

**Sociology of Mental Illness**  
**Cleveland State University Extension**  
**Professor Garot**  
**Fall, 2002**

**Contact Information**

You may email me at [rgarot@bgsu.edu](mailto:rgarot@bgsu.edu). I will not accept your work through email, but I will be pleased to discuss any questions or issues related to the course in this manner. I am happy to meet with students after class, or before class by appointment.

Be sure to exchange phone numbers with other students in the course and form study groups.

**Overview**

This course focuses on three sets of questions in the sociology of mental health and illness:

1. What is “mental illness”?

Is “mental illness” a medical condition? A psychological disturbance? An interpersonal disruption? A label for undesirable behavior? We will examine major models of mental health and illness and evaluate how they define the phenomenon and what they suggest should be done to deal with it.

2. Under what conditions, and through what social processes, do some people become identified as “mentally ill”?

We will explore the interactions through which ambiguous “troubles” are, or are not, defined as “mental illness,” by family, by friends, and by mental health professionals.

3. What happens to someone who undergoes treatment by the “mental health” professions?

We will study mental health occupations, the psychiatric hospital, and issues faced by former patients.

**Course Requirements**

1. Your participation is absolutely vital to this course. Therefore it will be worth 10% of your course grade. I will keep track of your attendance and participation for each class as the basis for this portion of your grade.

2. Readings will be provided in a class reader. Be sure to complete the readings before the day on which they are assigned.

3. Exams

Questions on exams will be provided in a multiple choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer format. You will have two short mid-terms, each worth 15% of your grade, which will be non-cumulative, although some material from the first mid-term may be relevant for your second mid-term. You will have one final, worth 30% of your grade. The final will be cumulative, but it will focus heavily on the final weeks of the course. I will provide review sheets and sample questions prior to each exam.

4. Final Paper. See attached.

## Grading

Participation:	10%
Mid-Terms:	30%
Final:	30%
Final Paper:	30%

A+ 98-100	B+ 88-89	C+ 78-79	D+ 65-69
A 93-97	B 83-87	C 73-77	D 55-64
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 50-54

## Weekly Topics and Readings

Please note that the following schedule, including project and exam dates, is tentative, and may change based on how quickly we cover the material.

### **Part I: What is A Mental Illness@?**

**8/26, 8/28: Week 1: Introduction:** Sadness, madness, and anxiety (SMA) as social and sociological problems: size and scope of the mental health enterprise; context, construction, and critique.

David A. Karp (1996) Speaking of Sadness: Depression, Disconnection and the Meanings of Illness Oxford: Oxford University Press: ("Sickness, Self and Society") pp. 165-188.

**9/2 (holiday), 9/4: Week 2: Disorders, Diagnosis, and DSM:** Power, politics and problems of DSM; psychiatric disorders identified in DSM.

William C. Cockerham. 1996. "Types of Mental Disorders" From Sociology of Mental Disorder. Englewood Cliffs: New Jersey: Prentice Hall, pp. 29-51.

Stuart A. Kirk And Herb Kutchins. 1992. The Selling of DSM: The Rhetoric of Science In Inquiry Hawthorne, NY: Aldine De Gruyter, Pp. 1-16

Wilbur J. Scott. 1990. "PTSD in DSM-III: A Case in the Politics of Diagnosis and Disease." Social Problems 37:294-310.

Richard Bentall. 1992. "A Proposal to Classify Happiness as a Mental Disorder." Journal of Medical Ethics.

**9/9, 9/11: Week 3: The Social Epidemiology of SMA:** the incidence and prevalence of sadness, madness and anxiety; social correlates (class, gender, ethnicity) of mental disorder; problems of interpretation; macro-sociological explanations of long-term changes.

William C. Cockerham. 1996. "Mental Disorder >Social Class= and >Race=@ From Sociology of Mental Disorder. Englewood Cliffs: New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Pp. 138-155, 186-198.

Joan Jacobs Brumberg. 1988. Fasting Girls. Cambridge: Harvard ("Anorexia Nervosa in Context") pp. 110-124.

*Optional:*

H.B.H. Murphy. 1978. "The Advent of Guilt Feelings as a Common Depressive Symptom: A Historical Comparison on Two Continents." Psychiatry 41:229-242.

**9/16, 9/18: Week 4: Medical (Biopsychiatric) Models:** Madness as biological pathology; genes and neurotransmitters; the context and consequences of the medical model

William C. Cockerham. 1996. "The Medical Model" From Sociology of Mental Disorder. Englewood Cliffs: New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Pp. 56-64.

Peter D. Kramer. 1993. Listening to Prozac. New York: Viking. Pp. Lx-Xiv, 1-21.

Stanton Peele. 1989. Diseasing of America. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. Pp. 1-29.

Michael J. Bader. 1989. "Is Psychiatry Going Out of Its Mind?" Tikkun 4:43-48.

**9/23, 9/25: Week 5: Social Stress Models:** SMA as the product of stress, coping, and social support; social construction of stress.

William C. Cockerham. 1996. "The Social Stress Model" From Sociology of Mental Disorder. Englewood Cliffs: New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 74-86.

Carol S. Aneshensel and Susan Gore. 1991. "Development, Stress and Role Structuring: The Social Transitions of Adolescence." Pp. 577 in John Eckenrode (Ed.) The Social Context of Coping. New York: Plenum Press.

Shelly Taylor. 1983. "Adjustment to Threatening Events: a Theory of Cognitive Adaptation." American Psychologist. 1983:1161-1173.

Deborah Belle. 1982. "The Stress of Caring: Women as Providers of Social Support" in L. Goldberger and S. Breznitz (Eds.) Handbook of Stress New York: Free Press, 496-505.

**9/30, 10/2: Week 6: Family Interaction Models:** Madness as a response to/reflection of family dynamics; skews and schisms; rubber fences; double binds, mystification, communication deviance and expressed emotion.

**9/30: Quiz #1**

Stephen J. Schultz. 1984. Family Systems Therapy: An Integration. New York: Jason Aronson, ("Historical Roots of Family Therapy" and "The Transactional Model" ) pp.21-51, 243-68.

*Optional:*

Ronald D. Laing. 1965. "Mystification, Confusion And Conflict." In Boszormenyi-Nagi And James Framo (Eds.) Intensive Family Therapy New York; Harper, 343-363.

**10/7: Week 7: Interactionist & Societal Reaction Models:** "Madness" as relationship, label and role; residual deviance; primary and secondary deviance.

**Review for Quiz #2**

**10/9: Quiz #2**

Thomas Scheff. "The Role of The Mentally Ill and the Dynamics of Mental Disorder." Sociometry, 436-453.

David L Rosenhan. 1973. "On Being Sane in Insane Places" Science. 179:250-258.

*Optional:*

David A. Karp. 1996. Speaking of Sadness: Depression: Disconnection and the Meanings of Illness. Oxford: Oxford University Press: "Illness and Identity" pp. 50-77.

## **Part II: Under What Conditions, and Through What Social Processes, Do Some People Become Identified as A Mentally Ill@?**

**10/14, 10/16: Week 8: Ambiguous Personal and Interpersonal Troubles:** The emergent, contextual and contingent understanding of S, M, and A.

*10/16: 2-3 pages of book summary are due, plus 1-2 pages of notes on how materials so far are relevant to your paper.*

*10/16: Guest Presentation by Dr. Ocasio of NORD*

Robert Emerson And Sheldon Messinger. 1977. "The Micro-Politics of Trouble." Social Problems. 121-134.

Robert M. Emerson. 1989. A Tenability And Troubles: The Construction of Accommodative Relations By Psychiatric Emergency Teams.@ Perspectives on Social Problems. 1:215-237.

Egon Bittner. 1967. Police Discretion In Emergency Apprehension of Mentally Ill Persons. Social Problems. 14:278-92.

**10/21, 10/23: Week 9: Accommodation Practices:** Managing others.

**10/23: Quiz #3**

Michael Lynch. 1983. "Accommodation Practices: Vernacular Treatments of Madness." Social Problems. 31:152-164.

Pollner, Melvin and Lynn Donald-Winkler. 1985. A The Social Construction of Unreality.@ Family Process. 24(2):241-254.

Robert Boddan And Steven J. Taylor. 1989. "Relationships with Severely Disabled People: The Social Construction of Humanness." Social Problems 36:135-47.

Edwin Lemert. 1963. "Paranoia And the Dynamics of Exclusion." Sociometry. 25:2-19.

**10/28, 10/30: Week 10: S, M, and A within the Family and the Self:** How families and individuals accommodate S, M, and A.

Yarrow, Marian Radke, Charlotte Green Schwartz, Harriet S. Murphy, and Leila Calhoun Deasy, "The Psychological Meaning of Mental Illness in the Family." Journal of Social Issues. 11(4):12-24.

Patricia B. Coughlan. 1993. Facing Alzheimers: Family Caregivers Speak. New York: Ballantine, 49-75.

David A. Karp. 1996. Speaking of Sadness: Depression, Disconnection and the Meanings of Illness. Oxford: Oxford University Press. "Coping and Adapting," pp. 104-133.

Dorothy Smith. "'K is Mentally Ill': The Anatomy of a Factual Account." Sociology. 12:23-53.

**11/4: Week 11: Moving into the A Mentally Ill@ Role:** Practices of police and courts; the legal context of decision-making.

Erving Goffman. 1959. "The Moral Career of The Mental Patient: Prepatient Phase." Psychiatry. Pp. 222-229.

James Holstein. 1993. Court Ordered Insanity: Interpretive Practice and Involuntary Commitment Hawthorne, NY: Aline, Chapters 5 & 6 (pp. 93-132).

**Review for Quiz #4**

**11/6: Quiz #4**

*1-2 pages of notes due on how materials from second third of class bear on your book.*

## **Part III: What happens to someone who undergoes treatment by the A mental health@ professions?**

**11/11, 11/13: Week 12: The Mental Health Enterprise: Diagnosis:** Practices of psychiatrists and PET teams; the professional and organizational contexts of decision making and diagnosis.

*11/13: Guest Presentation by Dr. Ocasio of NORD*

Mary Sykes Wylie. 1995. "The Power of DSM IV: Diagnosing for Dollars?" The Family Therapy Networker. pp. 23 ff.

Stuart Kirk And Herb Kutchins. 1992. "Diagnosis And Uncertainty In Mental Health Organizations" The Selling of DSM. Aldine, 163-183.

Spitzer, Robert L. and Janet B. W. Williams. "The Definition and Diagnosis of Mental Disorder." Pp.15-31 in Robert R. Gove (Ed.) Deviance and Mental Illness.

Arlene K. Daniels. 1969. "The Captive Professional: Limitations in the Practice of Military Psychiatry." Journal of Health and Social Behavior. 10:256-265.

**11/18, 11/20: Week 13: The Mental Health Enterprise: Commitment:** Descriptions and critiques of how mental health professionals learn to label.

*11/20: Outline of Final Paper due*

*Film: Titticut Follies*

Light, Donald W. 1982. "Learning to Label: The Social Construction of Psychiatrists." Pp. 33 ff in Robert R. Gove (Ed.) Deviance and Mental Illness.

Kovel, Joel. 1980. "The American Mental Health Industry." Pp. 72 to 101 in David Ingleby (Ed.), Critical Psychiatry.

Edelman, Murray. 1977. "The Political Language of the Helping Professions." Pp. 329-334, Oscar Grusky and Melvin Pollner (Eds.) The Sociology of Mental Illness: Basic Studies. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

**11/25, 11/27: Week 14: The Mental Health Enterprise Institutions and Treatments:** The mental hospital; psychotherapy de- and re-constructing reality in therapy; the recovery movement

Erving Goffman. 1959. "The Moral Career of The Mental Patient: Inpatient Phase." Psychiatry. 300-308.

Jerome Frank and Julia Frank. 1991. Persuasion And Healing: A Comparative Study of Psychotherapy. New York: Schocken. Pp.1-20, 34-51.

David R. Rudy. 1986. Becoming Alcoholic: Alcoholics Anonymous and the Reality of Alcoholism. Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University ("Explanations and their Functions") pp. 43-54.

Stanton Peele. 1989. Diseasing of America. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, pp. 1-29.

**12/2: Week 15: Construction of the Mental Health Enterprise:** Cultural, social and economic shaping of policies, practices, professions, and institutions of the Mental Health Enterprise.

Robert T. Fancher. 1995. Cultures of Healing. New York: W.H. Freeman & Co, Chapter 2 ("Problems and Patients"), pp. 51-96.

David Rothman. 1971. The Discovery of The Asylum. Boston: Little And Brown, excerpt.

Greg Critzer. 1996. "Oh, How Happy We Will Be: Pills, Paradise, and the Profits of Drug Companies." Harper's, pp. 36-48.

Keith Humphreys And Julian Rappaport. 1993. "The Community Mental Health Movement to the War on Drugs: A Study in the Definition of Social Problems." American Psychologist. 48:892-901.

**Review for Final Exam**

**Final Paper Due**

**12/9: Final Exam**