



# **The Politics of Madness: The State, Insanity and Society in England, 1845-1914 (Routledge Studies in the Social History of Medicine)**

*Joseph Melling, Bill Forsythe*

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The discovery and treatment of insanity remains one of the most debated and discussed issues in social history.

Focusing on the second half of the nineteenth century, *The Politics of Madness* provides a new perspective on this important topic, based on research drawn from both local and national material. Within a social and cultural history of the English political and class order, it presents a fresh appraisal of the significance of the asylum in the decades following the creation of a national asylum system in 1845.

Arguing that the new asylums provided a meeting place for different social interests and aspirations, the text asserts that this then marked a transition in provincial power relations from the landed interests to the new coalition of professional, commercial and populist groups, which gained control of the public asylums at the end of the period surveyed.

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