

Values in Psychiatric Nosology: A Conference for Philosophers & Mental Health Professionals

Date of Conference: December 4-6, 1997

Location: Dallas, Texas, U.S.A.

Conference Sponsors: The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, the Cary M. Maguire Center for Ethics and Public Responsibility at Southern Methodist University, and the Association for the Advancement of Philosophy and Psychiatry.

Description: Despite what are, for many, significant advances in the treatment of mental disorders, psychiatric diagnoses and the classification of mental disorders are a source of controversy. Over the past twenty-five years, public and professionals alike have renewed debate about the virtues and liabilities of taxonomies for mental disorders. While a significant portion of this debate involves routine scientific disputes and the problems of insufficient knowledge of mental disorders and their etiologies, a large portion of the debate involves *values* and how they drive the concept of mental disorder, particular diagnostic categories, and the development of diagnostic classifications.

This conference aims to assemble mental health professionals actively involved in the development of existing classifications for mental disorders (such as the DSM and ICD) with philosophers and conceptually-oriented clinicians to discuss the role that values play in mental disorder classifications and their development. There are three objectives for this conference: (1) to provide an intimate forum for an exchange of viewpoints about the role of values in psychiatric classification; (2) to improve the quality of future diagnostic classifications through an enhanced awareness of value issues; and (3) to make concrete and specific suggestions to psychiatric nosologists about how value-related nosological problems can be addressed in future editions of the DSM or ICD. A selection of the conference papers and discussion will be published in book form.