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Movie Essay

The documentary "Big Bucks, Big Pharma: Marketing Disease and Pushing Drugs" had a lot of serious talking points. It discussed what causes psychological distress, how you can medicate something that's not really there, and all the different names of life's problems. The documentary did state that you really can't treat something that's not really there, that's because psychotropic drugs are made to get past the body's natural defenses and to the brain; this can upset the delicate process that the brain needs to ensure the body runs fine. The documentary also named and defined all of life's problems which includes: shyness-social anxiety disorder, loss of a loved one-major depressive disorder, homesickness-separation anxiety, suspicion-paranoid personality disorder, having ups and downs-bipolar disorder, and distractibility which is known as ADHD. It talked about how psychotropic drugs were used to control outburst amongst inmates, but the drugs were morphine and opium which didn't cure anything and turned out to be very addicting. People in the early 20th century thought anything could cure mental illnesses, some even thought that heroin could do the job.

Psychiatrists tried really hard to find a drug that would cure everything and eventually they struck gold (or so they thought) with thiorazine. It was all good, but then it was discovered that thiorazine shut down human motor controls, was seen by many as a chemical lobotomy, immobilized patients showing unwanted behavior, reduced the symptoms of psychosis and schizophrenia, and led to really serious problems such as tardive dyskinesia (a movement disorder that's practically irreversible).

It spoke about how today there are nearly 1 million kids that are being diagnosed as bipolar, that's more than autism and diabetes put together. 500,000 kids had at least one prescription for an anti-psychotic drug in 2007. The industry is now worth about \$22.8 billion dollars. Anyone who reads the DSM would be able to diagnose anyone they see with some sort of illness. Hiring these big marketing companies to come up with campaigns to sell the sickness by elevating the importance of a condition, redefining an existing condition, and creating a new condition for a market is what makes them so much money.

They make a lot of money, but just how safe are the drugs? How do we find out if they're ready for the public? They usually test them on a very small number of volunteers, psychiatric researchers decide how much of an amount if proper, they make sure it's not all in the patient's head by handing out placebo

pills, and lastly the people get monitored to see how they're doing.

It's not just test subjects that try these drugs out though because the drugging of pregnant women has led to a 20+% hazard of preterm birth, brain damage and lower fetal age at delivery and some nearly triple the risk of severe birth defects.

Psychotropic drugs are also to blame for over 16,000 traffic accidents every year in the United States for drivers who are 65 years or older, but what are they honestly doing behind the wheel anyway? The biggest shame in all of this is that there is no scientific proof that psychiatric drugs cure any mental problems. A lot of the pills have severe short and long-term side effects and happen to be very addicting. The point that hurts that most though is that there are a lot of effective options that don't include taking any of these pills, but the patients are rarely (if ever) get that told them.