

“Jolly Hygiene” (1926)

Abstract

This short, light-hearted film from 1926 dispensed advice on how to protect oneself from colds and flu, as well as on how to treat those infections once they had occurred. It featured an animated little rogue with the ironic name “Leberecht Klug” — conveying “proper living” and “prudence”— who impetuously decides to explore the city on a particularly cold and wet day, despite warnings to the contrary. With soaking-wet feet and close proximity to sneezing streetcar passengers, Leberecht predictably catches the flu. The narrator admonishes him to stay home, in order to avoid infecting others, and to bundle up, gargle, and see a doctor. Coming just eight years after the 1918 Influenza Pandemic, this film addressed an ongoing public-health concern in Germany. It also depicted a man in an uncharacteristically tender caregiving role, as the narrator nurses Leberecht back to health and even does some ironing.

This film was the second in a ten-part series focusing on healthy living titled *Lustige Hygiene* [Jolly Hygiene] produced on behalf of the Reich Committee for Hygienic Education. The script was written by the physician Curt Thomalla, who authored numerous scripts for educational films on health and hygiene. Audiences would have seen short educational films like this one just before the main feature began. In terms of film making, this film showcased the innovative technical feat of combining live action and animation in the same frame, as Leberecht Klug interacts with real people and urban spaces.

Source

Title: Jolly Hygiene

Reich Commission for Public Health Education

Intertitles:

Leberecht wants to go out and have adventures again.

"You are staying home today! In this wet and cold weather you'll only catch the flu, bronchitis or pneumonia!"

But our little escapee feels uncomfortable on the wet and cold streets and wants to return home.

"Hey, you! Hold a tissue in front of your mouth when you sneeze or cough. You'll infect everyone!"

"Wet feet are dangerous! - Some parts of your body getting cold is most often the cause of a cold."

"Leberecht is coming down with the flu. Take him home so he won't infect others. Sick people belong in bed!"

Whenever one feels a cold coming on, one should lie down immediately and wrap one's throat and chest properly.

A throat wrap

A chest wrap

"---you must gargle at least every two hours!"

"-- you need to drink hot beverages. -- The best thing to do is to consult a physician."

Thus Leberecht recovered from the flu quickly.

Thus ends Leberecht's second adventure.

Source: *Lustige Hygiene* no. 2, Reichsausschuss für hygienische Volksbelehrung, 1926. USHMM: RG-60.3413, Accessed at United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv

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