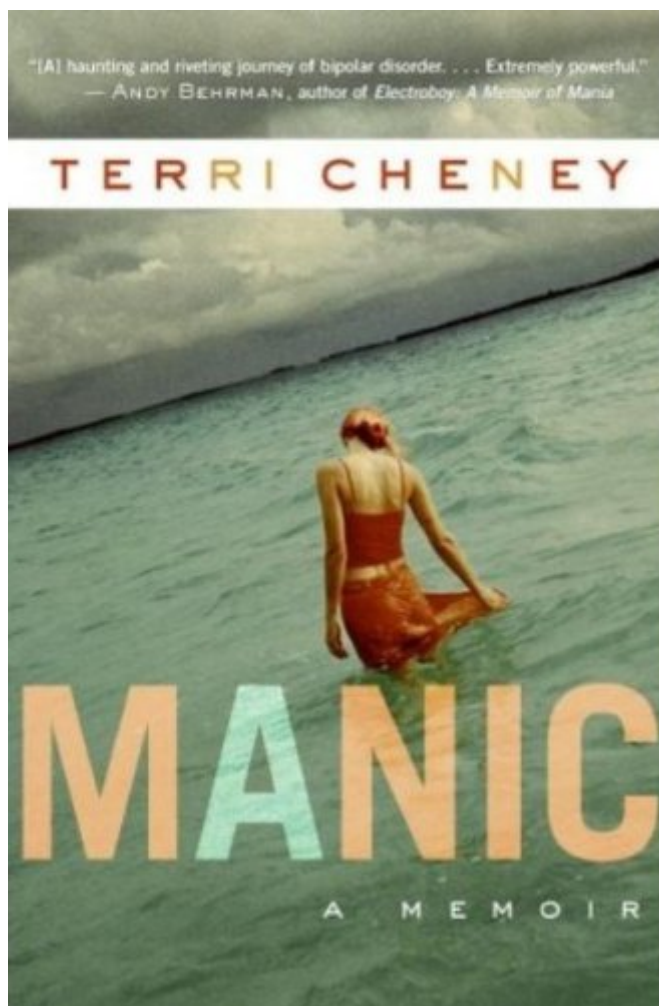




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# Manic: A Memoir



## Synopsis

An attractive, highly successful Beverly Hills entertainment lawyer, Terri Cheney had been battling debilitating bipolar disorder for the better part of her life—and concealing a pharmacy's worth of prescription drugs meant to stabilize her moods and make her "normal." In explosive bursts of prose that mirror the devastating mania and extreme despair of her illness, Cheney describes her roller-coaster existence with shocking honesty, giving brilliant voice to the previously unarticulated madness she endured. Brave, electrifying, poignant, and disturbing, *Manic* does not simply explain bipolar disorder—it takes us into its grasp and does not let go.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I am clinically diagnosed with major depression and anxiety disorder. If you know anyone who has this disease and wondered why that person may act sometimes ways you cannot understand then I suggest you read this book. I could never explain to you in words that you can understand how it affects your whole life in dealing with this disorder. The author here has the best explanation one could ever get. It is a horrible disease and not an easy one to deal with. I was pushed over my limit

in February of 1997 for no reason other than jealousy of a couple of conspiring coworkers and lost everything that I had worked so hard to get. I just hope they got the l r money's worth.

I really enjoyed Terri Cheney's original, creative writing. Her metaphors and descriptions are delightful. For instance, she says that her boyfriend in the 1980s was as essential to her as shoulder pads. She talks about her fellow mental institution inmates' and her frustration with occupational therapy in trying to complete picture puzzles with pieces missing from each and every puzzle. She said she was in Kafka-land where all the puzzles have missing pieces. Her father disinherited her on his death bed by having a nurse witness him removing her from his will. It hurts deeply to think of him doing that to her when she was at her most desperate and needy, especially financially. How could that will be legal with her dad under the influence of heavy morphine, drugged for cancer pain? No way was he of "sound mind". He announced his reason was that she's a drug addict - her bipolar meds. Why did she take all those pills in front of him knowing how he felt about her prescription "drug use"? But most of all I wonder why, as a lawyer herself, she didn't fight that change in his will that left her heartbroken, suicidal and penniless. She loved her dad with all her heart but he never accepted or understood her need for medication and what she was going through.

I came to this book after listening to Terri Cheney's essay, "Take Me as I am, Whoever I am" on the WBUR Boston-New York Times podcast, "Modern Love." I knew I had to look her up. The story telling, performed impeccably by the actress, Rebecca Hall, was incredible and ... familiar. Struggling with mental illness since I was a child and having been diagnosed with severe depression in my 20s and having thought about suicide many times, I had to know what else goes through this woman's head. I identified with so many of her episodes and have never highlighted so many passages in a book. The struggle is real. I really want to read her first book focusing on this illness during childhood and hope it's available on Kindle soon. This isn't a manual on how to address your illness, it's a deep journey into how a suffering mind sees the world around. It helped me to examine my own thought processes and experiences.

I would love for Terry to write a novel, she certainly has a way with words. Very witty and just the right amount of description. I could not wait to get back to this book and her very eventful .....to put it mildly.....often times unbelievable, sad, traumatic and sometimes hard to go to those very dark places with Terry. Wow, how she ever came out where she eventually did is just a miracle. Gotta

love this strong, highly intelligent woman that has been to hell and back several times!!

Terri Cheney's account of her bipolar "madness" is quite riveting. As a reader, you are along for the rollercoaster ride that is her life. She gives excellent (and entertaining) examples of what she felt like when she was manic, such as the time she thought she could seduce any man in the room. Since her life and career were in Hollywood, I doubt that most people even noticed her erratic and odd behavior! Some reviewers suggested that she is too self-indulgent in her account of her bipolar disorder, but HELLO, - this is an account of HER experience. The book is clearly not intended to be a manual on how to deal with bipolar disorder in general; She is speaking about how being bipolar has affected her own life. Still, I think it is a wonderful resource for the families of bipolar people, as Cheney's story helps to explain the disorder in a more accessible way than many clinical psychology manuals do.

I appreciate how candid and honest Ms Cheney has been in writing about her struggles with bipolar illness, and in making bold life choices to be able to survive. As someone with very similar struggles, there is much to commend in works that increase awareness of these types of disorders. However, after reading this book, as well as Ms Cheney Facebook's page + columns for Psychology Today, one of the dominant impressions that irks me is how self-centered she is. While I'm certainly not 'reviewing' her social media presence or magazine articles, in all of her works she sounds self-pitying, almost whiny. Also as another reviewer here pointed out, too much space is devoted here (and when she writes elsewhere) to her looks and beauty. Especially when compared to truly inspiring, really well-written memoirs about illness and mortality like Dr Kay Redfield Jamison's 'An Unquiet Mind', and Dr Paul Kalanithi's 'As Breath Becomes Air', this book lacks the kind of depth that could've lifted it to great heights. One more thing that could've added some of that profundity to her descriptions of a troubled existence, would've been relevant literary references like poetry or appropriate quotes from literature or art. Ms Cheney claims to love art and writing, but a few old movie references do not add up to an insightful book. Both Dr Jamison's and Kalanithi's books really draw on their love, and strong knowledge of the works of great writers and writers. Neither does Ms Cheney's quick detraction of ECT really offer insights into the comparative value of different treatment methods. In my opinion, it is certainly possible to discuss the medicine behind hard treatment options without confusing the reader, or losing the audience's interest. Ultimately, she is a writer of some talent, but I hope her future works really showcase all of her literary abilities.

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