Madness and Society in the Modern World

Part Two: The Twentieth Century: Freud to Prozac

Subject of the Course: What is insanity? How do we define the normal and the pathological? Who in society is best suited to determine psychological health and sickness? Can there be a science of the emotions and sexuality? How do class, race, religion, gender, and sexual identity influence our views of human mental functioning? Can the human mind know itself? At the beginning of the twenty-first-century, the sciences of the mind—psychiatry, psychoanalysis, clinical psychology, psychopharmacology, the cognitive neurosciences—claim tremendous scientific authority and exert enormous cultural influence. Yet these are only several of the urgent questions that remain controversial or unanswered today.

This seminar will seek to explore these and many related subjects. Our approach will be historical. Specifically, we will study the social, cultural, intellectual, and institutional history of madness and psychiatry in Britain, continental Europe, and North America from the early work of Freud to the present-day “Age of Prozac.” Topics will include: classic Freudian psychological theory; the history of the psychoanalytic movement; the transplantation of central European psychoanalysis to Britain and the United States; the Mental Hygiene Movement; military psychiatry and World War II; electroconvulsive therapy and psychosurgery; “Nazi psychiatry”; women in the age of tranquilizers; the advent of anti-psychotic drugs; the rise of the “anti-psychiatry” movement; feminist critiques of psychiatry; institutional decarceration; the “neuroscientific revolution”; the “death of Freud;” and the age of the designer antidepressants.

Structure of the Course: The course will meet twice weekly. On Tuesdays, we will discuss the assigned weekly reading. We will then meet on Thursdays to watch a movie dealing with the themes of Tuesday’s class. Afterwards, we will discuss the film briefly.

Course Readings: The following mandatory books are available in the university bookstore:

Freud, Sigmund, Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis (1910).
Grob, Gerald N., The Mad Among Us: A History of the Care of America’s
Mentally Ill (1994).
Ken Kesey, One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest: A Novel (1962).
Valenstein, Elliot S., Blaming the Brain: The Truth about Drugs and Mental Health (1998).

In addition to these texts, photocopies of several week’s assigned reading are available as numbered course packets at Dup-It, which is located at 808 South Sixth Street in Champaign, and at the Reserve Desk of the Undergraduate Library.

**Course Requirements:** 1) attendance at and regular and informed participation in both Tuesday and Thursday classes; 2) a five-to-six-page essay on an assigned question due at the end of week five; and 3) an in-class presentation of about twenty minutes on a relevant book or article drawn from the weekly supplemental reading listed below.

Beyond these requirements, students have a choice between two options: either an analytical book report of six-to-eight pages due on at the end of the semester and a three-hour comprehensive final examination or an 18-20-page research paper, on a topic of special interest to you, due the same day as the exam.

**Schedule of Classes and Topics**

**Introduction: Euro-American Psychiatry, 1890 to the Present**


**I. The Golden Age of Psychoanalysis, 1900-1960**

**Freud’s Basic Psychoanalytic Concepts**

Freud, Sigmund, Five Lectures on Psycho-analysis (1910).

**History of the Psychoanalytic Movement**


Report: Freud, Sigmund, History of the Psychoanalytic Movement (1914).
Psychoanalysis Emigrates to London and New York


Psychoanalytic Ego Psychology, 1930-1950


The American Mental Hygiene Movement


Films: Emotional Health (1947); The High Wall (1952).

World War II and Military Psychiatry


Films: Let There Be Light (1946), Directed by John Huston; Combat Psychiatry (1954); Introduction to Combat Fatigue (1944).

The Popularization of Psychiatric Ideas in the United States


Psychiatry in Mid-Century America

Friedman, Lawrence J., Menninger: The Family and the Clinic (1990), Part 2.

Film: Age of Anxiety, two parts (1962).
II. The “Heroic” Age of Somatic Therapeutics, 1930-1960

ECT, Metrazol Shock, Insulin and Malarial Treatments

Braslow, Joel, Mental Ills, Bodily Cures (1997), chaps. 2, 4, 5.


Frontal Lobotomy

Valenstein, Elliot S., Great and Desperate Cures: The Rise and Decline of Psychosurgery and Other Radical Treatments of Mental Illness (1986), chaps. 1, 4-14, 16.


Films: Prefrontal Lobotomy in Chronic Schizophrenia (1944); Prefrontal Lobotomy in the Treatment of Mental Disorders (1942); Psychosurgery: Oral Interview with James W. Watts (1988); Suddenly Last Summer (1959), Directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz.

Sterilization of the Insane


Psychiatry and the Totalitarian State


The First Anti-Psychotic Medications


American Women in the Age of the Tranquilizers


Films: The Hours (2002); The Bell Jar (1979), Directed by Larry Peerce; No Real Pathology (1961).

III. The Radical 1960s and Its Aftermath

European and American Anti-Psychiatry: Laing, Cooper, Szasz, Goffman, Foucault, and Basaglia


Film: R. D. Laing’s Discussion with Richard Evans (1975).

The Mental Patients’s Liberation Movement

Kesey, Ken, One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest: A Novel (1962).

Film: One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (1975), Directed by Milos Forman.

Feminist Critiques of Psychiatry

De Beauvoir, Simone, The Second Sex (1949), Part One; Millett, Kate, The Loony-Bin Trip (1990), selections; Shannonhouse, Rebecca, Out of Her Mind: Women Writing on Madness (2001), 60-175.

Film: Girl, Interrupted (1993), Directed by James Mangold.

Decarceration and the Rise of Community Health Care: Two Views


Film: Psychiatry Comes of Age, BBC V (1988).

IV. The Late Twentieth Century

The New Brain Sciences:


Critiques of the Neuroscientific Revolution

Valenstein, Elliot S., Blaming the Brain: The Truth about Drugs and Mental Health (1998), chaps. 1, 3-6, 8.


The Decline (and Death?) of Psychoanalysis


The Proliferation of Psychiatric Diagnoses


Psychopharmacology Today


Review Session: Where is Psychiatry Today?