

My name is Elizabeth Wynn, I'm the Equality and Diversity Manager at the Babraham Institute, and

demonic influences or witchcraft and unfortunately the treatment then was often persecuting women as witches or trying to exorcise the sin out of them.

The Renaissance was when Europeans rediscovered classical texts, which had been continuously in use in the Arab world throughout the Middle Ages in Europe, and so medical explanations again took

Freud stated that men also suffer from hysteria and, indeed, men are diagnosed with these mental illnesses, but they are still much more prevalent in women. There are a couple of possible explanations for this.

One is that women genuinely do present with these symptoms more often. We no longer think that it's due to the uterus, but perhaps it's due to things like genetics or hormones. Another possible explanation is that women are more likely to seek treatment for mental illnesses. We know that men are less likely to talk about when they're having problems with their mental health. But another possible explanation that there's a lot of support for is around misdiagnosis.

So though hysteria diagnoses had dropped off dramatically by the 20th century, they were still, it was still occasionally diagnosed. It wasn't until 1980 that hysteria was removed entirely as a diagnosis from diagnostic manuals. And in 1965 in the UK a follow up study on patients who had been diagnosed with hysteria in the 1950s showed that more than 60% had been found to have an organic neurological disease such as a brain tumour or epilepsy.

Some other information on women and diagnosis with mental health problems: women with chronic pain conditions are more likely to be misdiagnosed with mental health conditions than men. Women are more likely to receive anti-anxiety medications than men when they come to a hospital with pain. So men receive painkillers women receive anti-anxiety medications. Women take significantly longer than men to be diagnosed with everything from cancer to heart attacks to autoimmune diseases. And misdiagnosis with the wrong disease increases the time to get the right diagnosis. A physical misdiagnosis roughly double the time it takes to get the correct diagnosis. A psychological misdiagnosis can increase it up to 14 times longer.

I got the information on this slide from Maya Dusen- sorry, I always mispronounce that name. Maya Dusenbery's excellent book, *Doing Harm*, which I highly recommend. And I tried to focus here on information which was backed up by studies but that book has a lot of anecdotes as well of women describing their experiences with doctors with their physical symptoms being ignored, being told that it's all in their head, being misdiagnosed with mental illnesses and being taking it much longer to get correct physical diagnoses. And you can also find a lot of articles with people sharing their experiences on this. If you are a woman, you might have experienced with this or you might know

You may have been aware that Sunday, May 17th, was the International Day Against Homophobia,