

Duquesne University
Approaches to Psychopathology
PSYC 543-01 Fall 2016
Wednesdays, 3pm – 5:40pm

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Course Overview

Why do we suffer? How do we make sense of our suffering, and attempt (or not) to ameliorate it? Under what circumstances does suffering get interpreted as *psychopathology*? What are the consequences of understanding suffering in this way?

In this class, we will study a variety of approaches to these questions. In the process, we will gain a deeper grounding in our own role as diagnosticians. When a person comes to us for help, how do we go about developing a working theory of why they are distressed in the particular way that they are? How do these theories guide our decisions about what to do when sitting with them? What consequences do those choices bring about, outside of the therapy room, in the wider world of social relationships and complex bureaucracies and knowledge production infrastructures that we and our clients inhabit? This course will broaden the theoretical and practical toolkit that you bring to diagnostic processes, while also honing your critical awareness of their many ramifications.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will have a basic familiarity with several ways of conceptualizing distress – including, but not limited to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* – and a critically informed, felt sense of the connection between diagnostic conceptualization and treatment. You will have a preliminary understanding of how to think with psychodynamic theories of development and personality organization. By studying how distress and healing are construed in a variety of cultural contexts, including the cultures which you inhabit, you will grow your awareness of the power of culture to shape both human experience and its interpretation. My hope is that through this course, you will gain a deeper sense of confidence in your ability to craft, with each of your clients, an effective guiding narrative about why they suffer and how you can be of help to them.

Course Readings

Readings for most weeks of the course include a sheet containing text from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: Fifth Edition*, as well as several other readings. The majority of the readings for this course will be available on Blackboard, under Course Documents.

There are two required course texts:

Gabbard, Glen. *Psychodynamic Psychiatry in Clinical Practice, Fifth Edition*. Arlington: American Psychiatric Publishing.

We will be relying on this text significantly throughout the semester, and you should make sure you have access to it, and that you are using the Fifth Edition.

Prince-Hughes, Dawn. *Songs of the Gorilla Nation: My Journey Through Autism*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

We will be reading a substantial portion of this book, and it is fairly inexpensive to obtain; I recommend you do so.

Readings from these two texts will NOT be available for download on Blackboard.

Course Requirements

Attendance/Participation:

You should come to class each week prepared to participate actively in discussion. This class meets only once per week, so we must make the most of the time we have. Missing more than one class session will have a negative impact on both your course grade and on your experience of the class, as will frequent lateness.

Discussion Leadership:

Each week, one of the students in the class will lead discussion during the second half of the seminar. During the weeks that you are leading discussion, you should prepare by picking out about four significant themes or intriguing questions from the readings that you feel would stimulate a productive discussion. During the first half of class, you should also note down any issues that come up that you feel would benefit from more focused discussion. You can then raise these issues and use them as a frame for discussion.

Midterm Assignment on Personality:

Personality organization and personality disorders are a richly theorized topic. During your time at Duquesne you will be exposed to a wide range of approaches to understanding how personality might contribute to psychopathology, distress, or other sorts of problems in living. There are more theories out there than we can cover in any one class; however, our second week on personality disorders, Week Eight (October 12th), has been designed to allow us to talk about a range of different theories and how they might be applied to a variety of different people.

Please come to class on October 12th prepared to present on the following two things.

1. A five to seven minute presentation on a particular person's theory of a particular personality disorder or form of personality organization (i.e. Kernberg's theory of narcissism, Fairbairn's theory of schizoid retreat, Mitchell's work on gender and hysteria, etc.) *It is up to you to coordinate as a class to make sure that each of you is presenting on a different topic.*
2. A brief (under five minutes) presentation on a *fictional character* whose life struggles might be productive to understand through the framework of personality disorder. This can be a character from a novel, a movie, a television show, or even a song or poem (Aimee Mann has made whole albums about this). Please describe this character to us with enough rich psychological detail and illustrative examples that we will be able to discuss them through a variety of theoretical frameworks.

Final Presentation:

On the last day of class, you will give a 15 minute presentation on a topic of your choosing that relates to the material and/or issues covered in this course. This presentation should be in the format of a conference talk. You should be prepared to stand in front of the group as you give your presentation, and you should prepare a series of slides to go with your presentation. These can contain anything from relevant text and bullet-point outlines to illustrations that visually complement the points you make in your talk. I strongly recommend rehearsing and timing this presentation at least once before class. Each presenter will also have a Q&A during which they will take a question or two from the group.

A few possibilities for topics (this is not an exhaustive list, just some inspiration):

- Pick a DSM diagnosis that we did not discuss in this class (i.e. Conduct Disorder). Present the DSM criteria for this condition, review some existing theories about why people experience these things, and provide a critical analysis of what it means to understand this condition in one or more of these ways.

- Pick a DSM category (i.e. Paraphilic Disorders, Somatic Symptom and Related Disorders) that we did not discuss in this class. Research and present the history of why these conditions are grouped together in this way in the DSM-5. What underlying assumptions does such a grouping reveal? What may be some of its consequences? What might be an alternative way of conceptualizing these experiences?
- Pick an issue that has come up repeatedly in class (i.e. neurodiversity, the role of culture in the shaping and expression of distress, the relationship between economics and psychopathology), develop a specific question related to this topic, and present a research proposal to investigate this question. Discuss the pros and cons of framing the question in the way that you do and of adopting the particular method that you choose.
- Identify a source or experience of distress that has not, as far as you know, been conceptualized as a form of psychopathology, but that you feel might be productively understood in that light. Discuss why you think so, why this condition has been overlooked, and what the proposed diagnostic criteria might look like.

As you can see from these suggestions, presentations should include both a review of existing material and some independent critical analysis of your own.

To prepare for this presentation, you should identify and read *at least five articles or chapters that were not assigned in this class*, at least *four of which should be from peer-reviewed journals or scholarly books*. You should be sure to include material from all five of these sources in your presentation, being sure to cite appropriately in your slides.

Final grades for the course will be assigned as follows:

Attendance/Participation: 40%

Personality Presentations: 20%

Final Presentation: 20%

Discussion Leading: 20%

Policies

Academic Integrity:

Students at Duquesne University are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. The University policy on academic integrity can be found at: http://www.duq.edu/documents/academic-affairs/_pdf/academic-integrity-5-1-12.pdf.

Technology:

You are allowed to use portable electronic devices such as laptops in class to access readings and to take notes. However, class will go better if we are all looking at each other so I request that you rely on these devices as little as possible.

Disability Support:

Students with documented disabilities are often entitled to accommodations in the classroom. If you require such accommodations, please contact the Office of Freshman Development and Special Student Services in 309 Duquesne Union (412-396-6657), and then speak with me, as soon as possible, so that we can get them set up for you in this class. *Regardless of whether you have a documented disability, please come talk to me if you feel that something about the classroom environment is getting in the way of your active participation or learning process, and I will do what I can to help.*

Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances are welcome and encouraged to communicate these to me, in advance if possible.

Office Hours:

Meeting individually with students is one of my favorite parts of teaching. Though I don't hold scheduled drop-in office hours, feel free to stop in any time you see my door open. Or, you can also email me and we can set up a time to meet. I can usually schedule appointment times within a week.

Please see me if you are having a problem with some aspect of the course, but also keep in mind that office hours are not only a time to address problems. I'd be happy to talk with you about your areas of special interest, help you find further readings, discuss longer-term goals, et cetera.

Course Schedule:

Week One, August 24th: What Diagnosis Does

Spiegel, Alix (2005). The dictionary of disorder: how one man revolutionized psychiatry. *New Yorker*.

Hinton, Devon and Lewis-Fernandez, Robert. Idioms of distress among trauma survivors: subtypes and clinical utility. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 34: 209-218.

McWilliams, Nancy (2011). *Psychoanalytic Diagnosis*. New York: Guilford Press.
“Why Diagnose?” (7 – 20).

Cuthbert, Bruce (2014). The RDoC framework: facilitating transition from ICD/DSM to dimensional approaches that integrate neuroscience and psychopathology. *World Psychiatry*, 13(1): 28-35.

Metzl, Jonathan (2009). *The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease*. Boston: Beacon Press.
“Preface” (ix – xxi)
“A Racialized Disease” (95 – 108)

Week Two, August 31st: How Do We Know?

Frank, Jerome and Julia Frank (1993). *Persuasion and Healing: A Comparative Study of Psychotherapy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.
Chapter 1: “Psychotherapy in America Today”
Chapter 2: “A Conceptual Framework for Psychotherapy”

Good, Byron (2012). Phenomenology, psychoanalysis, and subjectivity in Java. *Ethos*, 40(1): 24-36.

Kirmayer, Laurence (2012). Cultural competence and evidence-based practice in mental health: epistemic communities and the politics of pluralism. *Social Science and Medicine*, 75: 249-256.

Luhrmann, T.M. (2000). *Of Two Minds: The Growing Disorder in American Psychiatry*. New York: Knoph
“Introduction” (3-24)

Week Three, September 7th: Theoretical and Practical Approaches to Psychopathology

Gabbard:

Chapter 2 (“The Theoretical Basis of Dynamic Psychiatry”)

Chapter 3 (“Psychodynamic Assessment of the Patient”).

Chapter 1 (“Basic Principles of Dynamic Psychiatry”) is OPTIONAL.

Burns, David. (1999) *The Feeling Good Handbook*. “You Can Change the Way You Feel” and “Ten Ways to Untwist Your Thinking”

Yalom, Irvin and Ruthellen Josselson (2013) “Existential therapy”. In (Danny Wedding and Raymond Corsini eds.) *Current Psychotherapies*. (265 – 297).
Focus on Part 1 (Overview) and Part 2 (Personality) which takes us through page 277.

Prepare to briefly (5 minutes) present a clinical case for discussion.

Week Four, September 14th: Depression

DSM handout: “Depressive Disorders”

Gabbard, Chapter 8 “Affective Disorders” (219-256)

Brosh, Allie (2011). *Hyperbole and a Half*.

“Adventures in Depression”

<http://hyperboleandahalf.blogspot.com/2011/10/adventures-in-depression.html>

“Depression Part Two”

<http://hyperboleandahalf.blogspot.com/2013/05/depression-part-two.html>

(links also available under Course Documents)

Styron, William (1990). *Darkness visible: a memoir of madness*. New York: Random House. Part IV (36-50).

O’Neill, Theresa (2004). Culture and pathology: Flathead loneliness revisited. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 28: 221-230.

Week Five, September 21st: Bipolar Disorders and Mood Dysregulation

DSM handout: “Bipolar Spectrum Disorders”

Jamison, Kay (2009). *An unquiet mind: a memoir of moods and madness*. New York: Vintage Books.

“Flights of the Mind” (67-89)

Weiner, Talia (2011). The (un)managed self: paradoxical forms of agency in self-management of bipolar disorder. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 35:448 – 483.

Linehan, Marsha (1993). *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Borderline Personality Disorder*. New York: Guilford Press.

“Biosocial Theory: A Dialectical Theory of Borderline Personality Disorder Development” (42 – 65).

Week Six, September 28th: Anxiety and Repetitive Behavior Disorders

****Readings lighter this week - start readings for Week Seven****

DSM handout: Anxiety Disorders

DSM handout: Obsessive Compulsive and Related Disorders

Gabbard, Chapter 9 “Anxiety Disorders” (257-280).

Elliot, Carl (2003). *Better than Well: American Medicine Meets the American Dream*. New York: Norton.

“The Face Behind the Mask” (54 – 76).

Chellingsworth, Marie and Paul Farrand. Exposure and habituation for specific phobias in low intensity CBT. University of Exeter: CEDAR.

Many similar resources are available for free download at:
<http://cedar.exeter.ac.uk/iapt/iaptworkbooksandresources/>

Week Seven, October 5th: Personality I

DSM handout: Personality Disorders

McWilliams, Nancy (2011). *Psychoanalytic Diagnosis*. New York: Guilford Press.

Part II: Types of Character Organization

Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, 13 and 14.

Week Eight, October 12th: Personality II

In-Class Presentations (see “Midterm Assignment on Personality” for details)

No other readings assigned (but if you are looking for examples of theorists who have written on personality disorders, you can find many possibilities in Gabbard chapters 14 – 19).

Week Nine, October 19th: Trauma, Dissociation, Trance

Gabbard, Chapter 10 “Trauma- and Stressor-Related Disorders and Dissociative Disorders”

DSM handout: “Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders”

DSM handout: “Dissociative Disorders”

Chapin, Bambi (2008). Transforming possession: Josephine and the work of culture. *Ethos*, 36(2): 220-245.

Herman, Judith. (1992). *Trauma and recovery: the aftermath of terror - from domestic abuse to political terror*. New York: Basic Books.

Chapter 2: “Terror”

Chapter 3: “Disconnection”

(Pages 33 – 73).

Week Ten, October 26th: Psychosis

DSM handout: “Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders”

Corin, Ellen (2007). The “other” of culture in psychosis: the ex-centricity of the subject. In *Subjectivity: Ethnographic Investigations* (João Biehl, Byron Good, Arthur Kleinman eds.) Berkeley: University of California Press (273 – 315).

Luhrmann, Tanya (2007). Social defeat and the culture of chronicity: or, why schizophrenia does so well over there and so badly here. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 31(2):135-172.

Week Eleven, November 2nd: Neurodevelopmental Disorders I

DSM handout: “Neurodevelopmental Disorders”

Prince-Hughes, Dawn (2004). *Songs of the Gorilla Nation: my journey through autism*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Chapters 1 – 3 (“A Culture of One” “A Chaos of Noise: Understanding Autism” and “The Silence Before Dawn”) 11 – 62.

Ochs, Elinor and Olga Solomon (2010). Autistic sociality. *Ethos*, 38(1): 69-82.

Chew, Kristina (2013). Autism and the task of the translator. From *Worlds of Autism: Across the Spectrum of Neurological Difference* (Joyce Davidson and Michael Orsini, ed). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press (305-316).

Sinclair, Jim (1993). Don't mourn for us. *Our Voice*, 1(3).

Week Twelve, November 9th: Neurodevelopmental Disorders II: Working Clinically with Adults on the Spectrum (and those with other neurodevelopmental differences)

Before this class, please email me a brief (1 page or less) write-up of the topic you have chosen for your final presentation. We'll have a slightly longer-than-usual break, during which I'd like to check in with each of you about your ideas for the final assignment.

Prince-Hughes, Dawn (2004) *Songs of the Gorilla Nation: my journey through autism*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Chapter 4: "Starting Off Key" (63 – 88)

Chapter 8: "Ancestral Hymns: A Family History" (165 – 177)

"Epilogue" (213 – 224)

Gauss, Valerie (2007). *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Adult Asperger Syndrome*. New York: Guilford Press.

OPTIONAL: Chapter 1: "Defining Asperger Syndrome in Adulthood" (13 – 38)

Chapter 2: "Conceptualization of Mental Health Problems in Adult Asperger Syndrome" (39 – 66).

Chapter 3: "The Initial Assessment" (67-96)

Chapter 9: "Obstacles to Treatment and How to Address Them" (204 – 214)

Week Thirteen, November 16th: Eating Disorders and Addiction

DSM Handout: "Feeding and Eating Disorders"

DSM Handout: "Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders"

Gabbard, Chapter 12: "Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders and Eating Disorders"

Schüll, Natasha Dow. *Addicted By Design: Machine Gambling in Las Vegas*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Chapter 7: Gambled Away: Liquidating Life (189 – 209)

Chapter 8: Overdrive: Chasing Loss, Playing to Extinction (210 – 238)

Lester, R. (2007). Critical therapeutics: cultural politics and clinical reality in two eating disorder treatment centers. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 21(4). 369-387.

Week Fourteen, Thanksgiving Week (no class)

Week Fifteen, November 30th: Final Presentations