

## **Gender and Mental Health**

Also by Pauline M. Prior:

*Mental Health and Politics in Northern Ireland*

# **Gender and Mental Health**

**PAULINE M. PRIOR**

**Consultant Editor: Jo Campling**





© Pauline M. Prior 1999

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No paragraph of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0LP.

Any person who does any unauthorised act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

The author has asserted her right to be identified as the author of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First published 1999 by  
MACMILLAN PRESS LTD  
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS  
and London

Companies and representatives  
throughout the world

ISBN 978-0-333-68762-8 ISBN 978-1-349-27671-4 (eBook)  
DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-27671-4

A catalogue record for this book is available  
from the British Library.

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and  
made from fully managed and sustained forest sources.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1  
08 07 06 05 04 03 02 01 00 99

Editing and origination by  
Aardvark Editorial, Mendham, Suffolk

Typeset by T & A Typesetting Services, Rochdale

*Dedicated to my mother, Rita Prior*

# Contents

<i>Preface and Acknowledgements</i>	<i>ix</i>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Why write another book on gender and mental health?	2
New knowledge	3
Summary of contents	8
<b>PART I: MENTAL DISORDER</b>	
<b>2 Defining Mental Disorder</b>	<b>15</b>
Legal definitions	16
Medical definitions	19
Alternative perspectives	24
Culture and mental disorder	29
<b>3 The Population at Risk</b>	<b>34</b>
Gender and prevalence	34
Mental disorders associated with women	42
Mental disorders associated with men	47
Finding the population at risk	50
<b>4 Approaches to Treatment</b>	<b>51</b>
Different perspectives	51
Hospital care	54
Community care	57
Therapies within mainstream psychiatry	61
Non-medical approaches	70
<b>5 Gender and Normality</b>	<b>77</b>
Feminism	78
The male perspective	82

Sexuality	86
Psychiatry and the gender debates	91

## PART II: MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

<b>6</b>	<b>Defining Mental Health Policy</b>	<b>99</b>
	A conceptual framework	100
	Modelling the policy system	101
	Analysing policy processes	102
	Understanding decision-making	104
	The impact of ideologies	106
	Changing trends in health policy	110
<b>7</b>	<b>Mental Health Services</b>	<b>116</b>
	Recent trends	118
	Current services in Europe	120
	Current services in the USA	126
	Gender and the use of services	131
<b>8</b>	<b>The Law and Mental Disorder</b>	<b>138</b>
	The scope of mental health law	138
	Mental health law in Europe	144
	Mental health law in the USA	149
	A gendered impact?	155
<b>9</b>	<b>Crime and Mental Disorder</b>	<b>158</b>
	Is there a link?	158
	Gender and crime	163
	Services for offenders with mental disorders	168
	Inside 'special hospitals'	173
<b>10</b>	<b>A Final Word</b>	<b>177</b>
	<i>Bibliography</i>	181
	<i>Name Index</i>	194
	<i>Subject Index</i>	196

# Preface and Acknowledgements

This book is intended as a critical introduction to debates on the impact of gender on mental health experiences and on mental health service use. It will be useful to students from a number of disciplinary backgrounds interested in either gender or mental health – students of sociology, social policy, gender studies, anthropology and psychology. It will also be suitable as reference and training material for professionals who encounter women and men with mental health problems – social workers, nurses, doctors, psychologists and lawyers. In addition, the author hopes that it will be of interest to members of the general public who have personal experience of the impact of mental disorder on themselves or a member of their family, as the issues raised are of such importance in the personal lives of so many people that they cannot be confined only to academic debate.

I would like to thank a number of people who have been instrumental in both the genesis and production of the final arguments that are presented in this book. On a professional level, these include Jo Campling, the consultant editor, and the anonymous referee for Macmillan Press, both of whom challenged some of my early ideas in a way that helped to clarify my thinking and greatly enhanced the final product; Professor Kathleen Jones, of York University, who is a constant inspiration to me in my work on mental health policy; Dr Bernadette C. Hayes and Dr Jim Campbell, both of Queen's University Belfast, who have collaborated with me in research that informed the debate; and staff at the Medical Library of Queen's University, who never complained about my obvious addiction to Medline and my unending demands for interlibrary loans. I would also like to formally thank Virago Press, the publishers of *The Loony Bin Trip* by Kate Millett, for permission to use extracts from this wonderful novel. On a more personal note, I would like to thank Angela and Stephanie Bourke, who made possible and enjoyable my retreat to a cottage in Kerry in the summer of 1997, and to Sarah Prior and other members of my family, who offered encouragement throughout the final writing phase. Finally, to the commissioning editor, Catherine Gray, and to the

many others too numerous to name, who have helped me both personally and professionally during the preparation of this book, may I also say 'thank you' for your support and advice.

PAULINE M. PRIOR

Every effort has been made to trace all the copyright holders but if any have been inadvertently overlooked the publishers will be pleased to make the necessary arrangements at the first opportunity.