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Depression and Narrative: Telling the Dark

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How the story of depression gets told in print, on screen, and online.

Depression and Narrative examines stories of depression in the context of recent scholarship on illness and narrative, which up to this point has largely focused on physical illness and disability. Contributors from a number of disciplinary perspectives address these narrative accounts of depression, by both sufferers and those who treat them, as they appear in memoirs, diaries, novels, poems, oral interviews, fact sheets, blogs, films, and television shows. Together, they explore the stories we tell about depression: its contested causes; its gendering; the transformations in identity that it entails; and the problems it presents for communication, associated as it is with stigma and shame.

Unlike certain physical illnesses, such as cancer, depression is stigmatized—sometimes as a nonproblem (the sufferer should “snap out of it”) and sometimes as the slippery slope to madness. Thus, depression narratives have their work cut out for them. This book highlights the work these stories do, including bringing meaning to sufferers, explaining depression, justifying therapies and treatments, and reducing the burden of shame—accounting for a suffering that is, in the end, unaccountable.

“Clark has assembled an impressive collection of 16 essays treating the broad psychological topic of depression and how stories shape and dismantle it ... This collection will further the current academic interest in disability and illness studies and will appeal to readers across a range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences.” — *CHOICE*

“...this is a useful collection of papers that brings the discussion of the role of narrative of mental illness forward.” — *Metapsychology*

“The number of scholarly books on depression is growing, perhaps because mood disorders are now so common, but *Depression and Narrative* is uncommonly interesting and insightful. Hilary Clark has assembled a volume that focuses on how writers attempt to describe anguish that is at times indescribable. Combining theoretical sophistication and close reading, the contributors cast much light on a dark subject.” — Jeffrey Berman, author of *Dying to Teach: A Memoir of Love, Loss, and Learning*

Contributors include Debra Beilke, Kiki Benzon, Sophie Blanch, Hilary Clark, Mark A. Clark, Brenda Dyer, Kimberly Emmons, Suzanne England, Carol

Ganzer, Linda M. McMullen, Joanne Muzak, Jennifer Radden, Andrew Schonebaum, Deborah Staines, Eluned Summers-Bremner, Carol Tosone, Frederick H. White, and Diane R. Wiener.

Hilary Clark is Professor of English at the University of Saskatchewan. She is the coeditor (with Joseph Adamson) of *Scenes of Shame: Psychoanalysis, Shame, and Writing*, also published by SUNY Press, and the author of *The Dwelling of Weather; More Light*; and *Two Heavens*.

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Editorial Review

Review

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From the Back Cover

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