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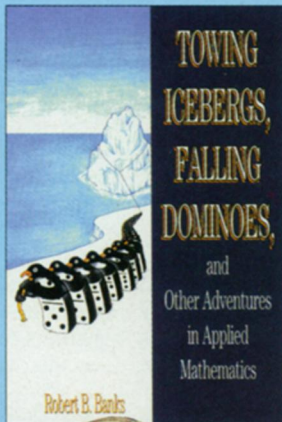
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Although we seldom think of it, our lives are played out in a world of numbers. Such common activities as throwing a baseball, skipping rope, growing flowers, playing football, monitoring savings accounts, and many others are inherently mathematical. So are more speculative problems that are simply fun to ponder—such as the best way to score Olympic events.

Here, Robert Banks presents a wide range of musings, both practical and entertaining, that have intrigued him and others: How tall can one grow? Why do we get stuck in traffic? Which football player would have a better chance of breaking away—a small, speedy wide receiver or a huge, slow linebacker? Can Californian water shortages be alleviated by towing icebergs from Antarctica?

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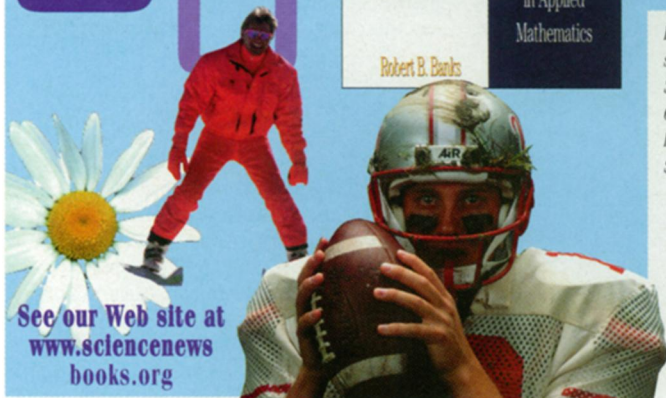
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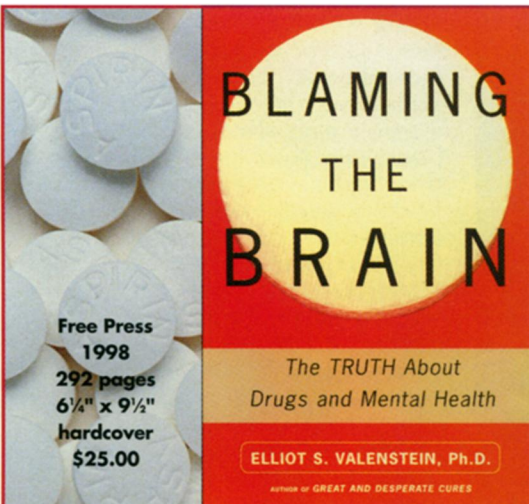
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**BLAMING  
THE  
BRAIN**

The TRUTH About  
Drugs and Mental Health

ELLIOT S. VALENSTEIN, Ph.D.

author of GREAT AND DESPERATE CURES

Over the last 30 years, the psychiatric establishment and the health care industry have shifted 180 degrees from blaming the mother to blaming the brain as the source of mental disorders. Whereas experience and environment were long viewed as the root causes of most emotional problems, now it is common to believe that mental disturbances—from depression and anxiety to schizophrenia—are determined by brain chemistry. And many people have come to accept the broader notion that their very personalities are determined by brain chemistry as well.

In *Blaming the Brain*, Elliot Valenstein exposes the many weaknesses inherent in the scientific arguments supporting the widely accepted theory that biochemical imbalances are the main cause of mental illness. Valenstein reveals how, beginning in the 1950s, the accidental discovery of a few mood-altering drugs stimulated an enormous interest in psychopharmacology, resulting in staggering growth and profits for the pharmaceutical industry. He lays bare the commercial motives of drug companies and their huge stake in expanding their markets. Prozac, Thorazine, and Zoloft are just a few of the psychoactive drugs that have dramatically changed practice in the mental health profession. Physicians today prescribe them in huge numbers even though, as several major studies reveal, their effectiveness and safety have been greatly exaggerated.

Part history, part science, part exposé, and part solution, *Blaming the Brain* sounds a clarion call through our culture of quick-fix pharmacology and our increasing reliance on drugs as a cure-all for mental illness.

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