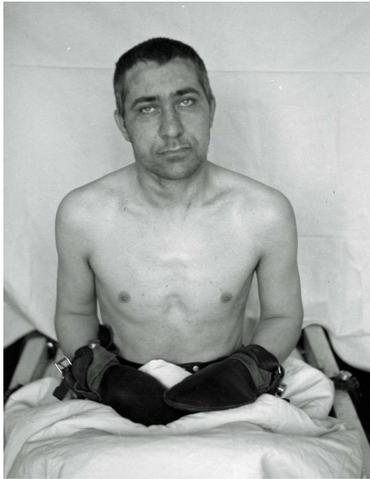


The Use of coercion in mental health institutions in Norway during the Asylum Era



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Liveet **HANDLER OM**
AT LEVE I NUTIDEN
GLÆDE SIG TIL *fremtiden*
& LÆRE AF FORTIDEN

2

Searching Cultures of Coercion

Some research questions:

Presence of humanistic ideals:

- Have humanistic ideals influenced the use of coercion?
- Have humanistic ideals influenced the choice of coercive measures?

Education and asylum culture:

- Did the staffing influence the use of coercion?
- Did the doctors' and nurses' training and the asylum culture have any impact on the use of coercion?

Patients':

- Did the patients' and relatives have any influence on the use of coercion?

Society:

- How did politics and other external opinions influence the extent and choice of coercion?

3

The modern industry and early welfare state



Norsk Hydro (1905)

Rønvik asylum
(1902)



4

Two institutions



Kriminalasylet 1895-1963

Reitgjerdet hospital 1923-87



5

Mission

Mission:

1. Security
2. Treatment

Patients:

1. Insane from the justice system (dangerous, detention, compulsory mental health care)
2. Insane from prisons
3. Difficult individuals from health institutions



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Why building asylums 1891-1926?

- 1) General impression in society that more people became insane → especially chronic illness
- 2) Industrialization, urbanization and smaller family units demanded a new social policy in a society more vulnerable for mental illness
- 3) Modernization of the merchant fleet and working life in general led to the bottom falling out of parts of the traditional labor market
- 4) In 1891 US introduced a stronger immigration control, at the same time as many of those who became insane in US became deported back to Norway
- 5) Higher willingness in Parliament to conduct an active social policy, to clean up the social conditions among poor, vagabonds, tramps and casual workers and make life better for vulnerable groups in general.

7

Who were the patients?

- The insane criminal proletariat!
 - Workers, vagabonds, tramps, «tater» (romani), sailors, homebound emigrants to US, war veterans, soldiers from the French legion, frozen polar explorers, workers from Spitzbergen, peasants from the coast – few from agricultural background.
- From the entire country– relative over representation from Northern Norway



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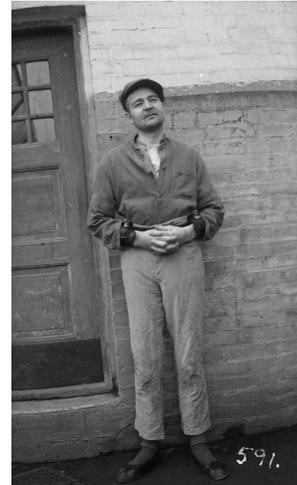
Lunatics act, 1848

§ 4.

Seclusion or use of mechanical restraints should only be used during a short period of time, when the condition of the patient makes it inevitably necessary.

§5.

Every incident of seclusion or mechanical restraint has to be noted in the patient' casebook, including an explanation of the reason, why and time period...



9

Temporary Criminal Asylum Act, 1898

§2.

Lunatics Act of 1848, §4, should not prevent seclusion or use of mechanical restraints, as long as the patient' condition makes this inevitably necessary.

Comments from The Justice committee (Parliament)

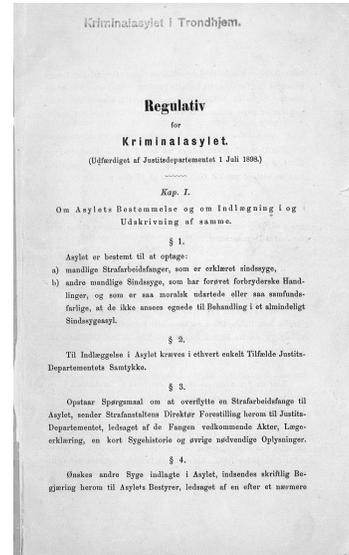
[Indst. O. No. 7 (1898)]:

... whether this can be worrisome, the committee acknowledge the need of the asylum to confront such dangerous persons, that use of coercion may be necessary during a long period of time. **[unlimited]**

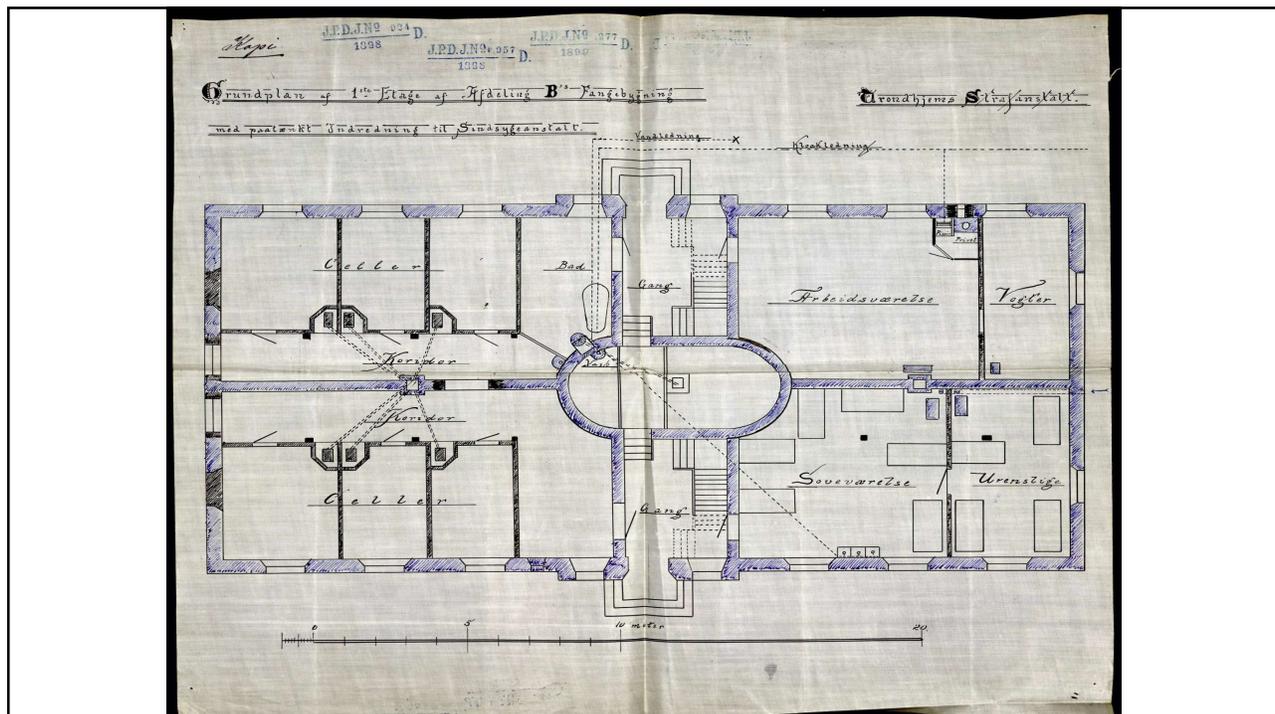
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Script and socio-materiality

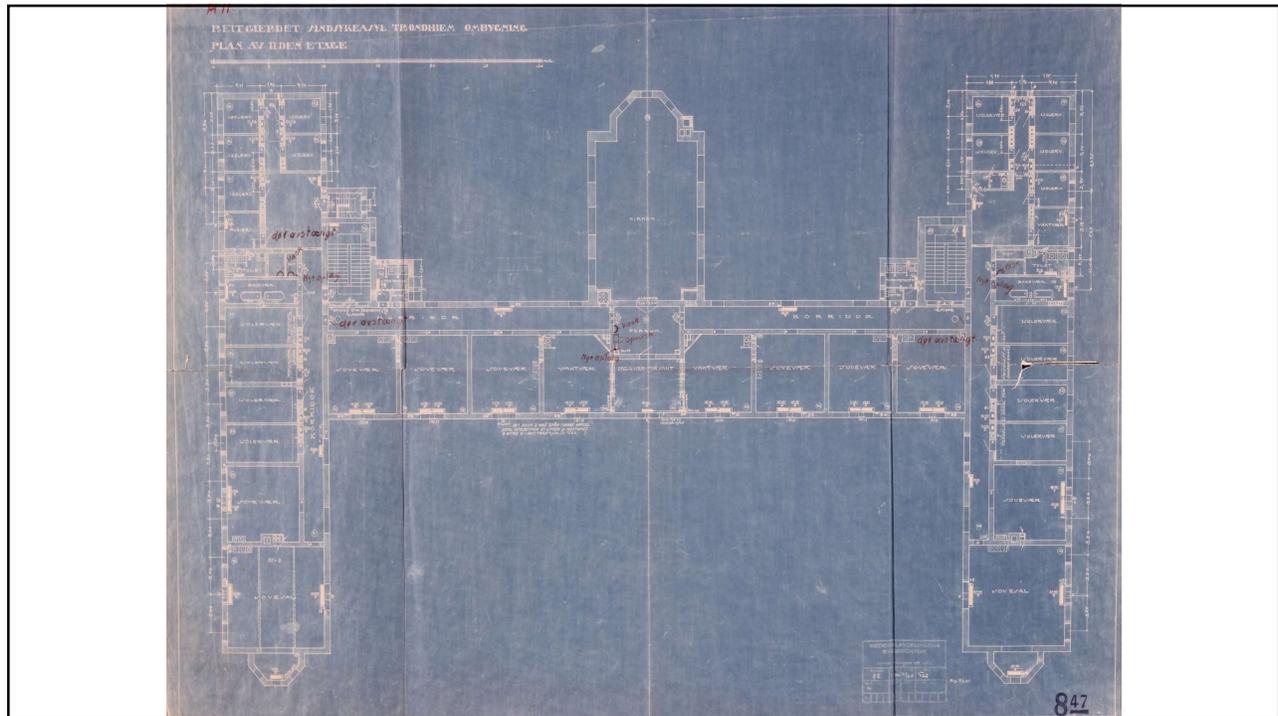
- Legislation
 - Law about a temporary Criminal Asylum (1898)
- Regulation (1894, 1898)
- Architectural drawings



11



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13

The Criminal Asylum Treatment and Coercion Technologies

- 12 Cells (4 security cells)
- Foot rock
- Chaining to wall
- Handcuffs and shackles
- Sedatives (more or less voluntary)
- Bed rest (voluntary)
- The architecture (building and area)
- Rewards and confiscations



14

D. m. H. F. No. 14/1001

Extrakt
af Kriminalasylets Behandlingsprotokol for ~~Kvartal~~ Aar 1900

J. No. 1,029 M. Dir.
1901

Tvangsmidler

A. Billest. Eriksson. Dept., Tålm.

Sygdomssymptom, som har foranlediget Tvangs Anvendelse	Tvangsmidlets Beskaffenhed	Antal Tilfælde, i hvilke Tvang har været anvendt		Antal Personer, som have været underkastede Tvang		Tider, hvori Tvang er anvendt, ialt	Anmærkninger
		Mænd	Mænd	Dage	Timer		
<i>Prætal opførsel</i>	<i>Glat celle</i>	3	3	12	19½		 <p>J.R.D. J. No. 1,280 D. 1901</p>
<i>Almindl. forvirring</i>	<i>Ordinar celle</i>	1	1	11	-		
<i>Prætal og brændt opførsel</i>	.	2	2	15	-		
<i>Almindl. raseri og ødelæggelseslyst</i>	<i>Glat celle</i>	3	2	10	-		
<i>Ødelæggelseslyst</i>	<i>især i væggen</i>	1	1	3	20		
<i>Ufredeligt forhold</i>	<i>Glat celle</i>	1	1	1	19		
Tilsammen		11	10	54	10½		

Kriminalasylet, 27^{de} april 1901
Indv. No. 14/1001

15

Extrakt
af Kriminalasylets Behandlingsprotokol for ~~Kvartal~~ Aar 1902

Tvangsmidler

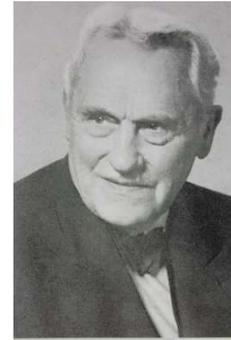
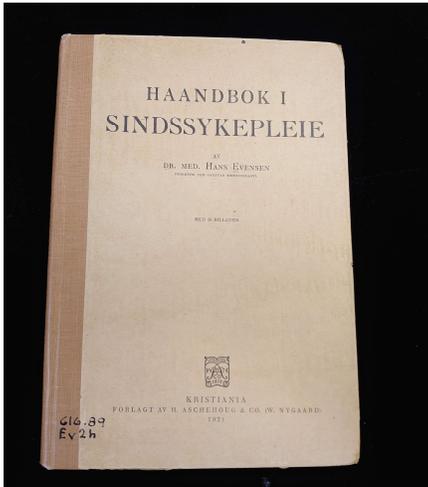
A. Billest. Eriksson. Dept., Tålm.

Sygdomssymptom, som har foranlediget Tvangs Anvendelse	Tvangsmidlets Beskaffenhed	Antal Tilfælde, i hvilke Tvang har været anvendt		Antal Personer, som have været underkastede Tvang		Tider, hvori Tvang er anvendt, ialt	Anmærkninger
		Mænd	Mænd	Dage	Timer		
							
Tilsammen							

Kriminalasylet, 7^{de} Jan. 1902

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Hans Evensen: Textbook in mental health nursing, 1921



Hans Evensen,
1868–1953

Humanitært: det, som er til bedste for medmennesker, navnlig dem, som trenger hjælp av andre, 78

Humanitarian: what is for the best for others, Especially those who needs help from others.

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The Flexible Interpretation of Coercion

Per Haave: *Ambisjon og handling*, 2008, p.131:

The ideal of freedom implied coercion also reduced the use of mechanical restraint. 'Mechanical restraints are not used in modern mental health treatment,' wrote Hans Evensen in his textbook on mental health nursing in 1921.

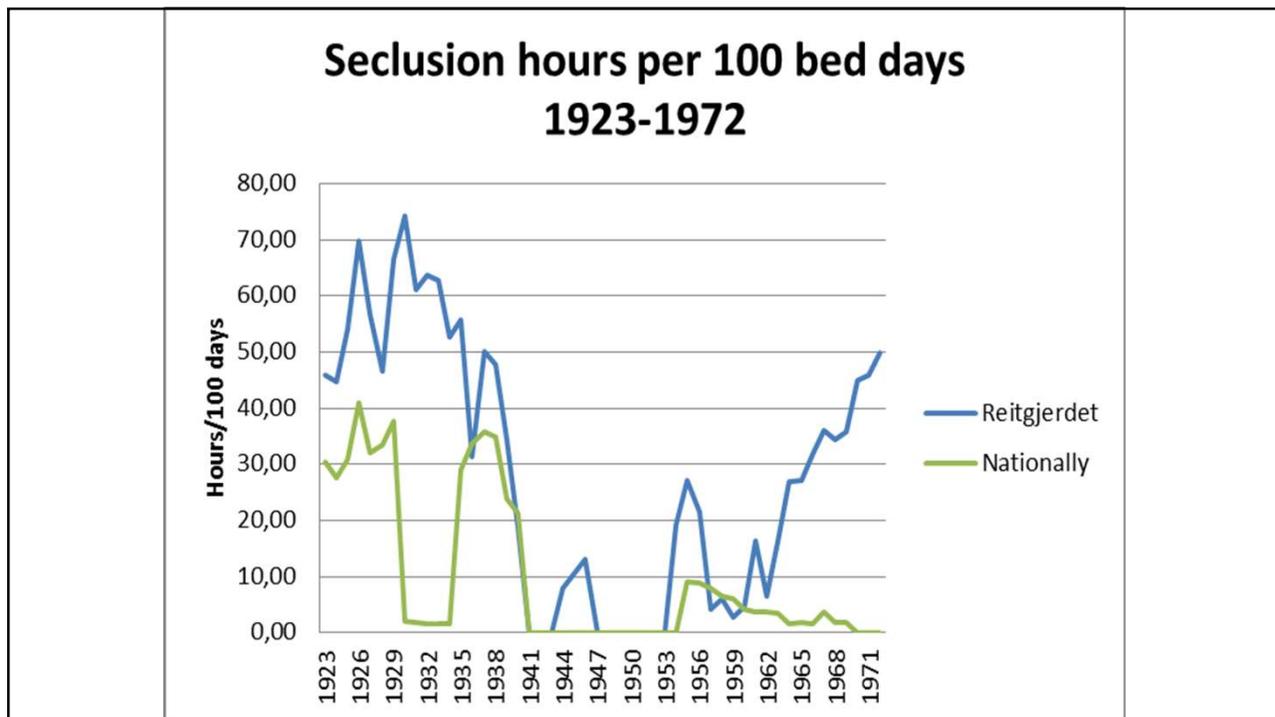


Einar Kringlen: *Norsk psykiatri gjennom tidene*, 2007, p.133-34:

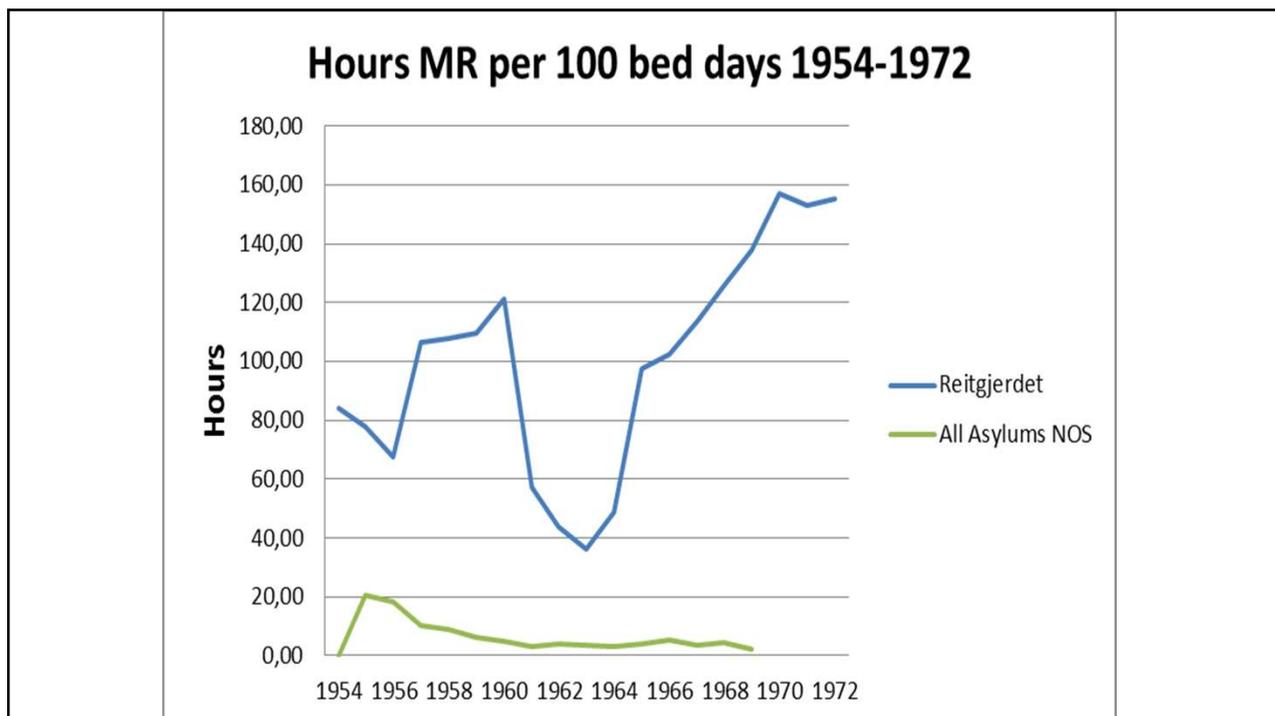
(Ca.1910) "Dikemark report comprehensive use of seclusion. The reason is that we have not found it appropriate to use the guarded wards, since patients are more confident in single rooms."



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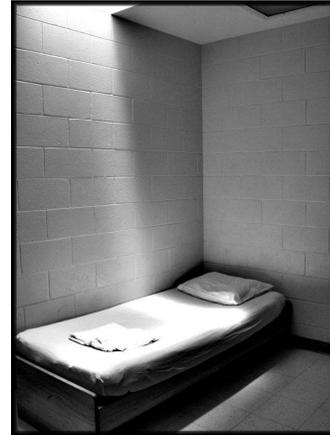
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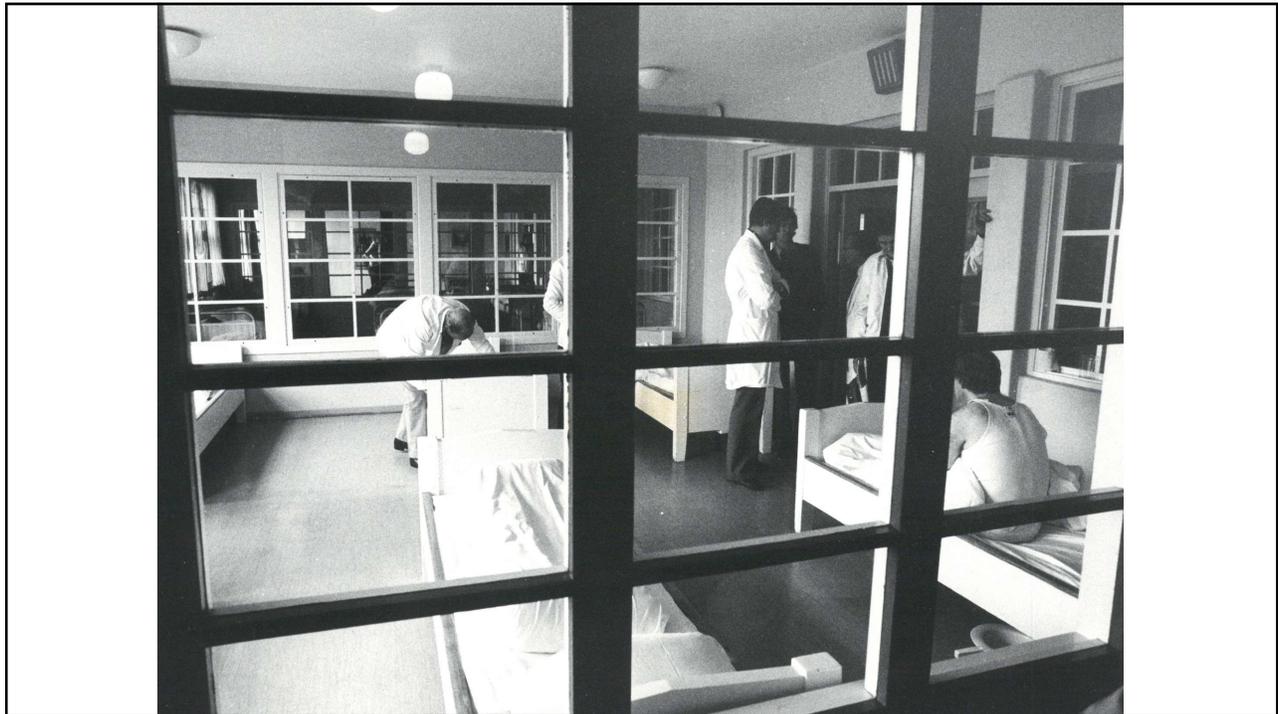
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Materiality of Coercion – Architecture

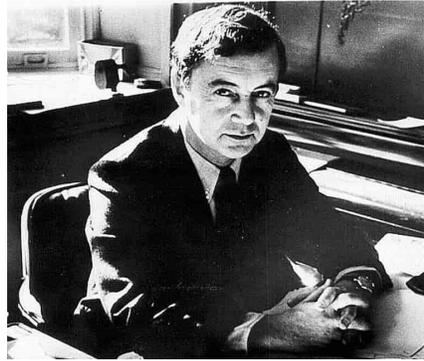
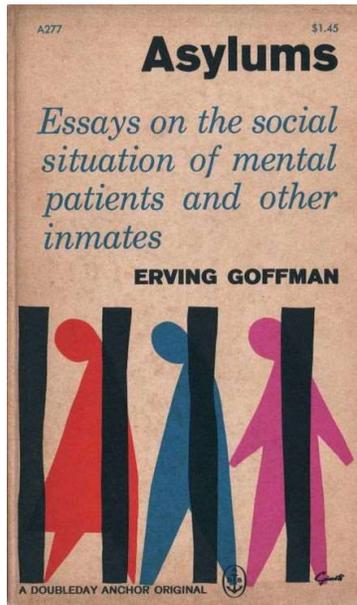
Did the design and furnishing of the interior have any influence on choice and use of coercion?



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22



Erving Goffman (1922–1982)

«The obligation to staff to maintain a certain humane standards of treatment for inmates represents problems in itself [...], but a further set of characteristic problems is found in the constant conflict between humane standards on one hand and institutional efficiency on the other».

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Documentary: Titticut Follies (1967)



The documentary movie Titticut Follies from Bridgewater State Asylum (Prison asylum) in Massachuttetts, US.

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Some main impressions of a century

The relation between human treatment, control and coercion in Norwegian Psychiatry and Norwegian mental institutions cannot be interpreted as a linear development from inhumanity to humanity.

The emphasize on dignity and respect in the treatment of patients has varied through the period.

... but it seems to have been more present in the early 20th century than in the first 2-3 decades after WWII.

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Thanks!

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