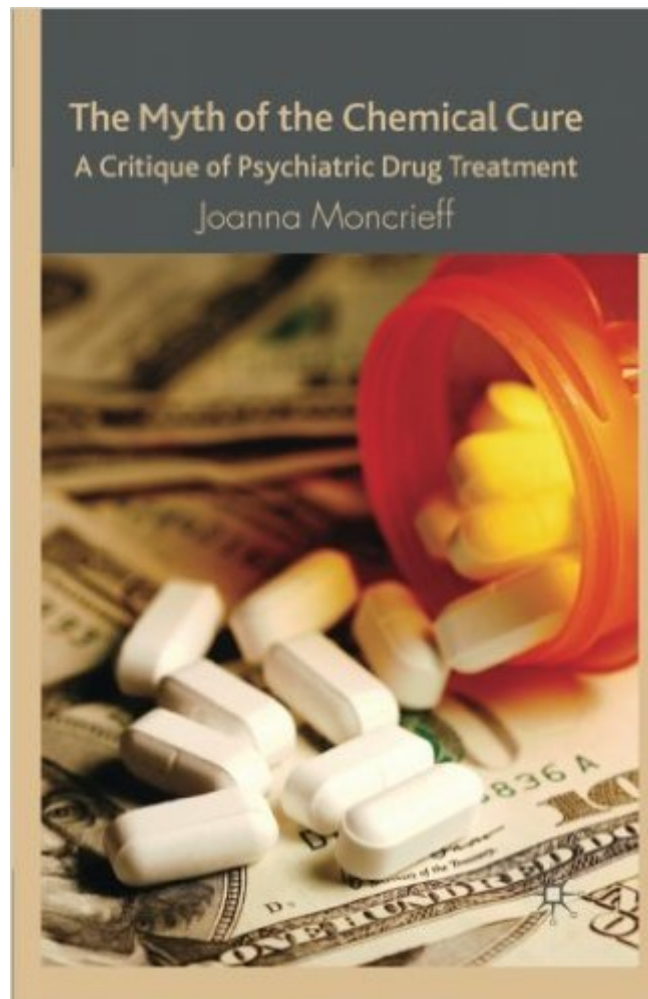


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The Myth Of The Chemical Cure: A Critique Of Psychiatric Drug Treatment



Synopsis

This book overturns the idea that psychiatric drugs work by correcting chemical imbalance and analyzes the professional, commercial and political vested interests that have shaped this view. It provides a comprehensive critique of research on drugs including antidepressants, antipsychotics and mood stabilizers.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Depression was once viewed as a state of mind caused by stressful life factors, but today the majority of Americans believe depression is a biological disease caused by chemical imbalance in the brain. This shift in the way "mental disorders" like depression and anxiety are viewed has resulted in profound social and cultural changes. Antidepressants are now the most widely prescribed class of medications in the U.S., and many states have enacted parity legislation requiring insurance coverage for mental illness equal to physical illness. Soldiers returning from Iraq are encouraged to seek treatment for post-traumatic stress, and Congress may pass a "Mothers Act" to promote screening new moms for postpartum depression. In many classrooms more than half the students are on medications for attention deficit and similar disorders, and the number of U.S. children diagnosed with bipolar disorder has risen an astounding 4,000% in the past ten years. Almost weekly we hear of yet another school shooting, with headlines clamoring for early intervention and mandatory treatment of "at risk" individuals. Against this backdrop of a seemingly rampant epidemic of mental illness, Joanna Moncrieff has written a brilliant new book calling into

question nearly everything commonly believed about the nature of psychiatric illness and psychiatric medication. First and foremost, this book shatters the myth that psychiatric drugs restore chemical balance. Page by page and chapter by chapter, Dr. Moncrieff systematically exposes the shoddy science, flawed research and deceptive marketing campaigns which have led us down a sadly mistaken path that has nothing to do with science and everything to do with profit.

Joanna Moncrieff is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Mental Health Sciences at University College London, and is co-founder of the Critical Psychiatry Network. She has also written books such as *The Bitterest Pills: The Troubling Story of Antipsychotic Drugs*, *Straight Talking Introduction to Psychiatric Drugs*, *De-Medicalizing Misery: Psychiatry, Psychology and the Human Condition*, etc. She wrote in the first chapter of this 2009 book, "Since the 1960s we have lived in an age characterized by the idea that drugs can cure the problems that are now referred to as 'mental illness'... By 'cure' I mean the idea that drugs can improve symptoms by helping to rectify the underlying pathological mechanism that is presumed to give rise to the symptoms in the first place... The story by which drugs first came to be seen in this way, as specific treatments for specific mental disorders ... and whether or not this way of thinking about drugs and their actions is justified, are the subjects of this book." (Pg. 1) She adds, "Over the following pages I hope to convince readers that the modern understanding of what drugs do in psychiatry ... is fatally flawed; that most knowledge about psychiatric drugs is, at best, only a partial account. This is because it ...

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