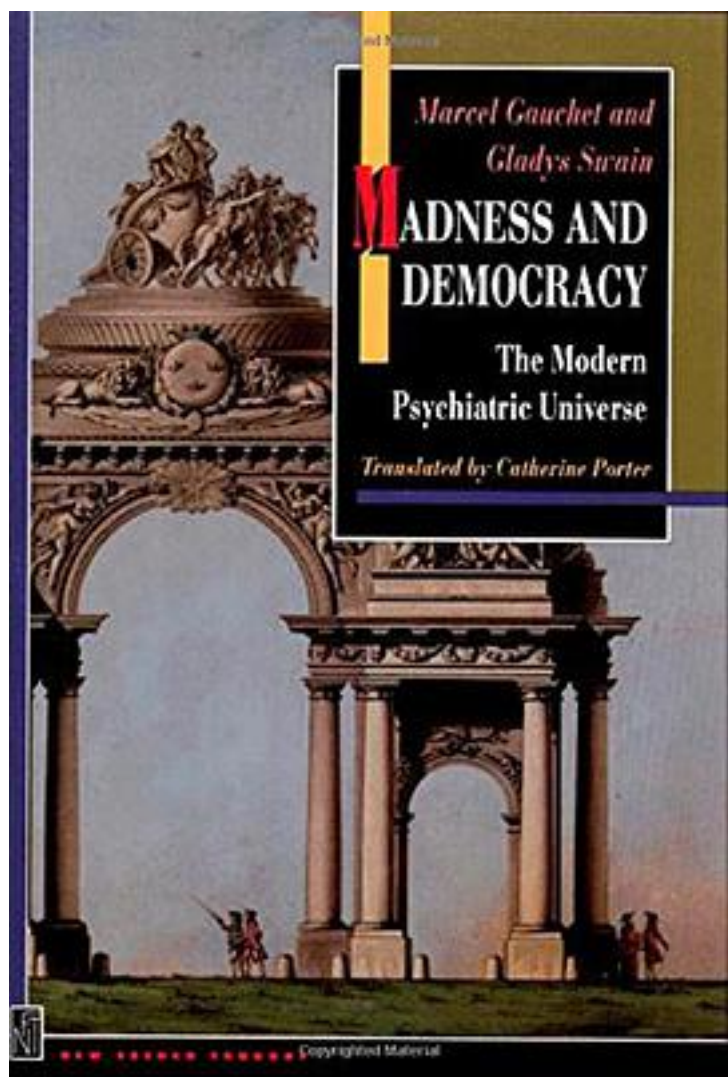


Madness and Democracy



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著者:Marcel Gauchet

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From Publishers Weekly

Gauchet and Swain challenge Foucault's classic analysis in *Madness and Civilization* that the "great confinement" of the insane represented the psychiatrization of political and social deviants, and that asylum treatment simply tried to inculcate bourgeois values. Instead of a history of subjugation, their analysis of late 18th- and early 19th-century French psychiatry shows how the modern self came to be understood as a complex creature with dangerous, irrational depths. Gauchet and Swain acknowledge the liberal, humanitarian intentions of "alienists" and cast the psychiatric exercise of power as beneficent in intent although no less insidious than Foucault portrayed it. Dr. Philippe Pinel's famous "moral therapy" and the expansion of the asylum system after the French Revolution, they argue, were a product of therapeutic optimism, driven by the conviction that the insane were never so bestial or alienated from their humanity as to be deaf to the voice of reason or self-reflection. This new model of the insane, in turn, prompted the modern understanding of the self. Furthermore, they contend, the asylum system was structured as an ideal community that crystallized the totalitarian exercise of power in postrevolutionary democratic society. Like Foucault, however, they are given to convoluted philosophical language and sweeping generalizations about subjectivity, power and society that are untethered by documentary supports but sure to stimulate much theoretical speculation.

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Review

A fertile interpretation of the history of the idea of insanity and of political efforts to cure the insane. . . . As much philosophy and cultural history, this work deserves a thoughtful audience.

作者介绍:

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