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## A Commentary on The Social Class and Mental Illness Correlation: Implications of the Research for Policy and Practice

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# A Commentary on The Social Class and Mental Illness Correlation: Implications of the Research for Policy and Practice

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This paper represents an extraordinary review of literature on the association between SES and mental illness. I think most social scientists would find it impressive. It also conveys some cogent reasoning about the relevance of these findings for social policy. I think most social workers would find it impressive.

What troubles me is that the author is using concepts which I regard as worthless. I think we should dispense with the concepts mental illness and mental health. They have led us astray in a host of ways and are an obstacle in thinking about people's problems. The construction of various ways of measuring SES and the reification of social class is also an intellectual stumbling block. Here is a lengthy paper which pays no attention to the extensive criticism of these concepts. The author accepts them as given. And he is right. That is what is usually done. But I see no reason to encourage this practice.

As for implications for social policy, I see no reason to demonstrate that unemployment and homelessness leads to mental illness which in turn is a monetary drain upon the state. We should strive to reduce unemployment and homelessness because they make people miserable. No other justification is needed. These elaborate arguments simply obfuscate the issues. A pox on them.

