



A History of Psychiatry: From the Era of the Asylum to the Age of Prozac

By Edward Shorter

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"PPPP . . . To compress 200 years of psychiatric theory and practice into a compelling and coherent narrative is a fine achievement What strikes the reader [most] are Shorter's storytelling skills, his ability to conjure up the personalities of the psychiatrists who shaped the discipline and the conditions under which they and their patients lived."--Ray Monk *The Mail on Sunday* magazine, U.K.

"An opinionated, anecdote-rich history. . . . While psychiatrists may quibble, and Freudians and other psychoanalysts will surely squawk, those without a vested interest will be thoroughly entertained and certainly enlightened."--Kirkus Reviews.

"Shorter tells his story with immense panache, narrative clarity, and genuinely deep erudition."--Roy Porter Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine.

In *A History of Psychiatry*, Edward Shorter shows us the harsh, farcical, and inspiring realities of society's changing attitudes toward and attempts to deal with its mentally ill and the efforts of generations of scientists and physicians to ease their suffering. He paints vivid portraits of psychiatry's leading historical figures and pulls no punches in assessing their roles in advancing or sidetracking our understanding of the origins of mental illness.

Shorter also identifies the scientific and cultural factors that shaped the development of psychiatry. He reveals the forces behind the unparalleled sophistication of psychiatry in Germany during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as well as the emergence of the United States as the world capital of psychoanalysis.

This engagingly written, thoroughly researched, and fiercely partisan account is compelling reading for anyone with a personal, intellectual, or professional interest in psychiatry.

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- Sales Rank: #86542 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 1998-03-03
- Released on: 1998-02-17
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.39" h x 1.18" w x 6.08" l, 1.50 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 448 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The history of madness and its treatment is a fascinating one. At one time, the mentally ill were diagnosed as demonically possessed; later, when mental illness became the province of psychoanalysts, those conditions that are actually physical in nature, such as schizophrenia or manic depression, went insufficiently treated, their sufferers consigned to asylums. In his book, *A History of Psychiatry*, Edward Shorter, a medical historian at the University of Toronto, presents a concise chronology of mental illness and its treatment. Shorter favors a biological understanding of these disorders, concentrating on medical approaches to helping the seriously mentally ill.

From Publishers Weekly

Shorter cites recent research indicating that adult-onset schizophrenia is genetically influenced and often traceable to uterine trauma or difficult birth. In his view, brain biology and genetics underlie much mental illness, and biological psychiatry-combining drugs with psychotherapy-has replaced Freudian psychoanalysis as the dominant paradigm for explaining and treating a host of disorders. In this richly informative, iconoclastic, sure-to-be-controversial chronicle, Shorter, professor of the history of medicine at the University of Toronto, argues that Freud, by turning psychoanalysis into a movement instead of a method of objective inquiry, fostered a stifling orthodoxy, therapists' arrogance toward patients and scientific stagnation. He defends electroshock as a valuable tool in the treatment of depression; identifies German physician Emil Kraepelin, systematizer of diagnoses-rather than Freud-as the central figure in the history of psychiatry; and dismisses as unhistorical nonsense Michel Foucault's theory that psychiatry arose in a collusion between capitalism and the state as a means to control deviant individuals. While this study won't end the nature-versus-nurture debate, it mounts a formidable challenge to strict adherents of the talking therapies. Photos.

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From Library Journal

The view of psychiatry held by both insiders and the general public has changed considerably in the past few decades, in ways that Shorter (*From the Mind into the Body*, LJ 11/1/93) both acknowledges and celebrates. For the most part, psychiatrists have moved from what Shorter calls the "Freudian Interlude" to a role as gatekeepers of psychopharmaceuticals. Shorter covers psychiatry's birth as an attempt to create "mental asylums" as places of refuge. This attempt, argues the author, capsized because new major psychiatric illnesses (notably neurosyphilis and schizophrenia) arose in the 19th century, deluging the asylums. Young psychiatrists turned to Freudian analysis to earn a living by treating less sick and more financially secure patients. This "interlude" ended because analysis has become too expensive at the very time that psychiatric drugs have become available. While the book is a bit dry in places, it covers a great deal of fascinating material, making this a good choice for academic libraries and larger public libraries with a clientele interested in social history. —Mary Ann Hughes, Neill P.L., Pullman, Wash.

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This A History of Psychiatry: From the Era of the Asylum to the Age of Prozac book is absolutely not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book will be information inside this e-book incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper you actually read a lot of information you will get. This specific A History of Psychiatry: From the Era of the Asylum to the Age of Prozac without we comprehend teach the one who examining it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't be worry A History of Psychiatry: From the Era of the Asylum to the Age of Prozac can bring any time you are and not make your tote space or bookshelves' turn into full because you can have it in the lovely laptop even cell phone. This A History of Psychiatry: From the Era of the Asylum to the Age of Prozac having excellent arrangement in word along with layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading.

Dawn Fernandez:

A History of Psychiatry: From the Era of the Asylum to the Age of Prozac can be one of your nice books that are good idea. Many of us recommend that straight away because this e-book has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nevertheless delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to get every word into enjoyment arrangement in writing A History of Psychiatry: From the Era of the Asylum to the Age of Prozac however doesn't forget the main point, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource facts that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information can certainly drawn you into new stage of crucial considering.

Robert Poulin:

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