



Mania (Johns Hopkins Biographies of Disease)

David Healy

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This provocative history of bipolar disorder illuminates how perceptions of illness, if not the illnesses themselves, are mutable over time. Beginning with the origins of the concept of mania -- and the term maniac -- in ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, renowned psychiatrist David Healy examines how concepts of mental afflictions evolved as scientific breakthroughs established connections between brain function and mental illness. Healy recounts the changing definitions of mania through the centuries, explores the effects of new terminology and growing public awareness of the disease on culture and society, and examines the rise of psychotropic treatments and pharmacological marketing over the past four decades. Along the way, Healy clears much of the confusion surrounding bipolar disorder even as he raises crucial questions about how, why, and by whom the disease is diagnosed.

Drawing heavily on primary sources and supplemented with interviews and insight gained over Healy's long career, this lucid and engaging overview of mania sheds new light on one of humankind's most vexing ailments.

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