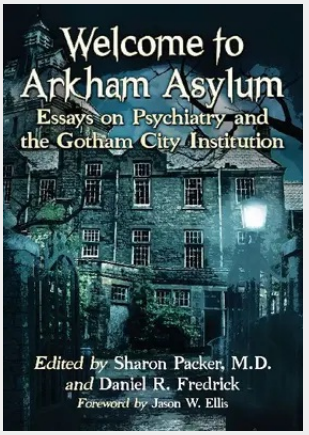
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Welcome to Arkham Asylum

Essays on Psychiatry and the Gotham City Institution



Arkham Asylum for the Criminally Insane is a staple of the Batman universe, evolving into a franchise comprised of comic books, graphic novels, video games, films, television series and more. The Arkham franchise, supposedly light-weight entertainment, has tackled weighty issues in contemporary psychiatry. Its plotlines reference clinical and ethical controversies that perplex even the most up-to-date professionals. The 25 essays in this collection explore the significance of Arkham's sinister psychiatrists, murderous mental patients, and unethical geneticists. It invites debates about the criminalization of the mentally ill, mental patients who move from defunct state hospitals into expanding prisons, madness versus badness, sociopathy versus psychosis, the "insanity defense" and more. Invoking literary figures from Lovecraft to Poe to Caligari, the 25 essays in this collection are a broad-ranging and thorough assessment of the franchise and its relationship to contemporary psychiatry.

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