

The Insanity Hoax: Exposing the Myth of the Mad Genius

By Judith Schlesinger

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This groundbreaking book sheds new light on an old and destructive stereotype: the idea that the highly talented must suffer a lifetime of psychological torment in payment for their exceptional gifts. Despite exaggerated professional claims, widespread popular assumptions, and the dramatic parade of "mad geniuses" in the media, no one has ever proved that creative people are more prone to psychopathology than any other group. ***The Insanity Hoax*** tracks this fantasy's history from its birth in ancient Greece to today, showing how Plato's benevolent "divine madness" slowly darkened into a symptom of bipolar disorder -- and why the myth is too deeply embedded in society to ever disappear. Psychologist, educator, and jazz writer Dr. Judith Schlesinger uses her three decades of research and creative and clinical experience to make a convincing case, while providing a witty and entertaining read.

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Editorial Review

Review
"In this original and passionate work, Judith takes on one of the great Western myths and serves up her painstaking research with equal portions of wit, wisdom and criticism. An emancipatory book." - David Cohen, PhD, Professor of Social Work, and Distinguished Tocqueville-Fulbright Chair, Florida International University

"Fascinating, insightful, and surprisingly funny." - Chris Brubeck, "fairly sane and highly functional" jazz musician and classical composer.

"In her skillful and entertaining dissection of the myth, Schlesinger deconstructs the pseudoscience used to support it, while illuminating the deep cultural functions that this myth can serve for society and the geniuses themselves." - Stuart A. Kirk, DSW, coauthor of *The Selling of DSM*, *Making Us Crazy*, and the forthcoming *Mad Science*.

About the Author
Judith Schlesinger, PhD has spent her entire life marveling at creativity and surrounding herself with others who cherish it. Psychologist, psychotherapist, author, educator, musician, jazz critic, and producer, she believes that genius should be celebrated, not diagnosed.

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