

Cambridge Elements

Elements in Bioethics and Neuroethics

edited by

Thomasine Kushner

California Pacific Medical Center, San Francisco

PATHOGRAPHIES OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Nathan Carlin

McGovern Medical School



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Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-07366-0 — Pathographies of Mental Illness
Nathan Carlin
Frontmatter
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One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
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www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009073660

DOI: 10.1017/9781009064866

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First published 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-009-07366-0 Paperback

ISSN 2752-3934 (online)

ISSN 2752-3926 (print)

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Pathographies of Mental Illness

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DOI: 10.1017/9781009064866
First published online: September 2022

Nathan Carlin
McGovern Medical School

Author for correspondence: Nathan Carlin, nathanscarlin@gmail.com

Abstract: This Element is a survey of the field of pathographies of mental illness. It explores classic texts in the field as well as other selected contemporary memoirs. In doing so, the reader is introduced to psychiatric information about various mental illnesses through a narrative lens, emphasizing experience. Because clinical research is evidenced based and aims to produce generalizable knowledge (i.e., trends), the reading of pathographies can complement these findings with practical experiential insights. By pairing psychiatric information with pathographies, certain personal themes become apparent that are different from the empirical trends identified by scientific and medical researchers. Based on the survey presented here, this Element identifies seven such themes, laying the foundation for future research, inquiry, practice, and policy.

Keywords: memoir, pathography, mental illness, narrative

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ISBNs: 9781009073660 (PB), 9781009064866 (OC)
ISSNs: 2752-3934 (online), 2752-3926 (print)

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