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Schaler keynote speech at new museum opening, Friday evening, December 17, 2005, on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles. The museum documents the history of psychiatric abuse. Half a mile of Sunset Boulevard was cordoned off by the police, in order for the crowd to gather. It was an incredible event.

Click [here](#) for pictures taken before and after the speech; and for pictures taken the night of the Szasz Award speech, February 26, 2006.



Dr. Jeffrey A. Schaler
December 17, 2005
Los Angeles, California

Ladies and gentlemen-

I'm honored to speak to you today at this inauguration of the "Psychiatry: An Industry of Death Museum," an historic project of the Citizens Commission for Human Rights. [As many of you may know, CCHR was co-founded by my dear friend and colleague Dr. Thomas Szasz.](#) For over 35 years, CCHR, Professor Szasz, and other courageous individuals have been exposing the dangers of psychiatry and the state-sanctioned use of psychiatry as an institution of social control.

There are three ways this occurs: Through a process known as involuntary commitment to mental hospitals, through the use of the insanity defense, and through the union of medicine and state, much as church and state were once united.

People diagnosed with mental illness are deprived of liberty via involuntary commitment and forced into prisons called mental hospitals despite the fact they have not harmed anyone. In this process—the constitutionality of which has been upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court—innocent people are treated as though they are guilty of a crime, and denied basic constitutional protections of due process.

The flip side of involuntary commitment is the insanity defense, for example, the claim that mental illness caused a person to engage in criminal behavior. In this process, people we know are guilty of committing a crime are treated as though they are innocent, thanks to psychiatric examination and a diagnosis of mental illness. It matters not that a psychiatrist cannot ascertain a person's state of mind when he committed a crime.

The insanity defense and involuntary commitment are like two sides of the same coin: On the one side is liberty, on the other side is justice. We can't have one without the other. When psychiatrists remove responsibility where it belongs, in the case of insanity, people are deprived of justice. When they assign responsibility where it does not belong, in the case of involuntary commitment, people are deprived of liberty. This is how psychiatry is used to undermine the principles of liberty and responsibility we hold and cherish.

Many people have been misled to believe that psychiatry is an exact and objective science, like, biochemistry, for example. Psychiatric diagnoses, however, are really value judgments made about a person's behavior.

Behavior cannot be a disease. Real doctors do not judge a person's character and behavior when they make a diagnosis of disease. They do not use diagnosis and medicine as instruments of social control. Real doctors focused on real disease only treat patients who consent to being treated. Their patients always have the right to refuse treatment. A person with cancer always has the right to refuse treatment.

In psychiatry, however, if a patient refuses treatment, or worse, denies the existence of "mental illness," the disagreement itself is considered a symptom of their illness. To say that a psychiatrist "treats" someone against his or her consent is really a misnomer: Assault and battery is more accurate.

While psychiatrists and their cohorts are fond of saying that mental illnesses are diseases just like cancer and heart disease, important differences exist between the two. Real disease refers to cellular pathology. So-called "mental diseases" refer to socially-unacceptable behaviors, speech, and claims made by a person.

In other words, mental illness refers to something that a person does. Cancer refers to something that a person has. The diagnosis of cancer has nothing to do with morality. Cancer and heart disease exist independent of whether someone is a good or bad person. Persons labeled as mentally ill have no right to refuse treatment. A person with cancer has the right to refuse treatment. Psychiatric patients cannot fire their doctors. Cancer patients can.

In every situation where psychiatrists diagnose and "treat" people against their will, there is a claim that people are sick simply because they don't agree with a psychiatrist, and are allegedly a threat to themselves and others. Disagreement is neither a sign of disease nor a crime. The freedom to disagree with others is a sacred right in our free society.

When government is free to deprive citizens of freedom because psychiatrists think they're going to commit a crime, we have nothing short of a return to the rule of man.

The Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution state that no person

shall "be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." This means that in order for the state to deprive someone of liberty there must be a trial and conviction—in other words, a fair hearing.

Under the rule of law, a person is innocent until proven guilty. Under the rule of psychiatry, a person is guilty until proven innocent.

What can we do to rid society of the dangers posed by psychiatry?

First, we must remove psychiatrists as experts from the courts.

Second, we must expose the myth of mental illness, its diagnosis and treatment. The public should be exposed to the research and critical thinking showing that the claims psychiatrists make are, in fact, a sham.

And third, we must separate medicine and state, in much the same way that church and state should remain separate. This country was founded on the principle of religious freedom. People seem to have forgotten this. Now we need psychiatric freedom. For example, we need a wall of separation prohibiting the state from acting as a tool of psychiatry through involuntary commitment procedures.

If we stop psychiatrists from having the power to testify in court, and the power to commit people against their will, and if we strip away their false mantle of science and medicine, the profession would die a most deserving death. It is time to euthanize psychiatry as an industry of death.

And this is why I'm here today, to assist and support CCHR in its condemnation and eradication of psychiatric abuse. Because psychiatry is undermining personal responsibility; it is destroying our society by reducing people to the mere category of things—things no longer capable of choice, people are no longer characterized as human's with a conscience and they are deprived of their fundamental constitutional rights.

The Church of Scientology and the Citizens Commission on Human Rights are known the world over for their untiring dedication to exposing the danger

committed in the name of psychiatry. For this, they are to be commended. The task is not easy.

Some ask why they are so vocal and so committed to the cause. It is, I believe, the wrong question.

I think we should be asking why too many others are noticeably silent. *Qui tacet consentit*. He who is silent, consents.

Let us work together to raise the voices of decent men and women to a deafening roar, and wipe out the harm that is done by psychiatry forever.

Thank you.

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