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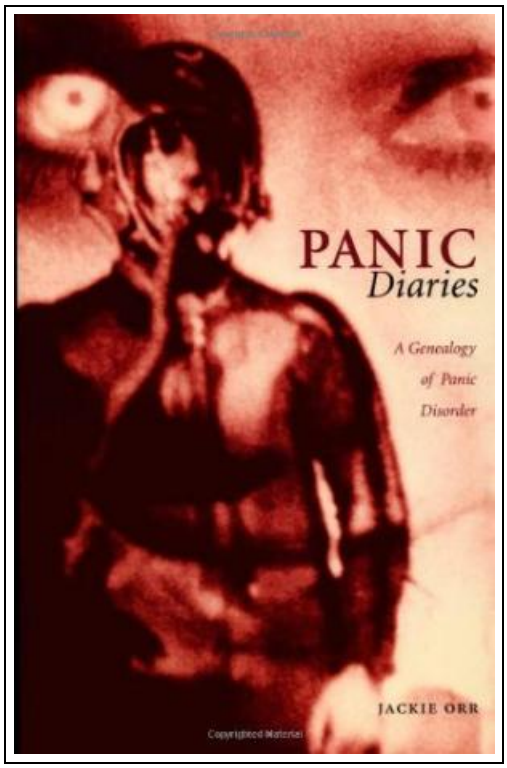

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PANIC DIARIES: A GENEALOGY OF PANIC DISORDER

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Duke University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Panic Diaries: A Genealogy of Panic Disorder, Jackie Orr, Part cultural history, part sociological critique, and part literary performance, Panic Diaries explores the technological and social construction of individual and collective panic. Jackie Orr looks at instances of panic and its "cures" in the twentieth-century United States: from the mass hysteria following the 1938 radio broadcast of H. G. Wells' War of the Worlds to an individual woman swallowing a pill to control the "panic disorder" officially recognized by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980. Against a backdrop of Cold War anxieties over atomic attack, Orr highlights the entanglements of knowledge and power in efforts to re-conceive panic, and its prevention, as problems in communication and information feedback. Throughout, she reveals the shifting techniques of power and social engineering underlying the ways that scientific and social scientific discourses--including crowd psychology, Cold War cybernetics, and contemporary psychiatry--have rendered panic an object of techno-scientific management. Orr, who has experienced panic attacks herself, kept a diary of her participation as a research subject in clinical trials for the Upjohn Company's anti-anxiety drug Xanax. This "panic diary" grounds her study and suggests the complexity of her desire to track the diffusion and regulation of panic in U.S. society. Orr's historical research, theoretical reflections, and biographical narrative combine in this compelling genealogy of panic and its manipulation by the media, the social sciences and psychiatry, the U.S. military and government, and trans-national drug companies. Jackie Orr is Associate Professor of Sociology at Syracuse University.

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