

VALUES IN MENTAL AND MEDICAL DISORDER CONCEPTS: THEIR PRESENCE IS NOT THE POINT, BEING AWARE OF THEM IS

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Abstract

Both in medicine and in psychiatry, it's essential to thoroughly identify the cases in which it is necessary to intervene therapeutically, and justify a sick leave or make forensic interpretations, among others. Therefore, it is important to find a general concept and definition for medical and psychiatric disorders. Boorse, develops one of the most widespread models of medical disorder that aspired to be value-free and that was based in medical dysfunction. But values appear implicitly or explicitly with a deeper analysis of this concept. On the other hand, there is the overtly value laden (harm) component that has been used in the definition of disorder, defended as essential by several authors over the time, once symptoms and their consequences (disability, distress) have been considered as a priority in medicine. In this article, we intend to review, through a conceptual analysis, the proximity between the concepts of mental and physical disorders regarding the presence of values, and to propose a way to deal with the different kinds of values that might be present. It is concluded that values are present in the main concepts that have been used to define medical or psychiatric disorder. What is essential is to understand what is descriptive and what is value and to try to avoid moral values.

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