

GUILTY BY REASON OF INSANITY: A PSYCHIATRIST EXPLORES THE MINDS OF KILLERS

by **DOROTHY OTNOW LEWIS**

– BOOK REVIEW BY LUCIA EMANUELA ANDREI –
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Dorothy Otnow Lewis is an internationally known American psychiatrist and expert on violent behavior, as she has spent most of her career studying the minds of killers. She is also the wife of child psychiatrist Melvin Lewis, the author of the famous textbook “Lewis’s Child and Adolescent Psychiatry”.

In her book “Guilty by reason of insanity: a psychiatrist explores the minds of killers”, doctor Lewis presents the results of her longtime experience working with murderers, from notorious ones like Ted Bundy or Mark David Chapman, to those whom she met in the wards of New York City’s Bellevue Hospital or in different juvenile detention centers across the U.S.A.

As the author states from the beginning of her book, she never wanted to study criminal behavior or to interact with violent patients. Her initial intention was to become a psychoanalyst. However, life’s pathways led her to meet the right people such as Dr. Jonathan Pincus, Assistant Professor of Neurology at Yale School of Medicine at the beginning of the ‘80s, the time of their first encounters. They started their collaboration when Dr. Lewis needed the expertise of a neurologist during the evaluation of a murder case in which the aggressor was a teenage girl who couldn’t remember anything about the crime she was accused of. Thus, Dr. Otnow Lewis and Dr. Pincus began their common

professional journey towards discovering what lies behind the cruel actions of those accused of violent murders.

Dr. Otnow Lewis believes that we are all born innocent, that nobody is born a monster. Even those babies born with neurological or psychiatric afflictions do not automatically become assassins. What triggers the

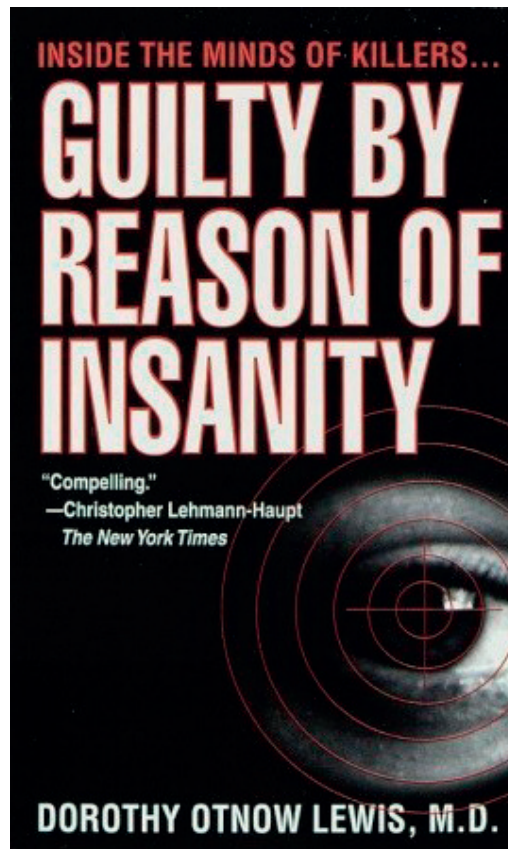


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