

PANDORA AND CINEMA FOR THE PRODUCTION OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES: STORIES OF LIVES, “SAUDADES” AND HOPES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN BRAZIL

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ABSTRACT

In Brazil, the population with disabilities was estimated at 18.6 million, which corresponds to 8.9% of the population in the age group studied in the last Census (2022). The crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has affected different groups in society differently, and people with disabilities are among those with the most severe consequences. In the text, we will address the process of making the documentary Pandora, authored by the first author of this article. The film brings to life the stories and experiences of people with disabilities from different parts of Brazil during the Covid-19 pandemic. Throughout the article, we describe the paths that enabled the union between scientific research and documentary cinema as an instrument to support the protagonism of social groups inserted in research processes, in this case, people with disabilities, as well as to expand the range of possibilities and languages for the dissemination of knowledge produced in academia.

KEYWORDS

People with disabilities; Covid-19; Cinema.

PANDORA E O CINEMA PARA PRODUÇÃO DO CONHECIMENTO CIENTÍFICO SOBRE PESSOAS COM DEFICIÊNCIA: HISTÓRIAS DE VIDA, SAUDADES E ESPERANÇAS DURANTE A PANDEMIA DA COVID-19 NO BRASIL

RESUMO

No Brasil, foi estimada em 18,6 milhões a população com deficiência, o que corresponde a 8,9% da população na faixa etária estudada no último Censo (2022). A crise provocada pela Pandemia da Covid-19 afetou de maneira distinta os diferentes grupos na sociedade e as pessoas com deficiência figuram entre aquelas com consequências mais severas. No texto, abordaremos o processo de elaboração do documentário Pandora, de autoria do primeiro autor deste artigo. O filme traz à tona histórias e experiências de pessoas com deficiência de diferentes partes do Brasil durante a Pandemia da Covid-19. Ao longo do artigo, descrevemos os caminhos que possibilitaram a união entre pesquisa científica e cinema documental como instrumento para apoiar no protagonismo dos grupos sociais inseridos em processos de pesquisa, neste caso, pessoas com deficiência, bem como para ampliar o leque de possibilidades e linguagens de divulgação do saber produzido na academia.

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Pessoa com deficiência; Covid-19; Cinema.

PANDORA ET LE CINEMA POUR LA PRODUCTION DE CONNAISSANCES SCIENTIFIQUES SUR LES PERSONNES HANDICAPEES: HISTOIRES DE VIE, « SAUDADES » ET D'ESPOIR PENDANT LA PANDEMIE DE COVID-19 AU BRÉSIL

RÉSUMÉ

Au Brésil, on estime que la population handicapée s'élève à 18,6 millions de personnes, ce qui représente 8,9 % de la population dans la tranche d'âge étudiée lors du dernier recensement de 2022. La crise provoquée par la pandémie de Covid-19 a affecté de manière différente les différents groupes de la société, et les personnes handicapées figurent parmi celles qui ont subi les conséquences les plus graves. Dans ce texte, nous aborderons le processus de création du documentaire intitulé "Pandora", réalisé par le premier auteur de cet article. Le film met en scène des histoires et des expériences de personnes handicapées issues de différentes régions du Brésil pendant la pandémie de Covid-19. Tout au long de l'article, nous décrivons les cheminements qui ont abouti à la réunion de la recherche scientifique et du cinéma documentaire comme outils utilisés pour soutenir l'émancipation des groupes sociaux impliqués dans le processus de recherche, en l'occurrence les personnes handicapées, ainsi que pour élargir le champ des possibilités et des langages de diffusion des connaissances produites dans le milieu académique.

MOTS-CLÉS

Personnes handicapées; Covid-19; Cinéma.

PANDORA Y EL CINE PARA LA PRODUCCIÓN DE CONOCIMIENTO CIENTÍFICO SOBRE LAS PERSONAS CON DISCAPACIDAD: HISTORIAS DE VIDA, "SAUDADES" Y ESPERANZA DURANTE LA PANDEMIA DE COVID-19 EN BRASIL

RESUMEN

En Brasil, la población con discapacidad fue estimada en 18,6 millones, lo que corresponde al 8,9% de la población en el grupo de edad estudiado en el último Censo (2022). La crisis causada por la Pandemia del Covid-19 ha afectado de forma diferente a los distintos grupos de la sociedad, y las personas con discapacidad se encuentran entre las que han sufrido las consecuencias más graves. En el texto abordaremos el proceso de realización del documental Pandora, del que es autora la primera autora de este artículo. La película da vida a las historias y experiencias de personas con discapacidad de diferentes partes de Brasil durante la Pandemia de Covid-19. A lo largo del artículo, se describen los caminos que posibilitaron la unión entre la investigación científica y el cine documental como instrumento para apoyar el protagonismo de los grupos sociales insertos en los procesos de investigación, en este caso, las personas con discapacidad, así como para ampliar el abanico de posibilidades y lenguajes para la divulgación del conocimiento producido en el ámbito académico.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Personas con discapacidad; Covid-19; Cine.

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization estimates that more than 1.2 billion people, about 15% of the world's population, live with a disability. In Brazil, it is estimated that 18.6 million people aged 2 years or more live with a disability. According to the last Census, this corresponds to 8.9% of the population in this age group. The count of people with disabilities in Brazil has been carried out in recent censuses; however, it has recently undergone methodological changes affecting its comparability to previous years (IBGE, 2022).

The crisis caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic affected different groups in society in diverse ways, widening pre-existing inequalities. People with disabilities, even under so-called normal circumstances, are less likely to access health, care, education, employment, and community participation. They are more likely to live in poverty, experience higher rates of violence, neglect, and abuse, and are among the most marginalized in any community affected by the crisis arising from the pandemic (WHO, 2020).

People with disabilities have historically been made invisible from public policies, resulting in inaccessible societies and the worsening of their vulnerability (PEREIRA *et al.*, 2021). Living in extreme situations of social isolation and exclusion created comparisons between the general population's forced quarantine and the daily life of people with disabilities around the globe.

Studies carried out in Brazil and other parts of the world have shown that the pandemic's negative effects on people with disabilities are potentiated in relation to the rest of the population, confirming that there was a need for specific health and social protection policies, as these people are in a situation of greater social vulnerability and have a higher prevalence of multiple chronic conditions (LANDES; TURK; ERVIN, 2021). In addition, people with disabilities were neglected in public policy actions and, often had their rights denied in more critical periods of the Covid-19 Pandemic (VON DER WIDE, 2020; BLOCK *et al.*, 2021).

To reach conclusions like these, most studies carried out worldwide use technical and scientific procedures to build evidence to present their results in articles and conventional academic texts³. However, it is not new that scientific evidence has been used in artistic pieces for the construction, dissemination, and expansion of knowledge and for the diversification of its audience.

Film, whether in works of a fictional or documentary nature, has been one of the artistic resources available to researchers, both for disseminating and producing knowledge

³ Aqui nos referimos a estudos como o de Almeida e Fontes-Dutra (2020), Aquino-Canchari, Quispe-Arrieta e Castillon (2020), Gleason *et al.* (2021), Henderson *et al.* (2022) e Landes, Turk e Ervin (2021).

about historical facts and specific population groups — in this case, the Covid-19 Pandemic and people with disabilities. In addition to enabling a different narrative about the phenomenon, depicting it visually (through film, photographs, etc.) can also expand the universe of subjects who access the content produced in the academy.

Thus, this article seeks to analyze the experience of the cinema production *Pandora: A hidden story of lives, loss and hope*, a documentary film that emerged from the research project titled *People with Disabilities and Covid-19: Construction of Knowledge, Monitoring Networks, Care and Prevention*. This research was carried out by a group of scientists linked to the Observatório Deficiência of the Universidade de Brasília (UnB).

Through this analysis we would like to demonstrate how this pathway between research and film was built and how the language of documentary film can become an essential element used to support the protagonism of social groups within research projects, as well as to expand the range of ways and possibilities for the dissemination of scientific knowledge.

We do not intend to close or establish dense discussions about doing research or cinema in Brazil. We aim to bring to researchers discussions about the possibilities of establishing bridges between the production of knowledge and cinema, respecting academic evidence, and maintaining the rigour of the scientific method. As we discuss below, these possibilities have already been explored over the years in Brazilian science.

We also seek to produce a text with the spirit of scientific dissemination to reach a wider audience than the usual academic readers: researchers, professors, or students. We understand that *Pandora* presents a snippet of Brazil's recent history, told by people with disabilities through reports about their lives during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The film addresses issues that are of national interest and can contribute to the inclusion of people with disabilities, whether in building their own image or in the elaboration of public policies that intend to overcome the invisibility and stigmatization of these people in Brazil.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND THE CINEMA

Farina (2012) examined a catalogue of 292 cinematographic works corresponding to films produced between 1931 and 2010, with an immense variety of themes and approaches, including classics such as *City Lights* (1931), *Freaks* (1932) and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1939), to contemporary Hollywood films such as *A Beautiful Mind* (2001), *Radio* (2003) and *The Aviator* (2004). Farina observed that cinematographic works have often portrayed people with disabilities in comical, bizarre situations that treat stereotypes in a caricature way. The author points out some exceptions, especially documentary films that seek to portray the stories of people with disabilities (FARINA, 2012).

Throughout the history of cinema and the fine arts, representations of people with disabilities have often been stereotyped based on prejudice instead of portraying them as full and complex subjects. According to a review carried out by Bogoni (2020), representations of people with disabilities in different languages follow different historically established interpretations of this group, which can be presented in three ways.

a) The first modality associates disability with the representation of a certain negativity. Its origin is possibly derived from the worldviews that founded the hegemonic West, where beauty, composed of symmetrical and harmonic parts, is related to goodness, greatness, honour and efficiency. For those who do not have such attributes, a connection is established between appearance and character, in which the visible presence of a disability is part of the construction of “bad” characters, while physical perfection is associated with beauty and goodness (BOGONI, 2020).

b) The second modality, on the contrary, associates disability with the representation of a certain positivity. In this, there is a polar inversion of the usual relationship between physical characteristics and moral, intellectual, or other attributes. For instance, the “negative” aspect of blindness is related to a positive ethos, in which the loss of vision would result in clairvoyance and/or wisdom, as in the myth of Tiresias (Greek mythology) and the myth of Odin (Norse mythology). Thus, characters with disabilities have their ethos related to positive qualities, such as courage, morality, justice, fraternity, resilience, etc. They are always good and sometimes seek to help in achieving educational objectives and building diversity (BOGONI, 2020).

c) In the third modality, we find the representation of disability separated from inherent valuation. Disabled characters can present positive or negative characteristics not linked to their disability, but to their actions, with a greater dimension of human affection, free of conditioning; that is, there is no castration or targeting of characteristics by the presence or absence of a disability. Thus, it detaches the characters from an essentially good or bad ethos, promoting a more complex representation of the characters (BOGONI, 2020).

CINEMA AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The arts have a lot to say and make us think about — make you see, hear, feel — about the experiences of life and death in the face of the epidemics that have undermined societies since the dawn of history, which applies to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The use of connections between art and science allows us to visualize and occupy public spaces and speeches, to appreciate the bodies and minds that escape the conventions of normality, as well as the possibility of building multimodal narratives that broaden the perception of the diversity of disability experiences (GONÇALVES; MARQUES, 2021).

Pandemics have been the subject of and have crossed the scripts of cinematographic works over the years, including in mainstream contemporary cinema, and it is undoubtedly one of the most discussed themes in science fiction. As is the case with the film *Contagion* (2011), it can even be considered as an anticipation of the Covid-19 Pandemic itself. The same happened with The *Walking Dead* series—which explores the theme of the zombie hecatomb when an epidemic interrupted the flow of civilization to which everyone was used and in which they knew how to live. The series had its filming suspended during the Covid-19 Pandemic when the real-life path of the pandemic caused by the coronavirus crossed with the path of the fictional zombie pandemic of the North American series (GONÇALVES; MARQUES, 2021).

The Covid-19 Pandemic has also been portrayed in cinema in the Brazilian documentary film *Quando Falta o Ar* (2022), by directors Ana and Helena Petta. The film shows the struggle of women on the front lines of the Brazilian healthcare system (SUS) during the fight against the Covid-19 Pandemic. It also brings to the screen intersections between health and religiosity, social inequality and structural racism present in the country.

The Pandemic was also portrayed in *Saúde tem Cura* (2022), directed by Silvio Tandler, a respected Brazilian documentary filmmaker who has a physical disability, with the support of Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (Fiocruz) — one of the most important Brazilian research institutions. The documentary addresses the power and weaknesses of the Brazilian Unified Health System (SUS), the largest public health system in the world, in the daily battle with the Covid-19 Pandemic. The video shows reports from professionals who participated in the construction of our health system and establishes relationships with the days of health crisis experienced by front-line professionals and patients in the system.

REALITY, FICTION AND AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTION ON DISABILITY AND THE PANDEMIC

As previously shown, different languages intersect with the possibility of producing audiovisual material about disability and the pandemic. On the one hand, we have exclusively fictional works, which use imagery to portray sometimes stereotyped perspectives on disability or even health tragedies. On the other hand, we have documentary framing, which attempts to approximate us with the phenomenon addressed, drawing attention to the relationships between the material producer and the subjects/places/memories that tell the story intended to be portrayed.

The literature about film demonstrates how fragile the distinction between "reality" and "fiction" that is proposed to divide the different audiovisual genres is (SALLES, 2005). Even ethnographic films, which largely seek to "portray" specific social practices, can be edited, cut/recut by the director/producer (RIBEIRO, 2007). That is, the audiovisual work is

always a narrative process produced with the aim of transmitting something to an audience and not necessarily reproducing *ipsis litteris* a previously defined reality (BENJAMIN, 1985a).

Movies as an artistic work and as a narrative — implied both in the sphere of production and internally to the story that is told — is taken as an irradiation of culture: one sees in the film the sociality that makes it or as highlighted by Benjamin (1985b), the film is a collective work.

Movies participate in a narrative dynamic that draw upon the culture in an internationalized world, thus demanding recognition of what Bhabha (2011) calls “the right to narrate.” This proposition enables us to think about the complex narrative network in which we are inserted, its links and disputes for legitimizing some narratives and not others (SOUZA, 2014).

There is an important debate about the production of engaged or emancipatory research in the context of disability (OLIVER, 1992). Key authors in the field demonstrate how it is necessary to give voice to people with disabilities and, at the same time, produce answers that aim at transforming the reality in which these subjects are situated. In this context, we believe that film production can be a potent language.

Initiatives using this theme — the use of audiovisual language in the context of disability — were also undertaken by other researchers. Kupper *et al.* (2021) and Reichenberger *et al.* (2022) propose participatory research with the use of audiovisuals to guarantee the protagonism of people with disabilities in research/interventions on the subject. By proposing the collective construction of videos and/or other languages with people with disabilities, the researchers argue that there may be an increase in participation and even a greater potential impact on the dissemination of knowledge and the production of public responses (KUPPER *et al.*, 2021; REICHENBERGER *et al.*, 2022).

TURNING RESEARCH INTO A FILM

As previously mentioned, this article describes the pathways taken by our research team and authors in creating an authorial cinematographic film that addressed questions related to evidence gathered during the *People with Disabilities and Covid-19: Construction of Knowledge, Monitoring Networks, Care and Prevention* research project, in which survey data was gathered by by a group of researchers linked to the Observatório Deficiência of the Universidade de Brasília (UnB).

This research sought to understand issues related to coping with Covid-19 between the years 2020 and 2022 among people with disabilities throughout Brazil. This project involved the contribution of researchers from an undergraduate to postdoctoral level. A

combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was used, as well as different data collection strategies.

After collecting data and during the first analysis of the research material, as we will describe later, the group of researchers conceived the idea of producing the documentary *Pandora: A hidden story of lives, loss and hope*. The film presents narratives collected from the stories of 6 people with disabilities and their families, interviewed in various locations in Brazil in 2021 during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The documentary was produced and completed between 2021 and 2022. It was directed by Diego Ferreira, with general coordination duties conducted by Everton Luís Pereira the second author, and it featured a script, audio, video, sound design, editing and original soundtrack⁴.

In addition to issues inherent to scientific dissemination, Pandora seeks to meet a need to bring to screen the research subjects; the physical, social, and political bodies of people with disabilities who have historically been made invisible and have not been the narrative protagonists of their own stories. Ultimately, it seeks to reconstruct a pandemic from the perspective of people with disabilities, their stories and experiences.

We opted for a documentary film because we believe it is the closest method that enabled us to represent what people were experiencing. This style enabled us to present people with disabilities on the screen as characters of themselves. If we establish a relationship with what Bogoni (2020) proposes, they would be in modality C, devoid of primordial values and where their life stories, told by themselves. They can act as windows to these themes which may help us to illuminate questions about the condition of disability and the Covid-19 Pandemic in Brazil.

Documentary is a non-fiction audiovisual genre which is used as a form of expression of society, to record events within a particular spectrum, and draws upon a critical point of view. In addition to its importance in building and disseminating knowledge to society, it is very common for it to contribute to putting light on specific subjects, generally little or poorly portrayed, contributing to social advances, more active community participation and even a better quality of life for individuals (VERTOV, 1923).

RESEARCH DURING THE PANDEMIC

Like other areas in life, research and film production were affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic. As previously discussed, in addition to being the subject of scientific research and audiovisual productions, the Covid-19 Pandemic has crossed paths ways of doing research

⁴ The film's script is signed by Alex Mirkhan and the film's production was shared between the producers Fome de Ouvido and Mirkhan Produções.

and producing cinema in the world, especially in the most common conceptions of what we understand as field research.

Bollettin *et al.* (2020) bring together a series of texts produced by master's and doctoral students who reflect upon the challenges of doing research while responding to restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Anthropological research, being so strongly anchored in the idea of *in situ* fieldwork, seemed doomed to failure in the face of restrictions and uncertainties caused by Covid-19 (BOLLETTIN *et al.*, 2020).

Due to the Pandemic conditions, digital communication tools such as *WhatsApp* and other synchronous audio and video interfaces received increased attention, with greater intensity and involving numerous people. Maluf (2020) and Miller (2020) rightly argue that, even in these circumstances, it is possible to carry out an ethnography, either by resizing ongoing projects and research or by resorting to research in the virtual environment (MALUF, 2020; MILLER, 2020). A good part of the reflections presented by various authors in Bollettin *et al.* (2020) touch upon different attempts to redefine the very notion of "field," seeking to reinterpret and adapt the possibilities of being present in the field (BOLLETTIN *et al.*, 2020).

It is true that well before the pandemic, alternative experiences were already widely explored within anthropological research and other topics, as observed by Talita Costa, who also published in the aforementioned volume. According to the author, "*Although the online ethnographic experience is the solution found by many anthropologists to continue their studies, it is not just justified by the crisis associated with the pandemic*" (COSTA, 2020, p.120).

It is precisely based on the search for solutions and on the task of rethinking ethnographic work and research amid the global health crisis, to overcome the challenges that limited access to "interlocutors," that the possibility arises within the scope of our research to create the cinematographic film *Pandora*.

BUILDING CHARACTERS FOR PANDORA

This documentary was based on research produced from quantitative and qualitative data, collected through a virtual survey and in-depth interviews carried out via telephone throughout Brazil. The online questionnaire had 79 questions, related to issues regarding people with disabilities, contagion by the coronavirus, services needed and accessed during the pandemic, and difficulties faced at that time. After ethical approval and filling of the Informed Consent Forms (TCLE) between July 2020 and July 2021, the sample consisted of 13,349 respondents in all Brazilian states. Subsequently, using a semi-structured script applied remotely by telephone or audio and video interface, between October 2020 and November 2022, 115 in-depth interviews were carried out.

With the survey data categorized, it was possible to create profiles, *personas*, recounting the recurrent reports among those who participated in the survey and who would be able to tell us more about the pandemic and the lives of people with disabilities.

The creation of these *personas* was thought of as a way of producing the required narrative in the film piece. In our understanding, a narrative needs to present a certain script and be able to produce in the spectator a sense of continuity and contact with a particular reality. More than just portraying an individual story, we propose that what was built on the screen should portray a diverse set of experiences of people with disabilities during the pandemic, as collected through our research. As Benjamin (1985a) points out, a good narrative is capable of triggering — through stories, situations, etc. — shared experiences in the community.

Undoubtedly, in constructing *personas* for our audiovisual film, we discussed authorship and a cut of reality carried out by the authors (CLIFFORD, 2022). More than portraying reality “as it is,” *Pandora* produces a synthesis of experiences about disability and Covid-19 in Brazil through the voice of people with disabilities (ANTELO, 1998). In this sense, 8 *personas* were developed, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Personas* for identifying Pandora participants.

1- Adult person whose primary caregiver/caregivers died due to the coronavirus
2- Person over 18 who, due to the pandemic, increased their participation in digital formats
3- Person who had COVID-19 and lost functions and/or worsened their disability during the pandemic
4- Person who did not have COVID-19 and had functional losses due to the pandemic
5- Person who had COVID-19 and was hospitalized
6- Person with a disability who, during the pandemic and infection of a caregiver/family member, became responsible for aspects of daily life that they did not have before
7- Employed person with a disability with impacts during the pandemic, either by positive or negative adaptation related to work
8- Person with a disability with a history of changes in their education during and due to the pandemic

Note: Created by the authors.

With the *personas*' characteristics described in Table 1, the research team contacted different groups and/or entities, such as Associações de Pais e Amigos dos Excepcionais (Apaes), Conselhos de Pessoas com Deficiência, Fundação Dorina Nowill and others. This search was carried out in all regions of Brazil, aiming to demonstrate the diversity of experiences of people with disabilities during the pandemic in the country.

In each region, we identified three people with disabilities and their families with histories of lives crossed by the pandemic. After an initial interview, a person was selected to participate in *Pandora* from each region, except in Brasília, where two characters were chosen for the film.

As a result, a decentralized team comprising at least one cameraman and a local researcher, based on prior scheduling, and signing of the Use of Voice Image and Likeness Form, carried out an interview day with each participant, seeking to preserve as much as possible their daily routine. Even with the intention of producing the greatest possible naturalness — demonstrated in everyday scenes across the documentary — the recording interacted with the purposes of the film. Thus, we included scenes in which it was possible to perceive the preparations carried out by the participants for the recording.

It should be noted that for each interview, the exclusive presence of the cameraman was recommended, and all Pandemic health safety protocols were followed. If there was any indication of flu-like symptoms by any of those involved, the interview was rescheduled. Image and audio records were collected, summing up approximately 16 hours, which were carefully examined by the research and cinema team involved in the process.

The documentary director made prior contact with all participants. In addition to enabling a better understanding of each story, this contact established a relationship of bonding, trust and affection between the subjects who participated in the film and the director. It allowed the relationships to transform the perspective of those involved, whether of the research team or of people with disabilities themselves. A relationship that continues to this day and that was fundamental for the recorded stories to reach depth and to make the interlocutors feel welcome in their pain, losses and hopes.

The team of researchers sought to connect the recorded stories with the broader research data—obtained throughout the national territory. It should be noted that we propose an ongoing dialogue between the audiovisual production and the other scientific pieces produced in the larger research — namely, the scientific articles that are in press or in the writing/review phase. Once this process was over, the cinema team, with the director being the link between cinematographic work and scientific pieces, carried out the subsequent stages of editing, sound design, graphic effects, and original soundtrack, entitled *Pandora*.

PANDORA: A HIDDEN STORY OF LIVES, LOSS AND HOPE

Pandora is directed by Diego Ferreira. In 42 minutes, the film presents the stories of 6 people with disabilities and their families who experienced the Covid-19 Pandemic in different regions of Brazil. The film addresses issues related to the daily care of people with disabilities, interruption of rehabilitation services, vaccination, illness, and death during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The film was released at an event organized by the Federação Nacional das APAEs in August 2022, with the presence of the film's participants in a face-to-face meeting for the

first time. *Pandora* is available for free on the *YouTube*⁵ streaming platform with accessibility features that make it possible to contribute to the social inclusion of people with disabilities. There is also an English subtitled version of the film, first shown at Western University in London, Canada in 2023.

Figure 1. Characters from *Pandora*.



Note: from *Pandora*'s photographic collection.

Pandora sought to bring to the screen people with disabilities and their stories within their daily routines, as well as show how daily life was affected by pandemic fighting measures, most notably social isolation. The title of the documentary was conceived from one of the characters' thoughts in the film when asked about the meaning of the pandemic in her life: *"We live in a pandora's box, when she opened it, all the evils came into the world, and she kept hope"*.

⁵ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@observatoriodeficiencia7938>. Access on: 5 set. 2023.

In the image above, Figure 1, from left to right and from top to bottom: Rodrigo and Ricardo (Father and Son), Dona Socorro, Ilton and her niece, Paula, Cláudio and Margarida, Dona Suzana and Vivi (Mother and Daughter), all characters who gave us a little of their stories crossed by the pandemic, telling us about their longing for who and what was gone, and hopes for a better world — which until then were, as a last resort, kept in a Pandora's box that was still open and that demanded of us innumerable deprivations in going through such an intense period.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

We conclude that film production, as discussed by many authors in Brazil and around the world, is a tool for recording and disseminating historic and scientific knowledge, forming part of the collection of different societies, and contributing to the knowledge of contemporary and future generations.

Documentary film is a tool which can be used to service society, enabling the translation and visibility of everyday life in a critical and sharp way, focusing on realities that are sometimes (made) invisible, as is the case of people with disabilities. In addition, documentary film seeks to illuminate aspects that, unnoticed or neglected, reinforce stigma, and contribute to the oppression of people with disabilities and other marginalized groups.

The preponderance that stories occupy in our memories and perceptions of ourselves is undeniable. Our subjectivities are constructed by the ways we narrate our own lives and by all the countless ways in which we hear, see, tell, or read stories that surround us. Cinema has always produced images of the world which have consequences on the meaning of the very idea of humanity. The way we see a film is always active and related to the historical stages and circumstances that we live collectively. The reception of a film is a dynamic act and is related to the production of our identities, the differences that include and exclude us, with our humanity (SOUZA, 2014).

As exemplified in *Pandora*, the union between cinema and scientific production seeks to reinforce the need for science to be done in an engaged manner, for and with the participation of interest groups—in this case, people with disabilities. This work becomes even more relevant considering that in Brazil, like many other countries, governments often failed to officially quantify/record the proportional amount of deaths of those with disabilities.

Pandora sought to bring in flesh, blood, and memory the protagonists of its stories, profiling face-to-face realities negligently made invisible in the history told by government records. Using the words of Cláudio Cardozo at a *Pandora* exhibition event at Western University in Canada, "*Pandora was our scream in the silence*".

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