

## TAKE-HOME NOTES:

**The regulation of madness in England from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century: Part 2**

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In the second module of this two-part series, we reviewed:

- the effects of the Reform movement of the early 19th century
  - the County Asylum Act of 1815 which recognised for the first time that there was a public responsibility for care of the insane
  - the Act of 1828: public asylums were built in every county, but these became horrifying repositories for containment
  - the 1890 Lunacy Act, which was passed to tighten up certification procedures
- the 1930 Mental Health Act
  - this ushered in a more recognisable therapeutic approach to a contemporary mental health practitioner.

**Reflection**

(1.12) How does the membership of the Mental Health Commission now compare with that of the Lunacy Commission of 1845?

(1.19) How does the media tend to report on mental illness today? What similarities are there between public attitudes towards the mentally ill in the late 1870s and now?

(1.21) How does contemporary mental hospital architecture differ from that of late 19<sup>th</sup> century asylums?

(1.27) To what extent do you believe that mental health institutions are a means of social control rather than cure?

(2.4) What do you think the reasons were for a reduction in 'notified insane persons' during the First World War?

**Tables and figures**

[Interactive timeline: 19th century mental health legislation](#)

[\(1.9\) Early 19th century legislation and control of the confined insane](#)

[\(1.11\) Legislation continued](#)

**References**

Bakewell T (1815) A Letter Addressed to the Chairman of The Select Committee of the House of Commons To Enquire into the state of Madhouses. Newcastle, C. Chester, pp 121–126. [\[Amazon\]](#)

Chesterton (1906) The Ball and the Cross. NuVision Publications (21st Oct 2008). [\[Amazon\]](#)

Digby A (1983) Changes in the Asylum: The Case of York 1777-1815. *Economic History Review*, Second series, 36(2): 218–239. [\[full text\]](#)

Dowbiggin I (1992) Degeneration and Hereditarianism In French Mental medicine 1840-90. Volume 1: 188–232.

King-Hele D (1963) Erasmus Darwin. Macmillan, London. [\[Amazon\]](#)

Jones K (1972) A History of the Mental Health Services. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London. [\[Amazon\]](#)

Porter R (2002) Madness, A Brief History. Oxford University Press. [\[Amazon\]](#)

Sheppard B (2000) A War of Nerves: Soldiers and Psychiatrists, 1914-1994. London: Jonathan Cape. [\[Amazon\]](#)

Smith R (1981) Trial by Medicine: Insanity and Responsibility in Victorian Trials. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh (1st Jan 1984). [\[Amazon\]](#)

Stone M (1985) Shellshock and the Psychologist, The Anatomy of Madness, Eds Bynum WF, Porter R & Shepherd M. 2: 11. [\[Amazon\]](#)

Taylor J (2007) The architect and the pauper asylum in late nineteenth century England. Madness, Architecture and the Built Environment, Eds Topp L, Moran, JE, Andrews J. 13: 263-284.

## Further reading

Bynum WF, Porter R & Shepherd M (1985) The Anatomy of Madness: Essays in the History of Psychiatry Vol I & II. Routledge (28 Nov 1985). <a href="#">[Amazon]</a>	A fascinating collection of essays on subjects ranging from shell shock to moral treatment to Descartes and dualisms.
Jones K (1972) A History of the Mental Health Services. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London. <a href="#">[Amazon]</a>	This gives considerable details about relevant mental health legislation. It is readable and very interesting.
Porter R (2002) Madness, A Brief History. Oxford University Press, Oxford (13 Mar 2003). <a href="#">[Amazon]</a>	All of Roy Porter's books are well worth dipping into. The easiest is Madness, A Brief History.
SHIFT <a href="#">[website]</a>	An organisation working to reduce and remove the stigma and discrimination directed towards people with experience of mental health problems.
Smith R (1981) Trial by Medicine: Insanity and Responsibility in Victorian Trials. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh (1st Jan 1984). <a href="#">[Amazon]</a>	A superb read about the great anatomist Thomas Willis, his contribution to our understanding of the human brain and his remarkable contemporaries such as Harvey, Hooke and Boyle, all put in the context of the political and social changes of the time.
Zimmer C (2004) Soul Made Flesh. Arrow Books Ltd; New edition edition (3 Mar 2005). <a href="#">[Amazon]</a>	This module has not described the important trials of the 19th century which struggled with the connections between crime, insanity and responsibility and reveal the differences of views between the judiciary and alienists. If interested, I would recommend: Trials by Medicine by Roger Smith. This should appeal to forensic psychiatrists.