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Miscellaneous

Mythopsychopharmacology: definition and differential diagnosis

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Mythopsychopharmacology is scientific rhetoric that extends pharmacotherapeutic reasoning beyond reliable evidence. Its paradigmatic form is justification of polypharmacy for mood disorders that, disregarding brain and social complexity, extrapolates from secure pharmacodynamic knowledge into fanciful prescription. It is found characteristically in social media and some bestselling psychopharmacology textbooks, serving to shore up professional confidence and boost clinician prestige and book sales. It must be distinguished from psychopharmacomythology, which is the erroneous attribution of beliefs to psychiatrists by critics of the specialty. Research into complex interventions for treatment-resistant depression utilising substances historically associated with mythology and ritual risks straying into mythopsychopharmacology.

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