

The Treatment of Schizophrenia and Dr Loren Mosher's Soteria Project

The Nefarious Psychiatric, Governmental and Pharmaceutical Industry Plot to Kill It

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"Psychiatry has been almost completely bought out by the drug companies...We're so busy with drugs that you can't find a nickel being spent on [non-drug] research." - Dr Loren Mosher

Psychiatrist Loren Mosher (who earned medical degrees from both Harvard and Stanford) was the highly esteemed founder of the experimental Soteria Project, which was subtitled "Community Alternatives for the Treatment of Schizophrenia" from 1971 to 1983. The Soteria Project proved that patients with first-onset psychotic breaks could be successfully treated - even cured - outside insane asylums by non-professional caregivers, in unlocked neighborhood facilities and without the coercive use of neurotoxic, dependency-inducing and dementia-inducing drugs.

Five years before his untimely death in 2004, and long after he was hounded out of the NIMH and mainstream psychiatry for doing the right thing, Dr Mosher wrote:

"Despite what the pharmaceutical companies would have us believe, we don't need 'a better life through chemistry'. (Books like) The Drug May Be Your Problem will help debunk this myth and provide practical advice on how to avoid psychiatric drugs and get off them."

It's Hard to Fly Over the Cuckoo's Nest on Brain-altering Drugs



The Soteria Project was Dr Mosher's response to the scandalous realities of the monopoly treatment that psychiatry and the pharmaceutical industry had over otherwise normal people who had been unfortunate enough to have suffered serious, oftentimes chronic psychological, sexual, physical or spiritual trauma and neglect and then degenerated into episodes of sadness, nervousness, sleep deprivation, voice-hearing, hallucinations, delusions and/or behaviors that were intolerable or confusing to family, friends, neighbors or their doctors. Such psychotic breaks and voice-hearing episodes - often temporary and explainable - were often mis-diagnosed as incurable chronic psychoses that needed life-long, brain-altering, brain-damaging, highly toxic major tranquilizer drugs and perhaps incarceration for a lifetime.

Dr Mosher wondered about those simpler times before there were the hundreds of unaffordable "me-too" psychiatric drugs in the five psych drug categories, before the psych drug-related teen suicide, violence and school shooting epidemics - incidents that never happened prior to the widespread use of psych drugs in adolescents and children). The years assessing the results of the Soteria Project proved to Dr Mosher (image right) and others that there was a more-cost-effective and curative way to treat what had been known through the centuries to be a temporary decompensation in response to trauma.

Mosher and the Soteria Project devotees had learned some of the important lessons of Ken Kesey's 1962 novel **"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest"**, and the 1975 Academy Award winning film adaption of the book, where all the patients in Jack Nicholson's psych ward were forced to take the authoritarian Nurse Ratched's Thorazine at "Medication Time".

The average US insane asylum of that era was in the business of profitably warehousing thousands of victimized undesirables by administering drug-induced chemical lobotomies. Brain-altering drugs were usually sufficient to keep unruly patients like the small-time criminal Randall McMurphy down, but repetitive electroconvulsive shock "treatments" often were needed for unwanted behaviors that weren't adequately suppressed by the drugs. Actual surgical lobotomy was the next step back in that era.

Nothing good happened to any of those doomed, locked up, drugged-up, shocked-up or lobotomized patients, except perhaps for the eventually-liberated Chief.

In the dramatic concluding scene of the film, the Chief had finally received enough good psychotherapy from McMurphy that he finally wanted to get out of the psychiatric hellhole. He was the only one who managed to "fly over the cuckoo's nest".

Neither Nurse Ratched, the treatment staff nor even the psychiatrists working on Randall McMurphy's ward had any idea that the antipsychotic drugs that were routinely being administered to their innocent patients, could cause permanent brain damage, resulting in tardive dyskinesia, tardive dementia, Parkinson's disease, brain shrinkage and sexual dysfunction, not to mention a high incidence of the following antipsychotic drug-induced signs and symptoms: akathisia, depression, suicidality, homicidality, disability, unemployability, homelessness, loss of IQ points, chronic constipation, dry mouth, premature death, brain atrophy and general feelings of zombification.

Thorazine, and its sister "first generation" anti-psychotic drugs like Mellaril and Haldol, and every other so-called anti-psychotic drug ever made since then (especially the second generation/"atypical" antipsychotics that wouldn't come to market until the 1990s, have been found to cause diabetes, obesity, gynecomastia, pituitary dysfunction, cardiac rhythm disturbances, sudden death, etc.

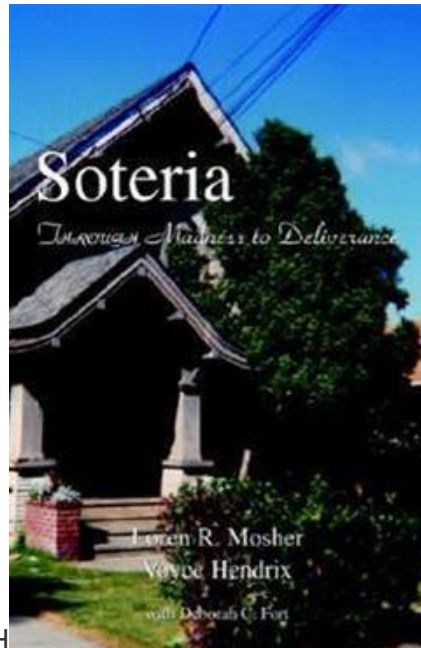
Soteria's Lucky Patients

Soteria's lucky patients had been randomized into the Project (the study's matched controls went to a drug-centered inpatient facility like McMurphy's), and therefore most of them avoided being falsely labeled as life-long chronic schizophrenics, and most of them didn't wind up as permanent patients on disabling, life-long psych drugs.

If it hadn't been for the existence of the Soteria House, those lucky ones would have instead been sent to a typical coercive Southern California insane asylum, where they might have been told that they had somehow suddenly inherited their new disorder or had a theoretical chemical brain "imbalance" and therefore had to be on dependency-inducing drugs (alleged to be able to "re-balance" the imaginary imbalance) for the rest of their lives.

Because of the luck of the draw, many of the Soteria patients were cured of their temporary psychosis at a far lesser cost of care than the matched controls – and without the cost of caring for newly drug-induced brain-damaged patients for the rest of their lives.

Some Soteria patients went on to lead normal lives following their discharge. In contrast, the vast majority of the patients who had been randomized into the drug-centered "insane asylums" wound up chronically drugged with dangerous, untested (for safety) cocktails of drugs for the rest of their lives. Most of those chronically drugged patients were destined to have their lives shortened by 25 years because of the drugs).



Soteria Project Sabotaged by the US NIMH

Tragically, especially for the millions of future mis-diagnosed (and therefore mis-treated) “chronic schizophrenics” since then, the Soteria Project was sabotaged by Dr Moshier’s own National Institute of Mental Health. The obviously unwelcome positive findings that were coming out of the Soteria Project were accurately seen by the establishment types in the NIMH, Big Pharma and Big Psychiatry as an economic threat to their industries, and they acted to subvert the project. Scandalously, the project was defunded during the Reagan era, in 1983, eight years after “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest” was released.

In a posthumously published book (2004), Dr Moshier and his co-authors describe the innovative, highly successful, non-drug therapeutic approach that was enacted by the young, caring, altruistic, but non-professional staff members. The book was titled **Soteria: From Madness to Deliverance**. It told the story of the noble experiment that managed to alleviate the temporary mental suffering of some otherwise doomed fellow humans who would have been put at risk of permanent drug-induced neurological disabilities rather than given a chance at a cure.

A good description of the project can be read at [Robert Whitaker’s Mad In America website](#).

“Soteria is the story of a special time, space, and place where young people diagnosed as ‘schizophrenic’ found a social environment where they were related to, listened to, and understood during their altered states of consciousness. Rarely, and only with consent, did these distressed and distressing persons take ‘tranquilizers’. They lived in a home in a California suburb with nonmedical caregivers whose goal was not to ‘do to’ them but to ‘be with’ them. The place was called ‘Soteria’ (Greek for ‘deliverance’), and there, for not much money, most recovered. Although Soteria’s approach was swept away by conventional drug-oriented psychiatry, its humanistic orientation still has broad appeal to those who find the mental health mainstream limited in both theory and practice.”

One can appreciate the anguish that Moshier and all the committed non-professional healers felt when the psychiatrist-dominated NIMH pulled the plug on the experiment. Moshier became disillusioned with the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and resigned.

“I want no part of it anymore.” Loren Mosher’s 1998 Letter of Resignation from the APA

Here are excerpts from Mosher’s letter of resignation from the APA, a professional trade association and lobbying group to which he had been a long-time member. For good reason, he called the APA the “American Psychopharmaceutical Association.”

He unintentionally outlines in his resignation letter the well-known strategy of how dysfunctional organizations often try to get rid of their best people (especially the creative and talented ones who also happen to be a threat to the less competent and ingrained upper management types whose positions of power, influence and seniority may be at risk). Making life miserable for promising up-and-coming employees is commonly orchestrated by threatened superiors by demoralizing the subordinates into quitting the organization. Mosher felt the pressure and logically resigned from the APA, saying “I want no part of it anymore”. Here is some of Mosher’s resignation letter:

“The trouble began in the late 1970s when I conducted a controversial study: I opened a program — Soteria House — where newly diagnosed schizophrenic patients lived medication-free with a young, nonprofessional staff trained to listen to and understand them and provide companionship. The idea was that schizophrenia can often be overcome with the help of meaningful relationships, rather than with drugs, and that such treatment would eventually lead to unquestionably healthier lives.

“The experiment worked better than expected. Over the initial six weeks, patients recovered as quickly as those treated with medication in hospitals.

“The results of the study were published in scores of psychiatric journals, nursing journals and books, but the project lost its funding and the facility was closed. Amid the storm of controversy that followed, control of the research project was taken out of my hands...By 1980, I was removed from my post altogether. All of this occurred because of my strong stand against the overuse of medication and against the disregard for drug-free, psychological interventions to treat psychological disorders.

“Why does the world of psychiatry find me so threatening? Because drug companies pour millions of dollars into the pockets of psychiatrists around the country, making them reluctant to recognize that drugs may not always be in the best interest of their patients. They are too busy enjoying drug company perks: consultant gigs, research grants, fine wine and fancy meals.

“Pharmaceutical companies pay through the nose to get their message across to psychiatrists across the country. They finance symposia at the two predominant annual psychiatric conventions, offer yummy treats and music to conventioners, and pay \$1,000 – \$2,000 per speaker to hock their wares. It is estimated that, in total, drug companies spend an average of \$10,000 per physician, per year, just on ‘education’.

“And, of course, the doctors-for-hire tell only half the story. How widely is it known, for example, that Prozac and its successor antidepressants cause sexual dysfunction in as many as 70% of people taking them?...

“Recently, it was dues-paying time for the American Psychiatric Association, and I sat there looking at the form. I thought about the unholy alliance between the APA and the drug industry. I thought about how consumers are being affected by this alliance, about

the over-use of medication, about side effects and about alternative treatments. I thought about how irresponsibly some of my colleagues are acting toward the general public and the mentally ill. And I realized, I want no part of it anymore."

The orchestrated demise of the Soteria Project is just another of the many examples of amoral, sociopathic corporations doing what is best for their bottom line and not what is best for the people that are targeted for consumption of their dangerous products.

We are all poorer for their actions.

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