History of Psychopathology

How our understanding and treatment of disorders has changed, mostly for the better
Before we knew any better

• For thousands of years we explained mds through supernatural causes

• *Demonology* – abnormal behavior is caused by evil spirits

• Widespread, from China to Babylonia, to Jerusalem, to Athens

• Jesus casts out demons through an *exorcism*
The first enlightenment

- Hippocrates separated medicine from the supernatural, looked to biology
- Mds have natural causes and should be treated accordingly
- Brain pathology causes maladaptive behaviors

- The Four Humors – any imbalance causes trouble
So Hipp

• Treatments differed greatly from exorcisms

• Relied on *empirical* means – careful observations in a clinical setting

• Though his theories failed the test of time, many of his descriptions stand today
The Dark Ages - A big step back

- As the classical civilizations of Greece and Rome declined in vigor and influence, Hippocrates’ biological approach vanished in Europe
- Catholic Church dominated
- Return to the belief that mental illnesses had a supernatural cause
Meanwhile, in progressive Baghdad

- Greek traditions took hold in centers of learning in the Islamic world

- C. 910 al-Razi sets up a psychiatric facility that uses *psychotherapy*!
An even more sinister turn?

• By the 13\textsuperscript{th} Century widespread fear and panic accelerated demonology into witchcraft paranoia

• Thousands were accused, tortured and killed

• But was this due to a misunderstanding of mental illness?
Turning from superstition

• Careful research reveals that even in the 13\textsuperscript{th} century things were changing
• Secular, municipal hospitals emerged
• Focus on care and recovery
• Actual lunacy hearings with consideration of relevant evidence such as memory, intellect, daily life, etc.
Asylums

• With leprosy in decline, plenty of rooms left vacant
• After 1400, big push to house mentally ill
• Most notorious - St Mary’s of Bethlehem, a/k/a *Bedlam*
• Often treated as entertainment
• Neglect rampant
Slow progress

• Dr Benjamin Rush pioneers innovative treatments after 1770

• But even Rush believes in bleeding and frightening patients as treatments
Breakthrough

• Pinel (or Pussin) frees the ill of La Bicetre

• Pioneers Moral Treatment

• Dawn of psychotherapy in the West
The essence of Moral Treatment

- Patients are human beings
- They deserve to be treated with dignity
- Their condition had a cause, and possibly, a cure.
- Conversation, counsel, and purposeful activity could foster healing.
- They should receive as much autonomy as possible.
Moral Treatment’s Demise

• Strangely the individual care and attention central to Moral Treatment vanished as more mental hospitals were built.

• Dorothea Dix led the charge for more hospitals in the mid-1800’s.

• But bigger hospitals, run by MD’s, led to less solo, psychological care and more meds.
Mental Hospitals today

• Despite all our progress, residential mental health care lags in effectiveness
• Too often just provides a minimum of protection, comfort, and medication
• Not much actual treatment
• And many needy have been released
• Still chronic overcrowding is common
Contemporary Approaches

• The emergence and application of the Scientific Method

• Three different perspectives gained momentum and have continuing influence

• Biological
• Psychodynamic
• Behavioral/Cognitive
Despite tentative steps towards understanding the CNS, little progress made until

The cause and nature of syphilis was understood

General paresis a progressive mental/physical illness was linked to syphilis through the germ theory of disease

Could this explain other mental illnesses?
Biology - Genetics

• Are mds the result of heredity?
• Started w/ Galton’s twin studies
• Studies confirmed the observation that mds seemed to run in families
• Links found for bipolar, schiz and depression

• Sadly this went too far w/ eugenics & forced sterilization
Biological treatments

• Attractive due to overcrowding and little $$

• Often controversial

• Insulin induced comas – fail

• Electro-convulsive therapy – gruesome but effective

• Frontal lobotomies – despite initial enthusiasm, eventually abandoned
Psychological

• Originated in France & Austria, then spread through Europe and the US

• Played out through different, independent theories
Trying to figure out *hysteria* ....

- **Franz Anton Mesmer** – despite specious *animal magnetism* theory
  
  Treatments relied on psychological concepts – hypnosis

- **Jean Martin Charcot** – appreciated psych factors

- **Josef Breuer** – used the *cathartic method* – getting patients to relive prior emotional trauma to release tension
Freud – Psychoanalytic Theory

• Focused on strong influence of the inaccessible *unconscious* on inner conflicts

• Structure of Personality
  
  *id* – works off the *pleasure principle*
  
  *ego* – the *reality principle*
  
  *super ego* – perfectionist, id’s mirror opposite
The Freuds’ Defense Mechanisms

• Strategies the ego uses to reduce anxiety
• Maladaptive – they don’t address the cause
• Repression – pushing beneath conscious awareness
• Denial – not accepting it’s very existence
• Projection – foisting your flaw on an other
• Displacement – redirecting emotions
• Regression – reversing development
Psychoanalytic Therapy Techniques

• Try to reveal traumatic early experiences
• *Free Association* – spontaneous, unfiltered responses
• *Transference* – patient treats analyst like significant person from childhood
• *Interpretation* – analyst explains patient’s maladaptive behaviors
Stages of Psychosexual Development

- As we age our id seeks pleasure in varying ways
- **Oral** – through our mouths, lips, etc
- **Anal** – through retaining or expelling feces
- **Phallic** – through our genitals
- **Latent** – temporary repression
- **Genital** – mature, heterosexual expression
- If our desires are denied, **fixation** follows
Alfred Adler – the first Neo-Freudian

• Broke far from Freud
• Established *Individual Psychology*
• Stressed our need to contribute to the *social good*
• Attempted to help patients change irrational or unreasonable beliefs, thoughts and expectations
Carl Jung

- Initially Freud’s favorite
- Argued that spirituality was just as crucial as sex
- Discussed traits – feminine vs. masculine dimensions – extroversion vs. introversion
Freudians today

• Original theories and concepts had meager empirical support

• Some have been discredited

• But later variants (Object Relation Theory) have gained support
Lasting contributions

• What happens to us as kids affects us as adults

• Some influences on behavior are outside of our awareness

• Often there is more to our behavior than meets the eye
Behaviorism

• Focus on observable behavior rather than elusive mental states

• **Classical Conditioning** – learning what events predict opportunity or danger

• Discovered by Pavlov, explained by Watson

• Can explain the development of some disorders such as phobias
Behaviorism II

- **Operant Conditioning** – *an action’s outcome, influences whether it will be repeated*
- First studied by Thorndike, finished by Skinner
- Outcomes or consequences that make a behavior more likely to recur are **reinforcers**
- if a child gains something he values (reinforcement) because of violence, he is likely to use violence again – Conduct Disorder
Behavior Therapy

• Using the principles of behaviorism to change behavior, thoughts, or feelings

• Shaping

• Systematic Desensitization

• Modeling
The Cognitive Revolution

• Thoughts and feelings matter, not just actions

• How we interpret a situation effects our actions
Cognitive Therapies

• Identify, challenge and change maladaptive thoughts

• **Rational-emotive behavior therapy**

• Albert Ellis

• Irrational beliefs which we assume are true, cause us great anxiety and prevent us from living up to our full potential
Professions in Mental Health

• Clinical Psychologists – research degree with added training in diagnosis and psychotherapy
• Psychiatrists – medical doctors with special training in pharmacology
• Psychiatric nurse
• Counseling psychologists
• MSW