

## MEDIA KIT

# Pain Comes First — Drugs Come Later

*A Philosophical Critique of Co-Existing Mental Health and Substance Use Challenges*

By Simon Bratt · Palgrave Macmillan, February 2026 · 236pp

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## AUTHOR BIOS — APPROVED COPY

### LONG BIO (180 words)

Simon Bratt is a researcher and practitioner whose work sits at the intersection of philosophy, mental health, and substance use. Based at Liverpool Hope University, he has spent more than a decade in frontline NHS and third-sector practice — in prisons, psychiatric inpatient settings, hostels, A&E, and community substance use services — working with people whose lives the system describes as "complex" and routinely fails to hold. His book *A Philosophical Critique of Co-Existing Mental Health and Substance Use Challenges: Pain Comes First — Drugs Come Later* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2026) argues that the failure of dual-diagnosis services is not a resourcing accident but an ontological one — a consequence of inherited assumptions that are structurally incapable of holding the reality of co-existing distress. Drawing on critical realism, phenomenology and frontline experience, the book offers the Layered Care Model as a practice-ready alternative. Simon's current work focuses on translating the model into commissioning specifications, training programmes, and service redesign with NHS Trusts, local authorities, and voluntary-sector partners. He speaks regularly to clinicians, commissioners and academic audiences across the UK and Europe.

### SHORT BIO (61 words)

Simon Bratt is a researcher and practitioner at Liverpool Hope University, with over a decade of frontline NHS and third-sector experience in prisons, hospitals, hostels and community services. His book *Pain Comes First — Drugs Come Later* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2026) argues that the failure of dual-diagnosis services is structural, not accidental, and offers the Layered Care Model as a practical alternative.

### ONE-LINE BIO (25 words)

Simon Bratt is a researcher and practitioner at Liverpool Hope University and the author of *Pain Comes First — Drugs Come Later* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2026).

## BOOK DESCRIPTION

*Across the UK, US, Australia and Europe, mental distress and substance use co-occur at extraordinary rates — and the systems built to respond to them remain split down the middle. This book argues that the failure is not a resourcing accident but a structural one, rooted in inherited assumptions that are incapable of holding the reality of co-existing distress. Drawing on critical realism, phenomenology, and a decade of frontline practice, it dismantles those assumptions and offers the Layered Care Model: a way of working that treats people not as problems to be split and solved, but as whole human beings to be recognised and supported.*

## ASSETS

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## SPEAKING TOPICS

- The broken ontology of dual diagnosis — and what comes after
- Designing services for co-occurring need: the Layered Care Model
- Epistemic injustice in mental health and substance use care
- Listening as method: lived experience in service redesign
- Bespoke in-house staff days for teams and commissioners

## INTERVIEWS, BOOKINGS & MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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