



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Disease, Science, and Society: Images From The Cinema and History

1920-2-E2004P041

Learning area

3: STUDY OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ASPECTS RELATED TO COMMUNICATION PROCESSES

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

According to the Learning Area n°3 (Study of the socioeconomic and cultural issues of communication), the laboratory intends to promote:

- the knowledge and understanding of the problem of the relationship between health & disease, normality & pathology, norm & deviance.
- the knowledge and understanding of the historical roots of stereotypes about mental illnesses.

According to the Learning Area n°3 (Study of the socioeconomic and cultural issues of communication), the laboratory intends to promote:

- the capability of conveying complex contents into clear, incisive and reasoned forms of communication.

Contents

The evolution of the conceptions on the relationship between health & disease, normality & pathology, norm & deviance will be analyzed. By means of a focus on psychiatry, students will be called to recognize and analyze the evolution of those scientific and social representations of mental illness which, historically bound to science and culture, still represent a relevant conceptual frame of the current communication on the subject.

Detailed program

- Merging and diverging of scientific and social representations of madness
- Mental illness as brain disease: an historical analysis of a commonplace.
- From brain to the person to society: the case of schizophrenia.
- Psychiatry and social criticism.
- The media impact on the public perception of mental illnesses.
- Questioning stereotypes: from mental disease as a natural object to the sick citizen. Mental illness and human condition.

Prerequisites

None

Teaching methods

Presentation and analysis of special issues concerning mental illnesses through the exam of visual materials

Assessment methods

WRITTEN: MANDATORY

In order to check the capability of conveying such complex contents as those on mental illness and/or health into clear, incisive and reasoned forms of communication, students are required to present a written project of a cultural event (exhibition, literary review, film exhibition, press review, musical review, etc.) on a chosen topic referring to a specific issue already touched during classes.

Alternatively, on the basis of a proper bibliography previously established with the teacher, students can work on a more traditional short paper.

ORAL: OPTIONAL

After having presented their papers, students can ask for an interview with the teacher, to discuss their works and deepen their arguments and presenting their possible major critical points if need be.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

- S. Gilman, Immagini della malattia: dalla follia all'AIDS, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1993.
 - S. Sontag, Malattia come metafora, Torino, Einaudi, 1979.
 - V. Woolf, Sulla malattia, Torino, Bollati Boringhieri, 2006.
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