



Szasz Under Fire: A Psychiatric Abolitionist Faces His Critics (Under Fire Series)

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Since he published *The Myth of Mental Illness* in 1961, professor of psychiatry Thomas Szasz has been the scourge of the psychiatric establishment. In dozens of books and articles, he has argued passionately and knowledgeably against compulsory commitment of the mentally ill, against the war on drugs, against the insanity defense in criminal trials, against the "diseasing" of voluntary human practices such as addiction and homosexual behavior, against the drugging of schoolchildren with Ritalin, and for the right to suicide. Most controversial of all has been his denial that "mental illness" is a literal disease, treatable by medical practitioners.

In *Szasz Under Fire*, psychologists, psychiatrists, and other leading experts who disagree with Szasz on specific issues explain the reasons, with no holds barred, and Szasz replies cogently and pungently to each of them. Topics debated include the nature of mental illness, the right to suicide, the insanity defense, the use and abuse of drugs, and the responsibilities of psychiatrists and therapists. These exchanges are preceded by Szasz's autobiography and followed by a bibliography of his works.

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