

Dear Mad Reading folk,

Welcome to 2021! I hope everyone had a restful period over the new year. Looking forward to seeing everyone at this month's Mad Studies Reading Group for January. Details are below!

I am off to a bit of a slow start this year so my apologies for the delay. We haven't had any takers for a facilitator this month so I'm happy to give it a shot. I've been reflecting a little bit on some of the media pieces about current affairs in the US in particular, and on the way in which diagnostic labels have been used to detract from white supremacist violence. To that end, I thought we could have a general discussion 'the language of mental health and illness'.

I've chosen two short pieces as I'm sure we're all still easing into things - one on biomedical language and stigma, and one on 'armchair diagnosis'. I'm not wedded to any particular direction for this discussion so am looking forward to hearing where people want to take it. I haven't developed any discussion questions - if you have anything you're really interested in sharing/asking, just come along on the night, or if you have any supplementary readings on this area, please email me ahead of time and I can share!

Could I also please ask that everyone **who plans to attend sessions in 2021** (even if you haven't come for a while or aren't coming to the first one) [fill out the following survey](#)? Just trying to get a sense of whether the day and time work for everyone! We can discuss it this month as well, but if we need to change the time it would be good to know what works for people.

Cheers,

Antonia :)

**Time and Date:** Thurs 21 January, 6pm-7.30pm AEST (Melbourne time).

**Topic:** The language of mental health and illness

**Readings:**

Sidley, Gary. 'Why words can harm your mental health', in *Drop the Disorder: Challenging the culture of psychiatric diagnosis*, ed. Jo Watson (2019) Monmouth: PCCS Books Ltd, pp. 120-128 (attached for study purposes - apologies for the scan quality)

Flaherty, Kathleen, *Let's talk about real issues, not Trump's mental health*, the CT Mirror, January 2018. Available here: <https://ctmirror.org/category/ct-viewpoints/lets-talk-about-real-issues-not-trumps-mental-health/>

**Zoom link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5280992948>

Meeting ID: 528 099 2948