

Nancy C. Andreassen Biography

Nancy C. Andreassen

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

Nancy C. Andreasen Biography.....	1
Contents.....	2
Biography.....	3

Biography

Nancy C. Andreasen is an author and professor of psychiatry known for her investigations relating mental illness to the biological processes of the brain. She was the first to use populations, such as **twins** to disentangle genetic and environmental interactions. Andreasen's work utilizes a variety of neuroimaging techniques for three-dimensional reconstruction, statistical analysis, and automated measurements.

Born in Lincoln, Nebraska, Andreasen began her first academic career with a B.A. in English from the University of Nebraska. She received an M.A. from Radcliffe College, and a Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska. She became a Fulbright scholar at Oxford University in England then joined the English faculty at the University of Iowa as an assistant professor in 1963.

In 1966, Andreasen undertook her medical studies at the College of Medicine at Iowa. Four years later she received her M.D., and following residency in psychiatry, she returned to Iowa as an assistant professor of psychiatry.

In the late 1970s advances in computer science and imaging technology made it possible to examine the interior of a functioning human brain. Powerful techniques like magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), positive emission tomography (PET), and single photon emission computerized tomography (SPECT) allowed scientists to examine dynamic neural functions. The new technology inspired Andreasen to start an ambitious project to map both healthy and diseased brains.

Using family and **twin studies**, Andreasen demonstrated a potential genetic connection of schizophrenia as it resembles other complex illnesses, such as diabetes mellitus. The mental illness is nonmendelian, probably polygenic, and possibly multifactorial. Recent studies show possible loci associated with the disorder located on chromosomes 6, 9, and 20.

On December 1, 2000 Andreasen received a National Medal of Science, one of the United State's highest awards in science. Andreasen asserts that neurodevelopmental illnesses are problems grounded in molecular and cellular malfunctions.

Andreasen is author of more than 200 scientific articles and ten books. Her book *The Broken Brain: The Biological Revolution in Psychiatry* was written for the lay public. She has won numerous awards for the book, which is now regarded as a classic text in introductory psychology and neurobiology. Her book *Brave New Brain: Conquering Mental Illness in the Era of the Genome* relates how the principles of psychiatry and **genetics** are used by physicians to treat mental illness.