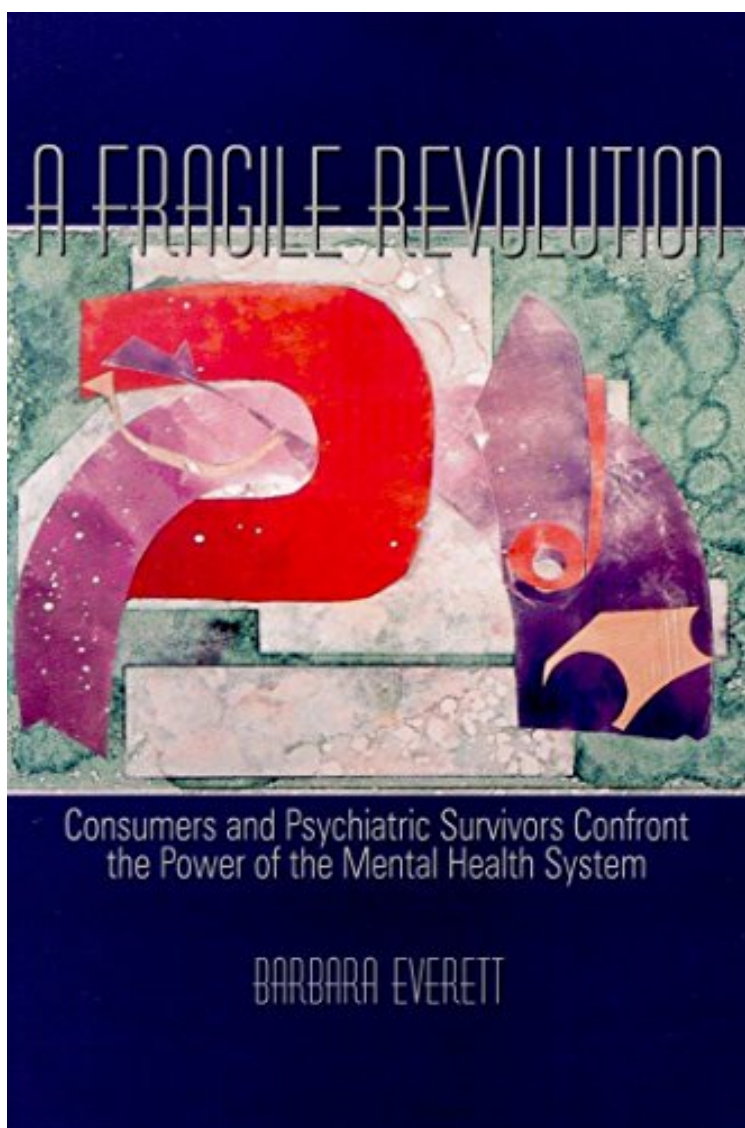


(Mobile library) A Fragile Revolution: Consumers and Psychiatric Survivors Confront the Power of the Mental Health System

A Fragile Revolution: Consumers and Psychiatric Survivors Confront the Power of the Mental Health System

Barbara Everett

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Barbara Everett : A Fragile Revolution: Consumers and Psychiatric Survivors Confront the Power of the Mental Health System before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Fragile Revolution: Consumers and Psychiatric Survivors Confront the Power of the Mental Health System:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended reading for advocatesBy Midwest Book

Review *A Fragile Revolution: Consumers And Psychiatric Survivors Confront The Power Of The Mental Health System* reveals the complex relationship between ex-mental patients, the government, the mental health system, and mental health professionals. Barbara Everett draws upon her experience with having worked in both hospital and community mental health services to explore how recent changes in policy have affected patient/provider relationships, creating new tensions and new opportunities. *A Fragile Revolution* is highly recommended reading for consumer advocates, health care policy makers, psychiatric service providers, psychiatric patients, and the general reading public with an interest in mental health care issues.

Despite two centuries and three major reform movements, mental patients have remained on the outside of the mainstream of society, often living in poverty and violence. Today we are undergoing yet another period of reform and, in a historical first, ex-mental patients, now calling themselves consumers and psychiatric survivors, have been recruited in record numbers by the Ontario government to participate in the change process. *A Fragile Revolution* investigates the complex relationship between ex-mental patients, the government, the mental health system, and mental health professionals. It also explores how the recent changes in policy have affected that relationship, creating new tensions and new opportunities. Using qualitative interviews with prominent consumer and survivor activists, Everett examines how consumers and survivors define themselves, how they define mental illness, and how their personal experience has been translated into political action. While it is clear that consumers and survivors have affected the rhetoric of reform, they know that words do not equal action. As they struggle to develop their own separate advocacy agenda, they acknowledge that theirs is a fragile revolution, but one that is here to stay.

"A *Fragile Revolution* demonstrates quite unequivocally, a first-rate strategic thinker, competent analyst, and elegant literary stylist.... This is the book you give to non-academic Psych Industry Workers for their own short course in what the antipsychiatry movement is all about.... A major contribution and a must-read for anyone concerned with Canadian mental health policy making and development." (Byron Fraser *In a Nutshell*, Winter/Spring 2002) "[As] a worker in the mental health field...[it] was gratifying to see my lived experience described in a cohesive way within a theoretical framework that helped me understand my professional experiences at a deeper level.... The author's ability to integrate the historical context of mental health reform with the experiences of consumers/survivors, the viewpoints of family members, and the perspectives of professionals is both exceptional and sensitively done. I highly recommend this book for anyone coming in contact with the mental health system--consumers/survivors, family members, mental health professionals, and students who are planning to enter the field of mental health." (Ru Tauro *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health*, Vol. 21 #1, Spring 2002) "The initial section on the history of the consumer movement is excellent.... Everett's discussions about 'partnership,' about the different meaning behind the terms 'consumer' and 'survivor,' and about possible retaliation against consumer activists are all excellent and important. Her description of the failure of well-funded consumer groups is illuminating.... The discussion about whether consumer-survivors can participate without being co-opted is worth the price of the entire book.... I finished the book wanting to phone the author and continue the discussion, to argue with her and to agree with her." (Ronald J. Diamond *Psychiatric Services*, Vol. 52, #39, September 2001) "Everett is a professional. She has worked in institutional and agency settings and has a valid take on the nature of power and powerlessness, control and being controlled.... Quotations from consumer/survivors make the book come alive.... Everett has done a good service to professionals and clients alike." (Pat Capponi *The Journal of Addiction and Mental Health*, Vol. 4 #4, July/August 2001) "The major sources of information for Everett's study were consumers and psychiatric survivors and those involved in providing services to this group. In-depth interviews yielded striking stories of pain and heroism as people sought help from a system with limited help to give.... Everett[s]...book, a powerful examination of the mental health system from the inside, presents a strong case for continued reform in the system." (Robert B. MacIntyre *Canadian Book Annual*, 2000) About the Author Barbara Everett has worked in both hospital and community mental health services in a variety of professional roles, from social work to senior manager. Her clinical focus has been the provision of psychotherapy for people suffering from complex posttraumatic stress disorder. She presently works as a consultant providing services such as clinical skills development workshops, clinical consultation and supervision, as well as program development and evaluation.