Sane or insane: who's to know? – mental illness

Health & Medicine, Disease

Johnson KayLa English 100 M W 9: 30-11: 00 Mental Illness Essay November 19, 2012 November 26, 2012 Everyone once in their life has either thought as themselves or another as crazy. In today's day and age people find it fun to be called crazy, that was not the case in the past. People in our past who were demined " Insane" were sent away, hidden from society's eyes and subjected to cruelty and unnecessary torture. America'shealthsystem has changed dramatically for the good and also it recent cases for the bad for some people.

Today healthcare is easy to come by but with so many faults it's hard to know which ones are good and will do better by the person and theirfamily's health needs. There are many types of health care, that all offer different things. Have different coverage's and pay for different things. Asking several different people what they think is wrong with America's health care system Coming to a list of conclusions of our health system. When asked " How do you feel about the health care plan you have? " people generally answered its okay, better than none.

A generally flat answers right? Well when asked " What do you think your plan can improve on? " they began to list things like pay for more test pay for more medication that's needed and the most common answer was to allow them to pick their own doctors and not having to wait months for one appointment. As an eighteen year old college student there was no clue about healthcare and its faults and didn't know it was so hard to get good healthcare. Also finding out that it may be hard now but it was not as nearly as hard as it was before in America.

Treating public illness has long been a process of trial and error guided by public attitudes and medical theory (Kimberly Leupo). This quote makes so much sense because as a society were so concerned about what people will think we just want to get rid of the problem, even if it's your son with autism or a daughter with down syndrome etc. There has always been those who's suffered from mental illness, as far back as the Egyptian or even the second millennium before Christ. They were often killed or locked away and that had little change in our history.

In early America the colonist refereed to those with mental illness ass " lunatics" all because they believed a person was crazy when they were born on the night of a full moon or sleeping under the light of a full moon, who's crazy here? They declared these people possessed by the devil (no exaggerating on their behalf), and were removed and locked away from society. These lunatics were put under 1 of 2 labels which were: Mania and Melancholy. Mania was mental illness marked by periods of great excitement, euphoria, delusions and overactivity. Melancholy was a feeling of pensive sadness, typically with no obvious cause.

They believed to cure an individual they had to catalyze crisis or expel crisis from the indiviual. For this they had several procedures including: 1. Submerging patients in ice baths until they lost consciousness 2. Executing a massive shock to the brain 3. Induced and forced vomiting 4. The notorious " bleeding" practice, The bleeding practice entailed draining the bad blood from the individual, unfortunately this inhumane practice normally resulted in death or the need for lifelong care; at best the odds were one in three that

this procedure would actually lead to an improvement in the patient's health(Kimberly Leupo).

The colonial era's methods of handling the mentally ill and medical procedures are considered arguably barbaric vs. todays means of the treatment of the mentally ill. In that time it worked fine because they were hidden from society's harsh and judgmental eyes. Around the 19th century the Europeans showed us a new to treat the mentally ill called " Moral Management. " This was based on that theenvironmentplayed a vital role in treatment of the mental ill.

In this process you had to create a more domestic feel to the patients living conditions, thus, replacing shackles, chains and cement cells with the little things like pictures and a bed. Recover was more likely to occur if they felt more like they were at home. Treatment also went under construction Phrenology was introduced, studying the shape of the brain to explain illnesses and render diagnosis. Also since the patients were no longer restrained all day they became unruly and basically bored so they had to come up activates for them to do to occupy their time.

A very important point in the history of how we treat our mentally ill was thecivil war. After the Civil War in America a great number of servicemen suffered from postwar trauma; war wounds that were emotionally and mentally ingrained as opposed to physical injuries. These inflicted persons were passed on to state mental hospitals and asylums, where the public displayed much interest in their care and treatment. Although, the public eye watched very closely how their ' war boys' were treated, institutions had no

choice but to reinstate old procedures due to the serious issue of overcrowding.

Restraints and shock therapy were reintroduced, along with new drug treatments such as opium. With that came the need to find more room for mental ill, thus, Asylums began to open up across the country to give those people help. Thomas Story Kirkbride was the designer of asylums at the time, and became well- known for his popular architectural ideas. He took great care and thought in constructing asylums taking in consideration of the patients and workers who would be in the asylums. For example in 1874 " Athens Asylum for the Insane. " Was open for the public.

It was the most attractive asylum in its day built to please the public's eye but also to withstand the harshest conditions from within. The original 544-room construction had two staggered wings branching out from a central building. The building had an exit and entrance only from the center building and the design was ideal for cross- ventilation and patient control. The design called for the least disturbed patients to be placed closer to the center building to encourage interaction with the staff, and as the patients' conditions worsened their placement would extend respectively throughout each wing toward the back of the structure.

The establishment community housing farms, a dairy barn, greenhouses, a transportation system, graveyards, etc. the patients had much to do while being treated. With the increasing great news of the asylums their population grew in shocking numbers. However some people took advantage of this. It was common for homeless people, tramps and hobos to become '

patients' of the asylums seasonally for shelter andfood, and then " elope," or slip away when the good weather returned.

Families would leave the elderly people at these places because of lack of time or resources to " deal" with them properly. The community found that these institutions were an easy means to remove unwanted people from society. As a result of asylums not having a mean of rejecting patients the people who were truly mentally ill and needed treatment suffered as a result. The now revised and human care of mental patient began to slip back to their old ways because of overcrowding. Now instead of single bedrooms to one's self patients had to sleep in wooden crib like beds three stacked.

Water baths and shock therapy had made an unjust comeback, and now the in the early 1930s the notorious lobotomy was introduced into American medicalculture. The original lobotomy is a medical procedure where the neural passages from the front of the brain are surgically separated from those in the back of the brain, the most common result of this procedure was the patient would their depressing or discouraging feelings or tendencies. This was a very delicate and time consuming process it required great skill and training from great surgeons.

In result of the great outcome of this great time was invested into this. Walter J. Freeman developed the trans- orbital lobotomy. The procedure was performed as follows: -To induce sedation, inflict two quick shocks to the head. -Roll back one of the patients' eyelids. -Insert a device, 2/3 the size of a pencil, through the upper eyelid into the patients' head. -Guided by the markings indicating depth, tap the device with a hammer into the patients'

head/ frontal lobe. -After the appropriate depth is achieved, manipulate the device back and forth in a swiping motion within the patient's head.

This was a much faster and efficient way. In a local newspaper, on November 20, 1953, the headline read " Lobotomies are performed on 31 Athens State Hospital Patients," and the article boasted that nearly 25 of those who received surgery would be able to go home with their relatives Sunday. Soon this began to stir up controversy and harsh criticism due to the larger number of deaths and complications. It was soon referred to as " psychic mercy killing" and " euthanasiaof the mind. " This was by far and no doubt mental health care's darkest hour.

Healthcare was in its darkest hour until Psychotropic medication was pioneered. In 1954 the medical community introduced an anti-psychotic drug called Thorazine for the treatment of the mentally ill. In a rapid almost trend like success; other psychotropic medications became available, making it possible to cut greatly the length of time patients stayed in mental institutions. This breakthrough led to a significant decline in asylum populations, and the gradual discontinuation of less humane treatments and procedures.

Unfortunately In 1972, a federal court ruled that patients in mental health facilities could no longer work at these institutions without pay. The result of this ruling further changed the nature of the Mental Healthcare; the dairy farming had to go, as well as the upkeep of much of the grounds. The institutions didn't have enoughmoneyto pay the patients for their contributions and also didn't have sufficient money/funds or staffing to occupy patients with enough free time.

The costs of housing patients increased dramatically, patients became bored and felt they lacked the purpose they once clung to, and consequently the need to de-institutionalize was more prevalent than ever. During the de-institutionalization process, three out of every four patients were released from the Athens Asylum. The relocating process was greatly aggravating and traumatic for the patients; patients were released to their families, nursinghomes, and half- way houses. The homeless population soared, the mentally ill population representing nearly a third.

The state pushed this process along by offering monetary rewards for decreasing the number of in-patients in asylums. Although healthcare is not as good as it should or can be, it has greatly changed for the better. People should be glad because if it were the same maybe they wouldn't be reading this essay, maybe they would of found a reason to lock an individual away in an insane asylum and been done with them. There is some revision needed to healthcare but instead of just adding a complaint why don't you do something to help make the change you want to see.

Be the change you want to see in the world. Works Cited cracked. com. N. p. , n. d. google. com. Web. 15 Nov. 2012. . ? Leupo, Kimberly. toddlertime. com. N. p. , n. d. google. com. Web. 15 Nov. 2012. . nih. gov. A. D. A. M , 13 Feb. 2012. google. com. Web. 15 Nov. 2012. . Schizophrenia. com. N. p. , n. d. google. com. Web. 15 Nov. 2012. .