

**Centre for the Social History of Health and Healthcare
Seminar Series**

Tuesday 16th February, 4pm

Working alternatives: towards a history of anti-psychiatry ‘from below’

The history of anti-psychiatry has tended to be, in practice, the history of anti-psychiatrists. In Britain, this has usually meant a near exclusive focus on the work of R. D. Laing and his colleagues in the Philadelphia Association, dissident psychiatrists who challenged the orthodoxies of their profession and sought to establish alternatives to mainstream mental healthcare. Too great a focus on the ‘great men’ of anti-psychiatry however, I argue, can risk obscuring a much broader movement, developing alongside – and at times in opposition to – Laing and his circle. In this paper, I explore the sources of this other, popular anti-psychiatry within the networks of the emerging ‘counterculture’ from the late 1950s to the early 1970s, and the first experimental attempts to put its ideas into practice represented by the information and counselling service BIT, and the activist-therapy collective People Not Psychiatry.



The event will be hosted on Zoom. To receive the link and password please email Caroline Marley: caroline.marley@strath.ac.uk