UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Forensic Psychopathology

2627-5-A5810248

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

Mastering forensic medicine, in the criminal law context, and forensic psychopathology approaches to the phenomenon of violent crime. Critical analysis of the national and international literature in the field.

Applying knowledge and understanding

- interpretation of the relationship between psychopathology and violent crime in its multiple forms through case studies
- ability to apply qualitative methodologies
- ability to dialogue with other disciplines

Autonomy of judgment

Ability to critically reflect on public discourse concerning the intersection between psychiatry and justice.

Communication Skills

Proficiency in legal, psychiatric, and socio-criminological language.

- Ability to Learn Independently*

Acquisition of cognitive tools to update one’s knowledge and apply it to the cultural, scientific, and legal contexts in which the intersection between psychiatry and justice takes shape.

Contents

Starting from a historical and disciplinary framework of forensic medicine in the criminal law arena, the course will deal with the research horizons of forensic psychopathology, adopting an interdisciplinary and comparative approach. In the first part, the relationship between psychopathology and violent crime will be studied in depth, and will include elements of victimology in order to understand and evaluate harms to the person. In the second part of the course, specific themes will be focussed upon: the relationship between alcohol, drugs and violent crime; imputability and ethnopsychiatry; psychology and psychopathology of the white-collar criminal. In dealing with these issues, an innovative path will be built, aimed at reaching an understanding of the psychopathological dimensions of criminal behaviour.

Detailed program

Part One – Historical Perspective

Starting from a historical and disciplinary overview of forensic medicine in the criminal field, the first part of the course traces the origins of forensic psychopathology through a comparative approach. The psychiatric expert reports of Lombroso and Verga in Italy, and those of Esquirol in the French case of Pierre Rivière, will be examined as foundational examples of the interplay between psychiatric and legal knowledge. The theme will be developed around the birth and institutionalisation of confinement, with central reference to Michel Foucault's *Histoire de la folie*. The course will cover the evolution of psychiatry, the emergence and development of psychiatric institutions for offenders with mental disorders, through to the Italian Judicial Psychiatric Hospitals (OPG) and their closure.

Part Two – Contemporary Issues

The second part of the course adopts a thematic approach and focuses on the key issues of contemporary forensic psychopathology: personality disorders and criminal responsibility; the care and management of offenders with mental disorders within the REMS facilities and the community mental health network; ethnopsychiatry and forensic psychopathology, with reference to the Kabobo case; the use of drugs, alcohol and crime, in its forensic medical and psychopathological aspects; forensic psychopathology and contemporary media discourse.

Prerequisites

Good skills in learning, writing and oral communication.

Teaching methods

The course will be delivered in Italian.The course will be delivered in Italian. Throughout the course, students' active participation will be encouraged, enabling them to engage with the theoretical and methodological approaches proposed.

5 lectures of 2 hours delivered in expository mode (DE) in person;
15 lectures of 2 hours delivered in expository mode (DE) in the initial part, aimed at engaging students interactively (DI) in the subsequent part (group discussions, case analysis, viewing and commentary of audiovisual materials);
1 lecture of 2 hours delivered in expository mode remotely.

All activities, with the exception of the remote lecture, are held in person.

Assessment methods

Oral exam: it will be a discussion based on the course texts and on the topics covered in class. During the oral exam, it is also possible to discuss a written work previously agreed upon with the professor and developed starting from the theoretical contents indicated in the bibliography.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Option A)

Bandini, T., & Rocca, G. (2010). Fondamenti di psicopatologia forense. Giuffrè.

Musumeci, E. (2012). Cesare Lombroso e le neuroscienze: un parricidio mancato. Devianza, libero arbitrio, imputabilità tra antiche chimere ed inediti scenari. Franco Angeli.

Option B)

Bandini, T., & Rocca, G. (2010). Fondamenti di psicopatologia forense. Giuffrè.

Merzagora, I. (2017). Lo straniero a giudizio. Tra psicopatologia e diritto. Cortina.

Option C)

Bandini, T., & Rocca, G. (2010). Fondamenti di psicopatologia forense. Giuffrè.

Foucault, M. (Ed.). (2020 [1973]). Io, Pierre Rivière, avendo sgozzato mia madre, mia sorella e mio fratello… Un caso di parricidio nel XIX secolo. Einaudi.

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS