Uniting Two Perspectives on Mental Illness
Philosophy and Linguistics

University of Essex, 13-14 September 2018

Mental illness has long been of interest to researchers in the humanities, including philosophy, linguistics, sociology, history and politics. In a domain where psychologists and psychiatrists have focused on identifying interventions and developing explanatory models, scholars in the humanities have preferred to explore broad conceptual and cultural questions.

For instance:

- Where do notions like "mental health" and "mental illness" come from? What can we learn from their history?
- How do specific diagnostic categories emerge?
- How does psychiatric language shape the way we think about ourselves and each other?
- How should we understand the relationship between mental illness and personal responsibility?
- How does stigma about mental illness function?
- How can we distinguish illness and disorder from other kinds of difference?
- To what extent can psychiatry be considered a science?

The aim of this conference is to demonstrate that a dialogue between two of these disciplines – philosophy and linguistics – can help shed light on these important issues.

With this in mind, we specifically encourage contributions that bring together methods and ideas from both of these fields. We also welcome submissions from philosophers who are specifically interested in discussing their work with linguists, and vice versa.

Suitable topics include, but are not limited to:

- Diagnosis and treatment ideologies
- Mental illness in institutional discourse (e.g. clinical texts, law, government policy)
- Models of mental illness (e.g. medical, social)
- Feminist and minorities perspectives on psychiatry

- Conceptualisation and portrayal of specific conditions
- Diagnosis and self-understanding
- Verbal and non-verbal communication in neurodiverse communities (e.g. autism communities)
- Mental illness in clinical, education, workplace, or family settings
- Mental illness in the media (e.g. newspapers, magazines, films, cartoons, advertisements)
- Identity and political representation (e.g. the neurodiversity movement, mad pride)
- Stigma and anti-stigma campaigns

Abstracts of up to 300 words (references excluded) should be submitted via the form provided in our webpage: http://www.uea.ac.uk/arts-humanities/graduate-school/news-and-events/uniting-two-perspectives.

All abstracts will go through a double blind-review process. The deadline is 12pm on the 20th of April. We will let you know if your paper has been accepted on the 4th of June.

Presentations should be 20 minutes, plus 10 minutes for questions. The language of the conference is English.

Keynote speakers

Dr. Nelya Koteyko (Queen Mary, University of London)

Prof. Tim Thornton (University of Central Lancashire)

Key Dates

Deadline for Submissions: 20th April, noon

Notification of Acceptance: 4th June

Registration: 11th June – 20th August

Conference: 13th – 14th September

Organizing Committee

Ian Hare – PhD Candidate in Philosophy (University of East Anglia)

Constantin Mehmel – PhD Candidate in Philosophy (University of Essex)

Sara Vilar-Lluch – PhD Candidate in Linguistics (University of East Anglia)

Venue: University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex, CO4 3SQ

Conference supported by the CHASE Doctoral Training Partnership.