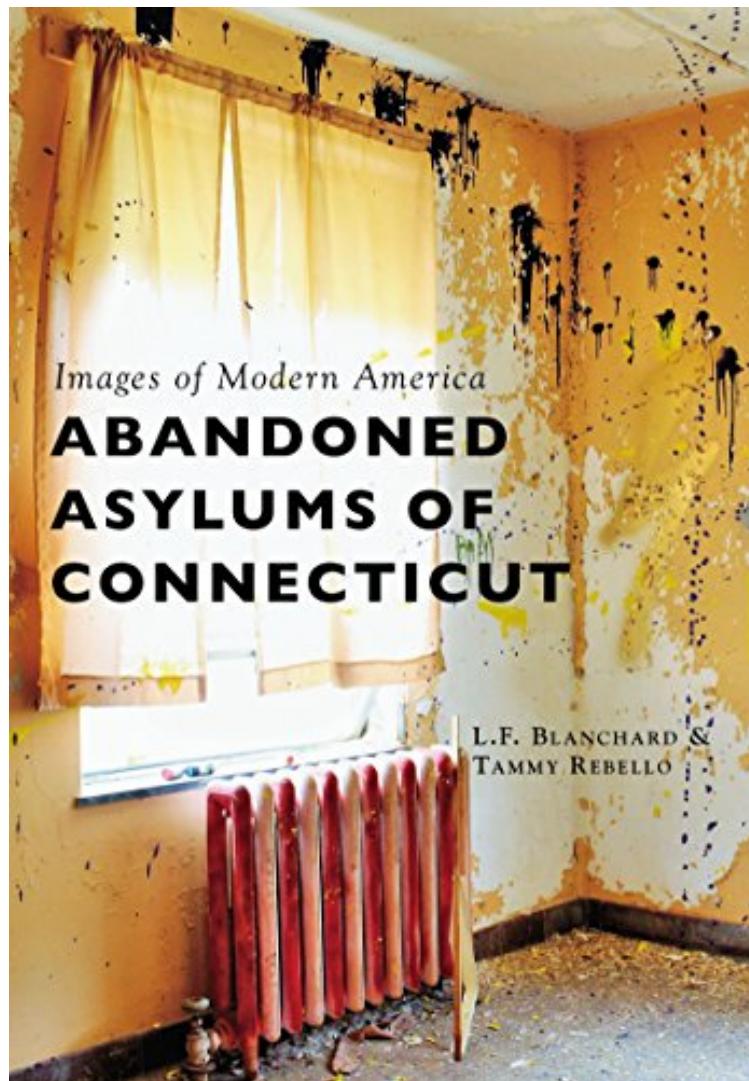


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Abandoned Asylums of Connecticut (Images of Modern America)

L.F. Blanchard, Tammy Rebello
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L.F. Blanchard, Tammy Rebello : Abandoned Asylums of Connecticut (Images of Modern America) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Abandoned Asylums of Connecticut (Images of Modern America):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Not worth the money!By MagmooPoorly written. Full of inaccuracies, including the location of Seaside Regional Center (Waterford, not Waterbury). Very disappointed. I regret spending money on the book0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Needed More InfoBy Mary Jane KrausThe photographs were great! However, the authors did not write a description under each photo of where it was taken. You wanted to know more about each photo and a description of its history.7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Disappointed.By Tacky JulieI was disappointed in this book. I was hoping for a coherent presentation

on state asylums in Connecticut. This is not it. It is a disjointed assemblage of pictures and text of dubious value. In many cases, such as the top photo of page 15, I don't even know what is being depicted; it's just a circle of metal pipes with weeds all around it. The caption does not say where or when or why the photo was taken. Instead it gives general statistical information about tuberculosis. On page 86, there's a photo of a two-story brick house. Why is it there? What does it have to do with Norwich State Hospital? The caption mentions (among other things) the Kettle Building, which this house is not. This kind of thing happens through out the book; these are just two examples. It's as if they wrote the text first and then randomly placed photos that have no connection to what is being said. The discrepancies between the photographs and the captions that accompany them makes for a jarring, confusing reading experience. There are no footnotes or bibliography, so it's unknown where all this information came from. It is important to know so that readers can judge for themselves whether what they are reading is reliable. I was particularly disturbed by the two anecdotes, "The Story of Thomas" and "The Story of Donna," for which no sources are cited. Without substantiation, these stories are merely sensationalism. I don't understand the point of including "The Story of Gerri Santoro." It's about illegal abortion, and the only connection to the subject of this book is that she and her lover were employees of one of the institutions. Like the stories of "Thomas" and "Donna," it seems like it was only included for sensational reasons. There is a focus in the book on the problems of state mental hospitals, but nothing on people who were helped. I know, from my own research, that this is difficult to find -- but not impossible. The doctors, nurses, social workers, and attendants worked under difficult circumstances with inadequate funding and resources. The fact that patients were regularly discharged seems to indicate some were helped and returned to their communities and families. I do not think this book is balanced in its presentation of the problems of state institutions. If anyone is interested in beautiful photographs of decaying state hospitals accompanied by well-researched and thoughtful commentary, I recommend "Asylum: Inside the Closed World of State Mental Hospitals" by Christopher Payne, with an essay by Oliver Sacks, M.D. Arcadia Publishing provides local authors an easy way to get historical photos published, but the quality of their publications is uneven. This one could have used an editor. The subject is interesting to many, but the book fails to illuminate it. I'm actually sorry I bought it.

This collection of photographs, history, and firsthand accounts gives readers a glimpse at the roots of mental health. These vignettes are born of the personal stories of those who worked at these facilities, those who were institutionalized, and their families. The authors took the time to listen to their stories and endeavored to understand their past and recognize how these events continue to influence the mental health industry today. Pictured throughout are the physical relics of the places?the now largely abandoned asylums of Connecticut?where these stories unfurled.

About the AuthorL.F. Blanchard has spent more than two decades serving as a peer counselor within her community. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and is currently working toward her master's degree in art therapy, joining two of her life's passions. Her desire to help those who have had extreme and life-changing events has fed her desire to understand mental illness and to work toward a better understanding of treatment options. Tammy Rebello holds a bachelor's degree in communications. Her passion for urban photography has ignited her desire to share the stories of those too often forgotten. Her explorations into these facilities have haunted her with echoes of days past, the deplorable conditions, and a yearning to tell their story through her photographs.