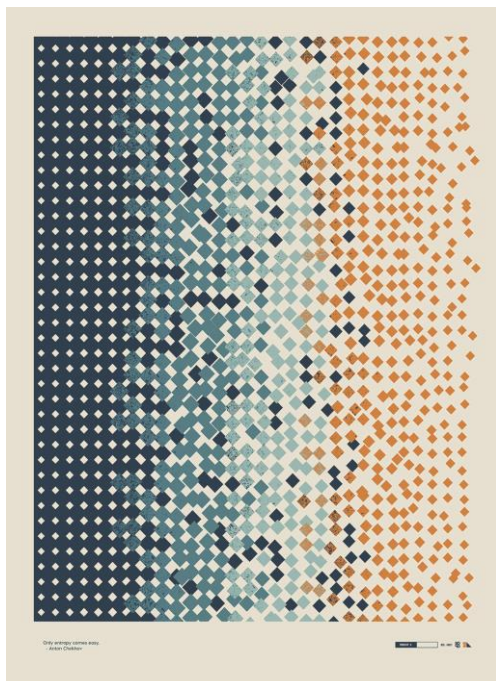


# A Portrait of Nursing... ...as the Key to Everything

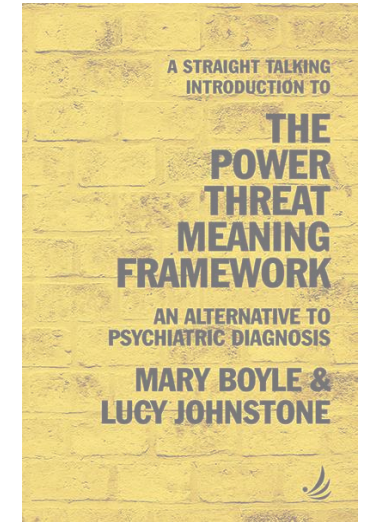
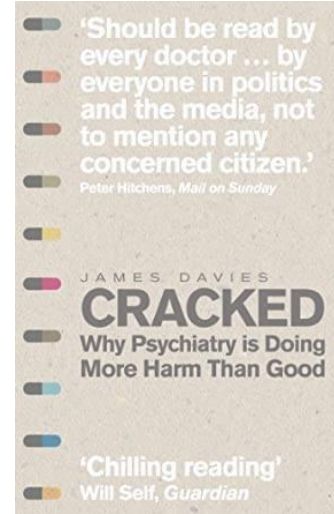
An Idiosyncratic Demonstration of How Better Understanding the Largest Caring Institution Can Create Meaningful Change



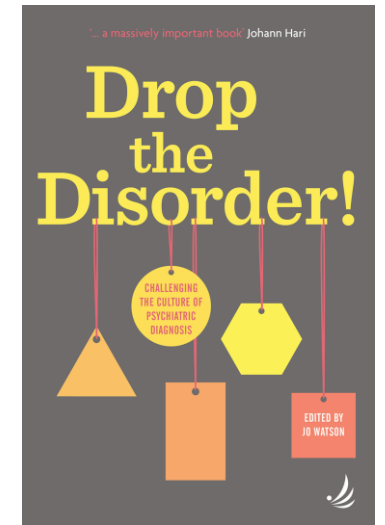
Stephen McKenna Lawson, RMN & Dr Ed Lord, RMN

@sjpmck & @ecotherapyTed





RE:CREATE Psychiatry  
A Mental Fight Club Project



# Contents

## *The Problem (Invisibility to others)*

The **absence of nursing** from psychiatric critique and reform agendas (both radical and mainstream).

The apparent **lack of appeal to/of nursing as an agent of transformative change** from those demanding/working towards change.

## *The Goal (Making visible)*

To portray the institution of **nursing as being central to achieving transformative change** in MH care as a result of its possessing certain qualities.

## *The Counter (Correcting this strategic error)*

Specifically, institution/system of nursing's resistance to **Entropy**, embodiment of **Anti-Aging** (Lindy Law) and **Antifragility** (Taleb) and its **Autopoietic** aspects (Maturana & Varela) make it well-placed to answer appeals to, or lead, lasting change.

## *The Possibilities (Knowing, owning & activating skilled practices)*

Nursing is embedded in a **technological society** (Jacques Ellul) in which 'technique' exerts a **colonising** force. The **skilled nurse as craftsman is moved from the centre to the periphery**, where they become a machine operator. A neo-luddite sensibility can reclaim and activate the skilled nurse as agent of change.

## *Novel approach drawing from:*

- Thermodynamics
- Ecological economics
- Science Fiction
- Statistics and probability studies
- Risk analysis
- Cellular biology
- General systems theory
- History
- Science & Technology Studies (STS)
- Anthropology & ethnography

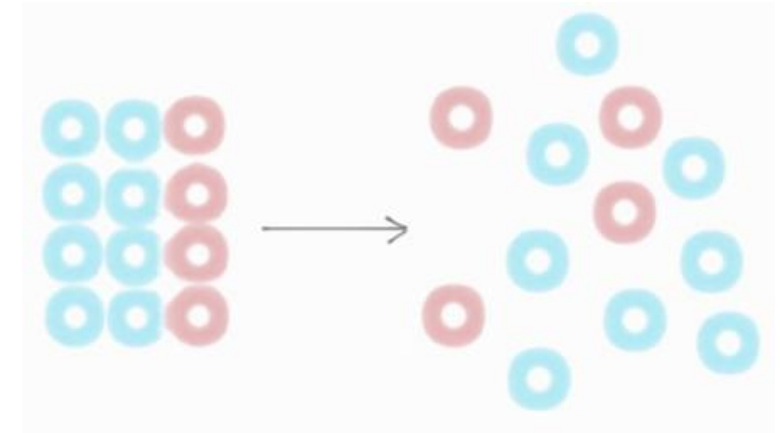
# Entropy

## *Thermodynamics*

- a proportion of the heat (energy) provided (input) to a cycle (process or system) will unavoidably and irreversibly be rejected or lost in the function of the cycle (process or system)
- "quantifies the energy of a substance that is no longer available to perform useful work"

## *Ecological Economics*

- "a measure of the unavailable energy in a thermodynamic system"
- "a measure of disorder"



## *Science Fiction*

- "it's a universal principle operating throughout the universe; the entire universe is moving toward a state of total, absolute kippleization."
- Kipple drives out non-Kipple

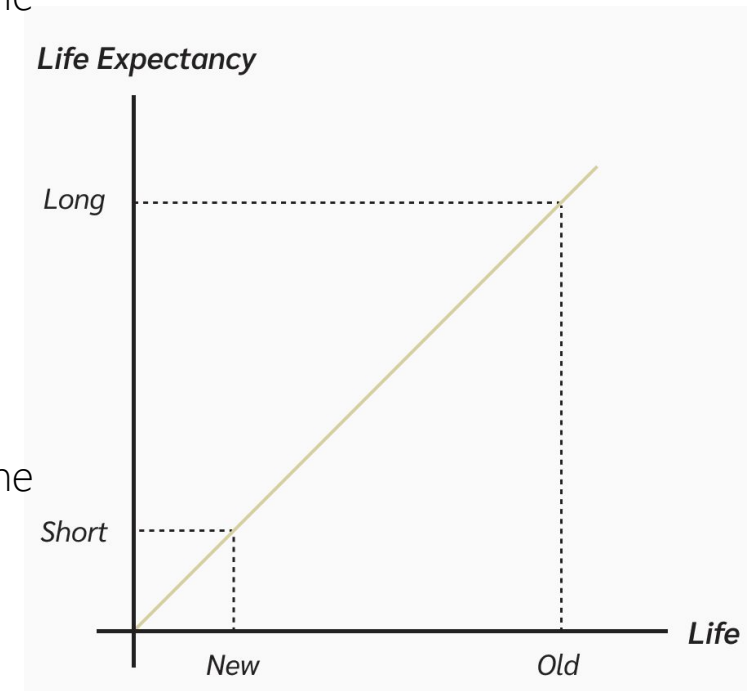
# The Lindy Effect/Law - Anti-aging and Antifragility

## *Statistics and Probability*

- “the future lifetime of a running show is proportional, on average, to its present age[...] the longer a show has been running, the longer it is expected to continue to run in the future.”
- “likelihood of failure decreases with age”
- “Lindy’s Law means ‘growing young’ and ‘anti-aging’”
- “things that are around for long [...] are also likely to stay around for long.”

## *Risk Analysis*

- “time is equivalent to disorder, and resistance to the ravages of time [...] survival, is the ability to handle disorder”
- “That which is ‘Lindy’ is what ages in reverse”
- “That which is fragile has an asymmetric response to volatility and other stressors, that is, will experience more harm than benefit from it.”
- => Antifragility is the capacity to grow stronger as a result of exposure to stress, disorder



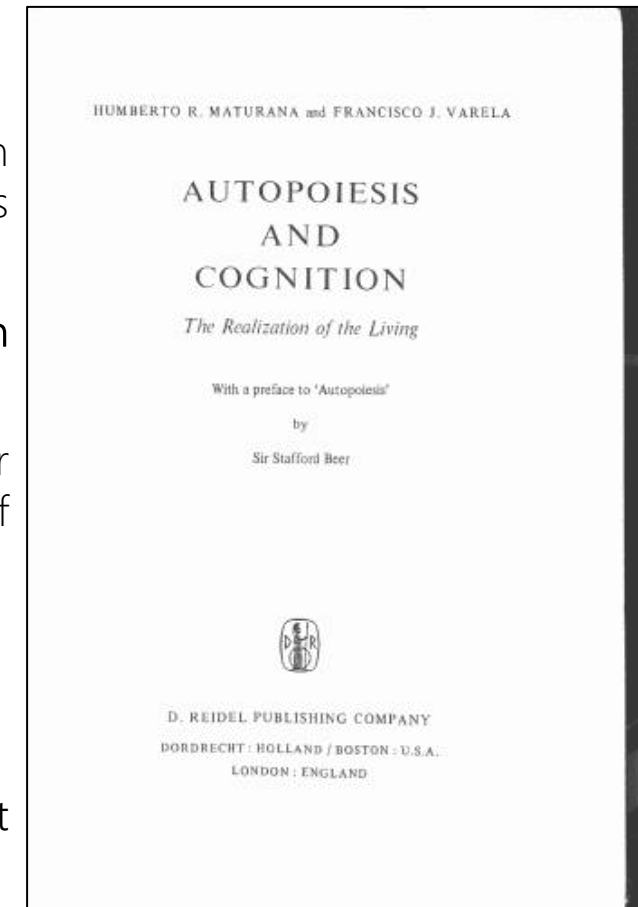
# Autopoeisis *auto* (self) *poesies* (production)

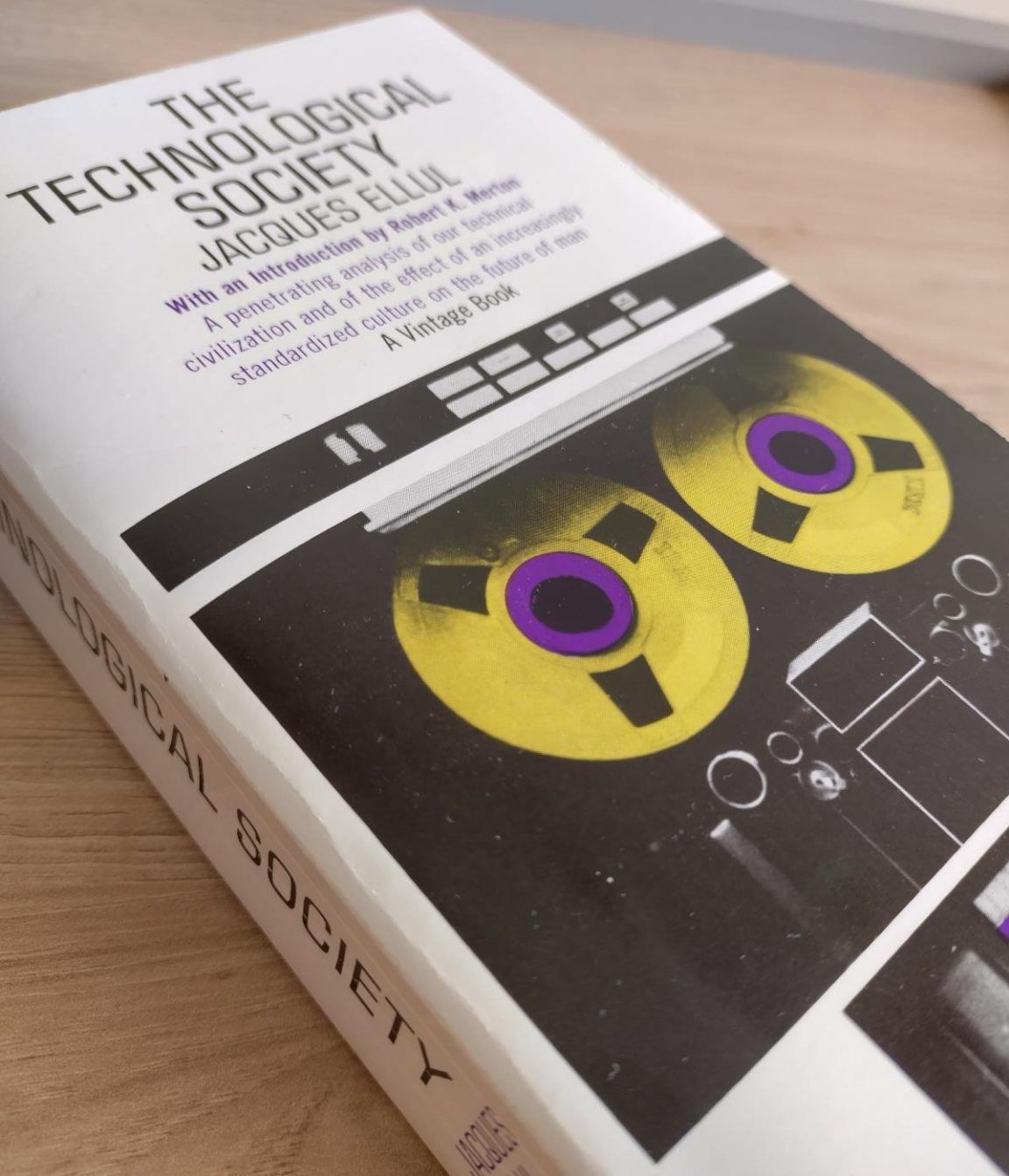
## Cellular Biology

- “autonomous, self-referring, self-constructing closed systems – in short *autopoietic systems*”
- “an autopoietic machine continuously generates and specifies its own organisation through its operation as a system of production of its own components, and does this in an endless turnover of components under conditions of continuous perturbations [distresses]”
- “an autopoietic machine is a homeostatic (or rather relations-static) system which has its own organisation [...] as the fundamental variable which it maintains constant”
- Autopoietic machines have **autonomy** (“subordinate all changes to the maintenance of their own organisation”) and **individuality** (“actively maintain an identity which is independent of their interactions with an observer”)

## General Systems Theory

- “All autopoietic, and therefore all biological (living) systems, are social systems.”
- Accepting all autopoietic systems are social systems is not to say/accept the inverse, “that all social systems are autopoietic”
- “The removal of external coercive pressures and props is one of the safest tests of viability (i.e. autopoesis) of social systems”





## MH Nursing in Ellul's '*Technological Society*'

*"Human life as a whole is not inundated by technique. It has room for activities that are not rationally or systematically ordered. But the collision between spontaneous activities and technique is catastrophic for the spontaneous activities."*



Escape... and  
*'action at a  
distance'*



A move from the centre to the periphery

# MH Nurse as skilled craftsperson or machine operator?

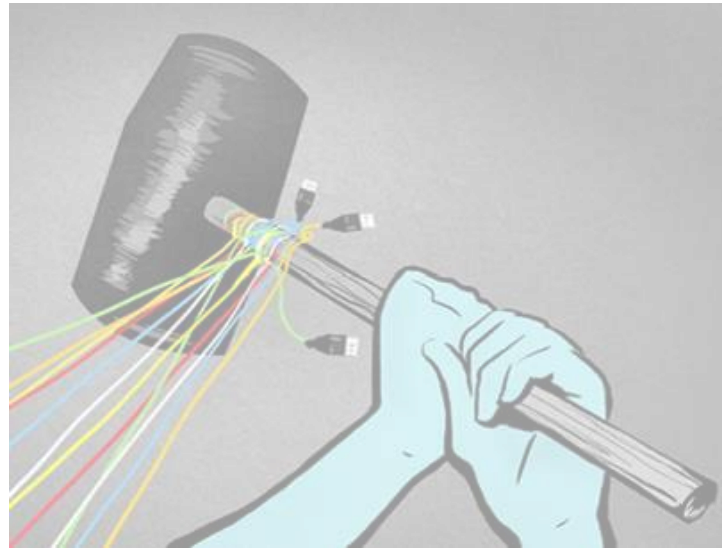
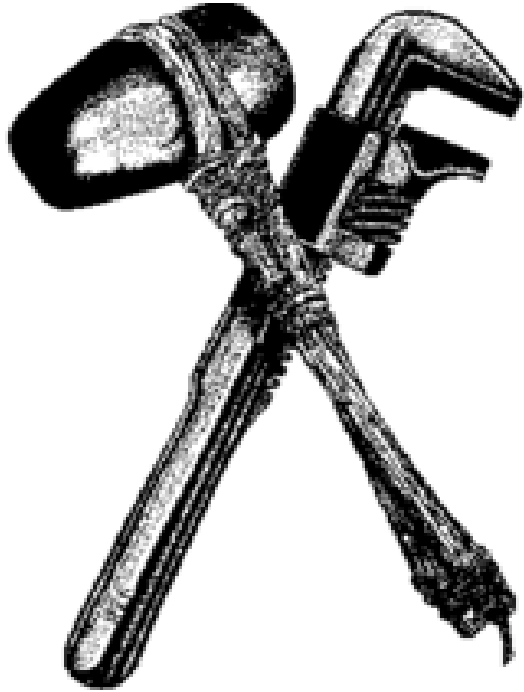
KNOWLEDGE: Tekhnē (skill) → Technology

DEVICES: Mēkhanē (tools) → Machines



Subject-central

Subject-peripheral



developing a neo-Luddite sensibility...

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# Any Questions?



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