



(Self-)Care in Contemporary Cinema

**[Call for papers for a special issue of
Acta Universitatis Sapientiae. Film and Media Studies](#)**

With the advent of the “cultural turn” in the field of humanities in the last few decades of the 20th century, the visual, technological representation and interpretation of the (clinical) supervision of the sick, vulnerable body has become a major concern in film studies. More recently – particularly in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic and the actual social discourse surrounding the research and treatment of degenerative diseases — film phenomenology is increasingly concerned with the affective aspects of these phenomena, the “embodied feelings,” and the “sensational” body. The exploration of the moral and attitudinal questions that arise from the caregiving situation and its visual, technological representation is one of the main strands of what is known as medical humanities (Rita Charon, Angela Woods, Anne Whitehead). Informed by the so-called “affective turn”, the phenomenological study of the emotional impact on the individual and collective spectator opens new directions in film research (see, for example, Robert Sinnerbrink, Eugenie Brinkema and Steven Shaviro). Growing attention is being paid to the well-being of caregivers and the possibilities for self-care, which involves the subjective portrayal of caregiving roles in crisis situations and changing familial, social and institutional frameworks (Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings, Virginia Held, Joan Tronto, Eva Feder Kittay, Selma Sevenhuijsen).

Beyond clinical care and treatment of the sick body and mind, education and social care, as well as changing familial relationships become terrains susceptible for a complex exploration of a sensitive balance between the care for the self and others. Constantly evolving visual technologies and revolutionary clinical “imaging” solutions raise further questions regarding sensitive passages between care and control, security and vulnerability, the body seen as subject and object. Moreover, filmmaking itself can become an act of care by shedding light on unseen and unspeakable, individual and communal, bodily and mental crises (Tânia Leão, Jane Stadler, J. H. Kupfer).

For this thematic special issue we invite papers that address contemporary cinematic “treatment” of the body and mind in need for care and self-care, along the following main directions that can be further expanded and nuanced:

- Cinematic representations of care in a historical context (visual taboos and technologies)
- Cultural and national film trends of the “visible” crisis and care
- Care and self-care in fiction, documentary and docufiction
- The crisis of care in the light of changing social, family roles
- Contemporary melodramas and the sensitive balance between care and self-care
- Narratives of care as national, cultural, and ecological allegories
- Ethical questions of cinematic representations of (self)care
- “Imaging” the body: visual and medical technologies of care
- “Sensitive,” intermedial images of (self)care and affect
- Filmmaking as an act of care - sensitisation through the “ethical stare” (Garland-Thompson, 2009) and the “holding gaze” (Swinnen, 2017)
- Institutional and home care in contemporary cinema and visual culture
- Physical and mental health care in Global North and Global South cinema

Guest editor: Eszter Ureczky

Deadline for submissions: 31 December 2026. The style and format of the articles of a length ranging between 6000 and 8000 words should comply with the [requirements of the journal](#). We encourage the use of captions from the films illustrating the argumentation.

Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Film and Media Studies is an official publication of the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania. This peer reviewed scholarly journal invites the submission of original research articles written in English in all areas of film and (screen) media studies. The journal is now published by Springer Nature under a hybrid publishing model, allowing authors to choose between subscription-based publication (no APC required) or open access (APC applies). This choice is offered after the paper has been accepted.

Manuscripts must be submitted via the journal's new submission system, [accessible at](#).