

## **Madpeople's Coping Mechanisms**

### **Biographies of presenters (alphabetic order)**

#### **Stephanie (Steph) Ban**

Steph Ban is an independent scholar and disability rights activist. She is multiply disabled with activist roots in the independent living and neurodiversity movements. Steph's scholarly interests include the history of disability activism, the place of disability in historical memory, and histories of neurodivergence (broadly conceptualized). She has presented at conferences in several disciplines, including history, disability studies, and musicology. Her work appears in *The Activist History Review*, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, and *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*.

#### **Michele Marie Desmarais**

Michele Marie Desmarais is a Métis, Dakota, and settler, mad poet and scholar from the lands now known as Canada. Dr. Desmarais is an Associate Professor in Religious Studies and a teaching faculty member in Medical Humanities and Native American Studies at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO). She was the founding director of the Medical Humanities program at UNO and publishes on Indigenous and non-Eurocentric perspectives in the health humanities. Desmarais' poetry has appeared widely in literary journals and most recently in her poetry chapbook, *owlmouth*, which reflects on experiences of historical trauma due to Indian Residential Schools, as well as climate change, intergenerational resiliency, healing, and the necessities of transforming the dominant culture. Desmarais has a Ph.D. in Asian Studies (Sanskrit and Indian philosophy) from the University of British Columbia. Her book, *Changing Minds: Mind, Consciousness, and Identity in Patañjali's Yoga-sūtra and Cognitive Neuroscience*, was selected by the International Society for Science and Religion as one of the foundational books in the field of science and religion. Michele is honoured to co-present *calls* with Fraser Mackenzie, a remarkable singer-songwriter and advocate, whose work she has long admired.

#### **Michael Dickson**

Michael Dickson is a professional philosopher, currently Professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of South Carolina and previously Ruth N. Halls Professor in the Department of History and Philosophy of Science at Indiana University. For twenty-five years, he worked in philosophy of quantum theory, game theory, and general philosophy of science, and served for five years as the editor of the journal *Philosophy of Science*. Recently, he has switched to working in aesthetics and philosophy of music, with a side interest in medieval philosophy. Prior to working at Indiana University, he was a student at the University of Notre Dame and Cambridge University. Prior to that he was, briefly, a professional musician, and maintains various musical pursuits as an amateur.

### **Anne-Marie Gagné-Julien**

Anne-Marie Gagné-Julien is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for Research in Ethics (CRE, Montréal) and the Canada Research Chair in Epistemic Injustice and Agency (CRC-EIA, UQAM). She held a previous postdoctoral fellowship at McGill University (Montréal) and at École Normale Supérieure (ENS, Paris). She received a PhD in philosophy of science and psychiatry from the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). In 2021, she was the winner of the Karl Jaspers Award granted by the Association for the Advancement of Philosophy and Psychiatry. Her research interests lie at the intersection of the philosophy and ethics of psychiatry, feminist philosophy of science, activism in and outside psychiatry, and epistemic injustices.

### **Ida Hallgren**

Ida Hallgren is a PhD candidate in philosophy at the University of Gothenburg, with a BA in practical philosophy, a BS in Cognitive Science and a MS in Clinical Psychology. In her practice as a licensed clinical psychologist and a philosophical practitioner she facilitates existential group dialogues and incorporates experiences from a collaboration with the artists behind the art project The Institute for Political Therapy.

### **Matthew Jackman**

Matthew Jackman identifies as a Mad person. They received Australia's National Mental Health Advocate award by the Mental Health Foundation of Australia in 2020. Matthew is the Founder/Principle Consultant of The Australian Centre for Lived Experience, an international peer lead consultancy and advisory practice. They have been a global mental health activist promoting human rights, social justice and lived experience perspective from a public health and Mad Studies discipline. Matthew's advocacy career addresses alternatives to the biological, psychiatric and 'psy' science approaches to wellbeing, with a focus on social, cultural, spiritual, and structural determinants. Matthew previously represented the Western Pacific Region on the Global Mental Health Peer Network and was a Global Shaper with the World Economic Forum. They consult the World Health Organisation on lived experience mental health perspective and peer work practice. Matthew trained internationally in certified peer specialist practice. They have been a social work lecturer and researcher in mental health and trauma. Matthew has been a longstanding public servant in forensic mental health, Department of Social Services, and the National Disability Insurance Agency. They are a member of the Victorian Branch Management Committee, with the Australian Association of Social Workers. Matthew is an open service user, participant, consumer, and family/carer of various systems. They are passionate about dismantling and reconstructing systems of justice driven care. Social media and public events <https://linktr.ee/matthewjackman>

### **Mia Joy (They/She)**

Mia Joy is a community organizer and survivor of the psychiatric system with lived experience of madness. They discovered the Mad Movement earlier this year amidst a crisis that sparked her search for a community that aligned with her abolitionist values. They believe in a complete and total recreation of how we as a collective society view, approach, and heal mental health crises. Mia believes in putting a strong emphasis on community care, interdependence, anti-pathology and love. She is tough on systems and soft on people. They hope to use their traumatic experiences with psychiatry, hospitalization, and the mental health system to embolden herself and her community to fight the power and create a new, healthy world. Having come from a family with a long history of similar experiences with madness, Mia hopes to honor their lives

by healing what they couldn't through this liberating lense. In addition to their radical and abolitionist identities, Mia is an artist, writer, creative, and spiritual being who hopes to inspire and learn from others as they embark on an entirely new relationship with themselves. They are so excited to be here!

### **Zoey Lavallee**

Zoey Lavallee is a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Philosophy at McGill University, and a postdoctoral researcher at the Centre for Research in Ethics in Montréal. They received a Ph.D. in Philosophy from The Graduate Center, CUNY. Zoey works in philosophy of psychiatry and mental health, as this intersects with philosophy of mind, ethics and feminist philosophy. Their research takes an externalist approach to psychiatry and mental health and explores how the so-called "internal" parts of an agent dynamically interact with the external environment. Their current postdoctoral project addresses the question of how the social environment, including structural inequality, shapes and is shaped by agency in addiction.

### **Fraser Mackenzie**

Fraser Mackenzie manages Coast Mental Health's Peer Support Program based in Vancouver, British Columbia. Born to immigrant parents from the UK and Australia, Fraser is also an accomplished singer-songwriter. Fraser uses his lived experience as a mental health consumer as well as his academic background in Psychology and Theatre to help inform the curricula and vocational roles he has spent the last decade developing for his clients. Fraser is honoured to be collaborating with Michele Marie Desmarais on *calls: a mad stories project*.

### **Michele Merritt**

Michele Merritt is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Arkansas State University. Her research occurs primarily within philosophy of cognitive science and feminist philosophy, especially the intersection between these two fields. She has published a book and several articles on the human-dog bond, and more recently, has been working on dismantling the pervasive narrative that adoption is a social good. Her work was recently featured in longest-running abolitionist magazine in the U.S., *The Nation*. As an adoptee who has struggled with suicidality most of her life, Michele's autoethnographic approach has brought critical adoption studies into conversation with philosophical examinations of psychology, in particular, suicidology. Michele's preferred coping strategy is endurance sports, and she is multiple Half Ironman finisher and marathon swimmer, in addition to being a mom to two very young humans, along with an assortment of other mammals.

### **Anne O'Donnell (they/them)**

I have experienced significant mental distress since my teens and have used mental health services from my late 20s to my early 50s. I have been involved in collective advocacy and survivor activism in Scotland since the mid-1990s. I am a PhD candidate at the University of Edinburgh and a lecturer in Mad Studies at Queen Margaret University where I teach on the MSc in Mad Studies and am the co-ordinator of a widening participation module, Mad People's History and Identity. I have a MSc in Community Education from the University of Edinburgh and have worked in community work for an independent advocacy organisation. I am a tutor on the undergraduate MA Learning in Communities at Edinburgh. I am on the editorial boards of *Concept: The Journal of Contemporary Community Education Practice Theory* and the *Community Development Journal*.

**Patrick Salas**

Patrick Salas has living experience of altered states of consciousness and aligns with the mad movement. Though he was given varied diagnoses and prescribed psychiatric medication indefinitely three years ago, he no longer identifies with any labels given by the medical model and has been free from psychiatric drugs for nearly two years. He now understands his past crisis as a spiritual emergency, and sees a need for radical mental health perspectives that emphasize a greater presence of peers and more empathic, loving responses to crisis situations. He is currently pursuing training in peer support alongside studies in outdoor adventure guiding in Banff National Park. He is an avid runner, cyclist and explorer of inner and outer landscapes. He draws inspiration from thinkers like Sam Harris, Russell Brand, Gabor Mate, Tim Urban, Alan Watts and Will Hall.