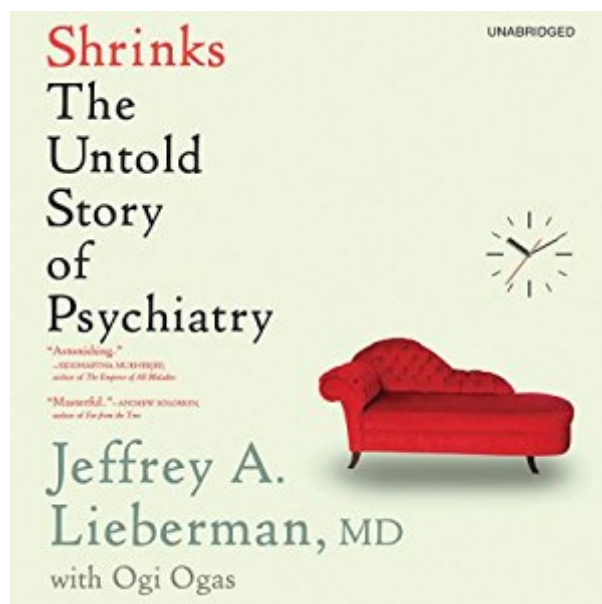


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Shrinks: The Untold Story Of Psychiatry



Synopsis

The fascinating story of psychiatry's origins, demise, and redemption, by the former president of the American Psychiatric Association. Psychiatry has come a long way since the days of chaining "lunatics" in cold cells and parading them as freakish marvels before a gaping public. But, as Jeffrey Lieberman, MD, reveals in his extraordinary and eye-opening audiobook, the path to legitimacy for "the black sheep of medicine" has been anything but smooth. In *Shrinks* Dr. Lieberman traces the field from its birth as a mystic pseudoscience through its adolescence as a cult of "shrinks" to its late-blooming maturity - beginning after World War II - as a science-driven profession that saves lives. With fascinating case studies and portraits of the luminaries of the field - from Sigmund Freud to Eric Kandel - *Shrinks* is a gripping and illuminating listen and an urgent call to arms to dispel the stigma of mental illnesses by treating them as diseases rather than unfortunate states of mind.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I haven't read the book. I am a psychiatrist who just received a promotional e-mail about this book -- from the American Psychiatric Association (APA), of which Dr. Lieberman is past-president of. The problem I have is that the APA has its own publishing arm, called "APPI" or something similar. Because of this, the APA will NOT promote publications from any other publishing house. Except in Dr. Lieberman's case, which I presume is because Dr. Lieberman has a ton of connections since he is the outgoing APA president. I have several psychiatrist colleagues who have written excellent books/textbooks from outside publishing houses who were not given support by the APA since the

APA's own publishing arm was not utilized. That they made an exception for Dr. Lieberman, to me, feels like a corruption. Below, I have pasted the e-mail I received from the APA. He is marketing his book under the guise of "Let's all of us psychiatrists get together and keep helping our patients and improving our field. And let's do it by promoting my book"....Dear Friend and Colleague, I am writing to share some thoughts and an important message. Over the course of my 30 year career in psychiatry, I have become increasingly concerned that many people suffer from the symptoms of mental illness unnecessarily, either because they are ashamed of their condition or unable to access competent care. Imagine if the population of our country was afflicted with infectious diseases like pneumonia, tuberculosis, smallpox and HIV and they did not seek or could not get antibiotics, vaccines or protease inhibitors. This is the reality for millions of people in the U.S. and around the world and it is a reality that is no longer tolerable.

I have met and worked with Jeff Lieberman at several points in my career. In this book, the characteristics I have always admired about him in person are plainly evident in print: his honest and straightforward style, his academic rigor, his ability to be a spokesperson and leader for our profession, his gentlemanly and kind demeanor. Although the book is meant for the general public, I would recommend it as a guide for psychiatrists at every stage of their careers, with the hope that the qualities of the author might be more widely emulated. Psychiatrists, perhaps more than other physicians, are faced with very complex problems, which contain biological roots, psychological constructs, and many issues arising from social and political policy. Perhaps it is not surprising then that psychiatrists, like professional politicians dealing with problems of similar complexity, have had the tendency to form themselves into camps and to develop passionately held positions that frequently lack empirical support. For example, other books have described the near religious influence that psychoanalysis came to have in American academic psychiatry, but Dr. Lieberman reviews this period with a balanced point of view. While I certainly knew psychoanalysts in my career who seemed to worship at the altar in an unquestioning and dogmatic way, I also knew many others that impressed me with their humanity, their humility, their ability to control and examine their own reactions to the many stressful situations into which psychiatrists are called to intervene, and to stick with very difficult patients over long periods of time. Likewise, Lieberman gives equal time to the chastisement of dogmatic biological reductionism.

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