Visual Media in the Pursuit of World Health

This presentation gives an overview of the different uses of film in global public health education campaigns throughout the 20th century. It focuses on films depicting the international spread of infectious diseases, and examines the influential role of WHO. It describes the film-makers' challenge of simultaneously explaining the vast scale of global migrations and the microscopic scale of bacteria, parasites, and viruses. Efforts to represent invisible contagions visually must balance popular appeal with explanations of complex medical and scientific principles. These competing demands have produced some surprising and unintended results, as film clips in this presentation will show.

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