



A History of Hypnotism

By Alan Gauld

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Dr. Gauld has written a detailed and scholarly history of the phenomena, practice, and theory of mesmerism, hypnotism, and multiple personality disorders. The book traces the development of mesmerism and hypnotism and those who were influential in its use and acceptance as a scientific method.

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Editorial Review

Review

"...the most important history of mesmerism and hypnotism available....The writing style makes the book very readable and comprehensible. The book should be on the reading list of anyone who is interested in the history of the treatment of physical and mental ailments and the evolution of our concept of the mind."

Nathan Schecter, Canadian Medical Association Journal

"...never ceases to interest the reader, perhaps because it is evident that the author was never uninterested in his subject....In this large volume is incorporated an analysis of nearly all the writings that are even remotely related to hypnosis, animal magnetism, or mesmerism, regardless of designation....presents us with a history of psychiatry and sociology from the middle of the 18th century until the 20th. It is a rich source of information...the volume is a joy to read." Ilza Veith, The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease

"If you are a serious student of hypnosis, Gauld's A History of Hypnotism is a must read....Gauld puts the period 1778 to circa 1900 under a microscope and provides the reader with a detailed and insightful account of hypnotism's early development and theoretical underpinning. The history is enriched by accounts of the social settings in which events unfolded, glimpses of the personalities of the leading characters, and good doses of citations from source documents....This title is well suited as a college or graduate-level text, as well as for the truly earnest professional who remains uninspired and unsated by the obligatory historical chapter in clinical texts on hypnotherapy." Science Books and Films

"...a significant contribution to the field, which will stand as a hallmark of scholarship for many years....for the serious scholar, A History of Hypnotism now represents the highest standard of excellence. It is no hyperbole to say that this volume belongs on the bookshelf of every interested student of the field." Melvin A. Gravitz, American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis

"This is a splendid book, impressive in its scope, in the depth of its research, and the elegant, seemingly effortless style in which it is written...Gauld's work will undoubtedly become one of the most important source books, and one of the most enjoyable reads, on this fascinating subject." Alison Winter, Times Education Supplement

"...a very scholarly, exhaustive and cumulative history bound to become a chief source of data for other investigators. Gauld writes in a clear and nontechnical manner that should interest any student of the history of that period....The most thorough treatment of hypnosis in one volume, it should interest not only serious students of hypnotism but also curious general readers." Choice

"...an absorbing account of hypnotism's colorful history....for those who know and value the work of the early and more recent pioneers of hypnosis the book may be indispensable." Hypnotherapy Today

"A long book written with clarity, intelligence, and touches of wit." Advances

"Gauld's history is thus bound to appeal more to those narrowly interested in past theories and practices of hypnotism than to those seeking fuller historical understanding of the construction of such theories and practices....a useful reference tool." Roger Cooter, The British Medical Journal

"Of special interest is his concluding discussions of the pros and cons of the social psychological as opposed

to the special state approaches to hypnosis." R.A.W., Exceptional Human Experience

From the Back Cover

Franz Anton Mesmer arrived in Paris from Austria in February 1778 and established a medical practice which hailed him as one of the most remarkable men of his time. His skill lay in his theories and in his use of 'animal magnetism' to cure disease. Mesmer began a school of thought which spread across Europe and America, and enjoyed, at various stages, favour as a respected scientific and medical therapy, and disrepute as the tool of occultists, mystics and charlatans. Dr. Gauld has created a detailed and scholarly history of the phenomena, practice and theory of mesmerism, hypnotism and multiple personality disorder. The book traces the course of the mesmeric and hypnotic movements and gives special attention to the ideas and influence of certain leading figures. It considers the theories which developed to explain the phenomena and the uses and shortcomings of the technique in medical practice. Throughout the book, case histories and anecdotal accounts provide a fascinating insight into this controversial subject. The book also touches on the social and intellectual issues which influenced the progress and development of mesmerism and hypnotism. The work is extensively annotated and referenced. In his epilogue, Gauld discusses modern approaches to hypnotism and multiple personality disorder, and the role of hypnotism in clinical practice, and offers some ideas for understanding these intriguing phenomena. A History of Hypnotism is a wide-ranging and detailed history of the mesmeric and hypnotic movements and is an essential work of reference and scholarship in this field. A fascinating account, this important work will be of interest to psychiatrists, psychologists and medical historians, as well as to the general reader who wishes to learn more about this absorbing topic.

Users Review

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Diana Castillo:

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