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The New York Times

Book Review



ASYLUM: Inside the Closed World of State Mental Hospitals.
Photographs by Christopher Payne. Essay by Oliver Sacks.
216 pp. MIT Press. \$39.95.

Payne, a photographer and architect, visited 70 abandoned psychiatric institutions in 30 states over six years, documenting the decay of formerly glorious buildings, where in another era patients "could be both mad and safe," as Sacks writes. (Sacks's book "Awakenings" was inspired by his work at a hospital in the Bronx.) Above, toothbrushes still hang at the Hudson River State Hospital in Poughkeepsie, N.Y.