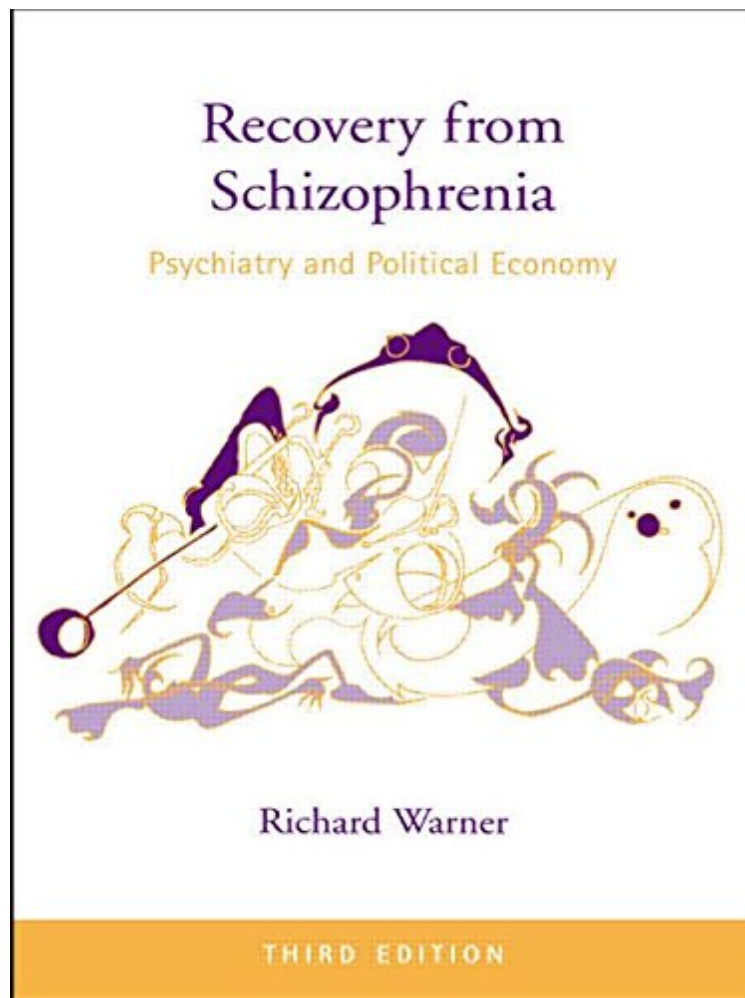


Recovery From Schizophrenia: Psychiatry and Political Economy

Richard Warner

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Richard Warner : Recovery From Schizophrenia: Psychiatry and Political Economy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Recovery From Schizophrenia: Psychiatry and Political Economy:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. fantastic jaunt through this history of modern psychiatry By critical consumer This is a really fantastic jaunt through this history of modern psychiatry through the lens of the treatment of schizophrenia. With scalpel-like precision, Warner, a British psychiatrist living in the US, dissects the statistics on recovery from schizophrenia and comes to an alarming conclusion: not only are outcomes no better for schizophrenia today, they may be even worse than in the 19th century! Unlike some other writers on this emotionally charged topic, Warner does not give way to polemic. His arguments are always reasoned and reasonable, his conclusions tentative, his exposition dispassionate. He considers all the evidence available at his disposal rather than selectively reviewing

the literature, and at every turn considers alternative explanations before laying his weight behind the most likely. In addition to providing the historical background to changing concepts of whether recovery is possible in this devastating illness, the book focuses on how large social and economic trends regarding to recession, labor surplus, work, industrialization affect the course of schizophrenia. Warner has a decisively Marxist bent to his arguments that may be offputting to some readers. Nevertheless, it is hard to ignore the findings in this book because he so thoroughly discusses the evidence both for and against his arguments. Unlike many academic texts, this book is eminently readable, and even enjoyable. I read most of it over the course of a few days. Warner's overarching message is a triumphant, positive one: the course of this serious mental illness is much less bleak than has previously presumed. People can and do recover from schizophrenia. Medications may have their place but they may also worsen the long-term course of the illness. Focusing on functionality and providing people with a sense of structure, and purpose often found in work may be key. In addition, Warner suggests looks at evidence for the role of obstetric complications and other environmental factors in schizophrenia, suggesting many cases could be prevented entirely.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Refreshing new way of looking at mental illness

By Kathy Approaching mental illness from an economic standpoint has shed new light on the failure of treatment and recovery strategies in the United States. As a student, this perspective is often overlooked or ignored. This book makes perfect sense in light of our multibillion dollar-a-year pharmaceutical industry and broken family systems. One thing is certain, Warner hits the nail on the head. The DSM and the APA are doing the mentally ill no favors by "labeling" them. Like modern day lepers, the mentally ill are labeled, handed over to a broken system-and then isolated and ostracized. Often jobless, and abandoned by their families, the mentally ill have little hope for complete recovery here in the wealthiest nation on earth. I will be referring to Warner's book often over the next few years. In fact, this book has inspired me to seek out people from the Developing World, and interview them personally- to see what they are doing "right." The western concept of mental illness has been flawed from the get-go. It's time to rethink mental illness, and admit where we fall short. This is a must read for all college students.

17 of 17 people found the following review helpful. A neglected contribution

By Richard Lichtman (I have not yet read the second edition of this book but it is reasonable to assume that it is an updated version of the first edition, which is the book I am referring to.) This is an extraordinary book which reviews the entire field of social structure and mental illness. (In fact my only objection to the book is the title, which suggests a far narrower field than is actually covered in the work.) Warner seems to have read all the relevant literature and has the distinct advantage of being able to place studies of mental health in a social, historical and cross-cultural context. His analysis is thorough and creative and he makes a very persuasive case that the predominant causes of mental illness, including schizophrenia, are more deeply rooted in the social system than the myopic, insulated views of most psychiatrists, psychologists and therapists can envision. His arguments against the "social drift" hypothesis and other self-serving illusions of contemporary psychotherapeutic research are extremely important. His willingness to incorporate insights from a variety of social thinkers, including Marx (yet, that Marx) give the book a deep analytic resonance. It is not accidental that this book is not widely known for it does not fit easily into the reified biological accounts of mental illness that have been playing havoc with the field for the last 25 years or so.

The first edition of *Recovery of Schizophrenia* was acclaimed on publication as a work of major importance. It demonstrated convincingly, but controversially, how political, economic and labour market forces shape social responses to the mentally ill, mould psychiatric treatment philosophy, and influence the onset and course of one of the most common forms of mental illness. In this revised and fully updated edition, Dr Warner examines the changes in approach to schizophrenia since publication of his original book and analyses new research to answer the question: 'Are they advances or not?'

"This is a useful book for libraries to own ... useful for students in a wide variety of disciplines." -- Choice

About the Author Richard Warner is the Medical Director of the Mental Health Center of Boulder County, Colorado and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Adjunct Professor of Anthropology at the University of Colorado.