



UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

TASMANIAN SCHOOL OF NURSING

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# *Nuritinga*

ELECTRONIC JOURNAL OF NURSING



## **Film Review:**

### **Theory of Flight, Universal, Pine Film, copyright 1998 Distant Horizon Ltd**

**Helen Bonham Carter, Kenneth Branagh**

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## **Review**

This is a commercially produced film, billed as "a romantic comedy". It may well be asked, why should it be reviewed in a nursing journal?

The film is the true story of a period of time in the life of a young woman suffering from motor neurone disease (MND).

Jane, a 25 year old woman with MND lives at home with her mother who is her full time carer. Her speech is failing and her mobility is limited to the use of an electric wheelchair. As it unfolds, the film touches on many issues of relevance to nurses, in a relatively involving way. Unlike a traditional educational film, these issues are not belaboured, but fit naturally as part of the story.

Issues that can be drawn out of this film include:

- Attitudes toward and assumptions made about a person who is disabled
- The concept that all people with disabilities have the same problems and require the same type of care
- Sexuality issues for disabled people
- Personal autonomy, and the rights of a disabled person to make choices and decisions
- Issues around being a full time carer
- Duty of care and legal responsibilities.

This film is an excellent tool for illustration and discussion of the above and many other issues. In addition it is an excellent opportunity for students to see the impact of illness and disability on the everyday life of a young woman. Students are encouraged to read narrative accounts of patients' experiences of illness. This film is a graphic rendition of such a narrative.

Be warned, the language is also somewhat graphic.