

**PART I - Below are passages and an illustration that illustrate how people with mental illness were treated in the mid 1850s. For each passage write a brief summary that explains how mental illness was treated. Conclude by discussing what you think about the treatment being described, and writing down any questions you have about the passage. Use the work all ready done for #1 as a model for your work on #'s 2-5.**

1. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries individuals with mental illness were viewed as demon-possessed or characterized as senseless animals. Physical and mental abuse was commonplace and the widespread use of physical restraints - straight-jackets and heavy arm and leg chains - deprived patients of their dignity and freedom. (source: National Mental Health Association, <http://www.nmha.org/about/history.cfm>)

***Summary and Thoughts:*** This passage says that in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries people with mental illness were physically and mentally abused. They were treated like animals and deprived of their freedom. Some thought that people with mental illness were possessed by demons, which means that people may have been scared of mentally ill people. This treatment sounds terrible. I don't see how anyone treated like this might get better.

***Question(s):*** What is a straight-jacket? Why did people at that time think the mentally ill were possessed by demons?

2. During colonial times American society called people suffering from mental illness "lunatics." This comes from the root word "lunar," meaning moon. It was believed that insanity was caused by a baby being born during a full moon, or sleeping under the light of a full moon. Colonists, believing that lunatics were possessed by the devil, usually locked them up and removed them from society. (source: "The History of Mental Illness," <http://www.ohiou.edu/~ridges/history.html> )

***Summary and Thoughts:*** \_\_\_\_\_  
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***Question(s):*** \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. In the mid 1800s American jails held prostitutes, drunks, retarded individuals, and the mentally ill. They were all held in unheated, unfurnished, and foul smelling quarters. There was a belief that the insane did not feel heat or cold.

**Summary and Thoughts:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Question(s):** \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. The popular belief in the mid 1800s was that the mentally ill could never be cured and living in their horrible conditions was enough for them.  
(Source: "Dorothea Lynde Dix (1802 - 1887): Humanitarian Reform and its Contribution to the History of Psychology," Alison Foley Simon Fraser University)

**Summary and Thoughts:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Question(s):** \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. The mentally ill were kept, regardless of age, sex or condition, in jails, prisons, and almshouses [a home for the poor], and workhouses [a prison in which inmates are sentenced to do manual labor]. Mentally ill inmates were often caged, beaten, chained, deprived of fresh air and sunlight, poorly fed, given no medical care, and were often found filthy, naked, physically weak, and lying in their own excrement.  
(source: <http://www.extramile.us/honorees/dix.cfm>)

**Summary and Thoughts:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Question(s):** \_\_\_\_\_  
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6.



The "tranquilizing chair" was meant to soothe patients by immobilizing them. Many 19<sup>th</sup> century treatments for mental illness were cruel and ineffective and were intended to restrain patients, not cure them.

Source: National Library of Medicine

**Description and Thoughts:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Question(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

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