

**Faculty of Health  
Department of Psychology  
PSYC 3140 3.0 O W(17)  
ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY  
Wednesdays 8:30am-11:30am  
Vari Hall A**

*What sane person could live in this world and not be crazy? - Ursula K. Le Guin*

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**Instructor and T.A. Information**

Instructor: Alexandra Rutherford, PhD CPsych  
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Office Hours	Weds 1-2pm	Tues. 3:30-4:30pm

**Course Prerequisite(s): Course prerequisites are strictly enforced.**

- HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology), with a minimum grade of C.

**Course website:** <https://moodle.yorku.ca/moodle/course/view.php?id=75041>

**Course Description**

This course is designed to provide students with the skills to think critically about our current definitions and explanations of, and responses to, mental distress. Students will consider the historically and socially constructed nature of mental health and distress. They will learn how people identified as “abnormal” or “disordered” have been understood and treated by the psychological and psychiatric establishments. They will also consider how those labelled “mentally ill” have understood their own experiences. They will reflect on how these perspectives relate to one another.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of abnormal psychology.
2. Articulate trends in abnormal psychology.
3. Express knowledge of abnormal psychology in written form.
4. Describe and explain limits to generalizability of research findings in abnormal psychology.

5. Demonstrate ability to relate information in abnormal psychology to own and others' life experiences.

### Specific Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to
  - 1) critically evaluate the concept of 'abnormality' and the practice of psychiatric diagnosis
  - 2) demonstrate knowledge of the current classification system for psychological disorders and be able to critically evaluate its contribution and impact
  - 3) articulate the influence of culture, class, gender, race/ethnicity, and power on how we conceptualize, understand, label, and treat mental distress
  - 4) compare and contrast "expert" understandings of mental distress with the firsthand experiences of people who are diagnosed by mental health professionals

### Required Texts

- Hornstein, G. (2009). *Agnes's jacket: A psychologist's search for the meanings of madness*. New York: Rodale. (Available as a course pack in the York bookstore)
- Frances, A. (2013). *Saving normal: an insider's revolt against out-of-control psychiatric diagnosis, DSM-5, big pharma, and the medicalization of ordinary life*. New York: William Morrow. (available in bookstore and on Amazon)

**\*And a selection of articles available via the York Library system or on-line, as outlined in the Course Schedule below and at the Moodle site\***

### Course Requirements and Assessment

Your grade in this course is based on two writing assignments worth 15% and 25% respectively, and three in-class tests worth 20% each. Tests consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Tests cover assigned readings, lecture material, and any video or web material that is shown or discussed IN CLASS.

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Test 1	February 1	20%
Test 2	March 8	20%
Test 3	April 5	20%
Writing Assignment 1	February 20	15%
Writing Assignment 2	April 12	25%
Total		100%

### Description of Assignments

There are **two** writing assignments for this course. They are designed to develop your skills in critical analysis and reading and evaluating the main arguments in scholarly writing. They are also designed to have you engage with first-person accounts of mental distress. Unfortunately, we do not have enough person-power to provide individual feedback on pre-e-mailed drafts of the writing assignments. If you have questions about how to approach the assignments, come to office hours

and/or attend the in-class session devoted to the assignment. If you have trouble with writing generally, there are lots of great resources at York. Check out the Writing Centre:

<http://writing-centre.writ.laps.yorku.ca/>

Also check out SPARK – Student Papers and Academic Research Kit:

<http://www.yorku.ca/spark/>

It is a great on-line resource that leads you through some important steps in essay writing and other important academic skills.

**Assignment 1 (15%; due by 11:59 pm on February 20):**

Explore “Remembering Oak Ridge”

<https://historyexhibit.waypointcentre.ca/>

In an 800-word essay, reconstruct a day in the life of a patient at Oak Ridge by writing a first-person account. Imagine that you have been incarcerated there because you have been found to be “criminally insane.” Pick the historical time period of your incarceration (e.g., in the 1960s, 1980s) and flesh out the details of a typical day for you within the walls of Oak Ridge.

Base your account on the details about patient lives and the institution that you learn about at the website. What sorts of activities might you engage in? What treatment might you receive? Who might you encounter (staff, other patients)?

Although this is a creative essay, be sure to reference the source of the details you provide following the “To cite this page” instructions at the bottom of every page on the site. (and for more on APA style, see below)

**Assignment 2 (25%; due by 11:59pm on April 12):**

Read the book *Agnes’s Jacket: A Psychologist’s Search for the Meanings of Madness* by Gail Hornstein.

In a 1,000-word essay, provide your reflections on the book. Your reflections, although written in essay style (short intro, proper sentences and paragraphs, conclusion), should address the following questions/topics:

- 1) Summarize/express Hornstein’s main points or arguments. Given this, what is the significance of the title’s reference to Agnes’s jacket?
- 2) How did Hornstein research her book? What challenges did she face?

3) How have your views of madness been influenced by reading *Agnes's Jacket*? That is, what were your views before reading the book, and how did reading her account affect those views? Be specific and give examples.

4) What recommendations does Hornstein have (implicit or explicit) for how to respond to people with emotional problems? Do you agree or disagree with these recommendations? Why or why not?

### **HOW TO PRESENT YOUR ASSIGNMENTS**

• APA format is to be used for both assignments. Try to keep direct quotes to a minimum, but if they are used, in-text references would look like this:

Hornstein (2009) has noted that despite strenuous efforts to silence the mad, communications from the “world of madness are far more numerous than one might think” (p. xii). *OR*

Despite strenuous efforts to silence the mad, communications from the world of madness “are far more numerous than one might think” (Hornstein, 2009, p. xii).

• Your assignments must be double spaced, one-inch margins all around, 12-pt font. Do not exceed the word limits (these do not include the references).

• Page one is a cover page that clearly indicates the title of your essay, your name, your student number, and your e-mail. .

• The last page of your assignment is a separate page that has your short reference list in APA style.

• Save your essay as a Word doc (not .pdf) with the following file name:  
Lastname\_Assignment 1 (or 2)

• Submit it through the Moodle site by the due date and time.

### **Grading as per Senate Policy**

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests\* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - [calendars.students.yorku.ca/2016-2017/academic-and-financial-information/academic-services/grades-and-grading-schemes](http://calendars.students.yorku.ca/2016-2017/academic-and-financial-information/academic-services/grades-and-grading-schemes))

## Late Work/Missed Tests or Exams

Students with a documented reason for missing a course test, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (Attending Physician Statement which can be found at: <http://registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/attending-physicians-statement.pdf>) may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

Notification that you will or have missed a test must reach both the course instructor and your TA within 24 hours of the missed date, preferably via an e-mail cc'ed to both of us. Proper documentation, consisting of a note from a physician outlining the specific nature of the illness and dated within 2 days of the test, is required to excuse a student from a test and must be physically presented to the TA at the makeup exam.

**\*\*All students who miss any tests due to illness will be required to write a makeup test that may differ from the original in BOTH format and content on the date specified by the instructor towards the end of the semester. Failure to write the makeup on this date will result in a 0 on the exam.\*\***

Assignments are to be submitted via the course Moodle site by the time and date specified. Late assignments will receive a 5% deduction for each day they are late.

## Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Important Dates](#)

Important dates	Winter (W)
Last date to add a course <b>without</b> permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Jan. 18
Last date to add a course <b>with permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Feb. 1
Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	March 10
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a "W" on the transcript – see note below)	March 11 - Apr. 5

## Information on Plagiarism Detection

Plagiarism is a serious breach of academic honesty (see below). We use Turnitin software for the writing assignments in this course to help detect plagiarism.

## Electronic Device Policy

Course-related use of laptop computers (e.g., for note-taking or in-class activities) is allowed in this course. Please be considerate of your classmates and do not "surf the net," engage in social media, or check your email during class time. This is distracting to other students and, of course, disrespectful to those trying to maximize their learning in the course. If you are being negatively affected by your classmates' misuse of laptops, please feel free to report it to the instructor. Please mute cell phones and refrain from using them during class time.

## **Attendance Policy**

Attendance is expected at all class meetings. Material and activities will be presented that are not covered in your textbook, and we will engage in active learning exercises that will enhance your experience of this course. Neither the course director nor the TA will lend out their lecture notes and notes will not be posted on-line. Active learning via note-taking and participation is more effective than reading posted notes, and since I do not follow my notes verbatim they are not a completely accurate record of the class content. No notes but your own will adequately reflect what goes on in class.

If you must miss a class for unavoidable reasons, borrow notes from a classmate, or if you know in advance that you must miss a class, have a classmate audiotape the class for you to listen to later. This is the only way to ensure you recover what is presented in that class.

Powerpoint slides will be posted on the course website in advance of the class meeting. If a student has a documented disability that requires accommodation involving notetaking, please contact the professor immediately to arrange accommodation.

## **Academic Integrity for Students**

York university takes academic integrity very seriously, please visit [an overview of Academic Integrity at York University](#) from the Office of the Vice-President Academic.

The following links will assist you in gaining a better understanding of academic integrity and point you to resources at York that can help you improve your writing and research skills:

- [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#)
- [Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity](#)
- [Information for Students on Text-Matching Software: Turnitin.com](#)
- [Beware! Says who? A pamphlet on how to avoid plagiarism](#)
- [Resources for students to help improve their writing and research skill](#)

## **Test Banks:**

The offering for sale of, buying of, and attempting to sell or buy test banks (banks of test questions and/or answers), or any course specific test questions/answers is not permitted in the Faculty of Health. Any student found to be doing this may be considered to have breached the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In particular, buying and attempting to sell banks of test questions and/or answers may be considered as “Cheating in an attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation” (article 2.1.1 from the Senate Policy) and/or “encouraging, enabling or causing others” (article 2.1.10 from the Senate Policy) to cheat.

## **Electronic Devices During a Test/Examination:**

Electronic mobile devices of any kind are not allowed during a test or examination. Students are required to turn off and secure any electronic mobile device in their bag which is to be placed under the chair while a test/exam is in progress. Any student observed with an electronic device during a test/exam may be reported to the Undergraduate Office for a potential breach of Academic Honesty.

## **Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:**

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. The [York University Accessibility Hub](#) is your online stop for accessibility on campus. The [Accessibility Hub](#) provides tools, assistance and resources. Policy Statement

**Policy:** York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations and adaptations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs.

The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses.

Provided that students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder.

For Further Information please refer to: [York university academic accommodation for students with disabilities policy](#)

## **Course Materials Copyright Information**

These course materials are designed for use as part of the HH/PSYC 3140 3.00 course at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#)

## Course Schedule:

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Readings:</u>
1) Jan. 11	What does “abnormal psychology” actually mean?	Bassman (1997) Frances, Chapter 1 Schrader, Jones, & Shattell (2013)
2) Jan. 18	What can we learn from history?	Scull (2015) Frances, Chapter 2
3) Jan. 25	Diagnosis and its discontents	Lafrance & McKenzie-Mohr (2013) Frances, Chapter 3
4) Feb. 1	<b>TEST 1 (20%)</b>  Orientation to first writing assignment – Dr. Jennifer Bazar	
5) Feb. 8	What does culture have to do with it?	Watters (2008) Kleinman (2004) Gordon (2002)
6) Feb. 15	Culture has a lot to do with it	Kirmayer (2012) Schulz (2004)
<b><i>FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE ON FEBRUARY 20<sup>th</sup> (submit by 11:59 pm)</i></b>		
7)	<b>WINTER READING WEEK Feb. 18-24</b>	
8) March 1	Poverty, inequality, discrimination	Belle & Doucet (2003) Lane (2010)
9) March 8	<b>TEST 2 (20%)</b>  Skills-building around second writing assignment	
10) March 15	Gender and madness	Marecek (1993) Shaw & Proctor (2005) Ussher (2013)



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|--------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 11) March 22 | Medicalizing sex and sexuality | Hartley & Tiefer (2003)<br>Belluz (2015)        |
| 12) March 29 | “Treatment” debates            | Breggin (2003)<br>Fisher (2003)<br>Carey (2015) |
| 13) April 5  | <b>TEST 3 (20%)</b>            |   |

***SECOND WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE ON APRIL 12<sup>th</sup> (submit by 11:59 pm)***

## **READING LIST BY WEEK:**

### **1) Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>: What does “abnormal psychology” actually mean?**

Bassman, R. (1997). The mental health system: Experiences from both sides of the locked door. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 28(3), 238-242.

Frances, A. (2013). *Saving Normal*, Chapter 1

Schrader, S., Jones, N. & Shattell, M. (2013). Mad pride: Reflections on sociopolitical identity and mental diversity in the context of culturally competent psychiatric care. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 34, 62-64.

### **2) Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>: What can we learn from history?**

Scull, A. (2015, April 22) Madness and meaning: Depictions of insanity through history. *The Paris Review*. Available at:

<http://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2015/04/22/madness-and-meaning/>

Frances, A. (2013). *Saving Normal*, Chapter 2

### **3) Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>: Diagnosis and its discontents**

LaFrance, M.N. & McKenzie-Mohr, S. (2013). The DSM and its lure of legitimacy. *Feminism & Psychology*, 23, 119-140.

Frances, A. (2013). *Saving Normal*, Chapter 3

### **4) Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> TEST #1 and Skills Building for Assignment #1**

### **5) Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>: What does culture have to do with it?**

Kleinman, A. (2004). Culture and depression. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 351, 951-953.

Schulz, K. (2004), August 22). Did antidepressants depress Japan? *New York Times Magazine*, retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/22/magazine/did-antidepressants-depress-japan.html>

Gordon, R. A. (2002). Eating disorders East and West: A culture-bound syndrome unbound. In M. Nasser, M. Katzman, & R. A. Gordon (Eds.), *Eating disorders and cultures in transition*. London: Taylor & Francis, pp. 1-15.

Watters, E. (2010, January 8). The Americanization of mental illness. *New York Times Magazine*. Retrieved from: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/10/magazine/10psyche-t.html? r=0>

## **6) Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>: Culture has a lot to do with it**

Kirmayer, L. J. (2007). Psychotherapy and the cultural concept of the person. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 44, 232-257.

Kirmayer, L. J. (2013). Rethinking cultural competence. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 49, 149-164.

## **7) WINTER READING WEEK**

### **8) Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>: Poverty, inequality and discrimination**

Belle, D. & Doucet, J. (2003). Poverty, inequality, and discrimination as sources of depression among U.S. women. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 27, 101-113.

Lane, C. (2010, May 5). How schizophrenia became a Black disease: An Interview with Jonathan Metzl. *Psychology Today: Side Effects*. Retrieved from: <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/side-effects/201005/how-schizophrenia-became-black-disease-interview-jonathan-metzl>

### **9) March 1<sup>st</sup>: TEST #2 and facilitated small group work for second assignment**

### **10) March 8<sup>th</sup>: Gender and madness**

Marecek, J. (1993). Disappearances, silences, and anxious rhetoric: Gender in abnormal psychology textbooks. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, 13, 114-123.

Shaw, C. & Proctor, G. (2005). Women at the margins: A critique of the diagnosis of borderline personality disorder. *Feminism & Psychology*, 15, 483-490.

Ussher, J. (2013). Diagnosing difficult women and pathologising femininity: Gender bias in psychiatric nosology. *Feminism & Psychology*, 23, 63-69.

### **11) March 15<sup>th</sup>: Medicalizing sex and sexuality**

Hartley, H. & Tiefer, L. (2003). Taking a biological turn: The push for a “female viagra” and the medicalization of women’s sexual problems. *Women’s Studies Quarterly*, 31, 42-54.

Belluz, J. (2015, Sept. 18). What the FDA’s approval of “pink Viagra” tells us about the problems with drug regulation. *Vox*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.vox.com/2015/9/18/9333639/female-pink-viagra-fda-approved>

## **12) March 22<sup>nd</sup>: Treatment debates**

Breggin, P. (2003). Psychopharmacology and human values. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 43(2), 34-49.

Also see YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luKsQaj0hzs>

Fisher, D. B. (2003). People are more important than pills in recovery from mental disorder. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 43(2), 65-68.

Carey, B. (2015). New approach advised to treat schizophrenia.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/20/health/talk-therapy-found-to-ease-schizophrenia.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/20/health/talk-therapy-found-to-ease-schizophrenia.html?_r=0)

## **13) March 29<sup>th</sup>: TEST 3 (20%)**

***SECOND WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE ON APRIL 5<sup>th</sup> (Agnes's Jacket)***