

Hello Mad Reading Folk,

Our shared mad reading has been a little derailed by the strange circumstances in which we find ourselves in this year. As a result, we are trying to share around facilitation of the reading group so that it doesn't fall entirely to Flick and Chris. While Covid-19 has shut things down so we can't be together physically, we hope to continue our reading and talking virtually. We will use the zoom platform to link up and if necessary will break into smaller groups to support discussion (we know video calls can be hard to fully engage in and want to make this as friendly, easy and safe as possible).

Topic: *What role for allies in Mad Studies?*

When: Thursday July 16th, 6.00-7.30pm EST

Where: via zoom

RSVP: please write back to let us know if you are coming so we can send the zoom link to you - although we will aim to upload this to the website as well so please check in there on the day if you have not had time to RSVP

Support to access: if anyone wants support to access the video link please reach out ahead of time and we will try and find a workaround

This month Priscilla Ennals will facilitate a discussion about allies in the Mad Studies movement - a big thank you to Priscilla and to Judith for organising the readings and updating the website this month.

Facilitator Bio:

I have worked in the mental health and education sectors and aspire to allyship with people who identify as Mad. I am committed to listening, learning and unlearning, challenge, and action in solidarity against oppression and towards better lives and systems. I am definitely a traveller not an expert in this.

Readings:

1. Spandler, H., & Poursanidou, D. (2019). Who is included in the Mad Studies Project? *The Journal of Ethics in Mental Health*, 10
2. Gordon, S., Dowell, T., Fedchuk, D., Gardiner, T., Garrett, S., Hilder, J., Matthieson, F., Stubbe, M. & Tester, R. (2020). Reflections on allyship in the context of a co-produced evaluation of a youth-integrated therapies mental health intervention. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 1-15.

The readings for this month [are available on the Mad Studies Network website](#). Please send an email through if you are having trouble downloading them and we will get them to you. Please try to have a read before the session, but, as usual, everyone is welcome regardless!

This is a link to some definitions around allyship and allies from The Anti-Oppression Network that may be helpful for some background: <https://theantioppressionnetwork.com/allyship/>

The Topic:

Both these readings consider the role of allies, but also raise big questions about inclusion and exclusion in Mad Studies, privilege and knowledge creation, and co-production. Our conversations could go anywhere....

Some questions we might consider:

- Who is an ally or what is allyship?
- Who is (or should be) included/excluded in Mad Studies?
- What are the risks and/or benefits of including allies or people who don't identify as Mad?
- In engaging with the Mad Studies project, what do allies need to know/learn? Should there be rules of engagement?
- Everyone talks about co-production in research, but is it even possible? What role for allies in co-production?

We look forward to discussing! Please spread the word, everyone is welcome.

Cheers,

Antonia (and on behalf of the other organisers)