



Mad In America: Bad Science, Bad Medicine, And The Enduring Mistreatment Of The Mentally Ill

Robert Whitaker

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In *Mad in America*, medical journalist Robert Whitaker reveals an astounding truth: Schizophrenics in the United States fare worse than those in poor countries, and quite possibly worse than asylum patients did in the early nineteenth century. Indeed, Whitaker argues, modern treatments for the severely mentally ill are just old medicine in new bottles and we as a society are deluded about their efficacy. Tracing over three centuries of "cures" for madness, Whitaker shows how medical therapies—from "spinning" or "chilling" patients in colonial times to more modern methods of electroshock, lobotomy, and drugs—have been used to silence patients and dull their minds, deepening their suffering and impairing their hope of recovery. Based on exhaustive research culled from old patient medical records, historical accounts, and government documents, this haunting book raises important questions about our obligations to the mad, what it means to be "insane," and what we value most about the human mind.

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