MANAS Speaks



'Mental Health in an Unequal World'

#WorldMentalHealthDay

MENTAL HEALTH

Childhood sacrificed pandemic

Growing up too fast: early menarche and mental illness

Adolescent mental health

Ghost of Surfing Social Media

The Academy of Psychology







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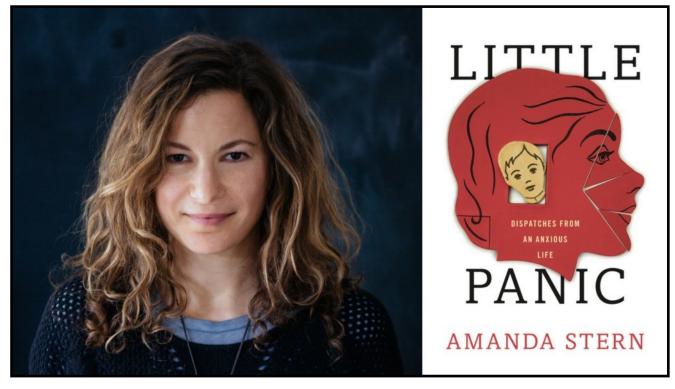
Author Guidelines

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BOOK REVIEW



LITTLE PANIC DISPATCHES FROM AN ANXIOUS LIFE

Stern offers a searing memoir about her lifelong panic disorder.

a series of mostly brief chapters, most of which could function as stand-alone miniessays, the author proves, as other memoirists have before her, that looking away from a train wreck can be nearly impossible. The riveting story is mostly chronological, as Stern deals with her daily fears up to age 25, the age when a therapist finally provided the proper medical term for her outsized anxieties. "The matter-of-factness with which [the therapist has] said all these life-altering things astonishes me," she writes of that revelation. "I've spent my entire life battling some impossible, invisible plague no one ever seemed to see, and this guy did it with such ease, as though the panic disorder is easy to establish, obvious to anyone who would take the time to ask what my symptoms were; textbook, even." At times, the author jumps ahead to the current decade, as she approaches 50. In her recent years, she has been thinking seriously about becoming a mother. As a result, she explores the science of freezing her eggs until she can identify a suitable sperm donor. Eventually, she decided that the move would be too risky. With a loving mother, a compassionate stepfather, stable siblings, admirable schoolteachers, and at least a couple of competent therapists, the author seemingly faced good odds of shedding her panic disorder and resulting anxieties. However, as she shows, she has had to battle anxieties nearly every day, with occasional patches of worry-free hours. In one of the chapters, Stern shares with readers a day-by-day account of a full week, conveying what it is like inside her head. At the end of selected chapters, the author includes actual paragraphs from the reports of multiple therapists she consulted, sometimes willingly, sometimes under duress. Stern is such a skilled stylist and such an unforgiving judge of herself that the memoir radiates a morbid fascination. (Review from KIRKUS)