



Making Us Crazy

Herb Kutchins

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What makes a person crazy? Nowadays it's the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM IV). For many mental health professionals, the DSM is an indispensable diagnostic tool, and as the standard reference book for psychiatrists and other psychotherapists everywhere, it has had an inestimable influence on the way we view other human beings. Deciding what we consider sane and normal, and reflecting the prejudices and values of each generation, it's not surprising that the DSM has become a battleground. But things have taken a strange turn. The fight is no longer about who escapes DSM labeling, but rather, how a person can qualify for a diagnosis. Now, mental health professionals must label their clients as pathological in order for them to be reimbursed by their insurance companies. This disturbing trend toward making us crazy when we are simply grappling with everyday concerns has even worse public implications. In *Making Us Crazy*, Professors Kutchins and Kirk reveal how the DSM is used to assassinate character and slander the opposition, often for political or monetary gain. None of this misuse bodes well for the future of mental health. Even children are being overdiagnosed and given drugs they don't need. *Making Us Crazy* is the long-needed antidote to the claims made about the DSM. Kutchins and Kirk argue that the DSM is not the scientifically based reference work it purports to be, but rather a collection of current phobias and popular mores.

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