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Today's front page.

Benefits of movies provide alternative psychological self-help

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Christopher Harrop
Kansas State Collegian

The word "therapy" elicits images of clinics, doctors and medication. However, one form of healing is as simple as turning on your DVD player.



Jordan Mizell Collegian

The practice of cinema therapy, popularized in the 1990s by Gary Solomon, is an alternative to the traditional methods of dealing with psychological issues. Instead of lying on a couch in a doctor's office, one can rest on a couch in the comfort of one's own home to deal with problems.

Recently, the emotional impressions made on viewers of Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" have questions abounding about the psychological effects of the silver screen.

Solomon, in an interview with Internet health site WebMD.com, said the personal aspects of gaining insight and self-knowledge through cinema therapy is one of the main benefits.

"This is an opportunity to do interventional work by yourself," Solomon said.

As more Americans look to alternative therapeutic forms, more groups have invested time and resources into understanding the ways films can be used in a professional setting.

Among those groups is the Chicago Institute for the Moving Image (CIMI). Although not a clinical group, CIMI serves as a research organization specializing in the ways in which film images affect individuals.

Sami Valenti, sophomore in mass communications, said she believed the realities on which films are based can provide a unique way to understand one's problems.

"I think film is somewhat based on people's experiences, whether fictional or not," said Valenti. "It can help in many situations. Sometimes seeing problems played out visually helps and can be very beneficial."

A number of Internet resources praise the benefits of cinema therapy, including www.cinematherapy.com, a site run by psychotherapist Birgit Wolz.

Campus Calendar

- Videotaped practice interviews are today from 9 a.m. to noon in Holtz Hall. Contact Career & Employment Services at 532-6506 for more information.
- K-State Agricultural and Food Security Forum will present "Global Bioterrorism Threats and Responses," from 10 to 11:30 a.m. today in the K-State Student Union Big 12 Room.
- Applications for the student homecoming committee are due at 4 p.m. today. Applications are available at the Alumni Center or at www.k-state.com/homecoming.
- Wednesday is the last day to change eID passwords.

Talk Back

See poll results here!

Should Social Security be privatized?

- Yes.
- No.
- I don't care

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therapy, as well as guidelines for choosing certain films for cathartic purposes.

The wealth of resources provided by the Internet may not always be the most useful in determining the best method of therapy to pursue. Many therapists urge people currently seeking one-on-one therapy with a licensed therapist not to abandon such counseling unless it is no longer necessary.

For more information about cinema therapy, a number of recent books were published concerning the method's validity, including John and Jan Hesley's "Rent Two Films and Let's Talk in the Morning."

INFOBOX:

Psychotherapist Birgit Wolz suggests a number of films to help in various therapeutic

situations:

"Cast Away" to develop inner resources.

"It's a Wonderful Life" to gain insight on ethics.

"Terms of Endearment" to cope with severe illness.

"What's Eating Gilbert Grape" to understand mental disorders and intellectual functioning.

Source: www.cinematherapy.com