

# [PDF] Guilty By Reason Of Insanity: A Psychiatrist Probes The Minds Of Killers

**Dorothy Otnow Lewis - pdf download free book**

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**Books Details:**

Title: Guilty by Reason of Insanity:

Author: Dorothy Otnow Lewis

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**Description:**

"We met no Jimmy Cagneys or Robert Mitchums among the inmates in the prisons we visited. We found ourselves, rather, in the company of a pathetic crew of intellectually limited, dysfunctional, half-mad, occasionally explosive losers. Long before these men wound up on death row, their similarly limited, primitive, impulsive parents had raised them in the only fashion they knew.... These brutish parents had set the stage on which our condemned subjects now found themselves playing out the final act. It was a drama generations in the making."

Psychiatrist Dorothy Otnow Lewis, working in a professional partnership with neurologist Jonathan Pincus, has been steadily accumulating and publishing (in medical journals) evidence that almost all

vicious criminals have some combination of (1) a childhood of abuse and/or neglect, (2) brain injuries through accident or abuse, and (3) psychotic symptoms, especially paranoia. This fascinating and well-written book, aimed at a wide audience, takes the form of a memoir in which Lewis tells us about the events that led her to study violent patients and about some of her more interesting cases, especially those on death row. Far from being another shallow "oh wow" book about conversations with horrifying killers, this is a thoughtful, humane examination of the horrible experiences that most murderers have endured, and a penetrating analysis of how subtle signs of brain damage in these people have been missed by other researchers. Lewis has an engagingly humble and personal way of writing about her experiences, which makes her findings all the more credible. --*Fiona Webster*

**From** New York psychiatrist Lewis, whose "curiosity about differences between us" caused her to change career paths and study homicidal criminals, offers a fascinating glimpse into the world of psychiatry and violent crime. How the mild-mannered Radcliffe College graduate found herself face-to-face with death row inmates and testifying in well-publicized trials is most intriguing. Lewis rationally explains her findings that violent crimes often are perpetrated by persons with abusive childhoods or organic brain impairments or both. A humanizing factor in her memoir is her psychiatrist's ability to reflect on her own shortcomings and miscues in diagnosing disorders. Lewis concludes that "given certain neurologic and psychiatric problems, any of us could be a killer," which is frightening, perhaps controversial, and always interesting. *Sue-Ellen Beauregard*

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