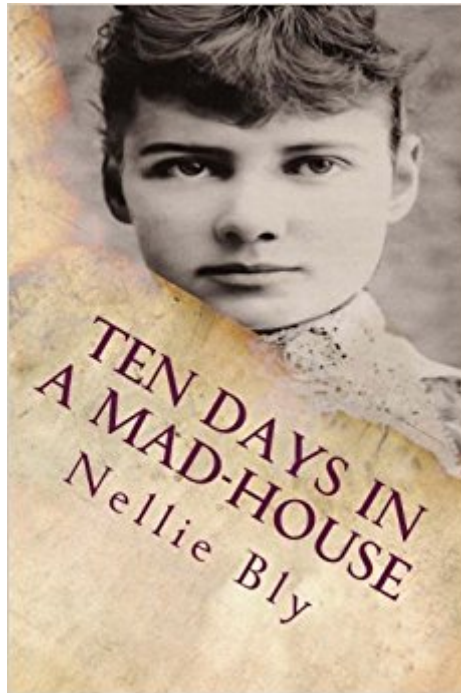


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# Ten Days In A Mad-House: Illustrated



## Synopsis

Ten Days In a Mad-House (1887) by Nellie Bly. Nellie Bly, whose given name was Elizabeth Jane Cochran, was a pio-neer of investigative journalism. She died in 1922. Of her many exposÃfÂ© assignments for Joseph PulitzerÃ¢ââs NEW YORK WORLD, her voluntary (and undercover) journey into the Ã¢ââlunatic asylumÃ¢ââ on BlackwellÃ¢ââs (now Roosevelt) Island is perhaps the most well known. In previous chapters of the series, she has (without much difficulty) fooled various doctors and authorities into deeming her insane and admitting her tothe asylum, which is located on an island just east of Manhattan. "SINCE my experiences in Blackwell's Island Insane Asylum were published in the World I have received hundreds of letters in regard to it. The edition containing my story long since ran out, and I have been prevailed upon to allow it to be published in book form, to satisfy the hundreds who are yet asking for copies."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Because this is a compilation of news reports, this reads very simplistically. There is a lot of repetition as well. However, the topic is an important one and it illustrates the power of the press in the past. If only we had journalists who were willing to go to such lengths to expose injustices today!!

This is totally well written book!! highly recommend this book!! would definitely recommend this book to my friends!

Good

Great book

Nellie (a pen name for journalist Elizabeth Jane Cochrane) was insanely courageous to feign insanity and sneak her way through the system into a mad-house made famous for its rumored ill-treatment of patients. Mental care has come far since Nellie's experiment in the late 1800's, and much of it is due to her exposing the malpractices of the doctors and nurses staffed at the hospital on Blackwell's Island. There isn't much I can say here that wouldn't spoil the book due to its short length and to-the-point writing, so I will just leave it at this: This book broke my heart. The women were treated far worse than animals. I feel guilty sleeping with a plush blanket, eating decent food, and being surrounded by family after reading the accounts of the women Nellie encountered during her stay. The scripture that says, "nothing is new under the sun," is accurate as ever and applies here. Though healthcare for the mentally ill has improved, the hearts of hateful, calloused people just seem to regenerate every generation. We hear of malpractices, people mistreating the elderly or other patients who cannot defend themselves, and think, "What is this world coming to?" The world has always been and always will be full of wretched, awful people. The staff at Blackwell's Island (aside from a handful of decent beings) were a group of the most inhumane humans I've ever read about. I shudder to think that there were surely many cases like this that never had their moment of exposure. The patients who were sane were barely hanging to their sanity by threads after enduring the treatment of the staff. I wonder how many family members admitted their loved ones to such a place thinking they would be getting the treatment they needed. There are many stories of people admitting cheating wives, or wives they were tired of and so accused of adultery, hot-tempered women, poor women that society no longer wished to offer charity, etc. They are all victims here who never received justice in this life. Language: There is only one mention of a minor curse word, which Nellie does not fully spell out. Hateful names and insults are hurled, but nothing profane. Sex: None. There is only mention of a woman who was unfaithful, and the taunts the nurses hurl at her during her stay. Violence: There's a good bit of violent content. The accounts of these women were pitifully sad and their treatment was extremely abusive. Religion: There are short mentions of patients praying, and one patient speaking of the devil. There's mention of there being church services available, but other than that there is no religious mention. It was written in a way that I would think wouldn't offend persons of any faith, or lack thereof.

Great buy!

Ten Days in a Mad-House provides insight into the mental health care system of the 1880s, recounting not only the ways patients were treated, but also some of the ways in which a sane woman may have found herself institutionalized. Nellie Bly's bravery in intentionally getting herself committed to Blackwell Island's insane asylum allowed her to reveal the horrible ways the patients were being mistreated and brought about a positive change to the system. The descriptions of abuse may be upsetting to some readers, but I would highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the history of mental health care.

Ten Days in a Mad House is a book I have been intrigued by for some time. I chose to read it for a class assignment and found that though I really enjoyed it, there were parts that were disappointing for me as well. I think the publication of the piece was incredibly necessary at the time and generated conversation and change that helped pave the way for further development in the mental care system. Though Bly used tactics that would be considered incredibly unethical today, she was able to shed light on the inhumane treatment of mental health patients at the time. I found that the book started out incredibly slow and it took time for me to become interested in what I was reading. I eventually became more fascinated by what I was reading, but I was still left with a sense of longing for more information when I finished it. Being that it was originally published in a newspaper, the brevity makes sense but I wish that more of the conditions and practices could have been exposed.

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