



The Madness of Women: Myth and Experience (Women and Psychology)

Jane M. Ussher

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Nominated for the 2012 Distinguished Publication Award of the Association for Women in Psychology!

Why are women more likely to be positioned or diagnosed as mad than men?

If madness is a social construction, a gendered label, as many feminist critics would argue, how can we understand and explain women's prolonged misery and distress? In turn, can we prevent or treat women's distress, in a non-pathologising women centred way? *The Madness of Women* addresses these questions through a rigorous exploration of the myths and realities of women's madness.

Drawing on academic and clinical experience, including case studies and in-depth interviews, as well as on the now extensive critical literature in the field of mental health, Jane Ussher presents a critical multifactorial analysis of women's madness that both addresses the notion that madness is a myth, and yet acknowledges the reality and multiple causes of women's distress. Topics include:

- The genealogy of women's madness – incarceration of difficult or deviant women
- Regulation through treatment
- Deconstructing depression, PMS and borderline personality disorder
- Madness as a reasonable response to objectification and sexual violence
- Women's narratives of resistance

This book will be of great interest to students and scholars of psychology, gender studies, sociology, women's studies, cultural studies, counselling and nursing.

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