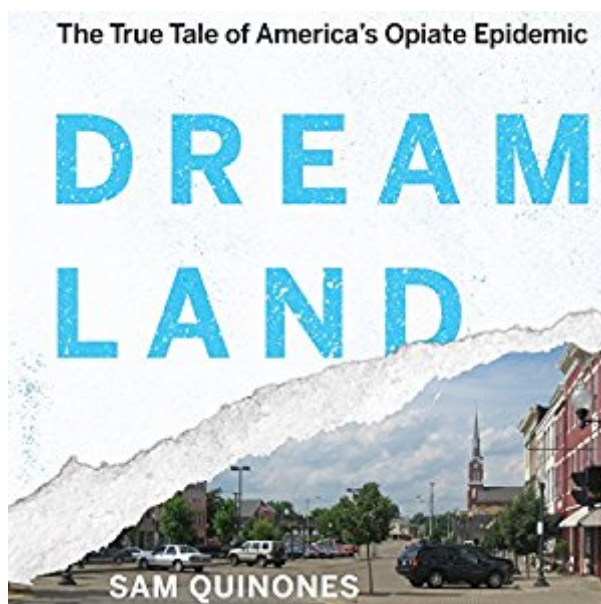


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Dreamland: The True Tale Of America's Opiate Epidemic



Synopsis

In 1929, in the blue-collar city of Portsmouth, Ohio, a company built a swimming pool the size of a football field; named Dreamland, it became the vital center of the community. Now, addiction has devastated Portsmouth, as it has hundreds of small rural towns and suburbs across America - addiction like no other the country has ever faced. How that happened is the riveting story of Dreamland. With a great reporter's narrative skill and the storytelling ability of a novelist, acclaimed journalist Sam Quinones weaves together two classic tales of capitalism run amok whose unintentional collision has been catastrophic. The unfettered prescribing of pain medications during the 1990s reached its peak in Purdue Pharma's campaign to market OxyContin, its new, expensive - and extremely addictive - miracle painkiller. Meanwhile a massive influx of black tar heroin - cheap, potent, and originating from one small county on Mexico's west coast, independent of any drug cartel - assaulted small towns and midsize cities across the country, driven by a brilliant, almost unbeatable marketing and distribution system. Together these phenomena continue to lay waste to communities from Tennessee to Oregon, Indiana to New Mexico. Introducing a memorable cast of characters - pharma pioneers, young Mexican entrepreneurs, narcotics investigators, survivors, and parents - Quinones shows how these tales fit together. Dreamland is a revelatory account of the corrosive threat facing America and its heartland.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you want to read one book this year that weaves together the forces shaping our culture today,

this is it. Sam Quinones is not only a master storyteller, but also possesses the sharp intellect necessary to weave together such a complex topic in the medical, social and criminal realms. Though not a quick read, this became my go-to book when I wanted to escape from my work for the day, because it can actually be relaxing to have someone explain so clearly what is wrong with a picture that seemed so fuzzy before. How did we get to this place, where accomplished, rich, smart people like Seymour Hoffman end up dead on the floor of an NYC condo from an overdose? Where white kids in the Midwest who were once successful athletes or scholars don't make it to their mid-twenties because they turn up dead with needles dangling from their arms? Quinones does a great job of laying blame where it is due without recrimination, leaving room for the reader to develop their own simmering anger. The medical establishment's blind adherence to the data fed them by a pharmaceutical company would be laughable if it weren't so true to form and so devastating in its consequence. If the AMA does not come out with a public service announcement on this issue, shame on them and shame on the medical schools that continue to generate so many physicians who are woefully under-educated on both the addictive potential and harmful side effects of many drugs. There are many other lessons in the book, including the fact that the Xalisco boys from Mexico who fanned the heroin epidemic across the country were by in large peaceful purveyors, treating their customers (and everyone else) well.

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