

## History of Mental Illness and Intervention

*'Insanity in individuals is rare; but in groups, parties, nations, and epochs it is the rule.'*

Nietzsche



## History of Mental Illness and Intervention

- By no means an exhaustive compilation of the developments of Mental Health Care
- We will look at major points of interest through time while focusing next week on chiropractic's involvement with Mental Health



## History of Mental Illness and Intervention

- Prehistoric times
- Ancient Greece and Rome
- Middle ages
- Renaissance
- 17<sup>th</sup> century
- 18<sup>th</sup> century
- Mental Health in America: Colonial era to present



## Prehistoric Times

- Mystical views dominate this period
- No division between health care, magic, and religion - no understanding of why diseases occur
- Abnormal behavior attributed to the supernatural
- Treatment included spells cast by Shamans, exorcisms, and perhaps **trepanning**



## Prehistoric Times

- **Trepanning** (8000 BCE -500 BCE)
- Earliest known surgery
- \*Used to drive alien spirits from the body
- \*Remedy for insanity, epilepsy and headache



## Trepanning



## Ancient Greece and Rome

Asclepius (4<sup>th</sup> Century BCE)



"A Visit to Aesculapius". Sir Edward Poynter , 1880

## Ancient Greece and Rome

- Between 500 BCE – 500 CE numerous mental disorders were identified
  - Melancholia
  - Mania
  - Dementia
  - Hysteria
  - Delusions
  - Hallucinations

## Ancient Greece and Rome

- Two theories of mental illness
  1. Mental illness is caused by possession (treatment?)
  2. Belief that all illness, including mental illness, has natural origins

## Ancient Greece and Rome

- Hippocrates (460 BCE)



## Ancient Greece and Rome

- Hippocrates (460 BCE)
  - Described mental illnesses of melancholy, postpartum psychosis, phobias, and phrenitis
  - **Humoral theory**: Classified personalities based on the 4 humours (**phlegm, black bile, yellow bile, and blood**)
  - Treatment? Rest, bathing, exercise, and dieting

## Ancient Greece and Rome

- Plato (400 BCE)
  - Theorized that childhood experiences shaped adult behaviors
- Aristotle
  - Contemplated the role of genetic inheritance
  - Viewed actions, feelings and thoughts as a single unit



## Ancient Greece and Rome

- Cicero (110 BCE) conducted interviews:
  - Clan/tribe, region, connections
  - Sex, nationality, family status age, physique
  - Education, association, habits/life-style
  - Social Class (Rich/poor, free/slave)
  - Appearance
  - Emotions, temperament
  - Interests
  - Motivation
  - Work hx
  - Significant life events
  - Form and content of discourse

## Ancient Greece and Rome

- Galen (129-201 CE)
  - Incorporated anatomical knowledge
  - Emphasized knowing through observation and experimentation; however, this concept would be lost until the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century

## Ancient Greece and Rome

- Al-Rāzī (865-925 C.E.)
  - Persian physician
  - “No fear of demons” – those with mental illness were thought to be supernatural spirits, but not necessarily “evil”
  - Presented definitions, symptoms, and treatments for illness, including mental illness
  - Emphasized compassionate treatment

## Ancient Greece and Rome

- An enlightened view was not shared by all of Rome
- Many continued to believe that illness was caused by the Gods

## Middle Ages (500-1500 CE)

- **The Age of Faith**
  - Christ healed by faith, therefore people believed only the grace of God would provide a cure for physical or mental illness
  - Cause of mental illness was demonic possession
  - Treatment – exorcism



breaking on the wheel : circa 1490

## The Renaissance (15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries)

- Witch hunts begin
- Provoked, at least in part, by anxiety about the sexual activities of some monks and nuns
- Who was to blame for this inappropriate behavior?



## 15<sup>th</sup> Century



### • *Malleus Maleficarum*

- Arguments for the existence of witches
- 'Proof' that witches are mostly women
- How to identify a witch (deviant behavior, i.e. sexual)
- Insanity was caused by possession by the devil

## 15<sup>th</sup> Century



### *Malleus Maleficarum*

- How should witches be treated?
  - Salvation of the immortal soul was more important than the comforts of the possessed body
  - Physical punishments were used to make the body an intolerable refuge for the devil

## 17<sup>th</sup> Century



- General belief: If mad people behaved like animals, they should be treated like animals
- Thomas Willis (neuroanatomist and doctor) advocated the following treatments:
  - Curative discipline
  - Fetters
  - Blows
  - Medical treatments

## 17<sup>th</sup> Century



- Alternative views during the 17<sup>th</sup> century
  - Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) was written from his own experience
    - He proposed a therapeutic program of exercise, music, drugs, and diet
    - Stressed the importance of discussing problems with a close friend or doctor

## 17<sup>th</sup> Century



- "Private madhouse"
  - In the 17<sup>th</sup> century people with mental health problems were often cared for privately
  - This evolved into a business where people housed numerous patients – "**private madhouse**"
  - Treatment varied according to ability to pay

## 18<sup>th</sup> Century



- Development of new asylums
  - Built to house people with mental health problems separately from houses of correction and poor houses
  - Bethlem Royal Hospital (**Bedlam**)
  - Prisons with neglectful conditions?
  - At this time, mental illness was considered a moral weakness

## 18<sup>th</sup> Century

'A Rake's Progress'

William Hogarth,  
1735



Bedlam  
1860s



- 'WG' hospitalized at Bethlem for 'acute mania' (1850s)
- Photo therapy (Museum of London, Bedlam Exhibit)

## Review

- Prehistoric times
- Ancient Greece and Rome
- Middle ages
- Renaissance
- 17<sup>th</sup> century
- 18<sup>th</sup> century
- Mental Health in America: Colonial era to present

## Colonial America to Present

- **18<sup>th</sup> century:** Hospitalization
- **19<sup>th</sup> century:** Moral management
- **20<sup>th</sup> century:** Society cooperation & interaction

## 18<sup>th</sup> Century: Hospitalization

- Hospitalization
  - Mentally ill referred to as “Lunatics”
  - Colonists declared these lunatics possessed by the devil, and usually they were removed from society and locked away

## 18th Century

- Two categories of mental illness: **mania and melancholy**
- Treatment involved inducing crisis or expelling crisis from the individual
- How to induce or expel a crisis?
  - Ice baths, bleeding, shocks with eels, induction of vomiting, induction of fevers with rats and malarial mosquitoes

- Barbaric? Why didn't society do anything?

## 18th Century

- Barbaric? Why didn't society do anything?
  - Although the Colonial Era's methods of handling the mentally ill and medical procedures could be considered barbaric by present-day standards, the vast majority of people were content because the lunatics were no longer visible in society
  - Integration of the mentally ill is a modern-day concept

## 18th Century

- Benjamin Rush (1745-1813)
- Father of American Psychiatry
- 1<sup>st</sup> US psychiatric text book: *Observations and Inquiries upon the Diseases of the Mind* (1812)



## 18th Century

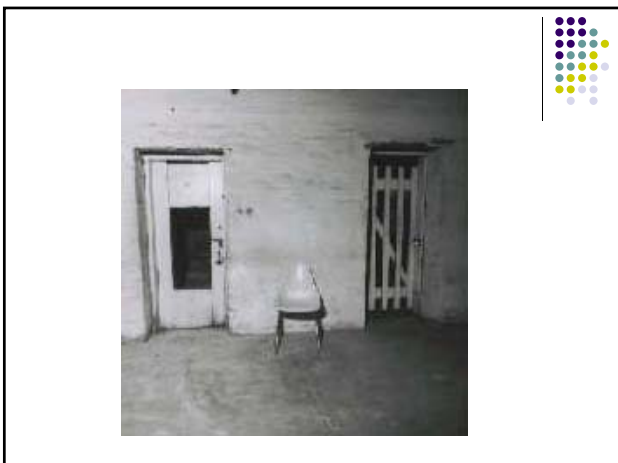
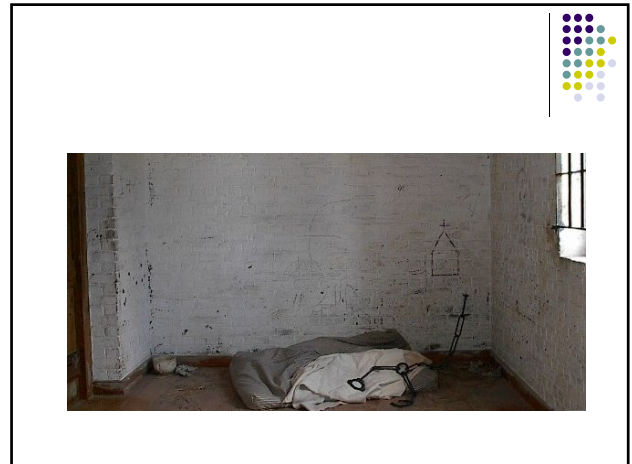
- Benjamin Rush
  - Mental illness is a disease of the mind and not a "possession of demons"
  - Treatment
    - Involuntary commitment in asylums
    - Diet, purges, bleeding, baths/showers, horticulture, emetic for vomiting, **gyrator**, **tranquilizing chair**, Dover's powder





## 18<sup>th</sup> Century: Hospitalization

- Hospitalization
  - Williamsburg Hospital "Public Hospital for Persons of Insane and Disordered Minds" (1773)
  - 24 locked cells
  - Room contained a mattress, a chamber pot, and an iron ring in the wall to which the patient's wrists or leg fetters were attached



## 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Moral Management

- "Moral Management"
  - The environment plays a vital role in the treatment of the mentally ill
  - Recovery would more likely occur if conditions and surroundings resembled the comfort of home
  - Beds, pictures and decorations replaced shackles, chains and cement cells

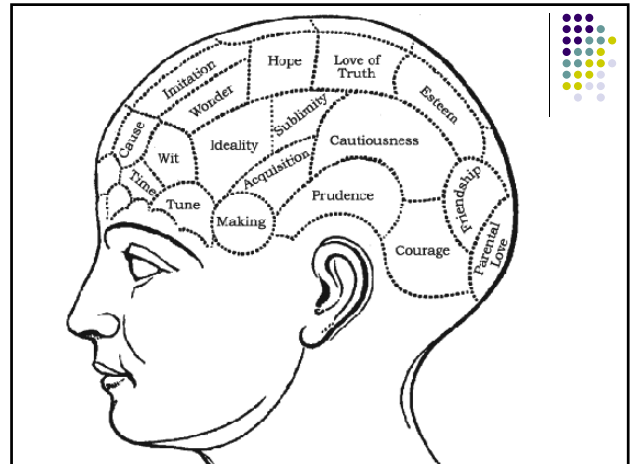


## 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Moral Management

- Moral management included:
  - Mentally ill to be treated in special facilities
  - Structured daily schedule (work therapy)
  - Inappropriate behaviors were to be confronted with the goal of eliminating the behavior
  - Ultimate goal - restore sanity and to return the patient to society as a fully functioning, productive member of society
  - Punitive treatments were abolished

## 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Moral Management

- Challenges:
  - The “unchaining” of patients, phrenology, and animal magnetism did not treat everyone
  - Some of the seriously mentally ill would become a danger to self and others when not restrained
  - What should patients do with their time?



## 19<sup>th</sup> Century

- Turning point...American civil war
  - A great number of servicemen suffered from postwar trauma - they entered state mental hospitals and asylums
  - Creating an overcrowding crisis
  - Although the public watched very closely how their ‘war boys’ were treated, institutions had no choice but to reinstate old procedures due to the serious issue of overcrowding
  - Restraints
  - New drug treatments such as opium

## 19<sup>th</sup> Century

- Due to public demand, asylums began to appear all over the country
- **Thomas Story Kirkbride** was a designer of asylums at the time, and became well-known for his popular architectural ideas
- Athens (Ohio) adopted the “**Kirkbride Plan**” and opened an asylum in January of 1874

## Athens Asylum for the Insane



<http://www.ohgen.net/ohathens/athenshospital.htm>

## Athens Asylum

- Athens Asylum as a community
  - Efficient community
  - Patients took part in community tasks both indoors and outdoors
  - Recreational activities
- Asylums became a status symbol

## Northern Michigan Asylum, Traverse City



## Dexter Asylum, Providence, R.I.



## Athens Asylum

- Athens asylum as a community
  - Grew into a very efficient community (farms, dairy barn, greenhouses, transportation system, graveyards)
  - Patients took part in tasks to benefit their living situation
  - Patients engaged in recreational activities

## Sheep Barn





## Recreational Activities



## Dining Together



## Athens Asylum

### Athens Asylum

- ✓ Beautiful buildings and campus
- ✓ Self sufficient community
- ✓ Adequate food
- ✓ Clean
- ✓ Support
- ✓ Social and recreational activities



### ● Problems for asylums

- Populations skyrocketed - no established criteria for accepting or rejecting patients into care
- Overcrowding caused patient care to suffer
- At Athens Asylum, patient population jumped from 200 to nearly 1800, with an insignificant alteration in staffing
- Asylums became the **solution for many "problem people"**



### ● Consequences of overcrowding

- Sharp decline in patient care: revival of old procedures and medical treatments
- Restraints, ice water baths, electroconvulsive therapy
- Overcrowded sleeping arrangements



## Medical Treatments of the 1930s

- Few mental health specialists
- Numerous theories were proposed about the cause of mental illness and its treatment
- Treatments included:
  - Removal of a person's teeth and large intestines
  - Induction of fevers
  - Sleep therapy
  - Hypothermia
  - Bath treatments
  - **Lobotomy**



## Trans-orbital lobotomy

- Walter J. Freeman developed the trans-orbital lobotomy
- This new medical procedure could be performed quickly and required limited after-care for the patient



## Trans-orbital lobotomy

The procedure:

- *To induce sedation, inflict two quick shocks to the head*
- *Roll back one of the patients' eyelids*
- *Insert a device, 2/3 the size of a pencil, through the upper eyelid into the patients' head*
- *Guided by the markings indicating depth, tap the device with a hammer into the patient's head/ frontal lobe*
- *After the appropriate depth is achieved, manipulate the device back and forth in a swiping motion within the patient's head*



lobotomy : circa 1950



- Asylums were overcrowded with no apparent way to cure these patients
- Along comes a procedure that is quick and easy that appears to result in a marked behavior change in patients
- What happens?



## Trans-Orbital Craze

- Freeman: "the traveling lobotomist" (performed over 3,000 lobotomies)
- Lobotomies were performed on hundreds of Athens Asylum patients in the early 1950s
- Newspapers ran articles about the success of the lobotomy
- Some health professionals considered Freeman's work: "euthanasia of the mind"





### **Lobotomy**

**PBS documentary, on Walter Freeman**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0aNILW6ILk>

### **'My Lobotomy': Howard Dully's Journey**

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5014080>

## **Dismal Conditions Continue in Asylums**



- Lobotomies and electroconvulsive shock treatment are the dominant treatments
- Numbers continued to rise while caregivers remained scarce
- Rumors of abuse and neglect flooded communities who once were proud of their community asylums
- In the 1950s, the Athens Asylum reached its peak population of nearly **two thousand patients**



- Shortly after the asylum population explosion in the mid 1900s, when mental health treatment was arguably at its worst, an apparent salvation emerged

## **Thorazine: A Salvation?**



- Psychotropic medication was pioneered
- 1954: Thorazine is introduced for the treatment of the mentally ill
- In rapid succession, other psychotropic medications became available, making it possible to cut substantially the length of time patients stayed in mental institutions



- Reflecting the changes in the treatment of the mentally ill brought about by drug therapy, and state and federal public policies in the **1960's, state institutions changed their procedures resembling the previous moral management revolution**

## **De-institutionalization**



- Changes in mental health institutions
  - Emphasis on protecting the human rights of the mental patients
  - Individualized treatments instead of group cure-alls
  - Movement toward de-institutionalization
    - 500,000 patients in 1960
    - Development of outpatient services

## De-institutionalization



- Movement toward de-institutionalization
  - JFK's community mental health movement
  - Insurance coverage provided to the mentally ill by the Comprehensive Mental Health bill in 1964 and the Medicare and Medicaid Acts in 1966
  - States greatly restricted long-term

## De-institutionalization



- 1972 federal court ruling declared that patients could no longer work at mental institutions without pay

Ken Kesey's  
'One Flew over  
the Cuckoo's  
Nest'

Biological  
therapies  
criticized

Psychiatric  
care criticized



## Deinstitutionalization



- Government pushed for deinstitutionalization of psychiatric hospitals
  - Federal regulation
  - Insurance
  - Community mental health movement
  - States offered monetary rewards for asylums decreasing their populations

## Deinstitutionalization



- During the de-institutionalization process, **3-4 patients** were released from the Athens Asylum
- There were benefits to deinstitutionalization, but what about the consequences?

## Deinstitutionalization



- Consequences
  - **Relocation trauma**
  - Patients were released to their families, nursing homes, and half-way houses
  - Homeless population soared
  - By 1986 number of patients in mental institutions in the U.S. was reduced to **100,000**

## Modern-day focus on treatment



- Today, emphasis remains on hospitalization of only the most severe cases
- Chronic institutionalization is avoided
- Emphasis is placed on acclimation into independent living between hospitalization stays
- Cognitive and behavioral therapy is often utilized
- Recovery Movement
- Positive Psychology