

## Call for Papers

### Workshop

University of Lausanne 3-4 March 2022

**\*\*Abstract submission deadline: October 30, 2021\*\***

## Useful Film in (Neuro) Psychiatry Europe, 1900–1950 Update on Current Research

This workshop is organized in the framework of the SNSF project  
*Cinéma et (neuro)psychiatrie en Suisse: autour de la collection Waldau, 1920-1990*  
<https://waldau.hypotheses.org/>

Since its inception, the cinematograph had many applications in the medical field, and particularly in the fields of psychiatry, neurology and neuropsychiatry (Lorusso & Venturini 2019). With surgeons, neurologists and psychiatrists are at the forefront of using film as a tool for analyzing, storing, archiving, and transmitting knowledge. For a long time, the (neuro) psychiatric films made by doctors as part of their teaching and research have been overshadowed by educational and health films. But since 2000, and especially 2010, scholars from different disciplines are increasingly interested in these practices. Several interdisciplinary teams have conducted research, with the aim of rehabilitating film as a privileged source for both the history of medicine and the history of cinema.

This interest stems partly from discoveries of films thought to be lost, such as the Magnus-Rademacher collection (1909–1940) (Koehler, Lameris & Hielscher 2015; Koehler & Lameris 2016). We can also mention the research in Italy on the Vincenzo Neri collection (Lorusso, Vanone & Venturini 2012; Vanone, Lorusso & Venturini 2015; Venturini & Lorusso 2013); in Germany on the Arthur Simmons and Max Nonne collections (Holdorff 2010, 2012, 2016); in Belgium on the Van Gehuchten collection (Aubert 2002a, 2002b, 2009, 2016); or in Rumania on the G. Marinescu collection (Buda et al. 2009). All these studies, and many others, show the dynamism of a field of research in continuous expansion.

Scholars face several challenges in front of films made by mental health professionals. How to locate objects that are poorly (or not at all) identified? How to understand them in the absence of sufficient information about their production and distribution context? How to work on films that are in poor condition? How to solve problems of access to sensitive data? How to establish productive transdisciplinary collaborations? Indeed, there is still much to be done to build on these documents defying traditional classifications (e.g. the distinction between documentary and fiction) and even escape knowledge altogether, as they “sleep” at the bottom of a closet, in a hospital, a bunker or the cellar of private owners.

Such investigations involve observing the contexts in which the film medium is used. But also, how scientific practices, observation protocols and discursive logics discipline-specific shape the medium and the uses of film. If the film is embedded in a preexisting framework that it modifies, it is itself also transformed in return by its environment of use. For this reason, it would be essential to question the consensus on the epistemic value of the “medical gaze” as mediated by film.

Focusing on the study of films shown in medical institutions, in lecture halls and at scientific conferences, this workshop has several goals: to map the state of research on works devoted to useful films in the field of neurology, psychiatry and neuropsychiatry, in Europe between 1900 and 1950; to highlight investigations on poorly known or unknown film collections; to serve as a starting point for one to two publications (journal

issues). The main purpose is thus to increase our knowledge on practices that have long been considered “marginal” both in the medical humanities and in the history of cinema (and the media).

We seek papers that may provide some answers to one or other of these questions:

- In which context (historical, institutional, scientific, etc.) do doctors appropriate the filmic medium?
- What are their needs and expectations regarding film?
- What are their explicit and implicit goals?
- What conception(s) of cinema underlie(s) the use of the moving image?
- What formal elements of the technology are considered productive or counterproductive?
- Which criteria lead doctors to emphasize certain technical properties of the medium to the expense of others?
- Which issues are raised by the films in the medical community?
- How are the films distributed and watched?

**Contributions can include but are not limited to the following topics:**

- Study of specific film collections, or other related media as film operates in conjunction with other visual media (Lorusso, Venturini 2019)
- Methodological issues raised by the examination of such sources, including issues related to their preservation and storage
- Theoretical questions, as long as they are supported by a case study
- Investigation of institutional or personal synergies on a European scale (Switzerland, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Great Britain, etc.), given the intense circulation of medical expertise during the twentieth century

This workshop is related to a **SFNS project** that aims to study several film collections made in and around the [Waldau between 1920 and 1990](#). It is part of the [UNIL+ Swiss Film Archive Collaboration](#).

- Organization committee: Mireille Berton, Elodie Murtas, Raphaël Tinguely
- Scientific committee: Mireille Berton, Christian Bonah, Peter Koehler, Lorenzo Lorusso, Simone Venturini

**Proposals submission**

- Abstract submission deadline: **October 30, 2021**
- Ideally, each abstract should articulate: 1) an issue or research question to be discussed, 2) a source-based case study 3) a methodological or critical framework used, and 4) expected findings or conclusions
- Decisions will be communicated to the authors by November 30, 2021
- Title and abstract (400 words max.), and a short bio (200 words max.) should be submitted in Word format to [Mireille.Berton@unil.ch](mailto:Mireille.Berton@unil.ch)

**Practical info**

- Language: English
- Location: [University of Lausanne](#), Dorigny campus, Switzerland
- Expenses covered: one night's accommodation, meals, travel within Europe
- No payment from the participants will be required
- Contact: [Mireille.Berton@unil.ch](mailto:Mireille.Berton@unil.ch) or [Raphael.Tinguely@unil.ch](mailto:Raphael.Tinguely@unil.ch)

**Timeline**

- October 30, 2021: application deadline
- November 30, 2021: notification of acceptance
- February 1, 2022: submission of a long abstract (500-600 words)
- March 3-4, 2022: workshop
- September 1, 2022: submission of the articles for publication

## Bibliography

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