The Story of Mental Illness Told Through Film

PSY 471

3 Credits

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Course Description: Nothing conveys information or evokes emotion quite as clearly as our visual sense. Filmmakers capture the richness of this visual sense, combine it with auditory stimuli, and create the ultimate waking dream experience: the movie. Film has become such an integral part of our culture that it seems to be the mirror in which we see ourselves reflected every day. (Wedding & Boyd, 1999)
The introduction of film into the study of psychology allows for the opportunity of exploring complexities of behavior, emotion, and interpersonal relationships in persons struggling with a variety of mental health issues.

No textbook is required for this course.

Student Learning Objectives:
1. Apply critical thinking skills in order to understand how films influence perceptions of mental health issues.
2. Gain knowledge of how social context influences what is considered a mental health issue.
3. To demonstrate written competence in analyzing and synthesizing mental health issues and their symptoms and will become aware of accuracies versus myths regarding how such disorders are portrayed in popular film.
4. Enhance ability to speak clearly and effectively.

Course Requirements:
Grades for this course will be earned through class attendance and participation as measured by completion of in-class activities, readings, and critical thinking summaries of movies. Also an 8-10 page paper (first three pages will be completed in class) analyzing a film of your choice dealing with mental illness/portrayal of mental health therapists/individual mental illness.
Paper will be discussed fully in the first class meeting and due one week after the course ends.

**Grading:**
Grades will be calculated based upon the percent of points earned out of the total possible points. The following percentages will apply.

- **A=100-94**
- **B=86-84**
- **C=76-74**

- **A+=93-90**
- **B+=83-80**
- **C+=79-77**

Anything below a 70% will result in instructor/student conference to determine course of action.

**Academic Integrity Policy:**
All individual student work will represent the student’s own work. Any use of others' ideas and words without proper citation of sources is plagiarism and will result in penalties to be determined by the instructor and/or dean of undergraduate studies.