

## **SOC 426: Gender and Mental Health** Spring Quarter 2020

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines the multiple meanings of gender and its impact on mental illness both historically and today, with a focus on a sociological understanding of mental health and mental illness. Although the primary focus of the course is on sociological explanations, the course is not intended to be anti-psychiatry or anti-medical. We take seriously current theories that much mental illness is the result of organic problems and can be treated with medications. However, we also aim for a more complicated understanding of what mental health and mental illness mean and how they function within gendered social contexts. The course is organized into five broad topics: (1) Historical approaches to gender and mental illness; (2) Theoretical explanations for mental illness and gender differences; (3) Gender and current psychiatric labeling; (4) Stress, roles, and role strain as gendered factors in mental illness; and (5) Institutionalized responses to mental illness.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- To encourage students to think critically and to communicate effectively in written form
- To help students develop and practice critical discussion with their peers
- To help students develop the ability to identify and construct academic arguments, evaluating thesis statements, claims, and evidence
- To encourage students to understand and apply sociological perspectives related to gender and mental illness
- To help students understand the political nature of psychological and psychiatric knowledge
- To teach students the historical relationship between psychiatric practice and the control of gendered lives
- To help students understand the gendered nature of mental illness and mental illness labeling
- To develop student understanding of the effect of social structures and social interaction on gendered forms of mental illness
- To encourage comprehension of the consequences of gendered psychiatric labeling on the social control of individuals

### **COURSE STRUCTURE**

Each week throughout the quarter, I will post weekly modules on or before Monday. Each week's module will include the following:

- **Weekly Instructions:** A brief statement of the week's theme(s); reading outline and questions to guide your reading; reminders about upcoming due dates and course requirements.
- **Weekly Quiz:** The quizzes require that you've completed the required readings for the week. The quizzes are based solely on the week's readings (not on PowerPoint slides or other material). The quizzes are open book/open notes, but you may not consult with your classmates or anyone else while taking the quiz. Once you start your quiz, you will be limited in the amount of time you have to complete it, so even

though it is open book/open note, you should complete the week's readings *before* starting the quiz. Your lowest quiz grade for the term will be dropped.

- **Weekly PowerPoints:** Video lectures in the form of voiced-over PowerPoint slides. These summarize some of the key information from your readings, but also provide additional information that is important for you to know as you prepare to discuss the week's readings and other material in a discussion with your classmates.
- **Weekly discussion questions:** Discussions with your classmates. You will be expected to answer discussion questions. Answering these questions will require you to understand, and be able to apply, information from readings and PowerPoint slide videos. For most weeks, to be able to answer these discussion questions, students will first need to watch an assigned video/video segment and/or read a brief media story meant to connect to the week's topic.

### **TIME MANAGEMENT AND COURSE ORGANIZATION**

- Because this is an online course, the onus will be on you to stay on top of course material, and to find enough time to complete course requirements. You should be aware that because we do not have a scheduled "face-to-face" meeting, you will instead need to do an equivalent amount of work on your own time. If this were a class with regular face-to-face meetings, you would be expected to spend **approximately 3-4 hours** in a traditional classroom; these 3-4 hours are **in addition** to the time spent on required readings and out-of-class assignments such as paper writing. Thus, rather than those 3-4 hours in a face-to-face lecture, you will instead be expected to spend an equivalent amount of time viewing PowerPoint slide videos that will be posted weekly, watching other videos/film segments, reading relevant media stories, and participating in discussions about this material. In addition, like any class, you are also expected to complete required readings. Therefore, you do need to plan to find time each week to complete all course requirements.
- To help you establish a weekly routine for this course, I have set up the course so that you will have deadlines the same day/same time each week:
  - **SATURDAYS AT 11:59 p.m.:** deadline for quizzes, based on required readings.
  - **MONDAYS AT 11:59 p.m.:** in most weeks, the deadline for discussion questions and responses to classmates' discussions.
    - Of course, you can do the work whenever it works best in your schedule for the week, but these days/times are the *latest* you can submit your work to receive credit each week.
    - The course is not designed for "working at your own pace," so working ahead on quizzes/discussions will not be allowed (i.e., I won't activate quizzes and discussions early). This course is intentionally designed so that all students are at more or less the same place in the course at the same time. If you do need to "work ahead" due to an upcoming time conflict, you should "work ahead" on required readings and/or the paper assignment.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

1. Readings and reading links will be available on D2L
2. In addition to the readings on D2L, the following book is available at the PSU bookstore, on Amazon.com, or at Powell's:  
Meri Nana-Ama Danquah. *Willow Weep for Me: A Black Woman's Journey through Depression*. 1998. Ballantine/Random House.

### **COURSE POLICIES AND RESOURCES TO HELP YOU SUCCEED**

- **Late Assignments.** Assignments should be completed by the due date/time. Late assignments *may* be accepted with a legitimate excuse but will be penalized 10% per day late. Please document any family or medical emergency and notify the professor as soon as possible (email preferred).

- Course Announcements. Please check D2L frequently (a minimum of 2 times per week) for any announcements related to the course.
- Contact for Technical Support: Helpdesk. Computing and D2L questions should be directed to the Helpdesk ([www.pdx.edu/oit/contact](http://www.pdx.edu/oit/contact)). They may be contacted in the following ways.
  - Helpdesk support is available online, by chat and over the phone
  - Phone: 725-4357 (5-HELP)
  - Online through the Help Center: <https://portlandstate.atlassian.net/servicedesk/customer/portals>
- Class Questions and Contacting the Professor. The best way to contact your TA or professor is via email. Please allow approximately 24 hours for a response during the week and up to 48 hours over the weekend. If you have a question about the class or the syllabus, you can post your question on D2L in the discussion titled “Class questions” (in the “Course Material” module). If you see a question posted in “Class questions” and you know the answer, you are encouraged to answer the question yourself.
- Upsetting Material Warning. You will likely find some of the readings and discussion topics in this class to be upsetting or offensive. The subject matter of this course includes topics that many people find “triggering” or otherwise upsetting. Professor Thompson is available to discuss any concerns you have with course materials.
- Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities. PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC can be contacted by phone (503-725-4150) or email [drc@pdx.edu](mailto:drc@pdx.edu), website: <https://www.pdx.edu/drc>.

- If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.
- For information about emergency preparedness, please go to the Fire and Life Safety webpage (<https://www.pdx.edu/environmental-health-safety/fire-and-life-safety>) for information.
- Net Etiquette. In all course communications you are required to observe the rules of net etiquette. These include the following:
  - Avoid using all CAPS as it can give the impression that you are shouting. If you want to emphasize a point, use \*asterisks\* around a word.
  - Avoid personal attacks. If you read a message that you suspect might be a personal attack, resist the temptation to fire off a response. Instead, let your response sit before sending or request that your instructor resolve the situation.
  - If you disagree with a fellow student, describe your perspective clearly and politely rather than primarily criticizing her/his comments. Avoid any personal criticism or potentially offensive language.
  - Be respectful when making a comment or responding to others’ comments. This rule is the same as for face-to-face classroom behavior. However, as we are not going to have body language and tone of voice in our online communications, please use formal English appropriately.
  - Be extra polite, careful, and kind about how you express yourself while posting to a discussion board or emailing the instructor.

- Avoid that thousand-word lengthy post and avoid posting dozens of messages a week. In the interest of time only, which I know none of you have enough of, please work on being succinct.
  - Avoid text message abbreviations. Not everyone knows them.
  - Finally, if you run into any net etiquette-related problems, please e-mail the instructor directly. I would like to be aware of any concerns.
- **Academic Misconduct.** According to the PSU Student Code of Conduct, a student is subject to disciplinary action for academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is the act of knowingly or intentionally seeking to claim credit for the work or effort of another person or participation in such acts. This includes, but is not limited to: (a) cheating, (b) fraud, (c) plagiarism, such as word for word copying, using borrowed words or phrases from original text into new patterns without attribution, or paraphrasing another writer's ideas; (d) The buying or selling of all or any portion of course assignments and research papers; (e) Performing academic assignments (including tests and examinations) for other persons; (f) Unauthorized disclosure or receipt of academic information. Students engaging in academic misconduct will receive a failing grade on that assignment.
    - **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a serious offense than can result in a failing grade and other serious consequences, including expulsion. Plagiarism occurs when you utilize the ideas, expressions, phrases or words of another person without correctly citing that person or source. Make sure you understand how to *correctly* cite sources, including when and how to paraphrase and quote. I expect you to cite **all sources** used in **all assignments** assigned for this course. I am not picky about which format you use to cite sources; however, I do require that you choose one (e.g., MLA, APA) and use it correctly and consistently, integrating both internal and external (e.g., works cited/reference list) citations. There are many on-line sources that document proper citation format. (See, for example: <https://guides.library.pdx.edu/c.php?g=271259&p=2613696>).
  - **Title IX Reporting Obligations.** Portland State is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or sexual harassment, know that help and support are available.

Information about PSU's support services on campus, including confidential services and reporting options, can be found on PSU's Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website at: [www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help](http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help) or you may call a confidential interpersonal violence advocate at 503-725-5672 or schedule online at <https://psuwrc.youcanbook.me>.

You may report any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, to:

- PSU's Title IX Coordinator: Julie Caron by calling 503-725-4410, via email at [titleixcoordinator@pdx.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@pdx.edu)
- Deputy Title IX Coordinator: Yesenia Gutierrez by calling 503-725-4413, via email at [yesenia.gutierrez.gdi@pdx.edu](mailto:yesenia.gutierrez.gdi@pdx.edu)
- Deputy Title IX Coordinator: Dana Walton-Macaulay by calling 503-725-5651, via email at [dana26@pdx.edu](mailto:dana26@pdx.edu)

Please be aware that all PSU faculty members and instructors **are required to report** information of an incident that may constitute prohibited discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. This means that if you tell me about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence that may have violated university policy or student code of conduct, I have to share the information with my supervisor, the University's Title IX Coordinator or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. However, the Title IX Coordinators will keep the information confidential and refer you to a confidential advocate.

For more information about Title IX please complete the required student module Creating a Safe Campus in your D2L.

- **Other Resources to Help You Succeed at PSU.**
  - Writing Center (<https://www.pdx.edu/writing-center/>)
    - One-on-one help with writing, 503-725-3570
  - Center for Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) (<http://www.pdx.edu/shac/>)
    - Mental health, physical health, dental, and testing services. 1880 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., 503-725-2800
  - Online grammar and writing resource:
    - The OWL at Purdue University [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html)
  
- **COVID-19-Related Information and Resources.** Portland State has been working diligently to address the health, safety, and well-being needs of the entire PSU community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Every effort is being made to provide an accurate and efficient flow of communication to all students, staff, and faculty. As questions and concerns arise, a multitude of campus resources are available to you. If you are ever unsure how to find a resource you need or want, explore the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' website at [pdx.edu/clas/covid-19-resources-for-students](http://pdx.edu/clas/covid-19-resources-for-students). Help is near. Reach out.
  - [Latest updates on PSU's response to COVID-19](#)
  - [PSU's Remote Learning Kit](#)
  - [Student guide to learning remotely](#)
  
- **Mental Health Resources for a Tough Time.** This is a trying time for everyone in the PSU community. Maintaining and supporting our mental health is vital as our lives continue to be turned upside down as we collectively work to stop the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus. As we look ahead to a spring term of uncharted territory, I'm sharing some resources pulled together by PSU.
  - Susan Hedlund, who is faculty in the PSU School of Social Work and director of patient services at OHSU's Knight Cancer Institute, shared some helpful coping tips in [this excellent webinar](#). Among them are:
    - Give yourself and others some grace: we're all experiencing stress and anxiety.
    - Focus on basic self-care including getting sleep, eating healthy foods, staying physically active and remaining in touch with friends and family.
    - Continue to do things that you enjoy and celebrate the small victories and joys in life.
  - **Student Health and Counseling:** The PSU Center for Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) has moved all counseling services for spring term to a telehealth model to enable this important service available to students during this time of stress. [Visit the SHAC website](#) to get in touch and schedule an appointment.
  - **Multnomah County:** County professionals shared [an article](#) about coping with coronavirus-related stress — covering everything from anxiety vaults to burpees — and also put together a [directory of public resources for mental health](#).

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES** There are a total of 380 points in this class. These points come from four categories of requirements:

- **Weekly Discussion Participation (90 points):** There will be 10 online discussions (one set of discussions per week). Everyone is expected to review the posted materials *and* participate in the weekly discussions. Each week's discussion will be worth 10 points. I will drop your lowest discussion score (I will only count the 9 highest scores). More instructions about discussions will be provided in the weekly instructions.

- **Quizzes (70 points):** There will be 8 quizzes throughout the term. Quizzes will be based solely on the required readings for that week. Each quiz will be worth 10 points. I will drop your lowest quiz score (I will only count the 7 highest scores). You will have 45 minutes to complete each quiz once you begin.
- **Academic Analysis Paper (70 points):** You will be required to write an academic analysis of *Willow Weep for Me*. This academic analysis will go beyond just discussing the book to connecting it with course readings and course material presented via the PowerPoint lectures. You will be required to post your response paper in a discussion forum that your classmates will be able to view. Your response paper is described in more detail on the final page of this syllabus.
- **Exams (150 points):** There will be two exams (a midterm and a final, worth 75 points each). Each exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false, or essay questions and will be based on required readings and PowerPoint material from the first five weeks (midterm exam) and from weeks 6 through 10 (final exam).

<b>Grading Scale</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Point Ranges for Associated Grade</b>
92% and above	A	350-380
90-91%	A-	342-349
88-89%	B+	334-341
82-87%	B	312-333
80-81%	B-	304-311
78-79%	C+	296-303
72-77%	C	274-295
70-71%	C-	266-273
60-69%	D	228-265
Below 60%	F	227 and lower

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Course schedule subject to change with reasonable notice

Date	Topic	Required Readings	Associated Deadlines
<p><i>Week 1</i> March 30 – April 5</p>	<p><b>Historical Approaches to Gender &amp; Mental Illness</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Friedman, S.H. &amp; A. Howie. 2013. “Salem Witchcraft and Lessons for Contemporary Forensic Psychiatry.” <i>Journal of American Academy of Psychiatry &amp; Law</i> 41:294-99.</li> <li>2. Theriot, N. 1993. “Women’s Voices in Nineteenth-Century Medical Discourse: A Step toward Deconstructing Science.” <i>Signs</i> 19:1-31.</li> <li>3. Danquah, M. N-A. 1998. “Willow Weep for Me” Pp. 13-23.</li> </ol>	<p>Quiz #1 due 4/4 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Discussion #1 due 4/6 at 11:59pm</p>
<p><i>Week 2</i> April 6 – April 12</p>	<p><b>Theoretical Explanations for Mental Illness and Gender Differences</b> <i>Mental Illness as a Social Product: Positivist Theories</i>  <i>Mental Illness as a Social Construct: Constructionist Theories</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ussher, J. 2003. “The Role of Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder in the Subjectification of Women.” <i>Journal of Medical Humanities</i> 24:131-146.</li> <li>2. Busfield, J. 1988. “Mental Illness as Social Product or Social Construct: A contradiction in feminists’ arguments?” <i>Sociology of Health &amp; Illness</i> 10:521-42.</li> <li>3. Danquah, M. N-A. 1998. “Between Starshine and Clay” Pp. 25-48.</li> </ol>	<p>Quiz #2 due 4/11 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Discussion #2 due 4/13 at 11:59pm</p>
<p><i>Week 3</i> April 13 – April 19</p>	<p><b>Gender &amp; Current Psychiatric Labeling</b> <i>Defining and Measuring Mental Disorder</i>  <i>Types of Mental Illness</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Affleck, W. et al. 2018. “Men’s Mental Health: Social Determinants and Implications for Services.” <i>The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry</i> 63:581-589.</li> <li>2. Rosenfield, S. &amp; D. Mouzon. 2013. “Gender and Mental Health” Chap. 14 in <i>Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health</i> (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed). Pp. 277-296 in Aneshensel, Phelan, &amp; Bierman (eds.) New York: Springer.</li> <li>3. Danquah, M. N-A. 1998. “Home” Pp. 49-95.</li> </ol>	<p>Quiz #3 due 4/18 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Discussion #3 due 4/20 at 11:59pm</p>
<p><i>Week 4</i> April 20 – April 26</p>	<p><b>Stress, Roles, and Role Strain as Factors in Mental Illness</b> <i>Poverty, Socioeconomic Status, and Employment</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Van de Velde, S, P. Bracke, &amp; K. Levecque. 2010. “Gender Differences in Depression in 23 European Countries. Cross-National Variation in the Gender Gap in Depression.” <i>Social Science &amp; Medicine</i> 71:305-313.</li> <li>2. Strandh, M. et al. 2013. “Unemployment, gender and mental health: the role of the gender regime.” <i>Sociology of Health &amp; Illness</i> 35:649-665.</li> <li>3. Danquah, M. N-A. 1998. “Ghosts at the Edge of the Swamp” Pp. 97-168.</li> </ol>	<p>Quiz #4 due 4/25 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Discussion #4 due 4/27 at 11:59pm</p>

Date	Topic	Required Readings	Associated Deadlines
<p>Week 5 April 27 – May 3</p>	<p><b>Stress, Roles, and Role Strain as Factors in Mental Illness</b> <i>Race, Class, and Sexuality Issues in Mental Illness and Treatment Access</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jackson, A.P. 2006. “The Use of Psychiatric Medications to Treat Depressive Disorders in African American Women.” <i>Journal of Clinical Psychology</i> 62:793-800.</li> <li>Spates, K. &amp; B.C. Slatton. 2017. “I’ve Got My Family and My Faith: Black Women and the Suicide Paradox.” <i>Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World</i> 3:1-9.</li> <li>Meyer, I. 2003. “Prejudice, Social Stress, and Mental Health in Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Populations: Conceptual Issues and Research Evidence.” <i>Psychological Bulletin</i> 129:674-697.</li> <li>Danquah, M. N-A. 1998. “Possibilities” Pp. 169-248.</li> </ol>	<p>Discussion #5 due 5/2 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Midterm exam due 5/4 at 11:59pm</p> <p>(Note: no quiz this week; week 5 readings will be tested on the midterm exam instead)</p>
<p>Week 6 May 4 – May 10</p>	<p><b>Stress, Roles, and Role Strain as Factors in Mental Illness</b> <i>Significant Others, Employment, and Household Labor</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bird, C. 1999. “Gender, Household Labor, and Psychological Distress: The Impact of the Amount and Division of Housework.” <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i> 40:32-45.</li> <li>Simon, R. &amp; A.E. Barrett. 2010. “Nonmarital Romantic Relationships and Mental Health in Early Adulthood: Does the Association Differ for Women and Men?” <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i> 51:168-182.</li> <li>Danquah, M. N-A. 1998. “The Infinite Power of Change” Pp. 249-269</li> </ol>	<p>Quiz #6 due 5/9 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Discussion #6 due 5/11 at 11:59pm</p>
<p>Week 7 May 11 – May 17</p>	<p><b>Stress, Roles, and Role Strain as Factors in Mental Illness</b> <i>Victimization: Intimate Partner Violence and Child Abuse</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coker, A.L. et al. 2002. “Physical and Mental Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence for Men and Women.” <i>American Journal of Preventative Medicine</i> 23:260-268.</li> <li>Gallo, E.J.G. et al. 2018. “Gender Differences in the Effects of Childhood Maltreatment on Adult Depression and Anxiety: A systematic review and meta-analysis.” <i>Child Abuse &amp; Neglect</i> 79:107-114.</li> <li>Sweet, P.L. 2019. “The Sociology of Gaslighting.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 84:851-875.</li> </ol>	<p>Quiz #7 due 5/16 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Discussion #7 due 5/18 at 11:59pm</p>
<p>Week 8 May 18 – May 24</p>	<p><b>Institutionalized Responses to Mental Illness</b> <i>Stigma and differential labeling</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wirth, J.H. &amp; G.V. Bodenhausen. 2009. “The Role of Gender in Mental-Illness Stigma.” <i>Psychological Science</i> 20:169-173.</li> <li>Severson, R.E., 2019. “Gender Differences in Mental Health, Institutional Misconduct, and Disciplinary Segregation.” <i>Criminal Justice and Behavior</i> 12:1719-1737.</li> </ol>	<p>Quiz #8 due 5/23 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Discussion #8 due 5/25 at 11:59pm</p> <p><i>Willow Weep for Me</i> analysis papers due 5/26 at 11:59pm</p>



Date	Topic	Required Readings	Associated Deadlines
<p>Week 9 May 25 – May 31</p>	<p><b>Institutionalized Responses to Mental Illness</b> <i>Pharmaceutical Advertising and Perceptions of Mental Illness</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Chananie, R.A. 2005. "Psychopharmaceutical Advertising Strategies: Empowerment in a Pill?" <i>Sociological Spectrum</i> 25:487-518.</li> <li>2. Metzl, J.M. 2003. "Selling Sanity Through Gender: The Psychodynamics of Psychotropic Advertising." <i>Journal of Medical Humanities</i> 24:79-103.</li> </ol>	<p>Quiz #9 due 5/30 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Discussion #9 6/1 at 11:59pm</p>
<p>Week 10 June 1 – June 7</p>	<p><b>Institutionalized Responses to Mental Illness</b> <i>Criminal Justice System and Legal Responses to Mental Illness</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Drapalski, A.L. et al. 2009. "Gender Differences in Jail Inmates' Symptoms of Mental Illness, Treatment History and Treatment Seeking." <i>Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health</i> 19:193-206.</li> <li>2. West, D.A. &amp; B. Lichtenstein. 2006. "Andrea Yates and the Criminalization of the Filicidal Maternal Body." <i>Feminist Criminology</i> 1:173-187.</li> </ol>	<p>Discussion #10 6/6 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Final exam due 6/12 at 11:59pm</p> <p>(Note: no quiz this week; week 10 readings will be tested on the final exam instead)</p>

**Sociology 426 Gender and Mental Health Paper Assignment (worth 70 points):  
Academic Analysis of Willow Weep For Me, Due Tuesday, May 26 at 11:59pm**

You are required to write an academic analysis of *Willow Weep for Me*. An academic analysis goes beyond just discussing the book, and instead seeks to connect the book with other course material, including assigned readings and PowerPoint videos. You are required to post your response paper in a discussion forum on D2L that your classmates will be able to view, read, and learn from. Papers should be double-spaced and typed using 12-pt font and 1-inch margins. All papers should include **your name** and the **name of the assignment** (e.g., Academic Analysis Paper) at the top of the page. All papers should be checked and corrected for spelling and grammatical errors. You may be marked down if you have multiple spelling and/or grammar errors.

This academic analysis paper focuses on the book by Meri Nana-Ama Danquah, Willow Weep for Me. This book recounts the author's experiences with depression and the mental health system. Her experiences raise questions about the gendered causes of mental illness and how to best respond to mental illness once it occurs. Your goal in this paper is to relate Danquah's experiences to the course material on gender and mental health. The paper assignment asks that you write descriptively about Danquah's experiences, but that you also go beyond mere description to discuss the ways in which her experiences relate to more general questions about the causes of mental illness, the effects of mental illness labeling, and the best means for reacting to and/or preventing mental illness from occurring in the first place.

Specifically, you should consider the following questions and write a 5-7 page paper that addresses them. You do not need to answer the questions in their given order. In fact, the best papers will integrate the answers to the questions into a coherent paper. **To receive full credit, each of the following questions *must* be addressed in your paper:**

1. In your opinion, was Danquah's depression *caused* by social factors or was it a *social construction*? You may also discuss biological and psychological causes, but your focus must be on either the social causation or the social construction perspective (or both). Provide evidence from the book and from class (readings and/or PowerPoint slides) to support your response.
  - How might Danquah's story (and your answer) differ if she presented with a different gender identity?
2. How did race, culture, gender, and social class affect Danquah's self-concept and the reaction of others to her and her illness?
  - How do stigma and stereotypes of mental illness (and those who are typically labeled "mentally ill") affect reactions to labeled mental illness? How do these stereotypes and stigma affect the self-concept of people who are labeled mentally ill? How might an intersectional approach speak to Danquah's experiences?
3. By the end of the book was Danquah "cured?" If so, what factor(s) contributed to her "cure?" If not, explain what factor(s) indicate that she is still mentally ill.
  - What effect did the mental health system have on Danquah? Might it be different if her race, gender, social class, sexuality, or other factors were different?
4. From a sociological perspective, what (if anything) could have been done to prevent Danquah's illness (or her mental illness labeling if you believe she's not "really" mentally ill)?
5. Why do you think Danquah chose to write this book? What is her main point? How does it connect with/speak to any other class material?

The paper that you write for this assignment should be 5-7 pages in length, typed, and double-spaced. You will be graded on the technical quality of your writing, the clarity and accuracy of your arguments, and the coherence of your paper. The **primary consideration** in grading will be your ability to successfully tie class material to the book. Thus, as an example, a discussion of the cause(s) of Danquah's depression would be incomplete without a discussion of whether mental illness is a social product or a social construction. When you refer to the Danquah book or to PowerPoint slides and readings, be sure to provide a citation [e.g., (Jackson 2006), or (PowerPoint video, week 2), or (Danquah 1998, p. 105)] and also include a references page at the end of your paper. You are not required to use any outside references (i.e., books/articles that are not read/discussed in class) but are welcome to do so.