevalence and the comorbidity data in each type of the body-focused repetitive behaviour spectrum. Moreover, recent findings of the neural processes behind Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders are presented in details for those interested in psychobiology. For clinicians in search of efficient healing methods, the book offers not only detailed descriptions that enable them to recognise the warning signs of the disorders, but various cognitive behaviour therapy methods, as well. As for patients – adults and children – and/or their caring family members, this informative work helps in understanding the nature of difficulties patients face with controlling behaviour, the psy-

chological and biological background of hair-pulling and skin-picking disorders, and last but not least, to evaluate the severity of symptoms and to become familiar with all the treatment options.

The book consists of 3 parts: "Clinical characteristics", "Diagnosis and evaluation", and "Treatment".

Part 1 presents clinical characteristics regarding body-focused repetitive behaviours. Chapter 1 gives a detailed picture of trichotillomania based on recent studies. It includes essential fields such as epidemiology and clinical characteristics. The strength of the chapter is its accuracy and the fact that it covers prevalence, onset, sex differences, possible cues, reinforcing mechanisms, and even possible complications. The latest is especially important as it sheds light on subjective suffering and distress that has still remained rather subtle and prevented clinicians and everyday people from recognising the severity of the disorder. Chapter 2 is devoted to pathological skin picking with the same depth as the previous chapter completed with a short summary of the neurobiological background and medical complications of the disorder. Chapter 3 reveals the epidemiology, clinical characteristics, prognosis, and therefore provides a definition for thumb sucking, pathological nail biting, head banging, and stereotypic

movement disorder. For those whose primary interest is the neurobiology of trichotillomania and skin picking Chapter 4 is particularly noteworthy. A review on monoaminergic system, on amino acid neurotransmitter, and on neuropeptide system highlights which molecular systems are claimed to play a role in the relevant neural circuitry that is claimed to be responsible for self-injurious behaviours – often contrary to previous expectations. The summary not only broadens the perspective of BFRBs genetic background from animal models to brain imaging studies, it also paves the way for neurocognitive research.

The second part of the book contains 4 valuable chapters about diagnosis and evaluation of BFRBs. Chapter 5 offers a guideline for identifying trichotillomania. Its undeniable necessity is supported by the fact that trichotillomania, skin picking, and repetitive behaviour have remained rather subtle until a short while ago in academic and clinical circles, as well. As a consequence, only a handful of clinicians have been aware of the disorder and the relevant therapy until recently. On the other hand, people (non-professionals mostly) who were familiar with the phenomenon of trichotillomania, tended to overuse it, even in mild forms of hair pulling. Both cases could lead to a misunderstanding of hair pulling. Chapter 5 tackles misbelieves while enabling actual patients to evaluate the severity of their symptoms and to consider whether professional help is needed for them. Chapter 6 deals with the role dermatologists play in the diagnosis of trichotillomania. Because of the nature of the disorder, dermatological signs are usually the only observable symptoms, which make the sharp eyes of the specialists even more crucial. Chapter 6 aims to reveal differences between trichotillomania and other scalp illnesses as well as between nail biting and other forms of nail abnormalities. Scalp biopsy pictures and an exhaustive list of typical signs help to discern trichotillomania and nail biting. A whole chapter is consecrated to the special case of examining children. Since BFRBs (especially trichotillomania, skin picking, and other stereotypic behaviours) have an onset in childhood, Chapter 7 brings attention to the early signs and aids in the assessment of adolescents. Furthermore, the entire process of assessment is detailed here from measurement options throughout psychoeducation to what to do with the family and exploring comorbidity. Chapter 8 is essential for researchers or clinicians struggling to determine the severity of symptoms, for this chapter discusses interview methods, the setbacks of self-report, and the collection of trichotillomania, pathological skin picking, and stereotypic movement disorder assessment scales.

Part 3 considers treatment opportunities. Cognitive-behavioural therapy for children by Mayumi Gianoli and David Tolin amazes the readers of Chapter 9, because it offers numerous specific actions of control hair pulling emphasizing the role of psychoeducation (useful tables for explanation are provided) and the involvement of parents. Moreover, the chapter also covers the topic of relapse prevention strategies. Chapter 10 focuses on adult cognitive-behavioural therapy and contains a wealth of useful strategies. The chapter also discusses the efficacy of the method in great detail. Alternative treatments of BFRBs are various: aerobic exercise, inositol, n-acetylcysteine, acupuncture, hypnosis, cosmetic techniques, biofeedback, meditation and yoga, which are all discussed in Chapter 11. As part of the obsessive-compulsive spectrum, BRFBs can be treated by pharmacological methods. Chapter 12 involves a summary of recommended medicines along with their disadvantages. As a parent or family member of a child one might be in need of answer to plenty of questions, for example, one may want to know what certain BFRBs mean, why the child is experiencing it, whether it is the "fault" of anyone, whether it will go away, how many people have it, and why the child is unable to stop it. These questions and many others are answered in Chapter 13. Suzanne Mouton-Odum and Ruth Golomb teach clinicians how to work effectively with the parents of young patients. They identify common mistakes that parents make, their misbelieves, and clarify their perspectives, thereby boosting the empathy of clinicians.

All in all, *Trichotillomania, skin picking, and other body-focused repetitive behaviours* is a highly exhaustive, scientifically thorough book. Its logical structure and language, however, make it an accessible and useful reading to non-professional interested parties as well.

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