



# Heavy Drinking: The Myth of Alcoholism as a Disease

By Herbert Fingarette

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**Heavy Drinking: The Myth of Alcoholism as a Disease** By Herbert Fingarette

*Heavy Drinking* informs the general public for the first time how recent research has discredited almost every widely held belief about alcoholism, including the very concept of alcoholism as a single disease with a unique cause. Herbert Fingarette presents constructive approaches to heavy drinking, including new methods of helping heavy drinkers and social policies for preventing heavy drinking and the harms associated with it.

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## **Heavy Drinking: The Myth of Alcoholism as a Disease By Herbert Fingarette Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Fingarette aims to refute evidence that alcoholism is a disease. Rejecting the terms alcoholic and disease, he points out that many "heavy drinkers" do not experience craving and/or loss of control, can engage in controlled drinking, and have spontaneous recovery. He also notes the variable success rates of medical treatment programs. Ultimately, Fingarette states that heavy drinking is dependent upon a host of situational factors. The heavy drinker is not "a passive patient who will be treated by an expert . . ." but an individual capable of exercising control and assuming responsibility. The weakness here is that alcoholism and heavy drinking are in fact different entities; in discussing alcoholism there is room for both a disease and a situational model. Barbara J. Powell, Veterans Administration Medical Ctr., Kansas City, Mo.  
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Review

"A formidable critique of alcoholism as a disease." -- *Robert Wright, The New Republic*

"Herbert Fingarette is at the forefront of a social counterrevolution that could redefine how the United States views alcoholism." -- *Curtis J. Sitomer, Christian Science Monitor*

"Social and political responses to alcohol problems are neglected and research programmes are misdirected, because the disease model prevails so strongly. Fingarette is having a tough time bringing this truth to the American public, but his book is a triumph of clarity and brevity and must help." -- *Richard Smith, British Medical Journal, The British Medical Association*

"The message of this book is important and will no doubt elicit violent reactions from both sides of the disease-concept controversy. Although hardly the last word, the book should be read by anyone interested in the broader picture of alcoholism, its treatment and social implications." -- *Lawrence Miller, Psychology Today*

"This enlightening and challenging book is a call to compassion for heavy drinkers. . . . Given the brevity of this clearly reasoned and well-researched book, and the ease with which both professionals and laypeople are able to grasp the issues presented, Heavy Drinking will no doubt become a seminal volume in the field of alcohol treatment." -- *James Alsdurf, Christianity Today*

About the Author

**Herbert Fingarette**, a distinguished professor at the University of California, has been a consultant on alcoholism and addiction to the World Health Organization, and a Fellow of the Stanford Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences. His work has had a significant influence on the U.S. Supreme Court, state supreme courts, and current national policy makers on substance abuse.

### Users Review

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