

"THERE AIN'T NO FLIES ON US"

d. Tony Douglas, ph. Dennis Miller and Robert Fresco, ed. Jack Schoon, cfe. sd. Ian Hendry, sd. ed. David Leach, p. Tony Douglas, produced for the Ontario Society for Crippled Children, the Easter Seal people. This film was made possible by a generous grant from the Hospital for Sick Children foundation, p. manager, Elaine Jaques, p.c. Tony Douglas Associates Ltd. 1977, col. 16mm, running time 26 minutes.

There Ain't No Flies On Us is a film about sports and recreation programs for young people who are disabled or handicapped.

It's a film about having a good time with your friends, a film about camping, bowling, skiing, basketball, horseback riding and about the campfire songs we all remember from our childhood.

At the same time, it's also a film about the things you have to deal with when you are both young and also handicapped or disabled. The people in the film talk about these things in their own words.

For example, among the people we meet is a high school student named Carla Patterson, who had her leg amputated because of cancer. Like Nadia De Franco, in Beverly Shaffer's National Film Board film *I'll Find a Way*, Carla speaks candidly about being handicapped, and about how she prefers to be treated by others.

She explains "Nobody really wanted to talk, to say anything about my leg. My friends were so shocked when I talked about my fake leg. They were really surprised to hear me say anything."

Another young woman we meet in the film is Linda Sutton who has cerebral palsy which affects her walking. In one sequence, she tells how much she enjoys skiing with her friends.

"When I'm going down the hill," she remarks, "I don't really feel handicapped. I (just) worry about falling. I want to look as good as everybody



A reflective moment in *There Ain't No Flies On Us*

else. I'm enjoying myself and that's what I like about skiing.

"You don't," she says at another point, "want people to feel sorry for you."

In the film, which Tony Douglas made for the Ontario Society for Crippled Children (with funding from the Hospital for Sick Children Foundation in Toronto), we also meet David Fugeman. Like Linda Sutton, David has cerebral palsy. In his case it affects his speech as well as his gait. He talks, slowly and with an effort, about how much handicapped kids enjoy having some sport or activity that offers a change from daily routine. David enjoys building model airplanes and skiing.

We also meet Glenn Hibbert, who is handicapped by a weakness in the joints, the result of muscular dystrophy. In the film we see his refereeing a spirited game of wheelchair basketball. "I'm not as strong as other members of the team," he comments. "I do play about as many games as they do but just different sorts."

Glenn, like a number of his friends at Sunny View Public School in Toronto, appears in both this film and also in the *I'll Find a Way*. In fact, the two films complement each other admirably, with Beverly Shaffer's film concentrating on one person, nine-year-old Nadia De Franco, in particular, and with **There Ain't No Flies On Us** introducing

reducing the viewer to various energetic and engaging handicapped young people.

In another scene we meet several young bowling enthusiasts who are enjoying that sport thanks to a piece of equipment that enables them to aim at the bowling pins from their wheelchairs. This bowling sequence sums up, with a particular force and clarity, what this film is about.

The film is a remarkable piece of work — in purely cinematic terms and in terms of its message as a sponsored film. It's held together by a solid sense of structure; the editing is well-paced; the transitions work; and even the color quality and the camera angles enhance the overall effect.

The film successfully conveys its message about sports and recreation without creating the "distancing effect" that can occur when handicaps or disabilities are discussed abstractly such that the audience relates to labels instead of to disabled, fellow human beings. Through his characteristic honesty, openness and directness (qualities that are evident in his earlier films, such as in *I'm the Same as Everyone Else*, which he made for the Toronto Epilepsy Association), — Tony Douglas avoids "distancing" the subject matter — and subjects — of this film and abstains from the contrived sentimentality with which filmmakers often approach the handicapped. **Jaan Pill**

NO...

d. John Stoneman, ph. John Stoneman, ed. William Carter, m. Gustav Holst "Planet Suite" (Saturn), p.c. Mako Films Ltd. 1977, col. 16mm, running time 6 minutes.

To describe in words the damage man has done to his planet could take thousands of pages and many hours. John Stoneman has attempted to do it without words, and in just six minutes, using a series of skillfully juxtaposed images and sounds. The film is both a very personal statement about the horror of man's rape of the earth, and a plea for the protection and preservation of one of the last relatively untouched areas, the oceans. It is also, incidentally, an expression of the joys of being a diver.

In the first three or four minutes the camera glides through a beautiful underwater landscape of green and blue, past waving sea fans and strange white coral shapes. We slowly drift amongst glittering schools of jacks as they twist and turn in the water, and pause by a single silvery barracuda looking suspicious as barracudas usually do. The smoothness of the camera work makes us feel a part of the fluid, rippling environment. And the music from Gustav Holst's "Planet Suite" is a well-chosen complement to the sense of pleasure and enchantment we get from this unfamiliar and peaceful world.

But the music occasionally has ominous overtones, creating a mild tension that subconsciously prepares us for what follows: a sudden direct cut to distressingly familiar scenes of our everyday life... factories blasting black chemical smoke, cars bumper to bumper in the grey air, masses of people jostling each other on concrete sidewalks, dead animals lying amongst piles of foul garbage. The images are a sharp and painful contrast to what has just filled the screen a moment before. So, when the divers plunge back into that cool, clear water and we follow them down again into the ocean, it is with a sense of relief and escape and even thankfulness.

It is a simple statement that would be hard for anyone to disagree with,



John Stoneman comes up for a coffee-break

especially in the climate created by recent massive oil spills, and stories of whale atrocities and careless mining of the ocean floor. The film could be accused of being not only simple, but simplistic, of avoiding an exploration of the complex reasons behind why man persists in destroying his own environment. Stoneman as a diver and environmental filmmaker must surely be aware of these complexities. He has chosen instead to express the dilemma in as brief, direct and uncluttered a film as possible. No long explanations, no involved rationalizations, no gimmicks, just the simple visual impact that tells its own sad story. My only quarrel with the film is that the converted can only nod and agree, but for the unconverted or unaware, it does not have nearly enough impact. Certainly not enough to change any minds.

Penelope Hynam

THIS FILM IS ABOUT RAPE

d. Bonnie Kreps, ph. Jan-Marie Martell, ed. Haida Paul, p. Bonnie Kreps, p.c. Chesire Films Production, 1978, running time 29 minutes, dist. Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Center (Toronto).

By now, Bonnie Kreps is well-known as a feminist filmmaker in Canada. Her short films *After the Vote*, *Portrait Of My Mother*, and a series of *Working Mothers* films made for the NFB have often been used as the focus for discussion in women's groups and have been seen in festivals in both Canada and the U.S. One aspect of her filmmaking style is the attention she pays to the objects and personal surroundings of her interviewees, letting these details reveal characters, establish mood. It works quite effectively for the opening of her latest film *This Film Is About Rape*. On the soundtrack we hear a woman telling of her experience as the victim of an attempted rape, while we see shots of a meticulous and slightly frilly living-room decor — flowered wallpaper, family snapshots in their gilt dimestore frames, plants, and a doll in a bright, crocheted dress. Only after we have seen her personal physical surroundings, her living space, do we see the woman herself — a slim, elderly lady wearing spectacles who is speaking about the aggressive invasion of her body by a rapist. The uncomfortably jarring relationship between sound and image works well to prepare us for the shock of recognizing this woman's age, thereby dispelling any notions about the sexual provocation by rape victims. The film later informs us that rapists act on "the opportunity of the moment" rather than on the desirability of the victim, and an interview with a convicted rapist brings out the admission that "the appearance of the woman had nothing to do with it."

What is perhaps most moving about the opening interview in this film is that the woman can discuss her own ordeal calmly and clearly, but breaks into tears when telling of her daughter's rape in years past. Compassion for

another takes precedence over concern for herself — a theme introduced here and carried subtly throughout the film. It is this very desire to be kind, compassionate and considerate of others which emerges as a central vulnerability in women — a sad commentary on the state of our society. A female therapist involved in a penal program to reform rapists tells us that “rapists act out the male cultural value system, the masculine mystique of being sexually dominant and powerful.”

The film foregoes analysis of this value system and its resultant male mystique and instead focuses on practical methods for dealing with potentially hazardous situations. It is an understandable focus for the film, although it leaves the causes of rape shrouded in shadow, as are the two rapists interviewed in the film. I, for one, was left with the vaguely helpless and paranoid feeling that the urge to rape must be like some disease which permeates the atmosphere and can overtake any man, any time. (Perhaps it is!) In any case, we are told that rapists come from all walks of life, are usually men less than thirty years of age, and that according to statistics a rape occurs every seventeen minutes, the victims ranging from infancy to advanced old age.

In such an atmosphere, an undeniable first priority must be the ability of women to handle dangerous situations. Fortunately, the film concentrates on both bodily self-defense and emotional self-control, since so often it is possible to stop aggression from escalating beyond the level of conversation. Thus, a particularly fascinating scene involves several women in a classroom situation, learning how to handle unwanted conversations instigated by strangers. As well, we are urged to rely on our intuitive and physical signals that alert us to danger. **This Film Is About Rape** should be shown in our schools, perhaps in a double-bill with Hanig and Roberts' documentary **Men's Lives**, or with Holly Dale and Janis Cole's **Thin Line**.

Joyce Nelson

THIN LINE

d. Holly Dale & Janis Cole, ph. John Clement and Joe Sutherland, p. Holly Dale & Janis Cole, 1977, col. 16mm, running time 32 minutes, dist. Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Center (Toronto).

Filmmakers Holly Dale and Janis Cole received a glowing write-up in the June *Saturday Night* magazine where Marshall Delaney briefly reviewed their four short documentary films, including **Thin Line**. He called this film their “big accomplishment” so far, and it is indeed a remarkable achievement, given the difficult nature of its subject — the workings of the Ontario hospital for the criminally insane at Penetanguishene.

Throughout, the filmmakers seem intent on changing any misconceptions we might have of either the inmates or the institution. At one point they include shots of the long corridors echoing with the haunting sound of screaming voices, as though in recognition that this is to be expected in such a place. Instead, the filmmakers, concentrate on articulate men able to analyze their problems, admit their weaknesses, and arrive at an understanding of the social and psychological forces which lead to their criminal acts. Revealingly, most of the men talk about intolerable early childhoods within a loveless milieu, particularly lacking in paternal love. Again and again we hear of absent or uncaring fathers. To stress this point, the filmmakers have included an interview with an inmate's mother, who describes the intolerable burden she has been forced to carry in raising her eight children almost single-handedly.

The need for mutual caring between men is further revealed in the therapeutic methods explored in the film. Emotional release — induced by alcohol, drugs, or whatever is necessary — takes place within an arena of affection carefully monitored by other inmates. This space, called the Capsule, provides an intense therapy session which is video-taped for later replay to the individual involved, along with the notes and comments of the friends who

have accompanied him. Every inmate shown in the film wears dark sunglasses, probably to conceal his identity from the camera; nevertheless, this particular article of personal attire effectively suggests the concealment, the refusal to be open with others which is a major problem discussed by the men.

As I recall, there is not one interview with administrator, therapist or guard in this film. Rather, the inmates themselves assess the benefits of this special therapeutic program, and speak of the need for reform in the rest of the penal system. They are especially critical of the hostile behaviour of guards in most maximum security prisons, where, as one man puts it, “you have the worst with the worst.” What is stressed in this film is the key role that love plays in every level of life. The remarkable achievement of **Thin Line** is the filmmakers' ability to reveal love working in this most desperate of places.

Joyce Nelson

SUCCESS STORY

d. John J. Carey ARPS, sc. Dorothy K. Carey, ph. John J. Carey, ed. Ralph C. Brunjes CFE, sd. ed. David Appleby, sd. rec. R.C. Carey, m. Al Brown, narr. Cy Strange, titles John Leach Associates, tech. consultant Dr. Maurice V. Smith, p. John J. Carey, col. 16mm, 1977, running time 27 minutes.

The challenge that faces an educational filmmaker, especially when dealing with a subject as complex as entomology (the study of insects), is to make a film that is informative and instructive without being either too ponderous or too simplistic. In these two short works, Jack Carey meets the challenge with the skill and care one expects from his lifelong interest in nature and more than twenty years of experience as a photographer and producer of nature films.

Success Story, which won the International Award at the 1978 National



John J. Carey (left) receives the International Award for his film, *Success Story*, at the 1978 National Educational Film Festival, Oakland, California

Educational Film Festival in Oakland California, begins with the premise that, from an evolutionary standpoint, the insects are the most successful creatures on earth, and proceeds in six segments to show why this is so. Each of these deals with a different aspect of the life cycle and behaviour of the various species, and Carey chooses insects which best dramatize these aspects. Thus, butterflies are used to provide an example of metamorphosis, the ant lion is used to demonstrate a method of food gathering and the lacewing fly larva shows the skill with which these tiny creatures camouflage themselves. To Carey's knowledge, this is the first time that this particular phenomenon has been photographed. Among the social insects, honey bees (the subject of two of Carey's earlier films) are shown as having the most sophisticated means of caring for their young and of protecting themselves in the winter.

The proportion of time invested in making a film like *Success Story* far exceeds the actual length of the end result. Almost ten years of work went into this film's 27 minutes, for reasons that are not always evident. This type of photography, dependent as it is on circumstances that are often

uncontrollable, such as the close-up work with insects, requires above all a lot of patience. Carey does his own camera work. Except for some judicious time lapse sequences that graphically show the metamorphosis process, he does not use special visual effects. But much time was required to mix the natural sounds and the unobtrusive musical score that are used to good effect.

BRING 'EM BACK ALIVE

d. John J. Carey ARPS, ph. John J. Carey, ed. Ralph C. Brunjes, sd. ed. Gerry Quinney, sd. rec. R.C. Carey, narr: Cy Strange, tech. consultant: Dr. Maurice V. Smith, p. John J. Carey, col. 16mm, 1978, running time 11 minutes.

Bring 'Em Back Alive, less overtly "educational" than *Success Story*, is aimed at a younger audience, and is designed as an introduction to insect collecting as both a school assignment and a hobby. Carey uses three youngsters to provide some audience identification, an important point to con-

sider when making a film for children. Using this framework, he shows that, while the collecting expeditions of an organization like the Royal Ontario Museum are sophisticated and expensive, students can start collecting with little or no money. He then follows the three collectors, as they prepare for their expedition, the expedition itself (with some useful asides on proper precautions to be taken in the woods), and the insects that they find. From here on, the material follows that of *Success Story* (life cycle and metamorphosis), but on a somewhat simpler level. Lastly, the youngsters release their fully developed insects. Carey attaches considerable importance to this last action, for he does not believe that insects should be mounted as trophies.

Both films are well narrated by Cy Strange, whose delivery neatly avoids verbosity or cuteness. Perhaps the only unfortunate metaphor is a reference to insects engaging in "chemical warfare." Carey and his technical advisor, Dr. Maurice Smith of the University of Guelph (an authority on honey bees), have also written a highly informative and practical teacher's guide for each film. It is to be hoped that Carey's interest in and respect for insect life will be conveyed to students by these films.

J. Paul Costabile

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Best documentary under 60 minutes
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Film makers

Derek Lamb

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Best Animated Film
— *Afterlife*

Film maker

Ishu Patel

Best Theatrical Short
— *L'Affaire Bronswik*

Film makers

André Leduc

Robert Awad

— *Song of the Paddle*

Best Direction

Bill Mason

Best Sound Editing

John Knight

Ken Page

Best Cinematography (Tie)

Ken Buck

— *L'Âge de la machine*

Best Screenplay

Gilles Carle

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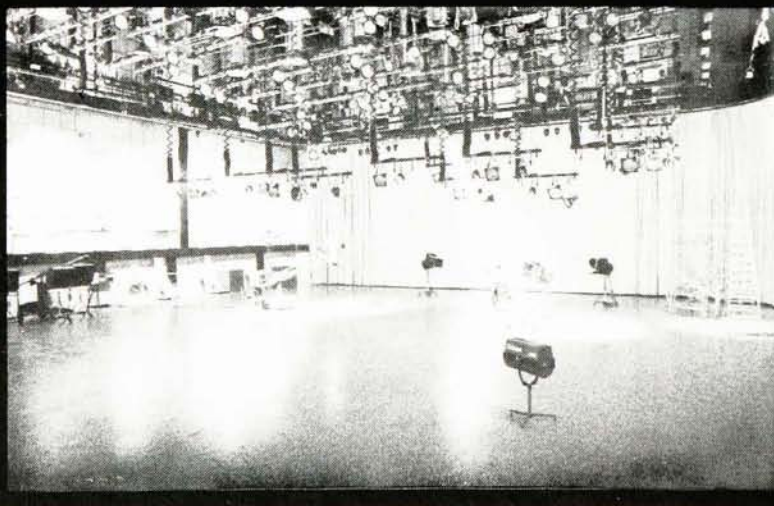
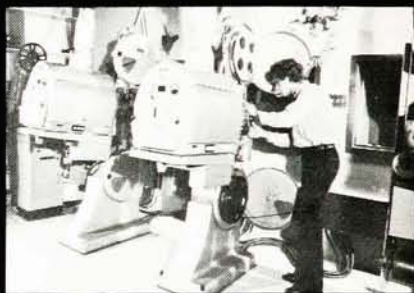
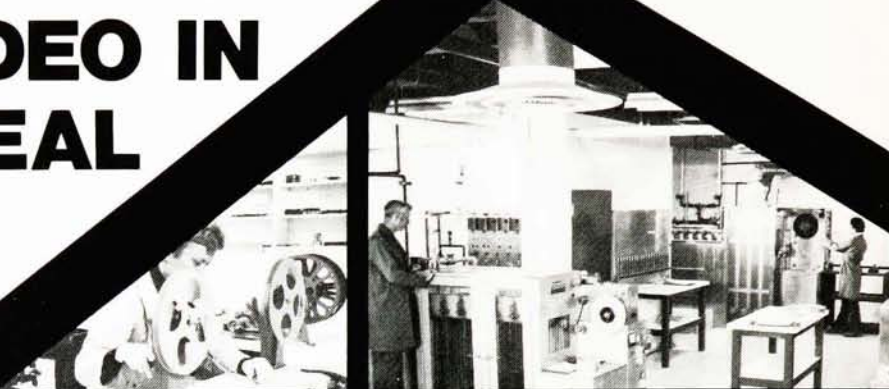


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