

Beyond a Beautiful Mind: Film as an Educational and Therapeutic Tool

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Film possesses an extraordinary power and offers an unrivaled medium for entertainment and escapism. The storylines of films are influenced by the societies we live in. Given that 1 in 4 of us has a mental health problem at some point in our lives, mental illness and the psychiatrists who treat these illnesses play huge roles in our societies and on our screens. Movies that have a mental health theme can provide viewers with a precious qualitative insight into the minds of people with psychopathology. Over the last few decades, films have become increasingly used as an educational tool in the teaching of psychiatry related topics such as mental state examination to mental healthcare trainees and students. Films also have the power to *heal* and the term *cinematherapy* has been coined. Indeed, there are case studies of people with first-hand experience of psychopathology who report that watching films with a mental health theme has contributed to their convalescence. Film, therefore, can and has been used as a 'therapeutic' tool with patients. In this presentation we provide a review of the literature on the use of film as an educational and therapeutic tool. Who also offer a first person narrative from an individual with schizophrenia in which he discusses and describes how films which theme on psychosis helped him to recover from his experiences of paranoid delusional beliefs. This person also comments on how films helped the mental healthcare providers charged with his care to understand him and mental illness better.