

Editorial

Medicine, Cinema and Education

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Contents, authors and readers are the three elements that allow the existence of a periodical. The environment of the contents qualifies it. Cinema, medicine and education are the “qualifying adjectives” of the *Journal of Medicine and Movies (JMM)*. In the singular, and not in the plural, the three words should be interlinked since their underlying aim -there are others- is to contribute to health education using the cinema as a teaching tool.

The articles published have attempted to analyse, in several deep and fun-oriented ways, the presence of topics related to health in diverse films, and the way in which they have been addressed, together with the quality of films with health contents.

The contents have been written by health professionals, cinema buffs, and teachers, and hence the journal has become a vehicle for them to express their feelings and opinions. The *JMM* has offered a haven their work, their preoccupations, reflections, analyses, criticism, experience and research; in sum, their contributions. The *JMM* is a “different” type of publication since because it is designed with the customary criteria of publications in the sphere of health, including those of quality, it permits the formats used in the humanities. So in it we find both simple analyses, of particular aspects or addressing only one film, and more complex ones, involving more than one film.

Its characteristics -electronic publishing, free availability on the internet and simultaneous publication in English and Spanish, all under the umbrella of

the University of Salamanca- have facilitated its diffusion and have drawn the attention not only of professionals but also that of other parts of society.

In light of all the above, we are convinced that the Journal must act as a promoter of *cinemaphilia*. Thus, people interested in this publication can find elements, which they may have overlooked previously, that will help to enhance their interest as the viewers of certain films.

The cinema has characteristics that make it ideal for use in expanding people’s awareness, divulgation and education; something that today nobody doubts, because it conjugates art, education, communications capacity, and mass consumption. If what is being sought are aspects related to falling ill, the cinema can help to make people aware, disseminate information, and train the population at large, as well as students of the health sciences and health-related professionals.

The educational capacity of the cinema improves if its viewing becomes an activity aimed at and subjected to debate and discussion. The *JMM* has published the experiences of different teaching groups and the methodologies they have used¹⁻⁶. This type of article is a first approach to the aims mentioned at the beginning of this editorial.

Knowledge of the health contents in the movies is essential to be able to perform a suitable selection of films and a specific educational process to be addressed. In this issue, we publish an article that

offers the results of an exhaustive search of the Heimlich manoeuvre in the cinema⁷. This manoeuvre is crucial in cases of airway obstruction and it usually performed, as we see in the films analysed, by people who are not healthcare workers. This article is hence a document attesting to the value of the cinema as a source of information and public awareness. The Journal already contains a large corpus of information when one is seeking or investigating different aspects of health topics in the movies.

Whichever the educational process selected, the usefulness of teaching publications to achieve the ends sought is easy to justify. Here we present articles in which the authors have made critical analyses of aspects related to the end of life⁸⁻⁹ and others in which the contents are more enumerative and descriptive and which show different aspects of the dimorphisms¹⁰ and of the history of medicine and pharmacy in the Middle Ages¹¹, a time in which both disciplines were united. The use of this type of material facilitates teaching and allows on-line educational activities to be carried out.

The educational capacities of a journal of this type, however, cannot simply rest at these levels. The editors believe that taking advantage of static images showing pathologies -shots- may be of great use in the training of students in the bio-health areas since as well as the information there is the "morbidity" deriving from the fact that they come from the cinema and can be associated with a given film. In this issue, we analyse one of the complications of a current "plague": the diabetic foot¹².

The training possibilities do not end here. Training activities using the cinema are evidently based on viewing the films, although it is not always necessary for students to see the whole film, and certain sequences may suffice. On the internet there are several portals that store and offer viewers small clips or fragments of larger works -videoclips- often from films. It is easy to check this simply by making a search for one of the films addressed in this issue: *Freaks* (1932), by Tod Browning. The use of this type of audiovisual resource is not uncommon in very high-impact medical journals with digital editions. With the present issue, the *JMM* initiates a new section -*Medicine in Movie Scenes*- with a film that, according to its progenitor, contributed to the belief that in a case of melanoma it is best not to touch it¹³. We are referring here to *Not as a Stranger* (1955) by

Stanley Kramer, a film already addressed in *JMM*, showing that interest does not flag and that it is always possible to update topics using new approaches.

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