

Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media Assignment

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Instructions:

Identify an example of stigmatization of a psychological disorder in the media or pop culture; this may include a film, book or other written narrative, television show, song, news report, or other cultural artifacts, and may involve a fictional or non-fictional person or persons. No matter the source – the example should explicitly portray disorders; this means that the example itself addresses the issues of disorders and it is not merely you inferring that the example related to disorders. Further, to demonstrate stigmatization, the example should present disorders in a derogatory and/or demeaning light; this includes perpetuating stereotypes regarding psychological disorders, making fun of psychological disorders, or using stigmatizing language related to disorders. Provide a description of the example, along with a link to the example; for films or TV shows, imdb.com and youtube.com are recommended. The example should not be someone else's evaluation of a specific media piece; instead, your writing will present your own assessment of an appropriate media or pop culture example. Additionally, you should not simply reuse an example discussed in class.

After describing the example evaluate the context and assumptions presented in the example. This evaluation should include identifying myths and misconceptions within the example and contrasting those erroneous beliefs to accurate information. Ideally, focus on myths and misconceptions about psychological disorders more broadly, rather than delving into individual disorders and specific symptoms. In discussing the myths and misconceptions in the example, also attempt to describe where these erroneous beliefs come from; to do so, you may find it helpful to review concepts from cognitive and social psychology. Finally, describe how the example would impact individuals in society. Doing so may entail 1) considering how the example would contribute to people's beliefs or feelings about psychological disorders and/or 2) considering how it would impact individuals actually diagnosed with a psychological disorder. For this discussion, explicitly draw on course material, correctly using terms and ideas related to class to demonstrate your understanding and ability to apply your knowledge.

Writing Criteria:

Your writing should be comprehensive, but concise. This means that quality is better than quantity (i.e., writing more does not earn you a higher grade if what you write does not meet the expectations of the assignment). Your writing should also be clear and coherent, flowing logically through your ideas. Further, it should convey a professional tone, including but not

limited to minimal grammatical and spelling errors, and no use of second person pronouns (i.e., you, your) and/or informal language (e.g., clichés, excessive use of contractions). It is not necessary to draw from external resources (i.e., those outside of class materials), but if you do so you should cite those resources. If it becomes apparent that external resources were used by not cited, you will be turned in for academic dishonesty. This includes failure to cite definitions from non-course resources (e.g., websites). As was true for previous assignments, you should cite the example itself, providing an appropriate external link.

Finally, as the assignment entails discussing stigmatization of psychological disorders, you should conform to the American Psychological Association's guidelines for reducing bias (APA Manual, section 3.15) to avoid stigmatizing language (e.g., negative labels, such as “brain damaged”; slurs, such as “crazy” or “retard”; and euphemisms, such as “mentally challenged”). You should also use person-first language; for example:

Not Okay	Instead write...
The schizophrenic character...	The character who allegedly had schizophrenia...
He was an alcoholic.	He struggled with an alcohol addiction.
The anorexic said...	The character who was suffering from anorexia said...
The narcoleptic woman...	The woman diagnosed with narcolepsy...
The character was bipolar.	The character had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

If the example itself uses the terms, you need to use quotes to indicate it is their words, not yours. This is also a good opportunity to speak about how the example is, in fact, spreading stigmatization of psychological disorders through the language the example uses.

Submission & Due Date:

All assignments must be submitted through Canvas, as an attached document; Microsoft Word is preferred, but PDF submissions will also be accepted. **Submissions of files that are not .doc, .docx, or .pdf will not be accepted**, as I may not be able to open those documents. If you use a program besides Microsoft Word, please convert the document to an appropriate file before submitting. This includes Google Docs; do not submit/share a link to the Google Doc - rather save it as a .doc or .pdf and upload that file.

Be sure to verify that you've correctly submitted the assignment prior to the deadline, and not that technical issues are not an appropriate excuse for failing to submit work on time.

Grading Criteria:

Refer to the grading rubric below to review the grading criteria. You should be careful to review the grading rubric prior to starting your writing and again before you submit your final response. Be aware that no work will be “pre-graded”; this means I will not read your work and grade it before you submit the response. If you want general feedback regarding whether you are on the right track, you must submit your paper to me via email no later than 4 days before the due date; the subject title should clearly convey the nature of the email (e.g., list the name of the class and assignment). If these conditions are met, I will be better able to provide timely and useful feedback to you that can improve upon your draft. Otherwise, I cannot guarantee that I'll be able to provide feedback in a timely fashion.

Academic Integrity:

Your assignment should reflect your own work conducted during this term for this specific class. If you are using materials from any other source, it should be cited when you are using that material and referenced at the end of your paper. If it is clear to me that you used the work of someone else without appropriate citations/references and/or if you have submitted similar or identical work to another class (including a previous Psy100 class), such behavior will be considered academic dishonesty; you will earn a 0 for the assignment and the case will be referred to the department chair and associate provost.

Building Block Assignment #1

By the end of the term, you will be writing a brief analysis of a media example that demonstrates stigmatization of psychological disorders (see [Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media](#) assignment for details). To help you develop that paper, there will be short assignments along that way, that help you consider how the current unit's content relates to the theme of stigmatization of psychological disorders.

As the current unit is focused on learning and memory, we'll be considering how observational learning and memory failures relate to the problem of stigmatization of psychological disorders in the media.

Instructions:

To get started, identify a media example that not only portrays a character with a psychological disorder but does so in a way that is derogatory and/or inaccurate. Please note that the media example does not need to explicitly identify a specific disorder, but it does need to imply that there a character has a disorder (e.g., refers to a character as "crazy"). Do not identify an example where you've attempted to diagnose a character with a disorder (e.g., assuming that Ariel in *The Little Mermaid* struggles with anorexia - nothing in the story suggests that is true). **If you are not certain whether an example fits, ask me!**

First, you should clearly identify the example and provide an external reference for it (e.g., imdb.com link, YouTube video). Write a brief (3-5 sentences) description of your example.

Second, write one sentence applying what you know about observational learning that can help us understand the influence of the media example on an audience. You are encouraged to focus on reading [6.4.Observational Learning \(Modeling\)](#) (Links to an external site.) to help you guide your response.

Third, write one sentence applying what you know about memory errors that can help us understand the influence of the media example on an audience. You are encouraged to focus on reading [8.3. Problems with Memory](#) (Links to an external site.) to help generate ideas.

Feedback:

By completing these smaller tasks, you will get feedback along the way that can help you construct a stronger final submission for your [Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media](#) assignment. It will be graded on a complete/incomplete basis and will count as a minor percentage of your overall Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media grade.

Cut-off Date for Submissions:

You can submit work up until the exam closes for this unit. No work will be accepted after that time. You will receive feedback within 3 days of submitting your work.

Academic Integrity:

Your assignment should reflect your own work conducted during this term for this specific class. If you have previously taken Psy100 and have completed a similar assignment, you should use a new example; you will not earn credit for the final paper if your final [Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media](#) assignment is highly similar to your previous submission or that of another student. See that assignment for further details about academic integrity.

Building Block Assignment #2

As the current unit is focused on social psychology, we'll be considering how social influence, social cognition, and social relations relate to the problem of stigmatization of psychological disorders in the media.

Instructions:

First, write a brief (3-5 sentences) description of your example, along with providing an external reference for it (e.g., imdb.com link, YouTube video). If you submitted something for the previous activity, you can (and should) use the same example; you can copy what you had for this portion to remind me of your example.

Second, write one sentence applying what you know about social influence that can help us understand the influence of the media example on an audience. You are encouraged to focus in on reading [12.4.Conformity, Compliance, and Obedience \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

Third, write one sentence applying what you know about social cognition and social relations that can help us consider the effects of the media example on an audience. You are encouraged to focus on readings [12.5.Prejudice and Discrimination \(Links to an external site.\)](#), [12.6.Aggression \(Links to an external site.\)](#), and [12.7.Prosocial Behavior \(Links to an external site.\)](#) to generate ideas.

Feedback:

By completing these smaller tasks, you will get feedback along the way that can help you construct a stronger final submission for your [Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media](#) assignment. It will be graded on a complete/incomplete basis and will count as a minor percentage of your overall Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media grade.

Cut-off Date for Submissions:

You can submit work up until the exam closes for this unit. No work will be accepted after that time. You will receive feedback within 3 days of submitting your work.

Academic Integrity:

Your assignment should reflect your own work conducted during this term for this specific class. If you have previously taken Psy100 and have completed a similar assignment, you should use a new example; you will not earn credit for the

final paper if your final [Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media](#) assignment is highly similar to your previous submission or that of another student. See that assignment for further details about academic integrity.

Building Block Assignment #3

As the current unit is focused on psychopathology, we'll be considering in what ways the media creates inaccurate and potentially harmful portrayals of psychological disorders.

Instructions:

First, write a brief (3-5 sentences) description of your example, along with providing an external reference for it (e.g., imdb.com link, YouTube video). If you submitted something for the previous activity, you can (and should) use the same example; you can copy what you had for this portion to remind me of your example.

Second, identify at least one belief the example conveys about psychological disorders. I strongly encourage you to think in broad terms here rather than to focus too narrowly on specific symptoms of a given disorder. For instance, it's better to focus on whether the example is portraying people with psychological disorders in general as violent, incompetent, needy/dependent, or unpredictable, instead of considering whether the example is accurately portraying the possible symptoms of specific personality disorder.

Third, for each belief you identify above, write a counter point conveying why the belief is inaccurate and/or problematic. This is a good time to turn to [Chapter 15 \(Links to an external site.\)](#) for ideas, along with the [other resources for this particular unit](#).

Feedback:

By completing these smaller tasks, you will get feedback along the way that can help you construct a stronger final submission for your [Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media](#) assignment. It will be graded on a complete/incomplete basis and will count as a minor percentage of your overall Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media grade.

Cut-off Date for Submissions:

You can submit work up until the exam closes for this unit. No work will be accepted after that time. You will receive feedback within 3 days of submitting your work. As this final assignment is due relatively close to the final due date for the [Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media](#) assignment, you may wish to submit it before the due date to ensure you have feedback in time for that final paper.

Academic Integrity:

Your assignment should reflect your own work conducted during this term for this specific class. If you have previously taken Psy100 and have completed a similar assignment, you should use a new example; you will not earn credit for the final paper if your final [Stigmatization of Psychological Disorders in the Media](#) assignment is highly similar to your previous submission or that of another student. See that assignment for further details about academic integrity.