

## 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:

- Bentall, R.P. (2003) *Madness explained: Psychosis and human nature*. London: Penguin Books
- Conrad, P., & Schneider, J.W. (1992) *Deviance and medicalization: From badness to sickness*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press
- Szasz, T.S. (1974) *The myth of mental illness: Foundations of a theory of personal conduct* (Revised edition, 2003). New York: Perennial

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:

- Porter, R. (1987) *Madmen: A social history of madhouses, mad-doctors and lunatics*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus Publishing Limited

... and in relation to mental health nursing:

- Nolan, P. (1993) *A History of Mental Health Nursing*. Cheltenham: Stanley Thomas

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:

- Whitaker, R. (2010). *Anatomy of an Epidemic: Magic Bullets, Psychiatric Drugs, and the Astonishing Rise of Mental Illness in America*. New York: Crown Publishing Group.

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:

- Lakeman, R. (2011). It's time to rethink our thinking about mental health problems. *British Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(5), 8-9.

In relation to understanding psychiatric diagnosis there are a wealth of resources on-line 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:

- Crowe, M., & Carlyle, D. (2008). "Clinical formulation for mental health nursing practice". *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 15(10): 800–807
- Crowe, M. (2006). Psychiatric diagnosis: some implications for mental health nursing care. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 53(1), 125-131.

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:

- Thornicroft, G. (2006). *Shunned: Discrimination against people with mental illness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Further recommended papers on discrimination include:

- Angermeyer, M. C., Holzinger, A., Carta, M. G., & Schomerus, G. (2011). Biogenetic explanations and public acceptance of mental illness: systematic

review of population studies. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 199(5), 367-372.

- Griffiths, K., Nakane, Y., Christensen, H., Yoshioka, K., Jorm, A., & Nakane, H. (2006). Stigma in response to mental disorders: a comparison of Australia and Japan. *BMC psychiatry*, 6(1), 21.
- Thornicroft, G., Brohan, E., Kassam, A., & Lewis-Holmes, E. (2008). Reducing stigma and discrimination: Candidate interventions. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems*, 2(1), 3.
- Thornicroft, G., Brohan, E., Rose, D., Sartorius, N., & Leese, M. (2009). Global pattern of experienced and anticipated discrimination against people with schizophrenia: a cross-sectional survey. *The Lancet*, 373(9661), 408-415. doi: 10.1016/s0140-6736(08)61817-6
- Mac Gabhann, L., Lakeman, R., McGowan, P., Parkinson, M., Redmond, M., Sibitz, I., . . . Walsh, J. (2010). *Hear my voice: The experience of discrimination of people with mental health problems in Ireland*. Dublin: Dublin City University / Amnesty International. Online: <http://www.amnesty.ie/reports/hear-my-voice-mental-health-prejudice-and-discrimination-research>

### Additional references cited in the lecture

- Barry, M.M. & Jenkins, R. (2007). *Implementing Mental Health Promotion*. London: Elsevier
- Dept of health and Aging (2008). *The Mental health of Australians 2: report on the 2007 national survey of mental health and wellbeing*. Australian Government: Canberra
- Dept of health and Aging (2011). *People living with psychotic illness 2010: report on the second Australian national survey*. Australian Government: Canberra
- IGDA WORKGROUP, W. (2003). IGDA. 7: Standardised multi-axial diagnostic formulation. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 182(45), s52-s54.

- Read J, Haslam N, Sayce L, & Davies E. (2006). Prejudice and schizophrenia: a review of the mental illness is an illness like any other approach. *Acta Psychiatr Scand*, 214, 303-318
- Swan, P. & Raphael, B. (1995). *National Consultancy Report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health. Part 1. 'Ways Forward'. National Mental Health Strategy*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.
- Wittchen, H., & Jacobi, F. (2005). Size and burden of mental disorders in Europe—a critical review and appraisal of 27 studies, *European Neuropsychopharmacology*, 15, 357-376
- World Health Organization. (2007). Mental health: Strengthening mental health promotion. Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs220/en/index.html>