Abnormal Psychology

Stigma

Psychology 3303

Professor June Gruber
THE MARK OF SHAME

Stigma of Mental Illness and an Agenda for Change

STEPHEN P. HINSHAW
Roadmap

Course Logistics

Stigma

Take-Away Questions
Course Logistics

Exam 1 Grading

Great work so far
Grades posted on CANVAS by Thursday
Exams handed back in class Thursday
Gruber 5% boost :)

Course Logistics

Calendar Update

Emailed recent syllabus last week

Updated on course website

Check to make sure doing correct readings!

Next week: Criminal Justice System (GUEST LECTURE)
Course Logistics

Email Reminder

Please remember to use “PSYC 3303” in subject line
Roadmap

Course Logistics

Stigma

Take-Away Questions
Check-In

The destructive beliefs and attitudes held by a society that are ascribed to groups considered different in some manner, such as people with psychological illness, are called:

a) Disorders
b) Stigmas
c) Typecasts
d) Discriminative categories
e) Personal distress
Stigma

What is Stigma?
Evidence
Why is there stigma?
Myth Busting
What can be done?
Stigma: Definition

Greece:
Literal ‘mark of shame’
(brands on slaves/traitors)

Today:
Psychological “branding”
Which out-groups are most frequently stigmatized?

- Racial/sexual minorities, women, those physical disabilities, etc.
- Children

- Most stigmatized today: Mental illness, substance abuse, homeless
Stigma: Distinguish key terms

- Stereotypes (cognitive)
- Prejudice (affective)
- Discrimination (behavioral)

- **Stigma includes all of the above**
  - Stigma is global: The victim’s entire ‘being’ is marked by stigma
Hidden or concealable stigmas

- On the face of it, would seem that ‘overt’/visible stigmas would be the worst
- But some stigmatized attributes can be hidden (concealable)
- With concealable stigmas, much anxiety
  - Should I out myself?
  - Will I be found out if I don’t? Will it ‘leak’?
What are the Effects of Stigma?

1. Fail to seek treatment
2. Drop out early from treatment
3. Do not take advantage of life opportunities
Check-In

Which of the following is NOT a component of stigma?

a) Stereotypes
b) Prejudice
c) Discrimination
d) All of the above are components of stigma
What is Stigma?

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Why is there stigma?

Myth Busting

What can be done?
1. Media Depictions
   • Pervasive stereotyping/association with violence

2. Language/Jokes
   • First thing kids use to tease others

3. Laws
   • No parity for insurance coverage of treatment
   • In over half of states, person admitting mental illness:
     - Can’t vote, drive, hold office, maintain child custody

4. Professionals
   • Low expectations, “us vs. them”
Stigma

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Where Does Stigma Come From?

Stigma emanates from common social-cognitive processes

- Everyone stereotypes
- Everyone is prone to implicit biases (e.g., ingroup vs. outgroup)
Evolutionary Models
• We’re all ‘wired’ to be social AND to be wary of fellow humans

Which traits make us most wary?
• Disease/contagion
• Cheating/exploitation
• Different ‘tribe’

Is stigma inevitable?
• NO, because we can reason and have empathy
Why is Mental Illness Stigmatized?

1. Threat Theory:
   • Mental illness threatens perceiver’s sense of stability

2. Attribution Theory:
   • If a negative attribute is believed to be STABLE, PERVASIVE, and/or CONTROLLABLE, then it will be more stigmatized

3. Structural Issues:
   • System justification, when hierarchies exist

4. Conditioning/Learning:
   • Media images: convey strong sense of violence and incompetence linked to mental illness
Stigma

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Myth Busting

Is mental illness linked to violence?

• Only certain forms (psychosis, antisocial PD, substance abuse)
• In general, mental disorders far more linked to victimization
The Myth That Mental Illness Causes Mass Shootings

By Tage Rai
October 13, 2017

Image: Eti Moshau/Unsplash

“A sick, demented man.” That was Donald Trump’s assessment of Stephen Paddock, who shot nearly 600 people, leaving 58 dead, during a concert in Las Vegas earlier this month. Echoing Trump’s
Stigma

What is Stigma?

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Myth Busting

What can be done?
What Can Be Done to Combat Stigma?

1. Systems
   - Recognition of problem
   - Anti-discrimination laws
   - Parity re: insurance for treatment coverage
   - Parity re: funding of research

2. Media Level
   - New set of images, listening to voices of those who experience mental illness (including families)
   - Intentional PR re: mental illness and therapy
What Can Be Done to Combat Stigma?

3. **Group Level**
   - Protest
   - Public Education (but limits of ‘factual’ education)
   - Contact Hypothesis

4. **Individual**
   - Accurate diagnosis and responsive treatment
   - Coping strategies for ind’s w/ mental disorder
   - Overcoming stereotypes for perceivers
Removing the Stigma with Stephen Hinshaw

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccgFvD_Hflk
Let’s Erase the Stigma: LETS Bring Change 2 Mind

• See bringchange2mind.org
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