



Menninger: The Family and the Clinic

Lawrence J. Friedman

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The story of the Menninger Clinic is the story of the Menninger family. The two cannot be separated, according to historian Lawrence Friedman, for one cannot be understood without the other.

Friedman should know. He is the only scholar granted full, unrestricted access to the Menninger archives and the personal papers of founder Karl and Will Menninger. In this study of the Menningers and their clinic, Friedman lifts the public relations veil to reveal the story behind the public success: the reciprocal influence of the family upon the clinic and the clinic upon the family.

Friedman has taken extraordinary time and care in researching this study. The resulting book is neither exposé nor hagiography. Nor is it a narrow institutional history. It is, instead, a finely wrought historical study based upon a decade of research in more than a dozen archives, including the vast Menninger archive.

Menninger is the first study of a major American psychiatric center based on full, unrestricted access to archival materials. It also incorporates information gleaned from extensive interviews with members of the Menninger family as well as interviews with more than one hundred people important in the clinic's history. Not only does Friedman examine the dynamics of the Menninger family close up, but he also steps back for a larger view of the Menningers' role in the history of psychiatry.

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