

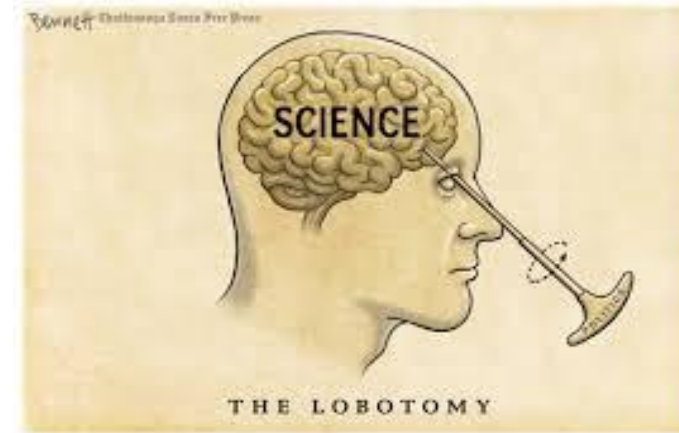
History of the Treatment of the Mentally Ill ~ Part 2



THE JOINT COUNTIES' LUNATIC ASYLUM,
ERECTED AT ABERGAVENNY,

For the use, and at the expense of the Counties of Hereford, Monmouth, Brecon, and Radnor, and the City of Hereford.

A Surgical Solution?



- The lobotomy is among one of the most brutal and infamous treatments for treating mental illness.
- The process involves a surgeon intentionally causing trauma to the **prefrontal cortex**, the part of the brain that deals with behavior and personality among other functions.

It worked, but at what cost?

- Ever since its invention in 1935, the treatment has sparked controversy over its effectiveness and sheer brutality. Many patients who underwent this procedure were left permanently incapacitated; some even died.



Only the Most Violent Patients?

- A form of psychosurgery, the lobotomy, was once used to calm uncontrollably emotional or violent patients, but began being used on many others.



“Miracle Cure” for Mental Illness

- The lobotomy was hailed as a miracle cure and **Egas Moniz**, from Portugal, received the Nobel prize for his work



Scientific Breakthrough

- In this photo taken in 1961, a prison official preps a convict to undergo a lobotomy.



How It Works

- Lobotomy
 - The procedure cut the nerves that connect the frontal lobes of the brain to the deeper emotional centers.

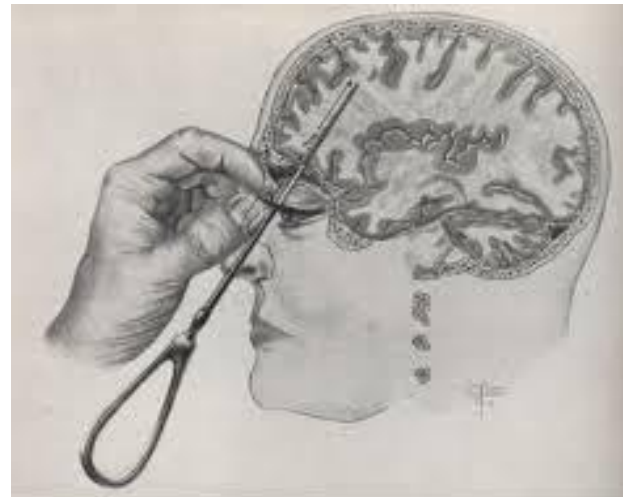
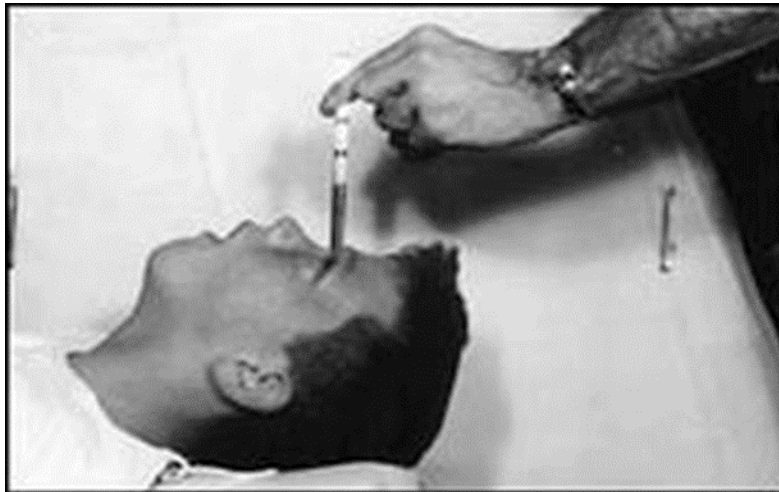


FIG. 4.—Pneumotome drawing showing instrument penetrating between eyeball and upper eyelid, through orbital plate into white matter in frontal lobe.

An “Advancement” in Treatment?

- The procedure worked remarkably well, but in the process turned thousands of patients into “vegetables” or reduced them to an unmotivated and immature state in which they vacantly stared into space for long periods of time.



The Ice Pick Lobotomy

- Worked by inserting an ice pick-like tool next to the eye of an unconscious patient, driving it through the thin bone of the eye socket, and swinging the pick to cut the connections at the base of the frontal lobe.
- This procedure could be done in minutes without even opening the skull.



Walter Freeman

- An American physician, Walter Freeman, brought the procedure to the United States and toured from hospital to hospital performing literally thousands of lobotomies.



Public Outcry



- However, the procedure became *overused* and *abused* and was done on patients who never should have received them, including young children.
- Moniz had originally intended that this procedure only be done on the most uncontrollable and violent patients.
- Public reaction to lobotomies was so negative that they stopped being performed.
- Now viewed as embarrassing failure of psychiatry

A Jolt to the System

INSANITY TREATED BY ELECTRIC SHOCK

Tests at State Psychiatric
Institute Here Said to Show
'Considerable Success'

SAFER THAN INJECTIONS

- Another controversial treatment was introduced that involved sending a jolt of electricity to the brain of patients.
- It was officially known as **ECT** or **electroconvulsive therapy**, but it was more commonly referred to as *electric shock therapy*.

- In this photo, a medical team preps a patient for electroconvulsive treatment, better known as **shock therapy**.



Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)

- “Shock Treatments”
- Worked by sending a brief electric current into the nervous system and the brain.
- Would cause seizures in the brain as well as muscle spasms.



Shock Therapy



- ECT was frightening to observe in the early days, however, patients felt no pain because they instantly lost consciousness.
- However, the resulting convulsion caused every muscle in the body to contract, sometimes with enough force to break bones.

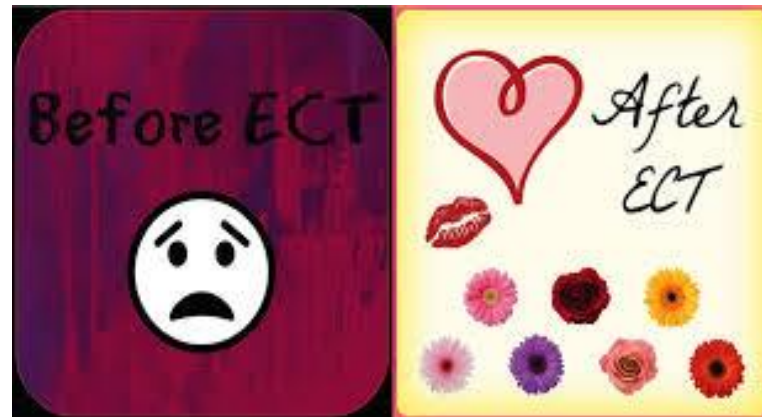
You're kidding! It's still used?

- The modern version of ECT is far more humane. Medical personnel administer muscle relaxants in advance to greatly dampen the convulsion – often the only visible indication of convulsion is a minor twitch of the extremities. A sedative puts the patient to sleep, avoiding the rapid loss of consciousness that many found unpleasant.



It works!

- We **still do not know exactly how**, but ECT lifts the depression.
- Today it is often used to treat major depression when medication and all else has failed.

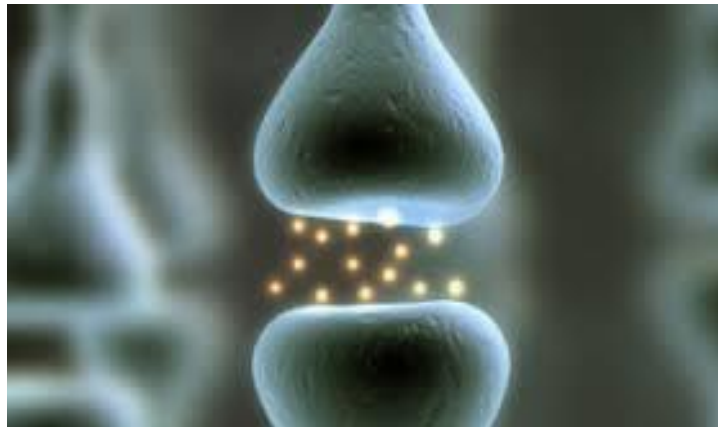


- **80% of people respond favorably** when given a series of shocks (usually 3 a week for 2-4 weeks)
- It **works more quickly** than drugs and is effective on suicidal patients



What exactly does it do?

- No one knows for sure how ECT helps depression.
- One theory says that ECT **stimulates the brain to release the neurotransmitters** that elevate mood.
- Another suggests that it **“restarts” the brain** much like a computer when it is turned off and back on



Controversial Treatment

- ECT's most serious side effect is **disruption of memory**, especially for the approximate time the treatment was administered, but researchers have been *unable to identify any brain damage* resulting from the procedure.



A Life-Saver

- Our lack of understanding of ECT has led to continuing controversy about this treatment, but for those who have been helped, the reason it works is less important than the fact that it does.



Psychiatric Medication

- The treatment of mental illness with medication is known as **psychopharmacology**
- Medications for mental illnesses were first introduced in the early 1950s with the antipsychotic chlorpromazine.



Powerful Side Effects

- Early medications often had **serious side effects**, but **allowed many to be treated outside of institutions**
- Dozens of other medications have since followed, that treat not just psychotic disorders, but also more common mental health issues like anxiety and depression.



The Prozac Generation

- In **1987** fluoxetine (known better by its brand name **Prozac**) was introduced.



Millions Medicated



- The number of people on psychiatric medications has skyrocketed and continues to increase.
- 400% increase between 1988 and 2008
- 69% of people taking antidepressants have never been diagnosed with Depression (*Journal of Clinical Psych.*)
- Today approx. **25 million Americans** (13% of the population) take antidepressants every day, including 1 in 4 women between the ages of 50 and 64 (*CBS News*)

Are we overmedicating?

- The use of psychiatric meds (particularly antidepressants) is controversial and some believe that many people who are on them don't really need them

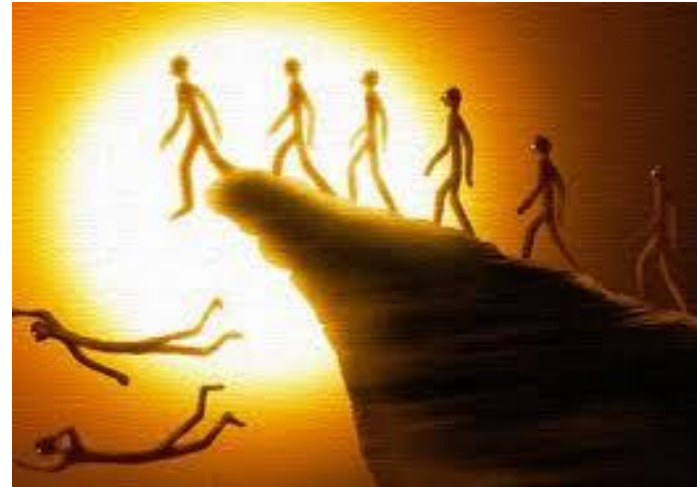


An ongoing Debate

- However, for those who really do need them, the availability of psychiatric meds have greatly improved their quality of life and in some cases, helped to save lives.
- This is an issue we will be revisiting throughout the semester as we discuss the pros and cons of psychiatric medication



The End of Institutions



- **Deinstitutionalization**

- The introduction of psychiatric meds allowed for **the emptying of mental hospitals** beginning in the 1970s
- Government no longer wanted to spend money to keep them open
- Argued that we should use the least restrictive environment necessary
- Many had nowhere to go



- Today *jails have become society's primary mental institutions*
 - Approximately **1 in 5 prisoners** has a mental illness.
 - There are **more mentally ill living in prison than in psychiatric hospitals.**
 - Many more are living on the streets.

Sources

- NIMH.org
- Thinking About Psychology, 2nd edit.