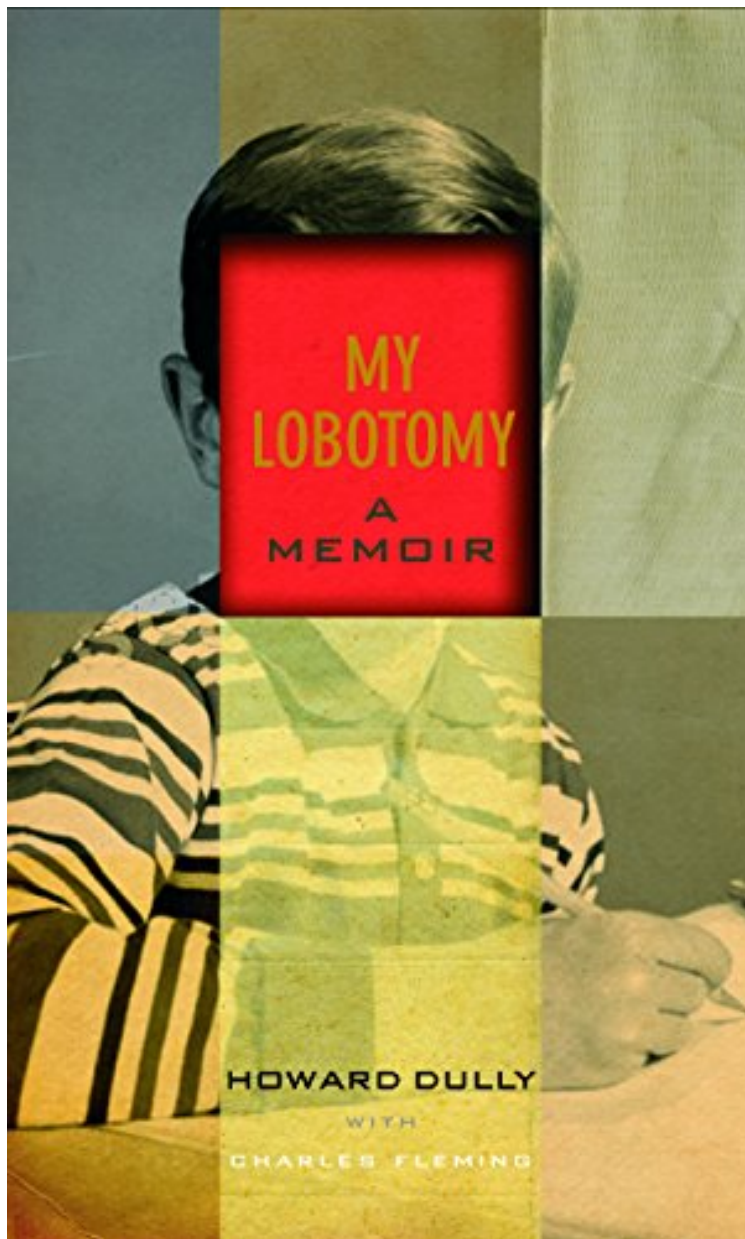


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My Lobotomy: A memoir

Von Howard Dully, Charles Fleming
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Von Howard Dully, Charles Fleming : My Lobotomy: A memoir before purchasing it in order to gage whether or

not it would be worth my time, and all praised My Lobotomy: A memoir:

Kurzbeschreibung Howard Dully was 12 years old when he was given a lobotomy. He was 56 years old when he found out why. The four decades in between tell a story of profound love and compassion. In 1960 Howard's father and stepmother delivered him into the hands of the man who had invented the 'ice pick' lobotomy. Expelled from the mainstream medical community, his once-popular procedure now a grisly medical relic, Dr Walter Freeman was eager to turn this temperamental 12-year-old into a submissive boy - especially after hearing the terrible lies his stepmother told about him. Howard, told he was going into the hospital for tests, was instead given electro-shock treatments and a transorbital lobotomy. It took him 40 years to recover. Howard Dully's escape from that dark place is a voyage of enormous hope and universal appeal. From Publishers Weekly At age 12, in 1960, Dully received a transorbital or ice pick lobotomy from Dr. Walter Freeman, who invented the procedure, making Dully an unfortunate statistic in medical history the youngest of the more than 10,000 patients who Freeman lobotomized to cure their supposed mental illness. In this brutally honest memoir, Dully, writing with Fleming (*The Ivory Coast*), describes how he set out 40 years later to find out why he was lobotomized, since he did not exhibit any signs of mental instability at the time, and why, postoperation, he was bounced between various institutions and then slowly fell into a life of drug and alcohol abuse. His journey first described in a National Public Radio feature in 2005 finds Dully discovering how deeply he was the victim of an unstable stepmother who systematically abused him and who then convinced his distant father that a lobotomy was the answer to Dully's acting out against her psychic torture. He also investigates the strange career of Freeman who wasn't a licensed psychiatrist including early acclaim by the *New York Times* and cross-country trips hawking the operation from his Lobotomobile. But what is truly stunning is Dully's description of how he gained strength and a sense of self-worth by understanding how both Freeman and his stepmother were victims of their own family tragedies, and how he managed to somehow forgive them for the wreckage they caused in his life. (Sept.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Pressestimmen "The lobotomy, although terrible, was not the greatest injury done to him. His greatest misfortune, as his own testimony makes clear, was being raised by parents who could not give him love. The lobotomy, he writes, made him feel like a Frankenstein monster. But that's not quite right. By the age of 12 he already felt that way. It's this that makes *My Lobotomy* one of the saddest stories you'll ever read." William Grimes, *The New York Times* "Dully's tale is a heartbreakingly sad story of a life seriously, tragically interrupted. All Howard Dully wanted was to be normal. His entire life has been a search for normality. He did what he had to do to survive. This book is his legacy, and it is a powerful one." *San Francisco Chronicle* "In *My Lobotomy* Howard Dully tells more of the story that so many found gripping in a National Public Radio broadcast: how his stepmother joined with a doctor willing to slice into his brain with ice picks when he was all of 12 years old." *New York Daily News* "[Dully's] memoir is vital and almost too disturbing to bear—a piece of recent history that reads like science fiction Dully, the only patient to ever request his file, speaks eloquently. It's a voice to crash a server, and to break your heart." *Cleveland Plain Dealer* "The value of the book is in the indomitable spirit Dully displays throughout his grueling saga. By coming to grips with his past and shining a light into the dark corners of his medical records, Dully shows that regardless of what happened to his brain, his heart and soul are ferociously strong." *Chicago-Sun Times* "Plain-spoken, heart wrenching memoir ..." *San Jose Mercury News* "Gut-wrenching memoir by a man who was lobotomized at the age of 12. Assisted by journalist/novelist Fleming (After Havana, 2003, etc.), Dully recounts a family tragedy whose Sophoclean proportions he could only sketch in his powerful 2005 broadcast on NPR's *All Things Considered*. In 1960, he writes, I was given a transorbital, or ice pick lobotomy. My stepmother arranged it. My father agreed to it. Dr. Walter Freeman, the father of the American lobotomy, told me he was going to do some tests. It took ten minutes and cost two hundred dollars. Fellow doctors called Freeman's technique barbaric: an ice picklike instrument was inserted about three inches into each eye socket and twirled to sever connections from the frontal lobe to the rest of the brain. The procedure was intended to help curb a variety of psychoses by muting emotional responses, but sometimes it irreversibly reduced patients to a childlike state or (in 15% of the operations Freeman performed) killed them outright. Dully's ten-minute test did neither, but in some ways it had a far crueler result, since it didn't end the unruly behavior that had set his stepmother against him to begin with. I spent the next forty years in and out of insane asylums, jails, and halfway houses, he tells us. I was homeless, alcoholic, and drug-addicted. I was lost. From all accounts, there was no excuse for the lobotomy. Dully had never been crazy, and his (not very) bad behavior sounds like the typical acting-up of a child in desperate need of affection. His stepmother responded with unrelenting abuse and neglect, his father allowed her to demonize his son and never admitted his complicity in the lobotomy; Freeman capitalized on their monumental dysfunction. It's a tale of epic horror, and while Dully's courage in telling it inspires awe, readers are left to speculate about what drove supposedly responsible adults to such unconscionable acts. A profoundly disturbing survivor's tale." Kirkus "...Hard to

put down." The RecordFrom the Hardcover edition.