What is Abnormal?

Chapter One:
Abnormal Behavior in Historical Context

Class Objectives

Ψ What is ABNORMAL?
Ψ When does an abnormal behavior become a psychological disorder?
Ψ Historical perspectives and treatments

Are psychological disorders rare?
So, where is the line between normal and abnormal?

Emotional states (anxiety/depression) may be considered

Abnormal behavior is characterized as:

ψ Socially unacceptable
  - Behavior that deviates from the norm

ψ Distressing to the person who exhibits it or to the people around them

ψ Maladaptive
  - __________________________________________

There are multiple definitions...and depending on the situation some criteria may be weighted more heavily than others
Behavior deemed abnormal in one society may be perceived as normal in another.

How do we define a psychological disorder?

Ψ Abnormal behavior that involves disturbance of __________________________

Ψ Psychological dysfunction associated with distress or impairment that is____________________

Defining psychological disorders

Ψ Personal distress also contributes to defining psychological disorders.

Ψ One last factor is the question, “Does the behavior meet cultural standards?”
Can any of these criteria be used solely to define a psychological disorder?

As well as looking at the “average.”

The conclusion...it is difficult to define “abnormal” and “normal”

Psychopathology

*Psychopathology* is the scientific study of psychological disorders.

This area is also involved the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of these disorders
Assessment

How are psychological disorders evaluated?

Mental Health professionals look for specific characteristics when evaluating a person in need of intervention.

Evaluation Behavior

A clinical description is written to document behaviors...

- Combination of thoughts, behaviors, and feelings
Clinical Description

A __________________ typically refers to the specific problem that brought the person in for help.

______________________________

Clinicians are interested in:

Ψ Course: pattern of the disorder in time

Ψ Prevalence: number of people the population with a disorder

Ψ __________________: The number of new cases of a disorder in a certain time period, usually per year

Ψ Prognosis: future development

Ψ Etiology: __________________

Treatment was influenced by the social perception of mental illness

Ψ Very early in history (500-700 A.D) the problem was based on the __________________

- disorders may have natural causes and should be __________________
Later in history (500-1700 A.D) due to the influence of the church witchcraft and demonic possession were common explanations for mental illness.

1700-1900 A.D

People with psychological disorders or ‘madmen’ were seen as dangerous animals who should be caged in order to protect society.

Reform

Reformers like Dorothea Dix and Dr. John Grey advocated for humane treatments for the mentally ill in the 19th century.

Dorothea Dix began ___________________________ which ensured treatment for all.
  - Including the poor and homeless.
The unfortunate result:

Deinstitutionalization

This federal policy shifted treatment from long-term care facilities to short-term and community mental health centers

Did it work as promised?

\[ \Psi \]

\[ \Psi \] Accounting for a very large percentage of the homeless population.

\[ \Psi \] The community mental health movement has had many successes, but continue to remain underfunded.
Next Class

How are psychological disorders DIAGNOSED?