

Rendezvous with Madness Film Festival 2010

Press Kit Materials

Self Labelling and Identity

Film Blurb

We call mad people many names, most of which are not complimentary. But what do mad people call themselves? Do they accept others' labels or apply their own labels? Why might one person choose a different label than another? In this documentary, twelve Toronto activists discuss how they identify themselves.

Film Synopsis

"Depending on the audience...I might identify as a lunatic." Lucy Costa

In preparing an online course called "Mad People's History", David Reville interviewed twelve Toronto activists. He asked them how they described themselves: Don Weitz has been calling himself an anti-psychiatry activist since the 1970s; Pat and Diana Capponi often describe themselves as crazies; Lucy Costa, jamming the culture, sometimes calls herself a lunatic. Each person's choice is careful and deliberate. No one uses a diagnostic label. The mental patients' liberation movement is one of the liberatory movements that emerged during the late 1960s. Today it is often called the consumer/survivor/ex-patient movement.

Sociologist Linda Morrison, herself a person with a mental health history, describes what the members of the consumer/survivor/ex-patient movement are doing: talking back to psychiatry. Back-talkers reject psychiatric terminology. The terminology developed by the mental health system doesn't have much support either. 'Consumer' and 'people with lived experience' are not labels these activists embrace. Jennifer Chambers uses the term 'client' – in favour at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto – but she prefers 'mental health oppression survivor'.

Reville, the video director, is an instructor at Ryerson University's School of Disability Studies and The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education. With Daniil Novikov, The Chang School's videographer, he has created a rich and complex tapestry, at once a record of and a tribute to the consumer/survivor/ex-patient movement.

(The online course was offered for the first time in Winter 2010.)

Production Credits

The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, Ryerson University, Digital Education Strategies Production:

Director - David Reville
Director of Photography - Daniil Novikov
Documentation and Research - Kathryn Church
Script-Editor - Alexandra Olsen, Linda Koechli
Interviewer - David Reville
Editor - Daniil Novikov
Original Score - Daniil Novikov
Production Supervisor - Naza Djafarova
Production Assistants - Alexandra Olsen, Ilya Emilianov
Post-Production Coordinator - Mariam Ahmed
Administrative Assistant - Deb Wise Harris
Legal and Business Affairs - Emily Payne, Rubin Vineberg

Director's Biography

A psychiatric survivor, David Reville has worked on mental health issues for over 40 years as a community activist, a member of the Toronto City Council and the Ontario Legislature (1980-90), special advisor to the Premier (1990-94), and chair of the Ontario Advocacy Commission. In 1996, he established David Reville & Associates (DRA), which specializes in social research and community development. The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) has been a major client, retaining DRA as a consultant on its redevelopment project and on client employment, empowerment, and banking.

Since 2004, David has been an instructor in the School of Disability Studies at Ryerson University. With Jim Ward, he team-teaches "DST 500 A History of Madness", a liberal arts elective, which reaches 330 students each year. The Chang School began offering his "CDST 504 Mad People's History" course online in January 2010.

David's community service has been recognized by the Canadian Mental Health Association, the ARCH Disability Law Centre, and the Council of Canadians with Disabilities. In 2002, he was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal.

David lives in Toronto with his wife, Cathy Jones; he is the father of Jane Reville and grandfather of Marley Reville Brown.