

ANTH 2321/UGEC2654

# From Madness to Mental Health



*Angst*, Edvard Munch 1896

Hamlet: I am but mad north-north-west. When the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (1604)

Instructor: Hsuan-Ying Huang

Lecture: Tuesday 2:30-4:15 PM

Tutorial: Tuesday 4:30-5:15 PM and TBA

Instructor: Hsuan-Ying Huang 黃宣穎 M.D., Ph.D.

NAH 303, [hsuan-ying.huang@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:hsuan-ying.huang@cuhk.edu.hk)

TA:

Language of instruction: English

Zoom ID: 962 3646 7978; Passcode: 794577 (will be renewed after the Add/Drop period)

### **Course Description:**

“If sanity and insanity exist, how shall we know them?”—psychologist David Rosenhan (1973) asked this question at the opening of “On Being Sane in Insane Places,” one of the most influential articles in the recent history of psychiatry and mental health. Nearly half a century later, the same question still haunts us, though it is often believed that nowadays we have much more effective treatments for mental illness. What are sanity and insanity respectively? Why and how some people go insane, while others do not? Are there sane and insane places (or societies) just like sane and insane individuals? Is it possible to stay sane in an insane place?

This course examines mental illness and mental health as subjective experiences, social processes, and objects of scientific knowledge and practice. It invites students to explore human experiences that are labelled as abnormal or pathological, to understand the expert knowledge and technologies employed to remedy these conditions, and to think about the complex relationships between them and the broader social and cultural contexts. Readings are drawn from psychiatric anthropology or anthropology of mental health, clinical case studies, and memoirs. They are chosen to reflect an interdisciplinary scope that includes social sciences, psychiatry itself, and the layman’s/patient’s perspective.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

1. Acquired basic knowledge in psychiatric anthropology or anthropology of mental health.
2. Developed a sophisticated understanding of psychiatry as a cultural domain and a social institution as well as a critical concern for mental health as a social issue.
3. Gained foundational knowledge regarding the symptomatology and illness experiences of major mental illnesses.
4. Become conversant in a range of ethnographic examples of how mental illness and mental health interact with local social and cultural contexts.

### **Expectations:**

#### Attendance:

You should attend the lectures and tutorials regularly. What you’ll learn from the course will to a large degree depend on your commitment to it.

#### Online Learning Policy:

Teaching will be conducted on the Zoom platform. **A new set of Meeting ID and Password will be sent to you when the Add/Drop period comes to an end.** Please note that as teaching shifts from on-site to online, various responsibilities will fall upon the shoulders of students (find a quiet place, have reliable Internet connection, get dressed properly, and be mentally and physically prepared, etc.). I hope you could concentrate on learning during the class—for

some students it may become a lot more difficult to resist distractions. I also hope you could keep your camera on during the class. I realize that this might be difficult or even impossible for you—but please keep this in mind. The use of earphones is recommended as you will be able to have better acoustic experiences.

Recording:

Lectures will be recorded and made available at the Blackboard website. These recordings are for your own private use only so please do not share them with others. Tutorial discussions will not be recorded. You must not record anything during the lectures or tutorial discussions without my permission.

Reading:

The course does not have a textbook. All the readings will be posted to the Blackboard website. The following two books—both relatively short and with e-book available at CUHK—could serve as useful guides for history and anthropology of mental illness respectively.

Scull, Andrew. 2011. *Madness: A Very Short Introduction*. London and New York: Oxford University Press.

Khan, Nichola. 2017. *Mental Disorders*. New York and Ontario, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

The most important journals in this field include: *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*; *Transcultural Psychiatry*; *Ethos*; *History of Human Sciences*; *History of Psychiatry*; *Journal of the History of Behavioral Sciences*; and so on.

For scholarly writings that are shorter and more accessible, check the blog Somatosphere (<http://somatosphere.net>).

Sometimes you may need to consult *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, the dominant psychiatric classification compiled by the American Psychiatric Association. You could find the electronic version of the latest version (DSM-V, 2013) at our library website (<https://dsm.psychiatryonline.org/doi/book/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596>).

Parallel Work:

Your own mental well-being matters and you must take good care of yourself. You are encouraged to keep a personal journal during the semester, which records your emotional experiences and reflections on issues related to mental health.

Office Hour:

You are most welcome to make an appointment with me to discuss any question related to or arising from the course. **For logistical issues, please contact the TA first.**

**Evaluation:**

Course participation (25%):

This part of the grade will be based on your preparation for and contribution to discussion in lectures and tutorials. Students will be divided into groups. Each group will take care of the tutorial discussion of particular week: they will give a 10-minute presentation at the beginning of the tutorial session and play the role of facilitator. They should prepare three or four questions for discussion and post them to the Blackboard website at least 24 hours before the meeting. More specifics will be announced by the end of the Add/Drop period.

Guest Lecture Reflection Paper (25%):

Choose one of the two talks given by guest lecturers to write a reflection paper (around 800 words). The paper should not be merely a summary of (part of) the lecture. Ideally, it should show your thoughtful engagement with the ideas and experiences of the guest lecturer as well as the course (for example, previous lectures, readings, or tutorial discussions). Due on March 24 (5 pm).

Final Paper (50%):

The length of the paper should be around 2000 words. There are two options:

- (1) Write a paper based on a small number of interviews with a particular individual, for example, a person with some kind of mental distress, a patient diagnosed with certain kind of mental illness, or a practitioner in the mental health services domain. You could also write about yourself if you consider yourself a very suitable subject and is keen to explore yourself more systematically.
- (2) Choose a topic of particular interest to you (of course, it has to be related to mental illness and mental health). For example, you could identify a mental health issue that seems to be particularly important and collect relevant materials (gossips, media accounts, academic research, and so on). This is an opportunity for you to engage in independent research that utilizes the ideas and themes from this course.

The paper should not be merely descriptive; it needs to include substantial discussion and cite a reasonable number of relevant references. You should begin to think about the final paper project as early as possible so that you have sufficient time to do the research work and to write the paper. You are encouraged to discuss with me or the TA about it. When you contact us, please write down your initial thoughts in one or two short paragraphs. The final paper is due on May 6 (5pm).

Please note that in anthropology (and most of the humanities and social sciences disciplines), the quality of writing would affect your grades substantially. I also think that **when it comes to writing, the quality is far more important than the length** (There seems to be a myth among humanities and social sciences students here that the professor would favor a longer paper rather than a shorter one. I think this is a serious mistake—if you do think that you must write a longer paper and you are confident in its quality, please let me know). I hope you could spare some time to do proofreading before submitting your paper. Please make the best use of the writing resources available at the university. Sadly, our “Independent Learning Centre” (<https://www.ilc.cuhk.edu.hk/EN/>) does not have writing tutors—I do think this is a ghastly mistake. I strongly recommend you to read “A Student’s Guide to Reading and Writing in Social Anthropology,” written by the UG Anthropology students at Harvard University ([https://anthropology.fas.harvard.edu/files/anthrodept/files/anthropology\\_writing\\_guide\\_2010.pdf](https://anthropology.fas.harvard.edu/files/anthrodept/files/anthropology_writing_guide_2010.pdf)).

**Assignment:**

Academic Integrity:

Students need to know how to cite properly and how to avoid plagiarism— using someone else's ideas or words without attribution. Please read the University's guidelines about academic honesty (<https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>). It's worth refreshing your memory even if you have read it before. Pay particular attention to Section 1 (What is plagiarism), Section 2 (Proper use of source material), and Appendix 1 (Details guidelines on proper use of source material).

Submission of papers:

The papers should be submitted via the plagiarism-detecting website Veriguide ([https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/login\\_CUHK.jspx](https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.jspx)). You should simultaneously send the file along with a signed declaration confirming your awareness of the University's policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures to the instructor.

Late Policy:

The assignments are due on the day and time specified in the syllabus. Extension is granted to medical or family/personal emergencies only. You must contact the instructor as soon as possible if such unfortunate events occur. Each day late without an approved extension will result in a reduction of 1/3 of a letter grade (i.e., A becomes A-; B+ becomes B).

Grade Descriptors:

| Grade | Overall Course  |
|-------|---|
| A     | Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes  |
| A-    | Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes  |
| B     | Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance |
| C     | Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses   |
| D     | Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes  |
| F     | Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.  |

## Weekly Schedule (subject to minor revision)

January 12: introduction

Rosenhan, David. 1973. "On Being Sane in Insane Places." *Science*. 179: 250-258.

January 19: Abnormal

Frances, Allen. 2013. "What's Normal and What's Not." In *Saving Normal: An Insider's Revolt Against Out-of-Control Psychiatric Diagnosis, DSM-5, Big Pharma, and the Medicalization of Ordinary Life*. Pp. 3-34. New York: William Morrow. (Chinese translation: 救救正常人：失控的精神醫學，左岸文化 2015)

Kirk, Stuart A. and Herb Kutchins. 1992. "DSM and Homosexuality: A Cautionary Tale." *The Selling of DSM: The Rhetoric of Science in Psychiatry*. Pp. 81-90. New York: Transaction Publishers.

### Recommended:

Kleinman, Arthur. 1988. "What is a Psychiatric Diagnosis?" in *Rethinking Psychiatry: From Cultural Category to Personal Experience*. Pp. 5-17. New York: Free Press.

January 26: Confinement

Rosenhan, David. 1973. "On Being Sane in Insane Places." *Science*. 179: 250-258. [Reread!]

Goffman, Erving. 1991[1961]. "On the Characteristics of Total Institutions." In *Asylum: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. Pp. 15-22 (Introduction only). London and New York: Penguin Books.

Foucault, Michel. 1984. "Panoptican" in *The Foucault Reader*. Edited by Paul Rabinow. Pp. 206-213. New York: Pantheon Books.

Film: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Milos Forman 1975)

February 2: Madness

Jenkins, Janis. 2004. "Schizophrenia as a Paradigm Case for Understanding Fundamental Human Processes." In *Schizophrenia, Culture, and Subjectivity: The Edge of Experience*. Edited by Janis Jenkins and Robert Barrett. Pp. 41-47 ("The Feel of Schizophrenia"). Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Luhrmann, Tanya. 2016. "I'm Schizophrenic!: How Diagnosis Can Change Identity in the United States." In *Our Most Troubling Madness: Case Studies in Schizophrenia Across Cultures*. Edited by T.H. Luhrmann and Jocelyn Marrow. Pp. 27-41. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Renee. 1951. *Autobiography of a Schizophrenic Girl* (excerpts) in *Out of Her Mind: Women Writing on Madness*. Edited by Rebeca Shannonhouse. Pp. 70-76. New York: The Modern Library.

Recommended:

Jenkins, Janis H. 2015. "This Is How God Wants It? The Struggle of Sebastián." in *Extraordinary Conditions: Culture and Experience in Mental Illness*. Pp. 71-95. Berkeley: University of California Press.

February 9: Couch

Luhmann, Tanya. 2000. "Psychoanalyst" in *Of Two Minds: An Anthropologist Looks at American Psychiatry*. Pp. 181-202. New York: Vintage Books.

Freud, Sigmund. (1893). "Katharina," Case Histories from *Studies on Hysteria*. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume II (1893-1895): 125-134. (Chinese translation: 歇斯底里症研究, 米那貝爾 2000)

Freud, Sigmund. (1936). A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XXII (1932-1936): New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis and Other Works, 237-248.

February 16: No Class (Lunar New Year vacation)

February 23: Sadness

Brown, George W. and Tirril Harris. 1978. "Clinical depression versus depressed mood" and "An example of a case of depression." In *Social Origins of Depression: A Study of Psychiatric Disorder in Women*. Pp. 22-30. London: Tavistock Publications.

Plath, Sylvia. 1963. *The Bell Jar* (excerpts) in *Out of Her Mind: Women Writing on Madness*. Edited by Rebeca Shannonhouse. Pp. 84-92. New York: The Modern Library.

Kleinman, Arthur. 1986. "Social Origins of Distress and Disease: Depression, Neurasthenia, and Pain in Modern China." *Current Anthropology* 27(5): 499-509.

Film: *Mad World* (Wong Chun 2016)

March 2: Culture

Luhmann, Tanya et al. 2015. "Hearing Voices in Different Cultures: A Social Kindling Hypothesis." *Topics in Cognitive Science*. 7: 646-663.

Watters, Ethan. 2009. "The Rise of Anorexia in Hong Kong." In *Crazy like Us: The Globalization of the American Psyche*. Pp: 9-63. New York: Free Press. (Chinese translation: 像我們一樣瘋狂：美式心理疾病的全球化，北京師範大學出版社 2016)

Recommended:

Kleinman, Arthur. 1988. "Do Psychiatric Disorders Differ in Different Cultures?" in *Rethinking Psychiatry: From Cultural Category to Personal Experience*. Pp. 18-33. New York: Free Press.

March 9: To be announced

Guest Speaker: Vincent Chung Yan Cheng 鄭仲仁 (social worker, person with lived experiences, mental health advocate)

March 16: To be announced

Guest Speaker: Amanda Chiu Ming Li 李昭明 (co-founder and CEO of Storytaler 說書人, clinical psychologist, mental health advocate)

March 22: Trauma

Boehnlein, James and Devon Hinton. 2016. "From Shell Shock to PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury: A Historical Perspective on Responses to Combat Trauma." In *Culture and PTSD: Trauma in Global and Historical Perspective*. Edited by Devon Hinton and Byron Good. Pp. 154-175. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Herman, Judith. 1992. "Child Abuse." in *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*. Pp. 96-114. New York: Basic Books. (Chinese translation: 創傷與復原, 時報文化 1995)

Film: *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* (Ang Lee 2016)

Take a look at the T2T Project 創傷同學會 (From Trauma to Transformation)

<https://www.woundedtransformer.online>

Recommended:

Herman, Judith. 1992. "Captivity." in *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*. Pp. 74-95. New York: Basic Books.

Duncan, Whitney. 2016. "Gendered Trauma and Its Effects: Domestic Violence and PTSD in Oxana." in *Culture and PTSD: Trauma in Global and Historical Perspective*. edited by Devon E. Hinton and Byron J. Good. Pp. 202-239. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

March 29: No Class (reading period)

April 5: No Class (Qingming Festival)

April 12: Drugs

Horwitz, Allan and Jerome Wakefield. 2007. "The Rise of Antidepressant Drug Treatments." in *The Loss of Sadness: How Psychiatry Transformed Normal Sorrow into Depressive Disorder*. Pp. 179-193. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kramer, Peter. 1997. "Introduction" and "Makeover" in *Listening to Prozac*. Pp. vi-xvi; 1-21. New York: Penguin Books. (Chinese translation: 神奇百憂解：改變性格的好幫手 1995)

Jamison, Kay Redfield. 1995. "Missing Saturn" in *An Unquiet Mind: A Memoir of Moods and Madness*. Pp. 90-109. New York: Picador. (Chinese translation: 躁鬱之心 1998)

April 19: Sanity (no tutorial)

Lando, Harry. 1976. "On Being Sane in Insane Places: A Supplemental Report." *Professional Psychology*: 7(1): 47-52. (c.f. Rosenhan's article)

Fromm, Erich. 1991 (1956) "Are We Sane" in *The Sane Society*. Pp. 3-11. London and New York: Routledge.