

Semiotica, estremo rifugio per ciarlatani universitari?

Other than as 'the study of signs' there is relatively little agreement amongst semioticians themselves as to the scope and methodology of semiotics. Although Saussure had looked forward to the day when semiotics would become part of the social sciences, semiotics is still a relatively loosely defined critical practice rather than a unified, fully-fledged analytical method or theory. At worst, what passes for 'semiotic analysis' is little more than a pretentious form of literary criticism applied beyond the bounds of literature and based merely on subjective interpretation and grand assertions. This kind of abuse has earned semiotics an unenviable reputation in some quarters as the last refuge for academic charlatans. Criticisms of structuralist semiotics have led some theorists to abandon semiotics altogether, whilst others have sought to merge it with new perspectives. It is difficult to offer a critique of a shifting target which changes its form so fluidly as it moves.

Daniel Chandler, *Semiotics for beginners*, Aberystwyth University. Retrieved 2008-02-06

(proposto da Paolo Fabbri)