

## BIOETHICS FILMS

- \* Altered States (1980) US Science Fiction 102 Rated R Color Tape Disc (human experimentation)
- \* Awakenings (1990) US Drama 121 Rated PG-13 Color Tape Disc (human experimentation with coma patients)
- \* Best Boy (1979) US Documentary 111 No rating Color Tape Disc (mental retardation)
- \* Big Business (1988) US Comedy 97 Rated PG Color Tape Disc (twins reared apart)
- \* Bill (1981) US 100 No rating Color Tape
- \* Born on the Fourth of July (1989) US War/Drama/Biography 144 Rated R Color Tape Disc (Viet Nam vet coping with paralysis from war injuries)
- \* Boys From Brazil, The (1978) US Thriller 123 Rated R Color Tape Disc (cloning)
- \* Cocoon (1985) US Science Fiction/Comedy 117 Rated PG-13 Color Tape Disc (aging)
- \* Coma (1978) US Thriller 113 Rated PG Color Tape Disc (organ transplantation)
- \* Cure, The (1995) US Drama 99 Rated PG-13 Color Tape Disc (AIDS)
- \* David and Lisa (1962) US Drama 94 No rating B&W Tape Disc (disturbed teenagers)
- \* Doctor, The (1991) US Drama 125 Rated PG-13 Color Tape Disc (doctor as patient)
- \* Donor (1990) US 100 No rating Color
- \* Fear Strikes Out (1957) US Sports/Biography 100 No rating B&W Tape Disc (mental illness)
- \* Frances (1982) US Biography 140 Rated R Color Tape Disc (mental illness)
- \* I Never Promised You a Rose Garden (1977) US Drama 96 Rated R Color Tape (mental illness)
- \* Iceman (1984) US Fantasy 99 Rated PG Color Tape Disc (Neanderthal/human experimentation)
- \* Inherit the Wind (1960) US Drama 127 No rating B&W Tape Disc (evolution)
- \* Judgment at Nuremberg (1961) US War/Historical 178 No rating B&W Tape Disc (human experimentation)
- \* Junior (1994) US Comedy 110 Rated PG-13 Color Tape Disc (male pregnancy)
- \* King of Hearts (1966) France?UK War/Drama/Comedy 102 No rating Color Tape Disc (institutionalization)
- \* Larry (1974) US 78 No rating Color Tape
- \* Lilith (1964) US Drama 114 No rating B&W Tape (therapist/boundary violation)
- \* Lust for Life (1956) US Biography 122 No rating Color Tape Disc (mental illness)
- \* M (1931) Germany Horror/Drama/Crime 99 No rating B&W Tape Disc (insanity defense)
- \* Madhouse (1974) UK Horror 89 Rated PG Color Tape (mental illness)
- \* Madness of King George, The (1994) UK?US Historical/Drama/Biography 107 No rating Color Tape Disc (mental illness)
- \* Mania (1959) UK Horror 87 no rating B&W Tape (experimentation on corpses)
- \* Metropolis (1926) Germany Fantasy/Drama 120 No rating B&W Tape Disc (futuristic, mechanized society)
- \* Mr. Jones (1993) US Romance/Drama 114 R Color Tape Disc (psychiatry boundary violation)
- \* My Body, My Child (1982) US 100 No rating Color (abortion, birth defects)
- \* My Life (1993) US Drama 112 Rated PG-13 Color Tape Disc (terminal illness)
- \* Nell (1994) US Romance/Drama 113 Rated PG-13 Color Tape Disc (research on child raised outside society)
- \* Now, Voyager (1942) US Drama 117 No rating B&W Tape Disc (psychiatry)

- \* Nuts (1987) US Drama 116 Rated R Color Tape Disc (insanity defense)
- \* O Mice and Men (1939) US Drama 107 No rating B&W Tape (mental retardation)
- \* On Golden Pond (1981) US Drama/Comedy 109 Rated PG Color Tape Disc (aging)
- \* One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (1975) US Drama 133 Rated R Color Tape Disc (institutionalization)
- \* Ordinary People (1980) US Drama 123 Rated R Color Tape Disc (grief)
- \* Outbreak (1995) US Thriller/Disaster 127 Rated R Color Tape Disc (contagious disease)
- \* Plague Dogs, The (1982) US Drama 86 No rating Color Tape (animal experimentation)
- \* President's Analyst, The (1967) US Spy/Comedy 104 No rating Color Tape Disc (satire)
- \* Pressure Point (1962) US Drama 91 No rating B&W Tape (psychiatrist treats Nazi prisoner)
- \* Prince of Tides, The (1991) US Romance/Drama 132 Rated R Color Tape Disc (psychiatry)
- \* Private Worlds (1935) US Drama 84 No rating B&W (institutionalization)
- \* Rain Man (1988) US Drama 140 Rated R Color Tape Disc (autism)
- \* Rain Without Thunder (1992) US Drama 87 No rating Color Tape (abortion)
- \* Regarding Henry (1991) US Drama 107 Rated PG-13 Color Tape Disc (recovery from brain injury)
- \* Roe vs. Wade (1989) US 100 No rating Color Tape Disc (abortion)
- \* Secret of NIMH, The (1982) US Children's/Animated 82 Rated G Color Tape Disc (animal experimentation?)
- \* Snake Pit, The (1948) US Drama 108 No rating B&W Tape (institutionalization)
- \* Soylent Green (1973) US Science Fiction/Mystery 100 Rated PG Color Tape Disc (overpopulation)
- \* Spellbound (1945) US Thriller 111 No rating B&W Tape Disc (psychiatry)
- \* Streetcar Named Desire, A (1951) US Drama 122 No rating B&W Tape Disc (mental illness?)
- \* Terminal Man, The (1974) US Science Fiction 107 Rated PG Color Tape (computer takeover)
- \* Three Faces of Eve, The (1957) US Drama 91 No rating B&W Tape Disc (mental illness)
- \* Through a Glass, Darkly (1962) Sweden Drama 91 No rating B&W Tape (mental illness)
- \* Whales of August, The (1987) US Drama 90 No rating Color Tape Disc (aging)
- \* Woman's Tale, A (1991) Australia Drama 93 Rated PG 13 Color Tape Disc (dying)

## List #2

- \* 1984 (futuristic society with no privacy)
- \* All Quiet on the Western Front (morality of war)
- \* And the Band Played On (AIDS)
- \* Being John Malkovich (personhood)
- \* Blade Runner (genetic engineering)
- \* Brian's Song (cancer, terminal illness)
- \* Charly (mental retardation)
- \* Clockwork Orange (operant conditioning)
- \* Critical Care (allowing to die)
- \* Dying Young (death and dying)
- \* Elephant Man (attitudes toward patients with deformities)
- \* Fat Man and Little Boy (development of atomic bomb)
- \* First, Do No Harm (alternative medicine; philosophy of medicine)
- \* Frankenstein (human experimentation)

- \* Gattaca (genetics)
- \* Gorillas in the Mist (animal protection)
- \* If These Walls Could Talk (abortion)
- \* Island of Dr. Moreau (genetic engineering)
- \* Jurassic Park (cloning)
- \* Life is Beautiful (concentration camp)
- \* Logan's Run (utopian society of the future)
- \* Lorenzo's Oil (alternative medicine)
- \* Losing Isaiah (drug-abusing mother; adoption)
- \* Million Dollar Baby (assisted suicide)
- \* Miss Evers' Boys (Tuskegee experiment)
- \* My Left Foot (cerebral palsy)
- \* Network (media ethics)
- \* One True Thing (death and dying)
- \* Philadelphia (AIDS)
- \* Providence (recommended by course participant)
- \* Rainmaker (lawsuit regarding health insurance for leukemia patient)
- \* Tim (mental retardation)
- \* Twilight of the Golds (prenatal genetic testing; sexuality)
- \* What Dreams May Come (suicide)
- \* Whose Life Is It Anyway? (right to die)

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PRIMER'S **ampersand**  
 conversations & connections opinions & ideas

Wednesday, February 20, 2013  
 Beach Blanket Bioethics



David Perlman

by David Perlman, PhD, President & Founder of E4-Eclipse Ethics Education Enterprises, LLC

I borrowed the title of this blog post from Nancy Berlinger, PhD, at the Hastings Center. Every spring, before the summer season, she writes a post for the Hastings Center Bioethics Forum about works of

fiction that tackle ethical issues in research and medicine.

Bioethics as entertainment is nothing new. My personal Top 10 List of films, books, and television programs show research gone awry is:

Coma

Dark Angel

I Am Legend

The White Plague

Limitless

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Frankenstein

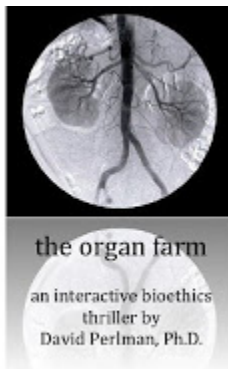
Jurassic Park

The Fly

The Hulk

These pieces of fiction are terrific for reflecting on research ethics. Fiction has an allure that fact lacks. With fiction, we can do the sorts of (thought) experiments that no institutional review board (IRB) in their right mind would ever approve. Stories resonate with our moral sensibilities. As I have written elsewhere, “stories are important tools for synthesizing universal truths from particular glimpses into our shared human condition.”

When I read a work of fiction that attempts to address ethical issues, I find myself using my moral imagination to play out the “what if” scenarios that confront the characters. Perhaps this is because, as a child of the 1970s, one of my first fiction reading experiences included the terrific Choose Your Own Adventure books. In this series of books, the reader becomes the protagonist and must confront moral choices. Some choices end badly; some don’t. Reflection on the likely consequences of one’s choices is at the heart of these books. In this way, these books, more so than straightforward works of fiction, help shape and sharpen one’s moral imagination and help to inculcate the habit of moral reflection. For this reason (and as a philosopher who studied the Ancient Greeks), I know Aristotle would have been pleased with the Choose Your Own Adventure series.



As an ethicist, I have often wondered why there aren’t more books about ethics that use this interactive format. So, I decided to write my own. Here’s a blurb I prepared to introduce people to the book, which takes place in the not-so-distant future:

My recipe for a creepy futuristic sci-fi novel: Take one part Robin Cook’s & Michael Crichton’s Coma, mix in one part Jessica Alba in Dark Angel. Stir in an organ transplant shortage, a devious surgeon, a nefarious body snatcher, and families of vegetative patients who would donate a kidney in exchange for

perpetual life support. Whisk in the ability to choose your own adventure throughout and what do you get? A perfect “organ farm.”

My novel, *The Organ Farm*, tackles issues of medical experimentation with patients in permanent vegetative state (PVS). The surgeon in the book trades the use of the patients’ bodies (as organ and tissue donors, especially ova for fertility experiments, which are fertilized then implanted back into the female PVS patients to gestate the fetuses) in exchange for continued medical maintenance of the patients. The description from Amazon.com says it best:

The year is 2022, and bioethics has come full circle. Learn how guerilla bioethicist, Maria Vasquez, infiltrates the medical tourist transplantation operation of Dr. Wallace Jefferson and what happens when she discovers that Jefferson's illegal operating room in former US base Guantanamo Bay has become a new base of operations for Dr. Zoltan Zaros' stateside fertility clinic Pregnancy Viability Systems, Inc.

I invite members of the PRIM&R community to check out *The Organ Farm* and leave a comment with your own Top 10 “Beach Blanket Bioethics” List of the books and films you would watch or read when on vacation and why.

