

Appendix D

12 Misconceptions About Mental Illness and Mental Health Professionals Perpetuated by Movies

| Misconception | Film examples |
|---|---|
| Love alone conquers mental illness. | <i>Mozart and the Whale</i> (2005) <i>Stateside</i> (2004) <i>Wilbur Wants to Kill Himself</i> (2002) <i>Matchstick Men</i> (2003) <i>Benny & Joon</i> (1993) |
| People with mental illness are violent. | <i>Keane</i> (2004) <i>Edmond</i> (2005) <i>The Killing of John Lennon</i> (2006) <i>The Assassination of Richard Nixon</i> (2004) <i>Peacock</i> (2010) <i>Nightmare on Elm Street</i> (1984) |
| People with mental illness are wild and crazy. | <i>Michael Clayton</i> (2007) <i>Mozart and the Whale</i> (2005) <i>Black Snake Moan</i> (2006) <i>The Big White</i> (2005) <i>I'm a Cyborg, But That's OK</i> (2007) |
| People referred to as delusional or psychotic are actually telling the truth, as well as being mentally healthy and grounded in reality. | <i>Flightplan</i> (2005) <i>K-Pax</i> (2001) <i>Happy Accidents</i> (2000) <i>The Jacket</i> (2005) |
| Parents cause schizophrenia, autism, etc. (the myth of the schizophrenogenic parent). | <i>Clean, Shaven</i> (1993) <i>Shine</i> (1996) |
| All mental illness has a traumatic etiology. | <i>The Fisher King</i> (1991) <i>The Snake Pit</i> (1948) <i>The Three Faces of Eve</i> (1957) <i>K-Pax</i> (2001) <i>Nurse Betty</i> (2000) |
| Schizophrenia is the same as dissociative identity disorder, gender identity disorder, etc. | <i>Me, Myself & Irene</i> (2000) <i>Dressed to Kill</i> (1980) |
| Psychiatric hospitals are dangerous places, or at the least, unhelpful; the patients are not sick, they are harmlessly eccentric or misdiagnosed. | <i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i> (1975) <i>Asylum</i> (2005) <i>The Jacket</i> (2005) <i>King of Hearts</i> (1966) <i>House of Fools</i> (2002) |
| Psychiatric treatment (e.g., ECT, medications) blocks creativity and intelligence. | <i>A Beautiful Mind</i> (2001) <i>A Clockwork Orange</i> (1971) |
| It is liberating to discontinue psychiatric treatment on one's own (e.g., medications). | <i>Garden State</i> (2004) |
| The treatment of mental illness involves boundary violations by a therapist (these are usually sexual). | <i>The Prince of Tides</i> (1991) <i>Numb</i> (2007) <i>Mr. Jones</i> (1993) <i>Final Analysis</i> (1992) <i>Tin Cup</i> (1996) <i>A Dangerous Method</i> (2011) |
| Psychological diagnoses are routinely made up by psychologists and patients and touted as a standard condition. | <i>Me, Myself & Irene</i> (2000): Advanced delusional schizophrenia with involuntary narcissistic rage <i>Asylum</i> (2005): Severe personality disorder with features of morbid jealousy <i>Transamerica</i> (2005): Gender dysphoria <i>The Ringer</i> (2005): Highly functioning developmental disability <i>Shrink</i> (2009) |