

On the Stigma of Mental Illness

Patrick Corrigan
SAMHSA Campus Grantee
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On the Stigma of Mental Illness

- **Public stigma:** robbed of rightful opportunities (work, housing, health)
- **Self stigma:** why try
- **Label avoidance:** stay clear of labelers

Label Source

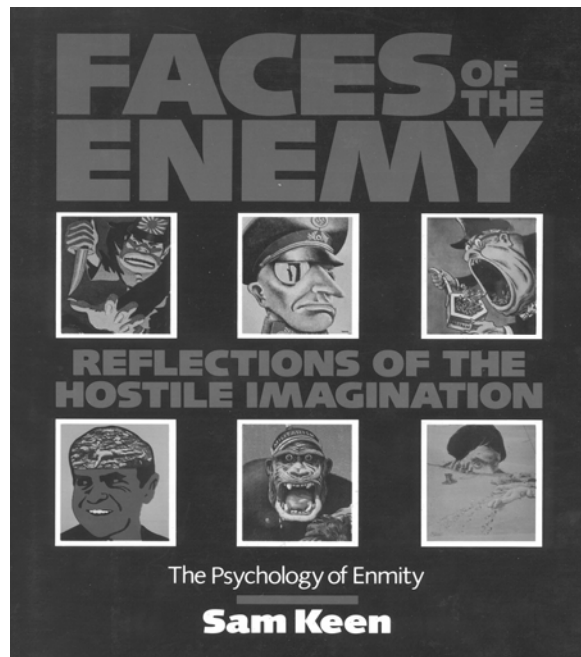
- Odd behaviors
- Poor and disheveled
- Social errors

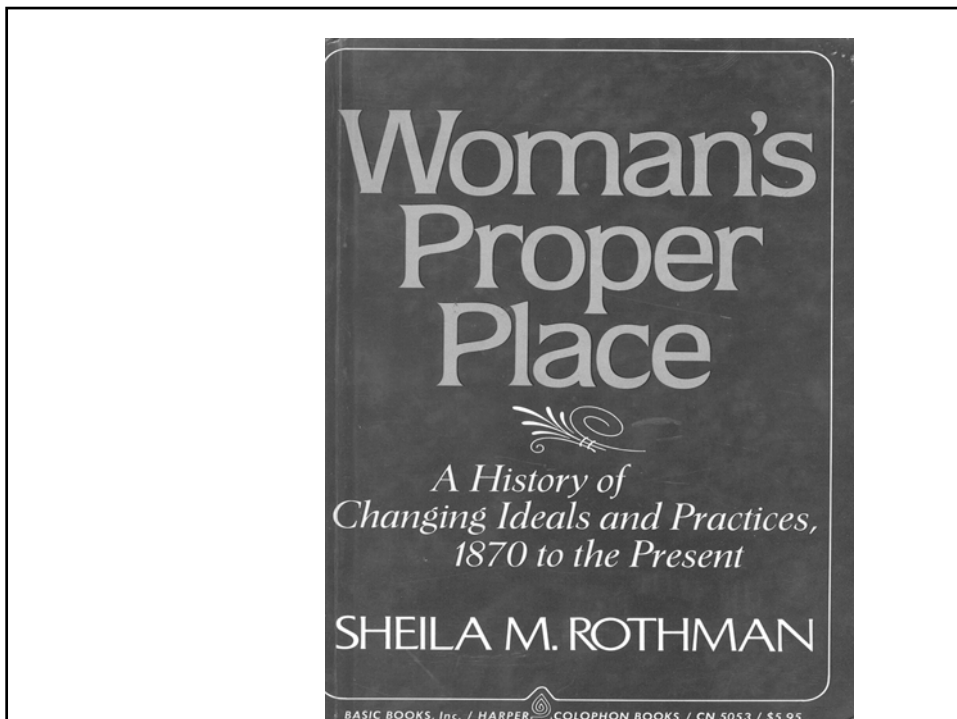
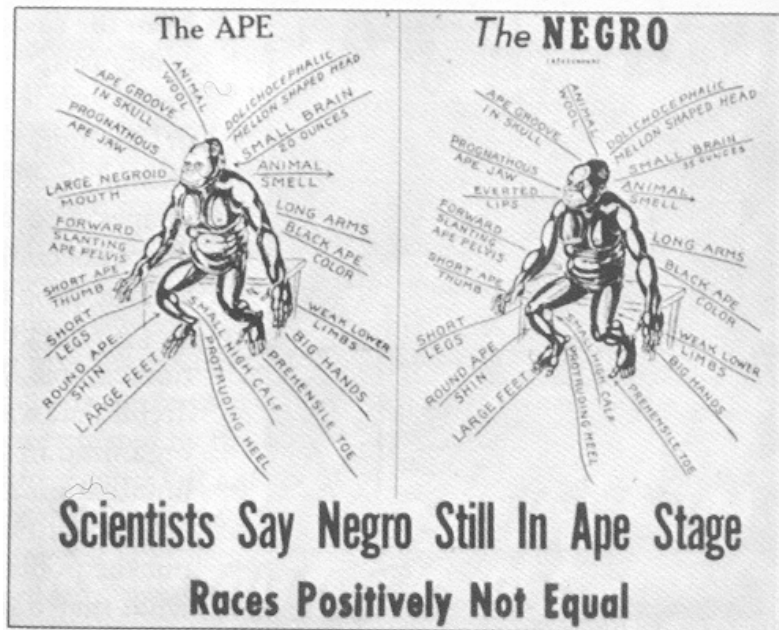
- Treatment
 - Knowing the person is getting treatment

20 minute goals

- From where comes stigma
- Ways to change it
- From research to practice

The Media maintains Stigma





People with mental illness are homicidal maniacs

In the movies





People with mental illness are
homicidal maniacs

In the newspapers

NEW YORK POST METRO
LARGEST-SELLING AFTERNOON NEWSPAPER IN AMERICA
FRIDAY, MAY 9, 1996 30 CENTS

FREED MENTAL PATIENT KILLS MOM

SPORTS ★ ★ ★ ★ FINAL

DAILY NEWS
New York's HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER
Friday, November 13, 1992

**TEXAS
CAMPUS
TRAGEDY
KILLS 11**
PAGES 9 & 7

**THE
TOP 40**

**GREAT
NEW YORK
EATS THAT
FIT
THE BILL**
PAGES 78-80

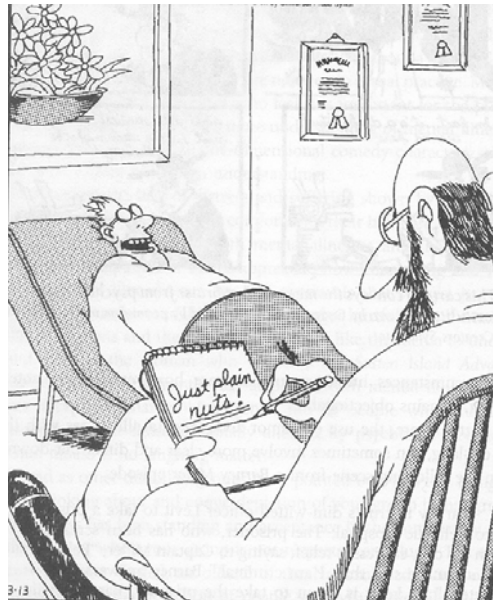
★★★
**FOR JAMES
BOND'S
'WORLD'**
PAGE 66

GET THE VIOLENT CRAZIES OFF OUR STREETS

NEWS' SPECIAL EDITORIAL
SEE PAGES 2 & 3

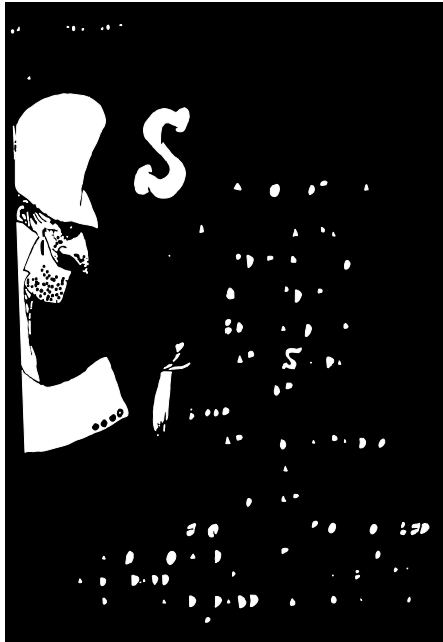
People with mental illness are homicidal maniacs

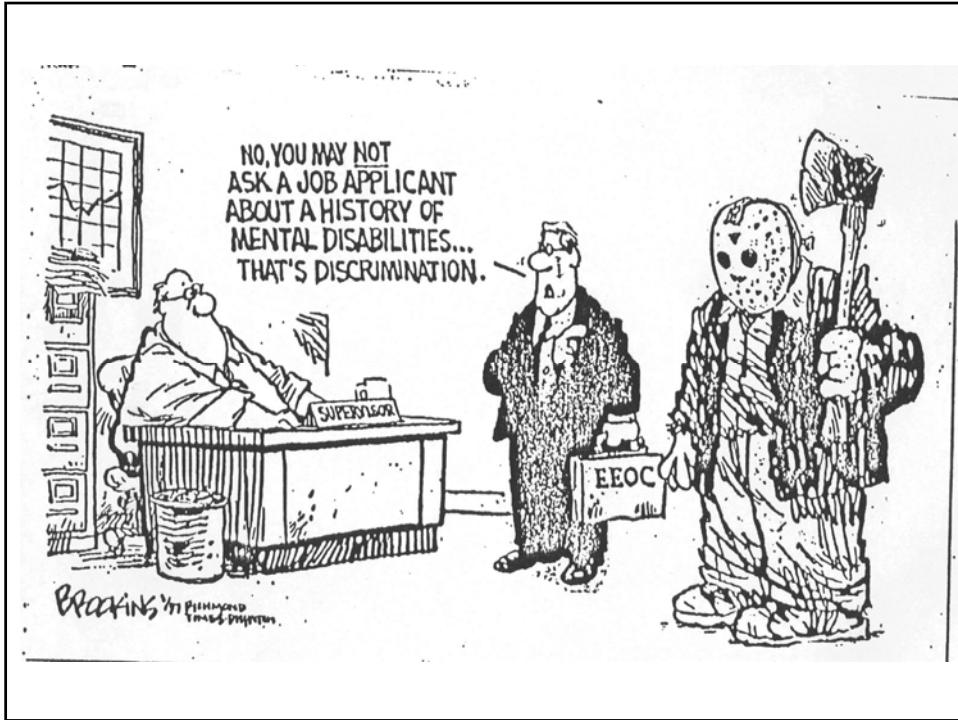
In comics



People with mental illness are homicidal maniacs

In kids books and TV





People with mental illness are
lovable buffoons

Benevolence stigma

Shouldn't we just lighten up

The role of humor in a free society



Satire has a role in
lamprooning the powerful

Media Madness

By Otto Wahl

NAMI website

Don't Call Me Nuts!

COPING WITH THE STIGMA OF MENTAL ILLNESS



- ◆ Dealing with the Pain of Self-Stigma
 - ◆ To Disclose or Not to Disclose
 - ◆ Seven Ways to Foster Personal Empowerment
 - ◆ Changing Society's Reactions through Contact, Education, and Protest

Patrick Corrigan ◆ Robert Lundin

Definitions of Various Terms

- **ATTITUDES**
 - Desserts are sweet and provide a wonderful end to a meal (POSITIVE)
 - Desserts make me fat; I hate them (NEGATIVE)
- **STEREOTYPES**
 - All Irish Americans have artistic souls (POSITIVE)
 - All Irish Americans are drunken sots (NEGATIVE)
- **PREJUDICE**
 - That's right; all Irish Americans are artists; I like them.
 - That's right; all Irish Americans are drunks; I hate them.
- **DISCRIMINATION**
 - I'm not going to hire Irish Americans

More about terms

- Stereotypes (about mental illness)
 - DANGEROUS
 - Weak character (Blame)
 - Incompetence
 - Benevolence

More about terms

- Prejudice (about mental illness)
 - Fear
 - Anger

More about terms

- Discrimination (towards mental illness)
 - Withhold help
 - Avoidance
 - Coercion (treatment)
 - Segregation (institutions)

Who would want to be part of that group?

Label Avoidance

Changing Public Stigma: Research

- Education
- Protest
- Contact

Changing Public Stigma

- Education

Review key myths and facts that counter these myths

Changing Public Stigma

- Myth: People with serious mental illness are dangerous.
- Fact: People with mental illness are more dangerous especially when using drugs or alcohol
 - BUT
 - Young Minority Men is Better Predictor,

Changing Public Stigma

- Protest
 - Review stigmatizing images
 - Shame on you for thinking that way

- Beware the rebound

Examples of the rebound

- *Don't think about white bears!*
- *Don't think bad things about People with Mental Illness!*
- Active NOT attending
- Reactance

Changing Public Stigma

- Contact

“Meet Bob Lundin”

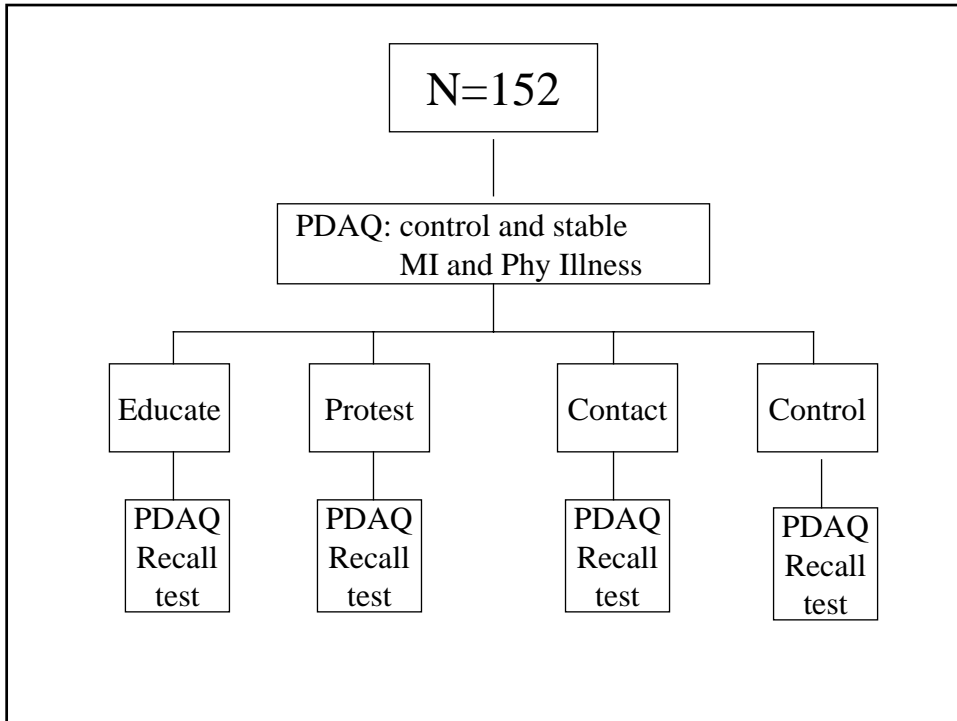


Changing Public Stigma

- Bob Lundin's story
 - My name is _____ and I have a severe mental illness called schizo-affective disorder
 - My childhood was not unusual...
 - My mental illness began when I was 25 years old...
 - Unfortunately, my mental illness did not go away quickly...
 - Despite these problems, I have achieved several accomplishments.
 - Despite my accomplishments, I have experienced stigma...

Changing Public Stigma

- Bob Lundin's story
 - Two take home points
 1. I, like the vast majority of people with mental illness, live, work, and play JUST LIKE YOU.
 2. So please treat me the same. Do not view me or respond to me based on any unfair stereotypes.



Protest

- Attitude rebound
 - Does not decrease stigmatizing views
 - May increase them
- Decrease behavior
 - Punitive response

Education

- Some mild improvement in stigmatizing attitudes
- Does not stick over time
- Not clear it spreads to behaviors
- Speaking to the choir

Contact

- Improves attitudes
- Improvements seem to stick
- Effects behavior
- Less exportable

What Kind of Contact is Best

- Famous people
- “Homeless bums”
- Neighbors

Contact

- One time contact
vs
- Repeated contact
- Coming out of the closet
 - Concealable stigma
 - Gay people, religion, level of education

Contact

- Come out of the closet
- Benefits
 - More power to group
 - More support among peers
 - Relief and self esteem
- Costs
 - Discrimination to self
 - Discrimination to friends/family

From Research to Practice

- NAMI's In Our Own Voice
 - Two people with mental illness telling there stores
 - Dark days
 - Acceptance
 - Treatment
 - Success hopes and dreams

College Settings

- Mind Matters @ Yale
- Finding Voice @ UMich
- Some of us
 - Have struggled with mental illness
 - Have families that struggled with mental illness
 - Interested but no prior experience

Services

- Mutual support
 - (counters self-stigma)
- Advocacy
- Awareness
- Groupness

Just like me

Success is to be measured not so much by the position one has reached in life as by the obstacles he has overcome while trying to succeed.

Booker T.
Washington