MOVIES, MUSIC AND MEMORY

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MOVIES, MUSIC AND MEMORY

Tools for Wellbeing in Later Life

Emerald Studies in the Humanities, Ageing and Later Life

EDITED BY

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Lisa Shaw is Professor of Brazilian Studies in the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures at the University of Liverpool. Her research interests are Brazilian cultural history, with an emphasis on twentieth-century popular music, theatre and film, and in particular from a transnational perspective. She has written books on the social history of Brazilian samba music, the film star Carmen Miranda and popular Brazilian cinema from the 1940s and 1950s. She leads the *Cinema*,

Memory and Wellbeing impact project, which explores the use of music and film as reminiscence tools to improve the emotional wellbeing of the older population, including those living with a dementia diagnosis, and involves outreach initiatives on Merseyside, UK, and in the states of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil.

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Ros Jennings is Professor of Ageing, Culture and Media and Co-Director of the Women, Ageing and Media (WAM) Research Centre, University of Gloucestershire.

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PREFACE

HELENA CULSHAW*

My involvement with this project has been as a catalyst between the contributing authors and practitioner occupational therapists in the North West of England and more specifically those working with dementia patients in the Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust. When I met with Professor Lisa Shaw and Dr Jacqueline Waldock they told me about the project with older people and the development of the Cinema, Memory and Wellbeing toolkit. I could immediately see the potential for their use within Occupational Therapy services for older people and those living with dementia as part of a range of interventions using meaningful activity to trigger memories and promote wellbeing.

This is a well-researched project involving activities suitable for use within any health interventions by therapists who are always keen to investigate the use of occupation-focussed activities that are evidence-based and that will assist their users in being able to participate as they choose. I was particularly struck by the two creative workshops that the contributors held on Merseyside, where they enabled the

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participants, along with their therapists and carers, to use a variety of crafting techniques to make decorative objects related to the film prior to their viewing it. This created great opportunities for engaging individuals, prompting childhood memories and promoting interaction between the participants. The potential I had seen at the first meeting had come to fruition.

The joy of this book and toolkit is that it can be used to very good effect by staff and carers in nursing and care homes and day centres for older people, as it provides good guidance and tips as well as demonstrating how to use equipment and resources that are easily available every day. Occupational therapists have long used creative activities as meaningful occupation within their interventions with service users, including older people. The outcome of this project is complementary to occupational therapy, and I would recommend its usefulness within specific interventions in health and care settings by occupational therapists seeking to extend the range of opportunities for service users.

Reminiscence work with older people and people living with dementia is constantly moving forwards. As the age profile changes, so does the era of the movies and the music that can be profitably used in reminiscence work. This project shows that these principles and the toolkit could be applied to re-connect people with memories from the eras of Carmen Miranda or Madonna, of Gershwin or Gary Barlow.