

Post Traumatic Stress Response: Medical or Political?



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31 July 2016

Trauma



☞ Forms of trauma:

- ☞ Transgenerational trauma
- ☞ National narratives of historical loss (Rabaia et al, 2014)
- ☞ Collective history as trauma
- ☞ Community trauma
- ☞ Everyday violence of racism, sexism, classism, transphobia, homophobia, adultism, ageism, disableism, sanism
- ☞ Environmental loss and trauma

Trauma



- ❧ A reaction to violent events in the real world
- ❧ An embodied experience
- ❧ Loss or absence of grounding
- ❧ Terror, hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness, despair, distrust, rage, guilt
- ❧ Disorientation spatially and temporally
- ❧ Disassociation and numbing
- ❧ Self-harm as coping strategy
- ❧ Nightmares, flashbacks, sense of aloneness

Neoliberalism



- ❧ Promotes exploitation and social injustice
- ❧ Maintains and entrenches socio-political hierarchies:
 - ❧ Racism, classism, sexism, ageism, ableism, sanism, homophobia and heterosexism, transphobia, disableism
- ❧ Expanding carceral state and the criminalization of poverty
- ❧ The 'American Model' = low wages + high inequality
- ❧ Focuses on individuals (reductionism)
- ❧ Construction of trauma

Biomedical Psychiatry



- ❧ Individualizes and internalizes distress
- ❧ Ignores social context and social structures
- ❧ Ignores or denies significance of group membership
- ❧ Understands traumatized person has having a distorted view of the world
- ❧ Deficit model - goal is to return patient to a `normal` state
- ❧ Diagnosis creates a mental illness out of distress and violates the traumatized person
- ❧ This violation through diagnosis and subsequent treatment is traumatic in and of itself

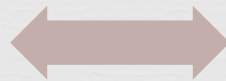
Vicious circle reproducing status quo



TRAUMA



NEOLIBERALISM



BIOMEDICALISM