The Meaning of mental Illness / Stigma and Marginalisation

The following provides an outline of the sources and recommended readings associated with this lecture which can be accessed at:

[http://www.screencast.com/t/n1qO2KTxm](http://www.screencast.com/t/n1qO2KTxm)

An extensive literature exists, particularly in the sociological field that critically addresses the concept of mental illness. The following are classic texts which critically consider the meaning of madness:


Every health professional ought to at least have a remedial understanding of the history of mental health care. As George Santayana is credited as saying “Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it”. The history of psychiatry and approaches to care is fascinating and intersects with changing conceptions. Authoritative texts relating to the history of psychiatry generally include:


... and in relation to mental health nursing:


Another vast and growing literature might be considered ‘critical psychiatry’ and addresses concerns about over-medicalising and medicating everyday problems of living. The most important recent contribution to this body of work I think is:

This makes a case that the pharmacological approach to psychiatric problems may actually contribute to brain disease and disability and Whitaker rallies considerable evidence to support these ideas. A synopsis may be found at:


In relation to understanding psychiatric diagnosis there are a wealth of resources online which provide an outline of diagnostic criteria for disorders. Indeed one can search for ICD or DSM-IV criteria for a given problem and one does tend to get accurate accounts. Most psychiatric and nursing texts will also outline criteria for disorders. See: [http://www.psyweb.com/DSM_IV/jsp/dsm_iv.jsp](http://www.psyweb.com/DSM_IV/jsp/dsm_iv.jsp)

If you read nothing else, about diagnosis **read these** two brilliant papers by Marie Crowe:


Marie provides something of a solution to the problems of diagnosis. That is, the promotion of case/clinical or problem formulation.

In the mental health field Graham Thornicroft is considered a world leader in the exploration of discrimination and stigma associated with mental illness. The following text summarises the state of the play at present:


Further recommended papers on discrimination include:


### Additional references cited in the lecture


