

December 18th, 2011

Request from McMaster University Grad Student in Canada

Note: Inclusion of this request here is not to be considered to be a **recommendation by me. Please use your own discernment in the matter.**
Patricia Lefave

I am inviting you to participate in a research blog (internet journal). In this blog, people who have had experience of the mental health system can review and discuss media that deals with themes of madness/mental illness and/or psychiatric treatment. People who take part can review any kind of creative media which interests them (novels, film, art, music, video games etc.) as long as they fit the theme. Participants may define themselves as psychiatric survivors, psychiatric users/consumers, (ex-)patients or mad people, or they may choose not to use a label.

Participants can live anywhere in the world. People who take part must be **over the age of 18** and must identify as having had experience of the mental health system. I am a PhD student in the **Department of English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University and a psychiatric survivor.**

As part of my research, I want to find out if people who have had experience of the mental health system interpret media differently because of their experiences. I also want to know what people think about when reading and writing about representations of madness/mental health. I will be exploring the points of view of people who've had experience of the mental health system in a chapter of my thesis. The chapter is about what it would mean to review media from a "mad" perspective. It also talks about the ways psychiatric users and survivors empower themselves by creating networks where they can talk about experiences of mental illness/madness and psychiatric treatment.

The risks of taking part in the research blog will be low; however, some people may find reviewing certain materials depicting madness/mental illness and psychiatric treatment upsetting. You can stop taking part at any time without giving a reason and without consequences to you. Please email me and I will send you a letter which gives you full details about this research blog. This study has been reviewed and cleared by the **McMaster Research Ethics Board**. If you have any concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is being run you can contact:

The McMaster Research Ethics Board Secretariat
c/o Office of Research Services
Telephone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 23142
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