

Mind Fixers

author: Anne Harrington

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Synopsis

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The story of the unfulfilled quest to find the biological basis of mental illness, and its profound effects on patients, families, and American society. In the 1980s, American psychiatry announced that it was time to toss aside Freudian ideas of mental disorder because the true path to understanding and treating mental illness lay in brain science, biochemistry, and drugs. This sudden call to revolution, however, was not driven by any scientific breakthroughs. Nor was it as unprecedented as it seemed. Why had previous efforts stalled? Was this latest call really any different? In *Mind Fixers*, Anne Harrington offers the first comprehensive history of the troubled search for the biological basis of mental illness. She makes clear that this story is not just about laboratories and clinical trials, but also momentous public policies, acrid professional rivalries, cultural upheavals, grassroots activism, and profit-mongering. Harrington traces a consistent thread of over-promising and frustrated hopes. Above all, she helps us understand why psychiatry's biological program is in crisis today, and what needs to happen next.

Reader's comments

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