Sociology of Health, Illness and the Body

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Semester 2

20 Credits

2000 word essay; 1 hour exam.

Summary of Content:

When a person is deemed to be mentally or physically sick, this involves taking on a particular social role and coming under the care (power) of others.

This module examines the power relations of medical care; the cultural meanings (and thus ‘treatment’) of different illnesses; and the impact that illness has on our personal and social identities.

We will also explore new developments such as the medicalisation of childhood naughtiness through the ADHD diagnosis; and the changing relationship that we have with our bodies in our consumer driven world of health products, plastic surgery, and genetic engineering.

Lecture Topics include:

- Sickness and Society;
- Medicine and Power Relations;
- The Sociology of Mental Illness;
- Experiencing Illness: Narrative and Identity;
- Representations of Illness in Art and Culture
- Morality: Risk, Blame and Shame;
- Health in Consumer Culture;
- The Body;
- Care.
Some Books from the Reading List:


