

# Mad Studies Reading Groups: Laboratory for New Subjectivities

*How can Mad Studies groups be of use for people with psycho-social disabilities?*

## What is Mad Studies?

“Mad studies is an emerging, interdisciplinary field, mainly in the social sciences and humanities, that expresses a radical new voice in academe about madness.” From Alex Gillis in University Affairs

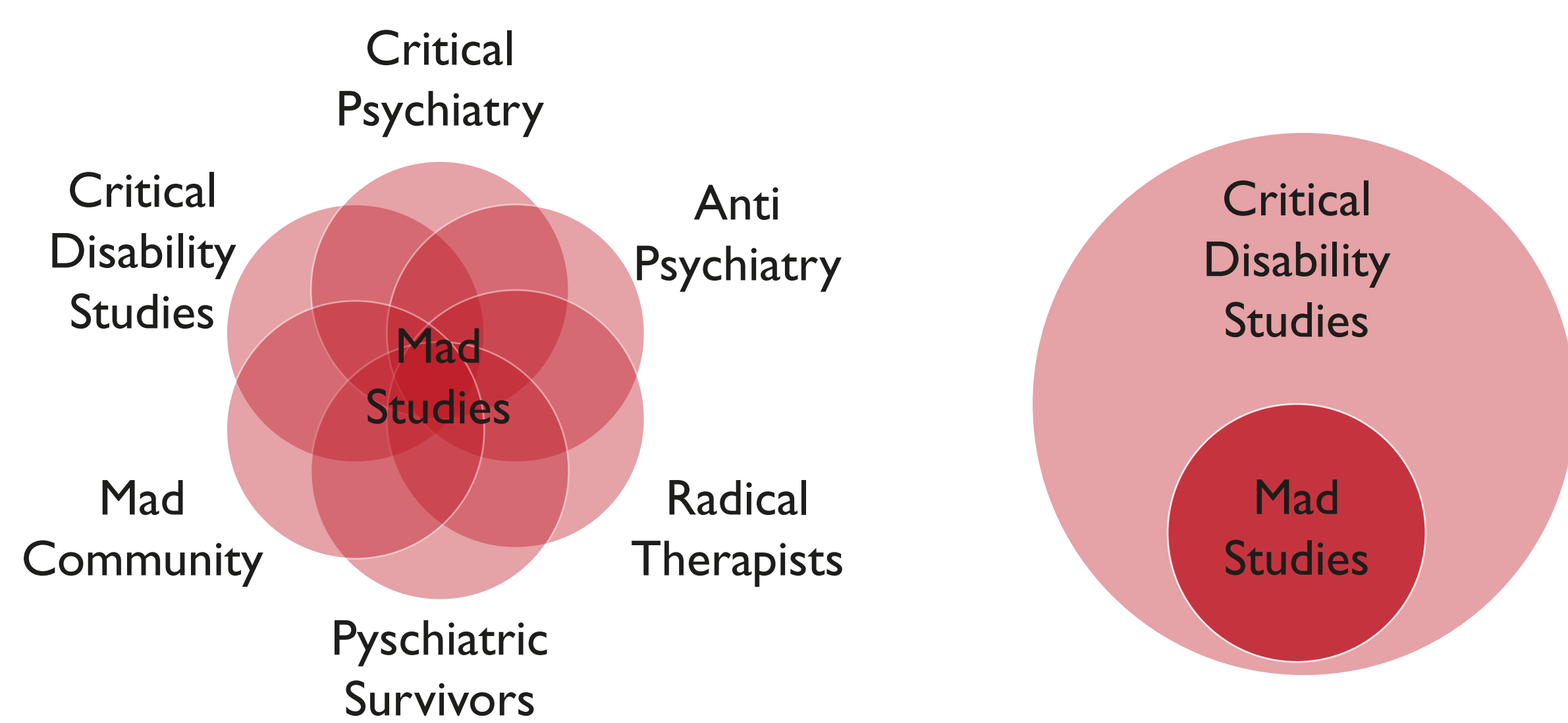


Image based on Brenda LeFrançois

## Participants learn to:

- Deconstruct ‘normalcy’
- Recognize sanism
- Use an alternative vocabulary for (self-)advocacy
- Express their own understandings of their experiences
- Connect to Mad peers
- Question and view critically dominant views on madness
- Add new tools to determine their life course

## Form of the groups:

- A group of 8-14 participants
- Minimum 50% service users
- Reading Mad Studies texts
- 10 meetings every 3 weeks
- We meet for 2 hours, watch a video or short intro
- Group discussions about the texts
- Themes of 4 out of 10 meetings are chosen by the group.
- Afterwards social gathering (*in café*)

## Pedagogies:

Paulo Freire (*reflection, action, dialogue*)

bell hooks (*reading and discussing among oppressed is action*)

Feminist Pedagogy (*Power, Holistic Learning and Integrating Dichotomies, Diversity, Social Change*)

## Context:

Organised by Foundation Perceval: *service-user led organization*

## Facilitators:

- Grietje Keller (*high-knowledge crazy & MA Gender Studies*)
- Rob de Vries (*philosopher & retired psychiatrist*)

## Groups since 2014

Influenced by English speaking c/s/x-movement

Support by: MoleMann Tielens & OdiBaan

## Themes we read about and discuss:

- Mad movement and its history
- Vocabulary
- Intersectionality: sexism & racism
- Mystical & spiritual experiences
- Mad Pride
- Neurodiversity
- Foucault
- Psychiatric drugs
- Sanism
- Inside madness
- The concept ‘recovery’
- Alienation and reconnection
- Neo-liberalism and bio-psychiatry.

## Authors we read:

Peter Beresford, Wilma Boevink, Bonnie Burstow, Judi Chamberlin, Lucy Costa, Trudy Dehue, Wouter Kusters, Suman Fernando, Bradley Lewis, Damian Milton, Emily Martin, Brigit McWade, Joanna Moncrieff, Marina Morrow, Jennifer Poole, Margaret Price, Daniel Paul Schreber, Berend Verhoeff, PhebeAnn Wolframe.

