

Faculty of Health
Department of Psychology
PSYC 4051/6063 3.0 A: Mental Health: History, Culture, and Critique
Thursdays / 11:30am / Founders College 109

Instructor: Michael Pettit
Office Hours: 2:30pm, Thursday in BSB 211
Email: mpettit@yorku.ca

Course Prerequisite(s): PSYC 1010.06 , PSYC 2010.03, PSYC 2020 or PSYC 2021 and 2022, PSYC 2030.03, PSYC 3125.03, PSYC 3140 3.00

Course Credit Exclusions

Please refer to [York Courses Website](#) for a listing of any course credit exclusions.

Course website: [eClass](#)

All course materials will be available on the course eClass site, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. The site will be your central access point for course materials [you may add specific types of materials for your course as examples here].

Course Description

This course examines the experience of mental health from a historical and cultural perspective. It focuses on how understandings of mental well-being and illness vary across time and place, looking at changes to the theories about its etiology alongside alterations to the arrangements of institutionalization, management, and care.

Program Learning Outcomes

1. Articulate, compare, and contrast the significance of different events/developments in the history of mental health
2. Evaluate the socio-historical contexts that allowed for the emergence of a variety of therapies such as moral treatment, psychosurgery, psychoanalysis, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and psychopharmacology
3. Evaluate the interaction between cultural norms and the experience of mental health
4. Craft persuasive assessments of scholarship in the psychological humanities through considered discussion.

Course Content Note

The readings and discussions for Mental Health: History, Culture, and Critique necessarily deal with the lived experience of mental distress and the troubled history of its management. Many will find the material we cover vivid, evocative, and disturbing. A central purpose of this course is to confront this difficult history directly, to make us accountable to the past and to better understand its continued relevance to the practice of mental health care in the present. The affective dimension of this course is part of its strength and power. However, I appreciate this may pose a barrier to learning for someone with a vulnerability in regards to a particular theme or phenomenon. An individual who has experienced, for example, significant loss, abuse, or trauma may find certain topics deeply troubling or even retraumatizing. It will be important for you to gauge whether certain material will be emotionally challenging for you to the point of *seriously disrupting your learning* in the course. In such cases, I encourage you to speak with me confidentially to discuss how, if necessary, accommodations may be made to support your learning.

Required Text

All required readings are available through the York University Library

Course Requirements and Assessment:

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
Oral Report on Reading	Throughout the term	20%
Film Review	October 20, 2024	25%
Quizzes	Best 5 out of 6 throughout term	15%
Final Takehome Exam	December 5, 2024	20%
Participation in class discussion	Throughout the term	20%
Total		100%

Description of Assignments

Oral Report

In our second session, you will select one of the “for report” articles to present to the rest of the class during the designated session. These reports will extend our collective knowledge base. The presentation should focus on the content and evaluation of the assigned article.

A successful presentation should include the following elements:

- an explanation of the article's thesis or argument
- a description of the evidence used to support it
- a discussion of the article's strengths and limitations.

The presentation should conclude with how this article is relevant to the day's theme and present 1-2 discussion questions directly connecting this reading to those assigned the rest of the class. Presentations are expected to run for **15 minutes** (with an absolute maximum of 20 minutes). Focus and concision matter.

Film Review

Please refer to the separate document posted to eclass which describes this assignment in detail, including list possible films for review. Your film **must** come from this list.

Quizzes

At the start (11:35am) of 6 random classes throughout the term, students will be given a quiz (5 items consisting of True/False, multiple choice, short answer questions) relating to that session's readings. These quizzes will assess your basic comprehension of the readings and preparedness for discussion. Each quiz should take students about 5 minutes to complete. However, all students will be given 10 minutes to complete the test. **There are no make up quizzes for missed classes.** However, only 5 best quizzes will count towards your final grade.

Participation

This is a discussion-based senior seminar. All students are expected to attend every session **in person** and contribute to our shared discussion. Attendance will be taken during class and contributions noted. Quality of contribution counts more than sheer quantity. A student can miss a single session without permission or documentation. However, a student cannot miss multiple sessions/weeks and expect to receive full marks for participation.

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 89, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar – [Grading Scheme for 2024-25](#)

Missed Tests/Midterm Exams/Late Assignment

There are no late penalties for assignments. However, the pace of the summer semester is fast and students should be careful not to fall behind.

Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Undergraduate Fall/Winter 2024-2025 Important Dates](#) on the York University website.

	Fall (Term F)	Year (Term Y)	Winter (Term W)
Last date to add a course without permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	September 18	September 18	January 20
Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	October 2	October 16	January 31
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	November 8	February 7	March 14
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript – see note below)	November 9 – December 3	February 8- April 4	March 15- April 4

Add and Drop Deadline Information

There are deadlines for adding and dropping courses, both academic and financial. Since, for the most part, the dates are **different**, be sure to read the information carefully so that you understand the differences between the sessional dates below and the [Refund Tables](#).

You are strongly advised to pay close attention to the "Last date to enrol without permission of course instructor" deadlines. These deadlines represent the last date students have unrestricted access to the registration and enrolment system.

After that date, you must contact the professor/department offering the course to arrange permission.

You can drop courses using the registration and enrolment system up until the last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (drop deadline).

You may [withdraw from a course](#) using the registration and enrolment system after the drop deadline until the last day of class for the term associated with the course. When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your transcript without a grade and is notated as 'W'. The withdrawal will not affect your grade point average or count towards the credits required for your degree.

Information on Plagiarism Detection

The film review and take home exam will be submitted through Turnitin

Electronic Device Policy

Students are discouraged from using electronic devices during the seminar.

Academic Integrity for Students

York University takes academic integrity very seriously; please familiarize yourself with [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

It is recommended that you review Academic Integrity by completing the [Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) and [Academic Honesty Quiz](#)

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.

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 university encourages students with disabilities to register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors as necessary. Please let me know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course.

<https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>

Excerpt from Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

1. Pursuant to its commitment to sustaining an inclusive, equitable community in which all members are treated with respect and dignity, and consistent with applicable accessibility legislation, York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs. This policy aims to eliminate systemic barriers to participation in academic activities by students with disabilities.

All students are expected to satisfy the essential learning outcomes of courses. Accommodations shall be consistent with, support and preserve the academic integrity of the curriculum and the academic standards of courses and programs. 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 Psyc 4051/6063 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

September 5: Introduction

Watters, E. (2010). The Americanization of mental illness. *The New York Times*, 8.

Scull, A. (2022). Thomas Insel and the future of the mental health system. Mad in America blog. <https://www.madinamerica.com/2022/04/thomas-insel-future-mental-health/>

Ducharme, J. (2023). America has reached peak therapy. Why is our mental health getting worse? *Time*. <https://time.com/6308096/therapy-mental-health-worse-us/>

September 12: Historicizing the Psyche

Duden, B. (1986). Historical concepts of the body. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*, 6(1), 23-28.

Brinkmann, S. (2005). Human kinds and looping effects in psychology: Foucauldian and hermeneutic perspectives. *Theory & Psychology*, 15(6), 769-791.

Luhrmann, T. M., Padmavati, R., Tharoor, H., & Osei, A. (2015). Differences in voice-hearing experiences of people with psychosis in the USA, India and Ghana: interview-based study. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 206(1), 41-44.

Bacopoulos-Viau, A., & Fauvel, A. (2016). The patient's turn: Roy Porter and psychiatry's tales, thirty years on. *Medical History*, 60(1), 1-18.

September 19: The Great Confinement and the Moral Treatment

Scull, A. (2015). Chapter Seven. The Great confinement. In *Madness in Civilization: A Cultural History of Insanity, from the Bible to Freud, from the Madhouse to Modern Medicine* (pp. 188-223). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Cox, S. Hocking, C., and Payne, D. (2019). Showers: From a violent treatment to an agent of cleansing. *History of Psychiatry*, 30(1), 58-76.

Koenig, A. M. (2020). Shipping fools: Foucault's wandering madman and civic responsibility in late medieval Germany. *Journal of Social History*, 54, 125-160.

For Report

Reiss, B. (2004). Letters from asylumia: The "Opal" and the cultural work of the lunatic asylum, 1851-1860. *American Literary History*, 16(1), 1-28.

Charland, L. C. (2007). Benevolent theory: moral treatment at the York Retreat. *History of Psychiatry*, 18(1), 61-80.

Swartz, S. (2010). The regulation of British colonial lunatic asylums and the origins of colonial psychiatry, 1860-1864. *History of psychology*, 13(2), 160-177.

Rawling, K. D. (2021). 'The annexed photos were taken today': Photographing patients in the late-nineteenth-century asylum. *Social History of Medicine*, 34(1), 256-284.

Dobbing C, Tomkins A. (2021). Sexual abuse by superintending staff in the nineteenth-century lunatic asylum: medical practice, complaint and risk. *History of Psychiatry*, 32(1), 69-84.

September 26: Eugenics: Inheritance, Degeneration, and Adjustment

Thomson, M. (2010). Disability, psychiatry, and eugenics. (pg. 116-133). In *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, A. Bashford and P. Levine (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Farreras, I. G. (2019). The professionalization of psychologists as court personnel: Consequences of the first institutional commitment law for the "feebleminded". *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 55(3), 183-198.

Handerer, F., Kinderman, P., Timmermann, C., & Tai, S. J. (2021). How did mental health become so biomedical? The progressive erosion of social determinants in historical psychiatric admission registers. *History of Psychiatry*, 32(1), 37-51.

For Report

Teo, T., & Ball, L. C. (2009). Twin research, revisionism and metahistory. *History of the Human Sciences*, 22(5), 1-23.

Setlur, S. (2014). Searching for South Asian intelligence: Psychometry in British India, 1919–1940. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 50, 359–75.

Dyck, E. (2014). Sterilization and birth control in the shadow of eugenics: Married, middle-class women in Alberta, 1930–1960s. *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History*, 31(1), 165-187.

Rzesnitzek, L. (2019). The introduction of leucotomy in Germany: National Socialism, émigrés, a divided Germany and the development of neurosurgery. *History of Psychiatry*, 30(3), 325-335.

Wieser, M., & Benetka, G. (2022). Psychology in National Socialism: The question of "professionalization" and the case of the "Ostmark". *History of psychology*, 25(4), 322-341.

October 3: Psychoanalysis: History and Repression

Lear, J. (1995). The shrink is in. *The New Republic*, 25, 18-25.

Herzog, D. (2017). The Libido Wars. *Cold War Freud*. (pg. 21-55). New York: Cambridge University Press.

For Report

Suloway, F. J. (1991). Reassessing Freud's case histories: The social construction of psychoanalysis. *Isis*, 82(2), 245-275.

Shamdasani, S. (2005). 'Psychotherapy': The invention of a word. *History of the Human Sciences*, 18, 1-22.

Sadowsky, J. (2005). Beyond the metaphor of the pendulum: Electroconvulsive therapy, psychoanalysis, and the styles of American psychiatry. *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 61, 1-25.

El Shakry, O. (2014). The Arabic Freud: The unconscious and the modern subject. *Modern Intellectual History*, 11(1), 89-118.

October 10: The Empire of Trauma

Loughran, T. (2012). Shell shock, trauma, and the First World War: The making of a diagnosis and its histories. *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 67(1), 94-119.

Young, A. (2001). Our traumatic neurosis and its brain. *Science in Context*, 14(4), 661-683.

For Report

Kidron, C. A. (2012). Alterity and the particular limits of universalism: Comparing Jewish-Israeli Holocaust and Canadian-Cambodian genocide legacies. *Current Anthropology*, 53(6), 723-754.

Priya, K. R. (2015). On the social constructionist approach to traumatized selves in post-disaster settings: State-induced violence in Nandigram, India. *Culture, medicine, and psychiatry*, 39, 428-448.

Buxton, H. (2018). Imperial amnesia: race, trauma and Indian troops in the First World War. *Past & Present*, 241, 221-258.

Moghnieh, L. M. (2021). Infrastructures of suffering: Trauma, sumud and the politics of violence and aid in Lebanon. *Medicine Anthropology Theory*, 8(1), 1-26.

***** Reading Week *****

October 24: Colonial Madness or Global Psyches

Summers, M. (2010). "Suitable Care of the African When Afflicted with Insanity": Race, Madness, and Social Order in Comparative Perspective. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 58-91.

Edington, C. (2021). The most social of maladies: Re-thinking the history of psychiatry from the edges of empire. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, 45(3), 343-358.

For Report

Read, U. M., Adiibokah, E., & Nyame, S. (2009). Local suffering and the global discourse of mental health and human rights: An ethnographic study of responses to mental illness in rural Ghana. *Globalization and Health*, 5(1), 1-16.

Sood A. The Global Mental Health movement and its impact on traditional healing in India: A case study of the Balaji temple in Rajasthan. *Transcultural Psychiatry*. 2016;53(6):766-782.

Robcis, C. (2020). Frantz Fanon, institutional psychotherapy, and the decolonization of psychiatry. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 81(2), 303-325.

Halliburton, M. (2020). Hegemony versus pluralism: Ayurveda and the movement for global mental health. *Anthropology & Medicine*, 1-18.

Matza, T. (2019). Global ambitions: Evidence, scale, and child well-being in El Salvador. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 33(3), 364-385.

October 31: Community Care: Decarceration, Divestment, or Transinstitutionalization?

Ramos, N. J. (2019). Pathologizing the crisis: Psychiatry, policing, and racial liberalism in the Long Community Mental Health Movement. *Journal of the history of medicine and allied sciences*, 74(1), 57-84.

Quarshie, N. O. (2022). Psychiatry on a shoestring: West Africa and the global movements of deinstitutionalization. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 96(2), 237-265.

For Report

Goldstein, J. L., & Godemont, M. M. (2003). The legend and lessons of Geel, Belgium: A 1500-year-old legend, a 21st-century model. *Community mental health journal*, 39, 441-458.

Rutherford, A. (2006). The social control of behavior control: Behavior modification, individual rights, and research ethics in America, 1971–1979. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 42(3), 203-220.

Dyck, E. (2010). Spaced-out in Saskatchewan: Modernism, anti-psychiatry, and deinstitutionalization, 1950-1968. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 640-666.

Varma, S. (2016). Disappearing the asylum: Modernizing psychiatry and generating manpower in India. *Transcultural psychiatry*, 53(6), 783-803.

November 7: No class meeting

Listen to “The (Ir)rational Rainbow” episode of this podcast.

<https://citedpodcast.com/2024/07/02/episode-3-the-irrational-rainbow/>

We will discuss its content in connection to next week’s discussion of classification.

November 14: Classification and its Discontents

Mayes, R., & Horwitz, A. V. (2005). DSM-III and the revolution in the classification of mental illness. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 41(3), 249-267.

Kitanaka, J. (2008). Diagnosing suicides of resolve: psychiatric practice in contemporary Japan. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, 32(2), 152-176.

Whooley, O. (2010). Diagnostic ambivalence: psychiatric workarounds and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 32(3), 452-469.

For Report:

Weller, S. C., Baer, R. D., Garcia de Alba Garcia, J., & Salcedo Rocha, A. L. (2008). Susto and nervios: Expressions for stress and depression. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, 32, 406-420.

Chua, J. L. (2011). Making time for the children: Self-temporalization and the cultivation of the antisuicidal subject in South India. *Cultural Anthropology*, 26(1), 112-137.

Najmabadi, A. (2011). Verdicts of science, rulings of faith: Transgender/sexuality in contemporary Iran. *Social Research*, 78(2), 533-556.

Davis, E. (2015). “We've toiled without end”: Publicity, crisis, and the suicide “epidemic” in Greece. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 57(4), 1007-1036.

Lang, C. (2019). Inspecting mental health: Depression, surveillance, and care in Kerala, South India. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, 43(4), 596–612.

Murray, H. (2022). Diagnosing the “master mechanism of the universe” in interwar and war-era America. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 58(2), 147-162.

November 21: Mental Ills and Bodily Cures

Jain, S., & Jadhav, S. (2009). Pills that swallow policy: Clinical ethnography of a community mental health program in Northern India. *Transcultural psychiatry*, 46(1), 60-85.

Sadowsky, J. (2017). Somatic treatments. In *The Routledge History of Madness and Mental Health* (pp. 350-362). London: Routledge.

Harris, L. (2020). The Management of Captive Populations with Psychiatric Drugs: An Interview with Anthony Ryan Hatch. <https://www.madinamerica.com/2020/01/management-captive-populations-drugs-anthony-ryan-hatch/>

Fort Report

Fraser, M. (2001). The nature of Prozac. *History of the Human Sciences*, 14(3), 56-84.

Ecks, S., & Basu, S. (2014). “We always live in fear”: antidepressant prescriptions by unlicensed doctors in India. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, 38, 197-216.

Behrouzan, O. (2015). Writing Prozāk diaries in Tehran: Generational anomie and psychiatric subjectivities. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, 39, 399-426.

Freudenthal, R., & Moncrieff, J. (2022). ‘A landmark in psychiatric progress’? The role of evidence in the rise and fall of insulin coma therapy. *History of Psychiatry*, 33(1), 65-78.

November 28: Talk Therapies in a Biomedical Age

Johnstone, L., & Boyle, M. (2018). The power threat meaning framework: An alternative nondiagnostic conceptual system. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 0022167818793289.

Rosner, R. I. (2018). Manualizing psychotherapy: Aaron T. Beck and the origins of Cognitive Therapy of Depression. *European Journal of Psychotherapy & Counselling*, 20(1), 25-47.

Zhang, L. (2018). Cultivating the therapeutic self in China. *Medical anthropology*, 37(1), 45-58.

For Report

Sharf, R. H. (2015). Is mindfulness Buddhist?(and why it matters). *Transcultural psychiatry*, 52(4), 470-484.

Ozawa-de Silva, C. (2015). Mindfulness of the kindness of others: The contemplative practice of Naikan in cultural context. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 52(4), 524-542.

Blackman, L. (2015). Affective politics, debility and hearing voices: Towards a feminist politics of ordinary suffering. *Feminist Review*, 111, 25-41.

Jablonsky, R. (2022). Meditation Apps and the Promise of Attention by Design. *Science, Technology, and Human Values*, 47(1), 314–336.