



“These essays cover scenes from films that will make you laugh, tear up, sob, jump around hopping mad, but mainly think. Using film to teach medical ethics is not new, but a book to do so is. This volume is a worthwhile addition to your bioethical or film library—a wonderful intermingling of the two fields. Thoughts stimulated by these film-scenes and discussions will inspire students to keep medicine alive—and save it if necessary.”

Cynthia Doran, *New York Journal of Books*

“The use of popular media is not novel in the teaching of ethics, nor is the use of film and/or television as a tool for engaging the audience especially innovative, but, Colt, Quadrelli, and Friedman show that film can be particularly useful and powerful when teaching humanities to science students and, more specifically, teaching ethics to medical students. Film works as a teaching tool because it is a simple and effective way to engage students.”

Dov Greenbaum, *Medical Law Review*

PREFACE

In the Wachowski Brothers' science fiction epic, *The Matrix* (1999), Morpheus (Laurence Fishburn) offers Neo (Keanu Reeves) a critical choice: take the blue pill ~~the~~ story ends. You wake up in your bed and you believe whatever you want to believe," or the red pill ~~you~~ stay in Wonderland, and I show you how deep the rabbit hole goes." Using film to teach medical ethics is like swallowing the red pill. Abstract concepts and ideas can be extracted from film, debated, and discussed. Viewers can relate with or alienate themselves from the actors, the plot, or the context. They can address the issues portrayed in the film and identify others that may not be fully developed. Regardless of their level of expertise and experience, viewers can voice opinions, argue contradictory positions, display their emotions, and justify their perspectives based on external evidence, their personal experiences, and what actually happens in the fictional narrative of the cinematographic experience.

From an educator's standpoint, film provides a multilayered nucleus from which significant learning can take place: it also makes available a myriad of scenes and scenarios that can be dissected, critiqued, and used as examples to highlight moral dilemmas. Not only can films teach us *how* to restrain ourselves from doing what we know,¹ or think we know, is wrong, but they can portray situations that might confuse us and thus prompt reflection on the *why* we do what we do (or don't do). Movies can thus be used to help health care providers develop skills in the human dimensions of medical practice. They promote enthusiasm for learning, highlight themes, enhance discussion and reflection, and sometimes, help illustrate specific teaching points on clinical topics, social and health care policy issues, cultural differences, and science.²⁻⁴

This is cinemeducation, and, as stated in the preface of Alexander, Lenahan, and Pavlov's book on the subject,⁵ if you are not already using film in your curriculum, we are confident that you will be after reading this book. Films with a solid plot and coherent story often work more dramatically and engagingly than a printed case description.⁶ Visual images impart important information that simply cannot be duplicated in the written case history, which usually presents the facts and often ignores the broader context of an ethical situation; equally important, film narratives put a human face on an abstract ethical issue, taking it from the realm of the theoretical and placing it firmly within the realm of the personal. Thus, film can be effectively used as an experiential exercise, as part of problem-solving sessions, or as a metaphor to clarify or dramatically magnify perspectives about a disease process or health care-related issue. Even a discussion of how cinematographic

techniques reinforce the emotional, psychological, and intellectual impact of film—the use of flashbacks, special sequencing, framing, lighting, or animation, can dramatically illustrate social behaviors, values, and ethical principles that contribute to learning and knowledge retention. While using film enhances the intrinsic value of the educational process, and both learning and teaching should be inherently fun and satisfying, it would be incorrect to presume that simply showing a film suffices to teach medical ethics, or that the integration of film could replace thoughtful reading and analysis of essential texts. Unless educators want to entice their students to reflect *de novo* about a subject, reading pertinent course material prior to viewing a film is a prerequisite for a more enlightening and enriching discussion.

We designed this book to give readers specific tools to use in the classroom or the auditorium. Short scenes, with their specific DVD time sequences, are described and serve as a springboard for discussions of a particular ethics issue. Authors return to the scene and integrate their analysis into a brief commentary about the film itself. While it may not be necessary for readers, or their students, to view the entire film prior to integrating the scene into a teaching session or lecture, it is certainly preferable to do so before using the short clip in the classroom. That way, the teacher obtains a firmer grasp of how the scene fits into the overall narrative flow, as well as its place within the various characters' situation at that particular moment in the movie. Much like a particular section you might take out of a novel to illustrate a specific ethical dilemma, it remains important for instructors to know what comes before and after that scene to fully appreciate its significance.

We choose to use short scenes because our electronic age differs dramatically from any era that preceded it. Today, media saturates every level of our daily environment. Young people, in particular, dwell in a world dominated by an onslaught of visual images; they inhabit a dynamic, high-speed, rapidly changing, and sensitive environment stuffed with information acquisition and powerful emotional impact. They customarily receive, process, interpret, and react to visual images, be they on movie, television, or computer screens, Blackberries, and cell phones. As such, short scenes, often characterized by powerful emotions, can effectively help illustrate or intensify a particular point. Additionally, the use of short scenes allows a broader use of film in the context of conventional courses without altering traditional class schedules. Scenes can be carefully chosen based on the educator's learning objectives and tailored to the educator's style and personality.

The analysis of a selected scene usually constitutes the central, strategic component of any film-based educational approach.^{7,8} Some educators, however, may choose to play an entire movie, advising students to view the film with an eye for reflecting on larger concepts.⁹ Quite exceptionally, full-length film has been used solely to provide the audience with an artistic and aesthetic experience that they would otherwise have missed, with no specific intent to afford talking

points or to illustrate ethical or clinical dilemmas.^{10,11} In contrast, in a manner similar to discussions that follow the reading of a complete short story or novel, the viewing of a film in its entirety provides a group with the opportunity to respond affectively, cognitively, comprehensively, and collectively to the narratives viewed on screen,¹² resulting, at times, in a deeper understanding of the issues being portrayed.

This book aims to supplement core texts and other readings in medical ethics. A large number of scenes, therefore, have been selected based on their value to illustrate ethical dilemmas or motivate discussions. Films were selected on the basis of their power for evocative, visually based, cinematic imagination, and a particular author's desire or experience using that film in a teaching setting. We preferred using easily accessible feature films rather than documentaries or animated films produced specifically as teaching tools with explicit didactic foci. In addition, often times, in popular, as well as in lesser known or even commercially unsuccessful films, authors may actually address what the viewer might first think is a side issue of the film itself but discover to be an important component of the overall narrative.

Our goal throughout this book was to harness the powerfully seductive, emotional, and attention-driving intensity of film to provide educators, and any viewer interested in health care professions and ethics, with a collection of films that illustrate some of the more common issues appearing in medical practice and under discussion in ethics courses. Sometimes, the entire context of a film is relevant to one's interpretation of the scene. Other times, the scene has an intrinsic value that is quite independent from the rest of the film. While we provide time sequences for scenes in order to facilitate their retrieval and bookmarking on modern DVD formats, they will not always be absolutely accurate depending on the DVD and DVD player being used. We leave to the discretion of the viewer how much or how little of each scene needs to be shown in order to succinctly comment on the ethics issue they wish to address.

As a springboard for discussion, a short essay accompanies each selected scene. These essays stress many of the more relevant theoretical and practical issues pertaining to the situation or dilemma illustrated in the scene. They are not intended to replace the rich existing literature about ethics theory; nor do we presume that the scene can be used only to address that particular teaching point. We did our best to assure that both the scene and the essay are engaging, and that the information provided will help viewers enhance their knowledge and understanding of ethics, as well as link ethical principles, theories, and abstract concepts to the concrete situations illustrated in the film. Our goal was to provide both professionals and a general readership with a collection of precise, accessible examples of how film can be applied to help illustrate, learn, and teach medical ethics. Chapters are constructed so that the reader can choose a film or an ethics issue. While

educators can use the essays to help stimulate classroom discussions about a film or a medical ethics issue, interested readers can easily move from essay to essay based on their intellectual curiosity. Material from this book can be thus accessed by a general readership interested in the use and understanding of film, as well as for illustrating various aspects of situational ethics in hospitals and universities, and for lectures or classroom teaching of humanities in medicine, film and cinematography, clinical medicine, philosophy, psychology, and ethics.

This anthology of essays, encompasses a broad range of relationships between medical practice, health care and social policy, professionalism, illness medical ethics, and film. The abundance of topics and possible perspectives, therefore, warranted that this book bring together an eclectic group of internationally recognized scholars and practitioners from diverse disciplines including medical ethics, clinical medicine, philosophy, psychology, media and communication studies, medical humanities, public health, business, theology, law, cultural studies, political science, women's studies, English, psychology, and health care education. Each author has experience using film in his or her teaching of medical ethics or other course materials. Each essay in *The Picture of Health: Medical Ethics and the Movies* is based on a scene extracted from a specific film in order to define, illustrate, and discuss a specific medical ethics issue. While each essay contains enough material to make it valuable as a resource and guide, essays are not so technically overloaded as to overwhelm readers, either in how they utilize film, or in the intellectualization of medical ethics. Although we provided creative license to authors in regards to the manner with which they presented their perspectives, we maintained a similar structure so that readers may easily understand the issues being addressed in their clinical, philosophical, scientific, and cinematographic context.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I includes a series of personal reflections whereby authors discuss specifically how they have incorporated film into their respective teaching careers. In the first essay, renowned ethicist and philosopher Al Jonsen reflects on how *Frankenstein* gave rise to medical ethics. In the second essay, medical ethicist and physician Peter Dans reflects on more than 40 years teaching ethics in the hospital and classroom setting. Johanna Shapiro, professor of humanities addresses the educational use of film in the third essay, while in the fourth, Professors Steven Crawford and Henri Colt reflect on how a scene from *City of Angels* (1998) prompted exploration of “the dark room of their souls” while they address guilt, compassion, and the power of forgiveness in the health care professions.

The second part of this book is the longest, containing 80 essays in eight sections of ten essays , each section categorized according to the type of ethics issue they illustrate: Autonomy, justice and informed consent; professionalism; communication and provider-patient relationships; health care

policy and social responsibility; rights, responsibilities and research; reproduction, genetics, and sexuality; end-of-life and right to die; other ethical issues in medical specialties.

Part III is comprised of a filmography listing the titles of 140 films not used in this volume, but that contain powerful scenes that might be integrated into ethics lectures or training curricula. This list is by no means complete, but provided only to guide readers toward possible additional resources.

With the introduction of any innovative teaching method, some part of the academic community, especially in biological sciences, requests proof of the effectiveness of that new technique before advocating or even supporting its widespread application. Educators, except for the most conservative ones, have long ago learned that the measurement of success in teaching remains an elusive, controversial, and at the least quite ambiguous¹³ goal. As stated by Fenstermacher,¹³ we should not confuse quality teaching with *successful teaching*, one that produces learning as is understood exclusively in its achievement sense. Quality teaching pertains to *what* is taught and *how* it is taught. Content must be appropriate, proper, and aimed at some worthy purpose. The methods employed must be morally defensible and grounded in shared conceptions of reasonableness.

We submit that acquiring a taste for the aesthetic provides an additional dimension to medical learning, and that even when morality is at issue, reason is an ideal tool for understanding. There is a place in this context for art, including that most powerful medium, film, that mobilizes all of our human resources for action: reason, intuition, instinctive responses, emotion and affectivity, and a need to find and provide answers. Scenes from films can encourage students to see various sides of an ethical dilemma. They contribute to classroom activities by providing an accessible point of reference that personalizes the more arcane philosophical commentaries that often characterize health care ethics debates. By introducing such provocative narrative experiences into the educational setting, the ethics teacher stimulates students to integrate abstract principles with concrete situations, a methodology that encourages students to combine theory and practice into an organic whole.¹⁴ If we add to this a careful selection of insightful readings, and a vivid, professional, interactive, student-centered, and objectives-guided discussion of the contents of a film potentially guided by the essays in this book, we are certain that the enhanced quality of our teaching of ethics will benefit colleagues, students, and other professionals interested in this fascinating field of human behavior and psychology.

In closing, we would like to thank the diligent and always helpful contributors to this volume. Not only have they enlightened us with their knowledge and expertise, but they engendered among us fresh interests and a desire to explore new horizons. They have unselfishly shared their

perspectives, trials, and tribulations using film to teach medical ethics to health care professionals, medical students, attorneys, communication and media professionals, and students of humanities studies in both the classroom and the workplace. Reading, and occasionally revising their essays, has been, for the editors, an extraordinarily enriching experience. We trust that it will be so for you as well.

H. Colt, S. Quadrelli, L. Friedman Eds

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