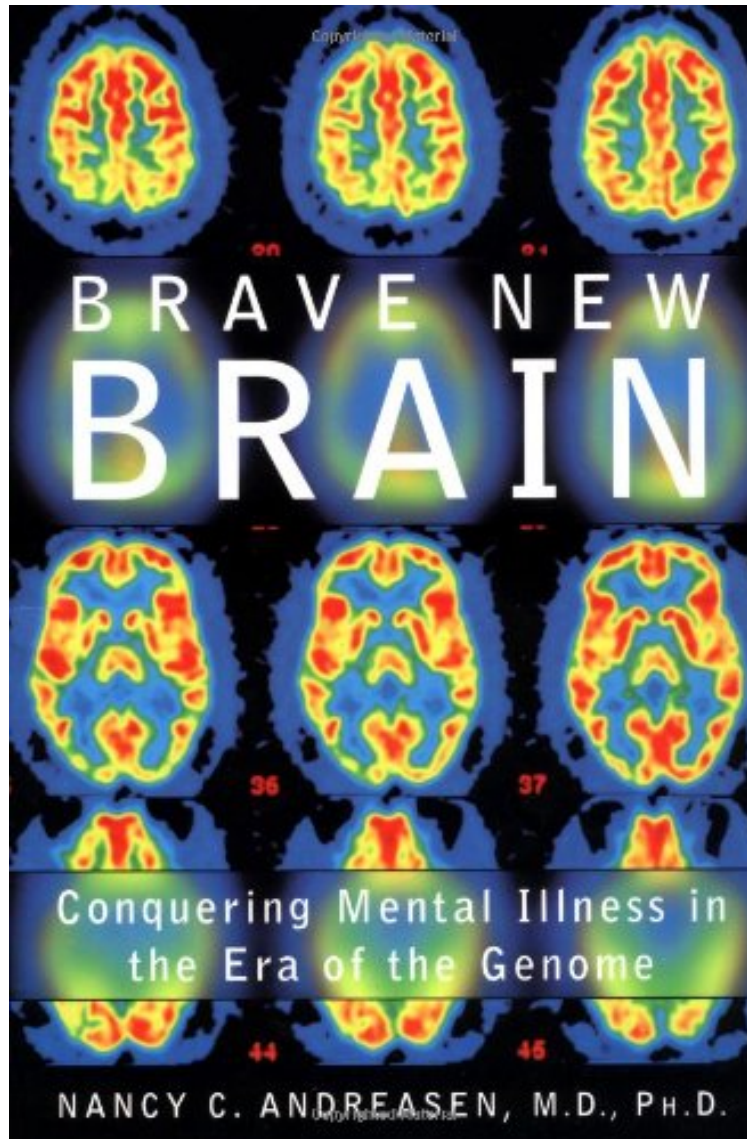


(Free pdf) Brave New Brain: Conquering Mental Illness in the Era of the Genome

# Brave New Brain: Conquering Mental Illness in the Era of the Genome

*Nancy C. Andreasen*

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**Nancy C. Andreasen : Brave New Brain: Conquering Mental Illness in the Era of the Genome** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Brave New Brain: Conquering Mental Illness in the Era of the Genome:

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Here, leading neuroscientist Nancy Andreasen offers a state-of-the-art look at what we know about the human brain and the human genome--and shows how these two vast branches of knowledge are coming together in a boldly ambitious effort to conquer mental illness. Andreasen gives us an engaging and readable description of how it all works--from billions of neurons, to the tiny thalamus, to the moral monitor in our prefrontal cortex. She shows the progress made in mapping the human genome, whose 30,000 to 40,000 genes are almost all active in the brain. We read gripping stories of the people who develop mental illness, the friends and relatives who share their suffering, the physicians who treat them, and the scientists who study them so that better treatments can be found. Four major disorders are covered--schizophrenia, manic depression, anxiety disorders, and dementia--revealing what causes them and how they affect the mind and brain. Finally, the book shows how the powerful tools of genetics and neuroscience will be combined during the next decades to build healthier brains and minds. By revealing how combining genome mapping with brain mapping can unlock the mysteries of mental illness, Andreasen offers a remarkably fresh perspective on these devastating diseases.

.com After centuries of outsiders carping about scientific reductionism, the promised synthesis is finally on its way. Immunology, genetics, medicine, neurology, and other fields are starting to overlap more and more, and prominent neuropsychiatrist Nancy C. Andreasen explores one exciting intersection in *Brave New Brain*. The author's broad understanding and straightforward writing offer readers a penetrating glimpse into new and future treatments for mental illness. Focusing on four devastating maladies (schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders, and dementia), she shows what scientists have learned about them recently thanks to powerful imaging and biochemical tools. This knowledge, growing exponentially and integrated with data from diverse scientific research including the Human Genome Project, is used to propose mechanisms underlying diseases and potential cures--from genetic repair to bold new pharmacologic interventions. Well-illustrated and lucidly explained, the book is an excellent lay primer on the brain and its disorders. Though Andreasen's prose isn't as elegant as some of her colleagues', it is clear and always to the point; many readers will appreciate the lack of distraction from the book's content. The hope she holds out to sufferers of mental illness, if not immediately promising, is certainly brighter than has been offered in recent years. Despite its moderately sinister title, *Brave New Brain* is an enlightening and even uplifting look at the convergence of several important scientific disciplines. --Rob LightnerFrom *Library Journal*Andreasen, a prolific author, editor of the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, and chair of psychiatry at the University of Iowa College of Medicine, argues that by combining our knowledge of the human genome with that of the human brain we can effectively "wage war" on mental illness. She summarizes what we know about the etiology, diagnosis, and treatment of schizophrenia, dementia, and various mood and anxiety disorders. Stressing that these illnesses are multifactorial (caused by both multiple genes and environmental factors), she predicts that the powerful new tools of molecular biology can be successfully applied to mental illness. Like Rita Carter in *Mapping the Mind* (LJ 2/15/99), which summarizes the current state of medical technology, Andreasen describes those tools along with the neuroimaging techniques that help us to view the functioning brain. Her text is unique in that it covers the fundamentals of neurobiology and at the same time touches on key issues in medical economics, treatment, and prevention. Hypothetical case studies illustrate the progression and impact of mental illness. Written with clarity and sensitivity, this study offers a refreshing, optimistic vision of the future. Suitable for public and academic libraries. Laurie Bartolini, Illinois State Lib., Springfield Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. "[A] gripping account.... A truly outstanding book. *Brave New Brain* informs, provokes thought, conveys the excitement of science, indicates why science matters, and considers both the achievements with respect to clinical application and the difficulties involved. Quite an achievement!"--*Science*"Excellent introductions to neuroscience, brain imaging, and genetics. Outstanding overviews of what is known about the neuroscience and genetics of the major psychiatric disorders of schizophrenia, mood disorders, dementia, and anxiety disorders. The descriptions of the history and neuroscience of medication are especially good."--*Nature*"Written with clarity and sensitivity, this study offers a refreshing, optimistic vision of the future." --*Library Journal*"[*Brave New Brain*] is clear, extremely informative and conveys the excitement of biological psychiatry that has been energized by the genome and imaging."--Judith L. Rapoport, M.D., National Institute of Mental Health