

Schizophrenia: A Very Short Introduction  
By Chris Frith and Eve Johnstone

Questions for thought and discussion

- What, if any, are the differences between physical and mental illnesses?
- Effective physical treatments for mental illnesses were mostly discovered by chance. They are widely employed. Why is this thought appropriate?
- What relevance does study of the abnormal mind have for the understanding of normal mental experience?
- To think that you might have heard your name being called or the telephone ring when in fact nothing has happened are experiences most people will have at some time. In what way is this different from the hallucinations associated with schizophrenia?
- Apart from the difficulties of the sufferers, the societal and family costs of schizophrenia are very high. Why?
- There is much controversy at present about appropriate legislation for the control of psychoactive substances (drugs that act on the brain). To what extent is the association between recreational drugs and the development of schizophrenia relevant to this issue?
- About 10% of people with schizophrenia will, for many different reasons, end their own lives. Is it appropriate to try to stop them?
- In most legal systems it is considered that it is sometimes ethical to treat people against their will. What is the justification for this?
- The evidence that a person with schizophrenia has, with a previously devised plan, killed someone in a violent manner may be overwhelming and yet in some circumstances a guilty verdict would not be employed. Why is this thought appropriate?
- In some cases of schizophrenia, there may be an excellent response to treatment such that the patient, carers, and staff are agreed that he seems to be free of positive symptoms and to be functioning near to his premorbid level. Although repeatedly told that the chances of relapse are much greater if he stops his treatment programme, he is not willing to persist with it. What reasons might there be for this?
- It is sometimes possible for a person with a mental disorder not to be held responsible for the acts that he/she commits. When should that not be possible?

Other books by the authors

Frith C D, *Making up the mind: how our brain creates our mental world*, (Wiley-Blackwell, 2007.)

Lawrie S, Johnstone E, Weinberger D. eds, *Schizophrenia- from neuroimaging to neuroscience* (Oxford University Press , 2004.)

Johnstone E C, Cunningham Owens D , Lawrie S M, McIntosh A M, Sharpe M. Churchill eds, *Companion to Psychiatric Studies (eighth edition)* (Livingstone/ Elsevier, 2010.)

Further reading

Roy Porter, *Madness: A Brief History* (Oxford University Press, 2002)

P.J. McKenna, *Schizophrenia and Related Syndromes*, (Psychology Press, 1997)

Robert J Sternberg, *Handbook of Intelligence*, (Cambridge University Press, 2000)

Gottesman, I. I, *Schizophrenia genesis: the origins of madness*, (W.H. Freeman & Co., 1991)