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Liberation by Oppression: A Comparative Study of Slavery and Psychiatry

By Thomas Szasz

Transaction Publishers. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 237 pages. Dimensions: 9.2in. x 6.1in. x 0.7in. Originally called mad-doctoring, psychiatry began in the seventeenth century with the establishing of madhouses and the legal empowering of doctors to incarcerate persons denominated as insane. Until the end of the nineteenth century, every relationship between psychiatrist and patient was based on domination and coercion, as between master and slave. Psychiatry, its emblem the state mental hospital, was a part of the public sphere, the sphere of coercion. The advent of private psychotherapy, at the end of the nineteenth century, split psychiatry in two: some patients continued to be the involuntary inmates of state hospitals; others became the voluntary patients of privately practicing psychotherapists. Psychotherapy was officially defined as a type of medical treatment, but actually was a secular-medical version of the cure of souls. Relationships between therapist and patient, Thomas Szasz argues, was based on cooperation and contract, as is relationships between employer and employee, or, between clergyman and parishioner. Psychotherapy, its emblem the therapists office, was a part of the private sphere, the contract. Through most of the twentieth century, psychiatry was a house divided-half-slave, and half-free. During the past few decades, psychiatry became...



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