Course Overview

Prevalence studies, although controversial, find that psychiatric diagnoses can be applied to more than 26 percent of the population in a given year and almost half of the population (46.4 percent) is diagnosable within their lifetimes.¹ Many psychiatrists and mental health workers understand these diagnoses through the biomedical model. “Broken brains,” “chemical imbalances,” and “disordered neuronal pathways” are the widely used metaphorical frames that link mental difference to our bodies, our brains, and our genes. But the biomedical model is not the only model available for understanding mental difference and disability. Non-ordinary mental states and traits can also be understood through psychoanalytic, cognitive-behavioral, existential/humanist, family, social/political, creative, spiritual, and integrative models, to name a few.

Of these many models, some tend to be pathologizing and others tend to be generative. Pathologizing models are organized around the frames of rationality and science in the service of

treatment and cure of human deficit. Examples include mainstream clinical models such as the biological, cognitive/behavioral, and versions of the psychoanalytic model. As a group we can call these approaches *mad science*. Generative models, on the other hand, are organized around the frame of enhanced human sensitivity and yearning. They see psychic difference as a positive attribute to be developed, cared for, and nurtured. Examples include the creative, spiritual, and political models. As a group we can call these approaches *mad pride*.

This course will use an interdisciplinary *mad studies* approach to develop a critical understanding of the many models of madness: both pathological and generative.

Understanding diverse models provides invaluable flexibility for narrating and navigating psychic difference, the distress it may cause, and the disabling effects of sanist prejudice, subordination, and structural barriers. It also allows us to ask important philosophic and political questions that go beyond the models themselves. Which of these models is “best?” Which model comes closest to the “truth?” Can one model, or a combination of models, offer a “solution?” Who should answer these questions and for whom? How are people currently struggling with and against dominant models today? And, with reference to Goya’s *Sleep of Reason*, is reason the solution or the problem with regard to the mind and human flowering?

**Required Texts**

*King Lear* by William Shakespeare (Royal Shakespeare Company)

*Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison

*Literary Theory* by Jonathan Culler

*Narrative Psychiatry* by Bradley Lewis (available as e-book in library)

*Outside Mental Health: Voices and Visions of Madness* (OMH) edited by Will Hall

**Class Schedule**

1.) Jan 24: **Introduction**

   In class videos: “Sanism” by Jennifer Poole (15 mins)
   King Lear (Digital Theater, Directed by Michael Attenborough)—Act 1 (21 mins)

2.) Jan 31: **Literature and Literary Theory**

   Shakespeare: *King Lear*
   Culler: *Literary Theory* (Ch 1 and Appendix)
   Ryan: *Practical Literary Theory* (selections)
   Suggested Reading: Morrison: *The Bluest Eye* (handout on NYU Classes)

   In class video: King Lear (selections)

3.) Feb 7: **Cultural Theory and Mad Studies**

   Culler: *Literary Theory* (Ch 3 and 4)
   Lewis: Psychiatry and Postmodern Theory
   Menzies: Introducing Mad Studies
McNamara: Inbetweenland (in *Outside Mental Health*)
McNamara: *Inbetweenland* (selections)

In class video: *Crooked Beauty*

4.) Feb 14: **Existentialism, Narrative Theory, and Recovery**

Sartre: Existentialism is a Humanism
Culler: *Literary Theory* (Ch 6, 8, 9)
Ricouer: Life in Quest of a Narrative
Lewis: Recovery and Narrative Psychiatry
Shenk: *A Melancholia of My Own*

In class video: *Ordinary People* (30 mins)

5.) Feb 21: **Mainstream/Pathological Models**

Divakaruni: Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter (in *Narrative Psychiatry*)
Lewis: *Narrative Psychiatry* (ch 5, 6, and 7)

In class video: *Ordinary People* (30 mins)

6.) Feb 28: **Biopsychiatric and Psychoanalytic Models Continued**

Black and Andreason: Depression in *Introductory Textbook Psychiatry*
Styron: *Darkness Visible*
Freud: *Morning and Melancholia*
Pollock: Process and Affect: Mourning and Grief
Dormen: *Planet No*
Suggested: Beck: A Cognitivist Analysis of Depression

In class video: *Ordinary People* (30 mins)

7.) Mar 7: **Alternative/Generative Models**

Lewis: *Narrative Psychiatry* (ch 8)
Hall: *Outside Mental Health* (Preface, Madigan, Bartok-Baratta, Simon)
Lewis: Mindfulness, Mysticism, and Narrative Medicine
Budbill: *The Uses of Depression*

In class video: *Ordinary People* (30 mins)

**********First Paper Due Fri March 10 in my box by 3:30**********

First Paper Topic: Imagine Conrad was going through his difficulties in 2016. How would his depression likely be diagnosed? What dominant model(s) would be used and what treatment
would be suggested? What might a mad studies perspective bring to this experience? What other models might he consider?

**********SPRING BREAK**********

8.) Mar 21: **Trauma, Tragedy, and Therapy**

   Morrison: *The Bluest Eye*
   Herman: Trauma and Recovery (Intro, Ch 1, 5, 6, 9)
   Radstone: Trauma Theory: Context, Politics, and Ethics
   Levine: Therapy, Trauma, and the Arts
   Ali and Wolford: Theater as Treatment

   Video: Bedlam Theater

9.) Mar 28: **Historical Perspective and Big Pharma**

   Lewis: *Depression: Integrating Science, Culture, and Humanities* (Ch 2 and 3, pg 40-68)
   Sismondo: *Pharmaceutical Studies Reader*
   Williams, Martin, Gabe: Pharmaceuticalization of Society
   Dumit: Pharmaceutical Witnessing
   Applebaum: Getting to Yes
   Sismondo: Ghost Management

   In class: Keats: “Ode to Melancholy”
   Video: Big Pharma

10.) April 5: **Gender Studies and Disability Studies**

   Lewis: Prozac and the Postmodern Politics of Cyborgs
   Wilson: *Gut Feminism* (back cover, Ch 4 and 6)
   Price: Defining Mental Disability
   Kafer: *Feminist, Queer, Crip* (Intro, Ch 5, 6)

   Video: Alison Kafer Lecture (UC Davis Book Project)
   https://video.ucdavis.edu/media/Book+Project+2014-2015A+Alison+Kafer+(10-13-14)/0_ril58ujh

11.) April 12: **Mad Pride Activism**

   Szasz: Myth of Mental Illness
   Adbusters: *Mad Pride/Mad World* (selections)
   Icarus Project: *Navigating the Space Between Brilliance and Madness*
   Hall: *Outside Mental Health* (selections)

   Video: Sascha DuBrul
Guests: Institute for the Development of Human Arts

12.) April 19: **Mad Pride Activism**

*Hall: Outside Mental Health* (selections)
Guardian: New York Parachute Program
Seikulla and Olson: The Open Dialogue Approach to Acute Psychosis

Guests: Institute for the Development of Human Arts

13.) April 26: **Neurocultures: Neurodiversity, Neuroplasticity, Neuropsychiatry**

Ortego: Challenge of Neurodiversity
Rolls: *Neuroculture: On the Implications of Brain Science* (intro)
Malabou: *What Should We Do With Our Brain?* (selections)
Kandel: New Intellectual Framework for Psychiatry
Jones-Smith: Neuroscience, Psychotherapy, Neuropsychotherapy
Nasralla: Let’s Tear Down the Silos and Reunify Psychiatry and Neurology

Video: *Neurotypical* (Kanopy)

14.) May 3: **Navigating Neuronal Selfhood**

Young: Neurology of Narrative
Siegel: Mindful Awareness, Mindsight, and Neural Integration
Scientific America: Mind of the Meditator
Pitts-Taylor: The Plastic Brain: Neoliberalism and the Neuronal Self
Lewis: Where is Psychiatry Going?: From the Biomedical Model to Neuropsychiatry

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Neuroscience Experiment I: Measuring the Magic of Mutual Gaze (2011)
by Marina Abramovic/Suzanne Dikker/Matthias Oostrik
BRAIN: The World Inside Your Head

Real Human Brain
Families and others visiting the nation’s capital this summer can see a real human brain and are encouraged to touch, explore and learn about the body’s central processing unit in “BRAIN: The World Inside Your Head.” Made possible by Pfizer Inc, the exhibit premiered at the Arts and Industries Building at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

**********Second Paper Due Friday May 6th in my box by 3:30**********

Second Paper Topic: Imagine a contemporary Pecola Breedlove going through her troubles in 2016. Please use narrative theory and the readings of the second half to imagine some possible futures for Pecola.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grades are based on three parts: attendance/participation (1/3) and 2 papers (1/3 each). Late papers are graded down. There will be an opportunity to rewrite the first paper if you desire. The attendance/participation grade is composed of weekly class readings, participation, and attendance. There can be one excused absence for each half of the class. After that, I drop a letter participation grade for each missed class.
Class will generally begin with a short presentation on the material for that week. Class discussion will be initiated by your selections from the material. To prepare for class discussion, please select a quote for each week’s reading (include author and page numbers so we can find your quotes).

Papers are 8 pages type written, double spaced. Please use the material from the class to develop the topic question I hand out. Back up your thesis with arguments and examples from the class readings. Please include internal citations with page numbers and a reference list at the end. A good paper demonstrates that you have integrated the material from the class discussions and readings and can use it to analyze your topics. Use the bulk of your energy reading closely and thinking seriously about the materials you have (rather than doing outside research). Also, be sure and give your paper a title.

The grading scale for the class will be as follows: 93-100% (A) 90-92 (A-), 87-89 (B+), 83-86 (B), 80-82 (B-), 77-79 (C+), 70-76 (C), 63-69 (D), and below (F).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Gallatin Policy: “As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating.” For more information, please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website (http://gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/integrity.html)