

May 2005

## Schizophrenia

Jeff Frate  
*St. John Fisher College*

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### Recommended Citation

Frate, Jeff (2005) "Schizophrenia," *Verbum*: Vol. 2 : Iss. 2 , Article 6.  
Available at: <https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/verbum/vol2/iss2/6>

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## Schizophrenia

### Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"The Hospital: such a sterile atmosphere, clean smelling, but one knows it is cleanliness as a precaution, a disinfected smell and a guard against disease. People come to the hospital when they are sick, when they are born and when they are dying; no one should live at the hospital."

Alumni  
Corner

# Brief Essays



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## **\*\* Schizophrenia.**

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My daughter asked my wife recently, “Do people break?” Sadly, they do and some of them break in their mind. In a former age, it was possible to be considered a saint if one heard voices, but it was also a possibility to be considered possessed by devils; either way at least one was seen as a man or woman who, in a way, was in control of their faculties. Now the “mentally ill” are treated like a machine gone wrong; they are taken apart, diagnosed, given the appropriate quick fix medicines, and sent on their way with a weak band-aid on the mind that will only last for so long. They become the victims of a lifelong illness.

Mike was in the Hospital for the third time in two years. There is no joy in the R-wing, the psychiatric ward of the hospital, especially for those who have committed themselves and are denied visitors. They are tucked away behind bolted doors. Everyone has to be buzzed in and out in order to “protect” the world around him or her.

The “R-wing”: what an innocuous euphemism for mad- house.

My friend and I, both visiting, rang the bell by the door and when we were, finally acknowledge by some sort of doctor, we were informed that Mike could have no visitors, and we would have to come back another time. He was “unstable”, and could not handle the excitement.

The next day we returned and were let in to see Mike. He looked like one of my children when they've done something wrong and are expecting me to yell at them; but there was also a deep resentment in his eyes; he was angry that we were seeing him, in the R-wing, walking around in his socks, heavily medicated. *Why are the mentally ill ashamed that they suffer?*

The conversation primarily consisted of uncomfortable silence, and Mike asking how our families were doing, school, work, the weather... There was nothing to say; in hell there are no words, no communing of souls; crowds of people are utterly alone together.

Two things stand out to me from this experience: First, Mike had no shoes because they probably thought he might hang himself with the shoelaces. Second, on the wall in his room, he had taped a piece of paper, and it said "GOD IS LOVE."

By: Jeff Frate