

**SEMINAR IN ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR
SOCIOLOGY 4000-005**

Dr. B.J. Gallagher, III
Professor of Psychiatric Sociology
Fall 2004 – T 4:00 – 6:00
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Subject Matter

This course is an in-depth investigation of abnormal human behavior. Primary emphasis is placed on clinical symptoms, causal theories, and the social epidemiology of mental illness in the U.S. today. Because the subject matter is approached in an interdisciplinary manner, students utilize research sources in psychiatric sociology, psychiatry, social psychology, abnormal psychology as well as relevant medical research.

There are literally **hundreds** of topics which students can select to research. **Some** of the possible course topics are:

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| 1. Mental Illness and Homelessness | 19. Transvestism/Transsexualism |
| 2. Schizophrenia | 20. Exhibitionism/Voyeurism |
| 3. Psychiatric Treatment | 21. Sadomasochism |
| 4. Serial Murder | 22. Incest/Pedophilia |
| 5. Emotionally Disturbed Children | 23. Other Psychosexual Disorders |
| 6. Psychiatry and the Law | 24. Phobias |
| 7. Bipolar Disorder (Manic-Depression) | 25. Somatoform Disorders |
| 8. The Autistic Child | 26. Conversion Disorder |
| 9. Down's Syndrome | 27. Factitious Disorders |
| 10. Other Childhood Disorders | 28. Borderline Personality Disorder |
| 11. Alzheimer's Disease | 29. Post - Traumatic Stress Disorder |
| 12. Other Dementias | 30. Generalized Anxiety Disorder |
| 13. Psychopaths | 31. Paranoid Personality Disorder |
| 14. Narcissistic Personality Disorder | 32. Passive-Aggressive Personality Disorder |
| 15. Multiple Personality Disorder | 33. Disorders of Impulse Control (Kleptomania/Gambling/Sex) |
| 16. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder | 34. Culture-Bound (Rare, Exotic) Disorders |
| 17. Fetishism | 35. Tourette's Disorder |
| 18. Pyromania | 36. Sleep Disorders |

Course Format and Requirements

The seminar is limited to 14 students. Everyone selects a specific topic and develops an expertise in that area by conducting a thorough literature review as well as through “real life contacts” such as meeting mental patients and/or interviewing experts. Students will either work as individuals or as part of a two person team. Seminar meetings consist of students presenting their research findings.

After the presentation, the student then proceeds to either the final draft of a traditional term paper, or the “essay exam option.” (See below.) To ensure that each student is able to intelligently comment on another's subject area, general background readings will be assigned for each meeting. These will be selected (at least one week ahead) by the student(s) making the presentation. Copies of the reading packets are to be provided by the student(s). In addition, everyone is expected to read extensively from two general sources. These sources can also serve as background readings for specific course topics. The sources are:

1. Bernard J. Gallagher, III, The Sociology of Mental Illness (Upper Saddle River, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 2002).
2. Gloria Leon, Case Histories of Deviant Behavior (Boston: Holbrook Press, 1990).
3. Secondary Sources. There are over 3,500 different references in the Gallagher book for those of you who wish to pursue topics of special interest.

Preliminary Meeting

Each student will meet Dr. Gallagher during the end of the spring semester to select a topic and get a head start on the readings. *To facilitate this process, there will be a group meeting in the spring to discuss the structure of the Seminar and pick topics. Please think about which topics interest you before our spring meeting. Ms. Brobyn and recent Seminar students will also attend. You will receive an Email notifying you of the time and date of the spring meeting. Attendance at this meeting is mandatory.*

Clinical Contact

The Seminar is especially enhanced by the involvement of Ms. Laura Brobyn, Coordinator of Clinical Specialists, at Norristown State Hospital. Ms. Brobyn will offer students the opportunity to have clinical contact with patients who suffer from disorders chosen as seminar topics.

Extracurriculars

There are numerous outside activities available (not required) to Seminar students in conjunction with activities offered in Social Psychiatry (Soc. 3450). These include expert guest lecturers on serial murder, community psychiatry, homosexuality, psychiatry and the law, and select documentary videos on different aspects of mental illness.

Grading

The components of the final grade are:

1. Seminar Presentation 60%
2. Seminar Participation 10%
3. Term Paper **OR** 30%
Essay Exam Option
(This is a choice to write short “reaction papers” to 2 course topics of special interest to the individual student).