

ReelNews

The official newsletter of the
Federation of Victorian
Film Societies

#101

April 2014

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Editor's Desk

Good friends, plenty of food, and a sudden outburst of Greek dancing!



What else do you need on your 10th wedding anniversary? Which is what Prodos and I celebrated **on** the day of the FVFS 2014 AGM ... **at** the FVFS 2014 AGM!

Oh, and did I mention magic tricks? Our guest speaker, Aboriginal academic, Dr. Anthony Dillon, started his thought-provoking talk with some very amusing magic, cleverly woven into his presentation! Read his and Prodos's opinion pieces in this issue.

John Arkins brainstormed the Delegates into thinking more deeply about their film society's operation. Some sparks flew for a moment at election time, but we all left the building as friends, eager to get into another productive year!

In this issue, check what's being screened by fellow film societies & how they rate it, with Susan Davidson's *What's Being Seen* and *StarBox* Scores. John Arkins' President's Report offers an overview of the past year and thoughts on what's ahead. Roger Seccombe carries the torch for 16mm film and screening ideas that can work for any film society – 16mm, DVD, etc. Ian Davidson gets down to the nuts & bolts, answering your questions – this time about annual auditing. And he updates us on some of the independent films the FVFS is working on bringing to you. And do read about Gerald Lawson's latest indie film, *McLean's Money* (I've watched and really enjoyed it.) Let's make it a great year!

Ready? Lights off! Imaginations ON!

Barboo A H Marinakis
ReelNews@FVFS.org.au

PS: Please share this newsletter with friends and colleagues! Print it out, email it, leave it lying around.



The FVFS is proud to have David Stratton as our patron.

Correction to ReelNews 100

Page 10, article: "16 mm Film & the David Bowie Effect"
The following paragraph on page 10 was accidentally pasted from another item and does not belong in this article. Apologies for any confusion this caused.

"They now hold the world's largest Repertory Library of Columbia Pictures, Tri-Star Pictures, Spelling, Screen Gems, and Sony Picture Classics."



fvfs.org.au

WHAT'S BEING SEEN ACROSS THE FILM SOCIETY CIRCUIT

Let ReelNews readers know what is being screened. Email Susan Davidson: secretary@fvfs.org.au

Alpine Film Society

Arapiles Motion Picture Society

Since Otter Left, France/Belgium +, 2003.
Satellite Boy, Australia, 2012.
Adam's Rib, USA, 1949.

Arts Group of Flinders

Artists Film Screening Society

Australian Bing Crosby Society (Film Society Arm)

Each session screens a Bing Crosby film plus supporting feature from the same era.

Ballarat Film Society & Buninyong Film Festival

Mental, Australia, 2012.
A Royal Affair, Denmark, 2012.
Tales of Ugetsu, Japan, 1953.
Beyond the Hills, Romania, 2012.

Bannockburn Movies Film Society & Film Festival

Barwon Heads Film Society

The Best Offer, Italy, 2013.
Blue Jasmine, USA, 2013.
About Elly, Iran, 2009.
Hugo, UK/USA/France, 2011.

Beechworth Film Society

Big Picture Film Society

Bright Film Society

Elena, Russia, 2011.
Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy,
France/UK/Ger, 2011.
Le Havre, France, 2011.
The Sapphires, Australia, 2012.

British History Film Study Festival

Camberwell Film Society

Quartet, UK, 2012.
Winter in Wartime, Netherlands/Belgium,
2008.
The Student Prince, USA, 1954.
Jindabyne, Australia, 2006.

Celebrate Israel Film Study Festival

Corangamite Film Society

Court Film Society

Amour, France, 2012.
Happiness Never Comes Alone, France,
2012.
Blacanieves, Spain, 2013.
The Rocket, Australia, 2013.

Croydon Film Society

Mud, USA, 2012.
Farwell My Queen, France, 2012.
Before Midnight, USA, 2013.
The Patience Stone, Afghanistan, 2012.
Kon-Tiki, UK +, 2012.
Barbara, Germany, 2012.

DADo Film Society

F Project Cinema

Far East Film Society

Ferntree Gully Film Society

The Angels' Share, UK, 2012.
Barbara, Germany, 2012.
Performance, USA, 2012.
The Other Son, France, 2012.

Flexible Respite Film Society

Flickside Film Society (Arts Yackandandah)

The Reluctant Fundamentalist, USA,
2012.
Caramel, Lebanon, 2007.

Geelong Classic Cinema Inc

God Loves Atheists Film Study Festival

Goulburn Valley Film Club

Intouchables, France, 2011.
Pearls of the Far East, Canada/Vietnam,
2011.
The Tiger and the Snow, Italy, 2005.
Sister, Switzerland, 2012.

Goulburn Valley U3A Film Group

Grampians Film Society

Horsham Film Society

Amour, France, 2012.
The Turning, Australia, 2013.

Intermittent Cinema Club

Submarine X-1, UK, 1969.
Morituri, USA, 1965.
Under the Cherry Moon, USA, 1986.
Purple Rain, USA, 1984.

International Film Group

Stories We Tell, Canada, 2012.
A Simple Life, Hong Kong, 2012.
Lygon Street, Australia, 2013.
About Elly, Iran, 2009.

Liberate Education! Film Study Festival

Lounge Lizards Film Society

LV Film Society

What Maisie Knew, USA, 2012.
The Other Son, France, 2012.
Performance, UK, 2012
Amour, France, 2012.

Macartan Club (Inc) Film Society

Macedon Ranges Film Society

Melbourne Horror Film Society

Moira Film Group

Calamity Jane, USA, 1953.
The Blind Side, USA, 2009.
Last Chance Harvey, USA, 2008.
Cat Ballou, USA, 1965.

Moviehouse

Doctor Dolittle, USA, 1967.
Holiday, USA 1938.
I Shot Jessie James, USA, 1949.
Murder at the Gallop, UK, 1963.
Scott of the Antarctic, UK, 1948.
The Bellboy, USA, 1960.
I Confess, USA, 1953.

Moving Clickers Inc & Lorne Film Festival

"Where am I?"

Are your screenings missing from this list? Oh, Drats! Could it be because you haven't let us know about what you've been screening? Tsk-tsk. Please keep us up-to-date so we can all enjoy reading about your film society's activities!

WHAT'S BEING SEEN ACROSS THE FILM SOCIETY CIRCUIT

Let ReelNews readers know what is being screened. Email Susan Davidson: secretary@fvfs.org.au

Murrindindi Film Society

Myrtleford Film Society

Network Film Club

Old Scotch Film Society

My Wedding & Other Secrets, NZ, 2011.
Swing Time, USA, 1936.
The Sting, USA, 1973.
Chicago, USA, 2002.
The Intouchables, France, 2011.
The Women on the 6th Floor, France, 2011.
Priscilla, Queen of the Desert, Australia, 1994.
The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, UK, 2011.

Phillip Island Movie Club

Plaza Cinema Group

Port Fairy Film Society

Portarlington Film Society

Portland Film Society

Behind the Candelabra, USA, 2013.
The Intouchables, France, 2011.
Safety Not Guaranteed, USA, 2012.

PRODOS Film Study Group

Prom Coast Film Society

Samsara, [version not known]
Seven Psychopaths, UK, 2012.
The Intouchables, France, 2011.
Beautiful Kate, Australia, 2009.

Red Rock Film Society

Red Rum Film Society

Down By Law, USA, 1986.
Amour, France, 2012.
Psycho, USA, 1960.
Mon Oncle, France, 1958.

Science and Technology Film Study Festival

Shimmy & Shake Film Society

Smart Girls Film Club

Films featuring exceptional women in history and fiction

St Andrews Film Society

St Dunstan's Hall Film Society

Mao's Last Dancer, Australia, 2009.
Stand By Me, USA, 1989.
Hitchcock, USA, 2012.

Sun Country Movie Club

Teddy Bobo Film Club

Short films + lateral thinking exercises.
Most Tuesday nights.

The Impossible Film Club

Studying fantasy, science fiction, heroic adventure.

Trentham Film Society

Searching for Sugar Man, Sweden/UK, 2012.
A Separation, Iran, 2011.
Source Code, USA, 2011.
Beasts of the Southern Wild, USA, 2012.

WEAG Film Society

Whitehorse Film Society

Pearls of the Far East, Canada/Vietnam, 2011.
Lincoln, USA, 2012.
Amour, France, 2012.
Life of Pi, USA/Taiwan, 2012.
Beyond the Hills, Romania, 2013.
Satellite Boy, Australia, 2012.

Williamstown Film Society

The Blue Bird, USA, 1940.
The Damned, Italy/Germany, 1969.
Beneath Hill 60, Australia, 2010.
The Great Gatsby, USA, 1974.

Yarra Ranges Film Society

Love is All You Need, Denmark, 2012.
The Hunter, Australia, 2011.
Bicycle Thieves, Italy, 1948.
The Kid with a Bike, France, 2011.

Halls Gap Film Festival (NPV Film Festival)

Port Campbell Community Film Festival (NPV Film Festival)

Valhalla Social Cinema

New South Wales

Deniliquin Film Society and Film Festival

Since Otter Left, France/Belgium, 2003.
Welcome to Sarajevo, USA, 1997.
Careless Love, Australia, 2012.

South Australia

Adelaide Cinematheque

Crazy and Thief, USA, 2012.
North By Northwest, USA, 1959.
Sex, Lies and Videotape, USA, 1989.
Paradise:Love, Austria+, 2012.
The Company of Wolves, UK, 1984.

South Australia

Adelaide Film Study Group

South Australia

Adelaide University Film Society

South Australia

Barossa Film Club

On the Town, USA, 1949.
Hedgehog, France, 2010.
The Third Man, UK, 1949.
Lust, Caution, Hong Kong, 2007.

South Australia

Port Lincoln Film Society

South Australia

Reels @ Wehl Film Society

Red Obsession, Australia +, 2013.
A Royal Affair, Denmark, 2012.
Basilicata Coast to Coast, Italy, 2010.
Blue Jasmine, USA, 2013.

South Australia

RiAus Film Society

South Australia

Southern Fleurieu Film Society

The Sapphires, Australia, 2012.
Jiro Dreams of Sushi, USA, 2011.
Ed Wood, USA, 1994.
Beautiful Kate, Australia, 2009.

South Australia

Yankalilla & District Over 50s Film Club

Editor's note: The forthcoming article (mentioned in ReelNews 100) on past, successful FVFS projects for which funds were spent and/or raised consistent with "[Underlying Principles of FVFS Monetary Projects](#)" has been rescheduled for ReelNews 102.

FVFS 2014 AGM: President's Report

Introduction

Reports to the membership at the Annual General Meeting often have the flavor of being like a school report card – this is what you were examined on and this is how you have done.

In many ways all reports must cover that ground, to show the achievements or failures of the organization, but also these reports must provide a vehicle for talking about the future and what needs to be achieved.

Last Year's Commitment # 1

Last year we committed to creating smaller projects and asking for help from the membership.

Did we achieve that? Not really.

Why was that so?

Well in the first place, there were not many projects that lent themselves to this approach. A lot of the projects were those done by one or at the most two people from the committee and required the significant knowledge that they possessed.

Because of this, we were unable to involve the membership in these smaller projects.

Will we try this again?

Yes of course. The act of involving the membership means that the operating knowledge is spread more widely and help in future tasks may be easier to obtain.

Last Year's Commitment # 2

The move from 35mm film to digital projection is now highly penetrated throughout the film community.

There are very few theatres still showing 35mm as the normal projection method.

We have included articles about the experience of this transition in *ReelNews* and will continue to do so in the next few months.

Our understanding and the implications in costings with this new method of projection will continue to be examined by the Federation.

Last Year's Commitment # 3

Last year, we noted that with reduced funding, it was possible that the lending collection of ACMI may no longer be available.

Late in 2012, Nick Richardson, Collections and Access Manager for ACMI, wrote to borrowers with a view to the cessation of lending activity from the ACMI DVD, VHS and 16mm collections.

For many years, access had been by membership only and no rights were held for non-theatrical screenings of DVD or VHS titles. All memberships would cease in December 2013.

Nick attended the ACOFS Convention in May 2013 and effectively requested delegates to contact societies and ask for expressions of interest in borrowing from the 16mm collection.

Only three societies contacted John Turner who held two meetings with Nick Richardson but with so little interest it is difficult for FVFS, ACOFS or Nick to make a case to ACMI Management to change this decision.

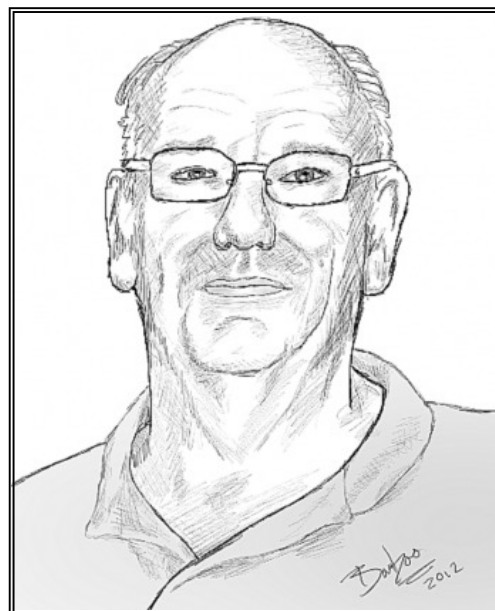
We can attempt further submissions to ACMI if there is sufficient interest from societies, and make a stronger case for continued borrowing.

It is now over to you to prove the necessity of the loan facility.

Statistics for 2014

Our most efficient Secretary and Treasurer maintain the statistical information of the Federation and I would like to share some of that information with you. All the details are for the year ending 31st December, 2013.

Our membership at the end of 2013 was 77 organisations - up one on 2012.



This comprises:

- 10 interstate organisations
- 31 Melbourne suburban organisations and
- 36 country organisations

Of the above, two were NPV cinemas and two were NPV film festivals.

Total members of all societies was 5,660 = down 300 on last year.

The methods of screening were as follows:

16 mm	13	(down 7)
35 mm	5	(down 1)
DCP/digital	7	(up 7)
Video files	9	(down 2)
VHS	6	(down 1)
DVD	66	(up 7)

From this information it is clear that the direction is to digital screening of programs. This will continue in 2014.

Where to in 2014?

Our role is very simply to support the Film Societies, Film Study Groups, and Film Festivals in the State of Victoria.

We will continue to do all that which helps film groups run their organizations better.

Remember the resources you have at your disposal:

- The committee of the FVFS have considerable experience and can be contacted for discussion and deliberation.
- The FVFS website contains a number of papers which can provide information or even more details on a particular process or issue.
- A member of the FVFS committee may be able to attend a meeting of your film society to offer comments and suggestions or just to stimulate a discussion.

It is our intention to continue to visit film societies this year and to ensure that we can provide encouragement and stimulus for a successful year.

We will also be investigating the provision of more films, like the one

we will see today [*McLean's Money by Gerald Lawson*] that do not have a current distributor and have requested that we inform our members. This may well grow into a distribution service in the future. Who says we are not in business!

Thank-You to the Committee

As you are all aware, very little is done individually. As President I am very lucky to have a group of knowledgeable and dedicated executive and committee.

I would not be able to do this task without their help.

It is never easy to single anyone out but, over the past year, it has been clear that Ian Davidson has contributed a great deal. His advice and knowledge imparted to new and old members has been a significant help and we could not succeed without it.

Susan Davidson, our Secretary, has kept us all on the straight and narrow and been extremely prompt and accurate with the minutes. We have had great issues of *ReelNews* this year including Edition 100. Thank you to Barboo & Prodos.

Prodos has also done significant work in maintaining FVFS.org.au, our website, acting as Vice President, and has been involved interstate with a number of film groups. Where he finds the time I don't know. I think he should be known as "Dr. Who" due to his time travel.

To the committee, members of FVFS and to my film society, Croydon, thank you for your help and support.

We look forward to an engaging year in 2014 and to seeing all the members during visits or at other functions.

*John Arkins, President
15 March 2014*

Frequently (and Occasionally) Asked Questions

Q Do my film society accounts need to be audited annually?

A The short answer is "Not unless your constitution or rules require it, but they must be authenticated."
The longer answer follows:-
If your film society is incorporated with Consumer Affairs Victoria then follow their rules for tier one (ie less than \$250,000 turnover per annum).

Under these rules the annual financial report should be validated and signed by two committee members and approved at a committee meeting before being submitted to members at an AGM and to Consumer Affairs.

These film societies do not need to have their financial statements externally reviewed or audited unless:

- their rules state otherwise (check your constitution/rules)
- a majority of members vote to do so at a general meeting, or
- the Registrar of Incorporated Associations directs them to do so.

If your film society is incorporated using your "Own Rules" then refer to those rules.

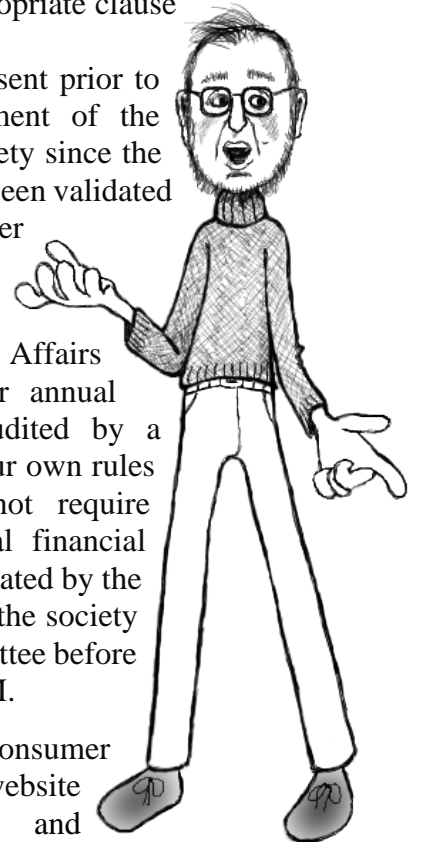
If your film society has adopted the Model Rules suggested by the FVFS, then the appropriate clause is:-

"5.2 The treasurer will present prior to or at the AGM a statement of the financial affairs of the society since the previous AGM, which has been validated as being correct by another member of the society."

In summary, neither the FVFS nor Consumer Affairs Victoria require that your annual financial statement be audited by a qualified auditor unless your own rules require it. If they do not require auditing, then your annual financial statement must be authenticated by the treasurer and a member of the society and approved by the committee before being presented at the AGM.

For the exact wording by Consumer Affairs go to their website www.consumer.vic.gov.au and search under "clubs and not-for-profits". For the exact wording in the FVFS model rules go to www.fvfs.org.au/info and look at Information Sheet 03.

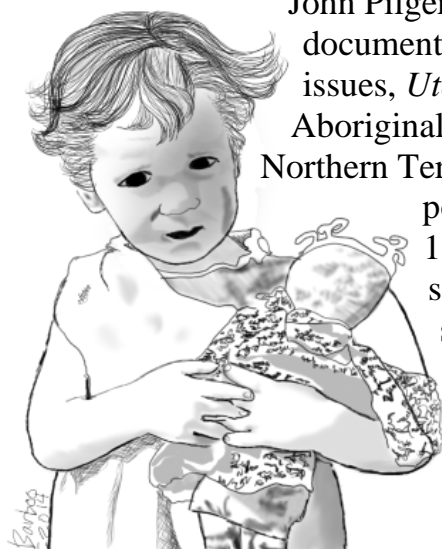
Ian Davidson



Two Comments on UTOPIA

Part 1: UTOPIA & The Use of Contrast in Social Justice Documentaries

By Prodos



Poor child from "Beautiful Melbourne"

John Pilger's most recent documentary on Aboriginal issues, *Utopia* (named after the Aboriginal settlement in the Northern Territory with a population of around 1,200 people, where some of the film is shot), has gotten strong reactions across Australia -- both positive and negative. People have not only reacted strongly to the film but also reacted

strongly to the strong reactions of others. And so on.

For instance, Indigenous footballer, Australian of the Year, Adam Goodes, wrote that he cried three times during the screening he attended and finds those who criticise it "offensive", "hurtful" and in "denial". (Ironic, since the critics' main objections seem to be the film's many glaring factual omissions and lack of balanced discussion.)

One of the key filmic methods used in *Utopia* to build its case is also used in some of the films made after WWII by the Realist Film Unit, run by Film Society Movement founders, Ken Coldicutt and Bob Matthews.

In "Beautiful Melbourne" (1947) we are first shown extensive footage of the sad, shabby living conditions of a working class family. Then we switch to the clean, happy conditions of a well-off family.

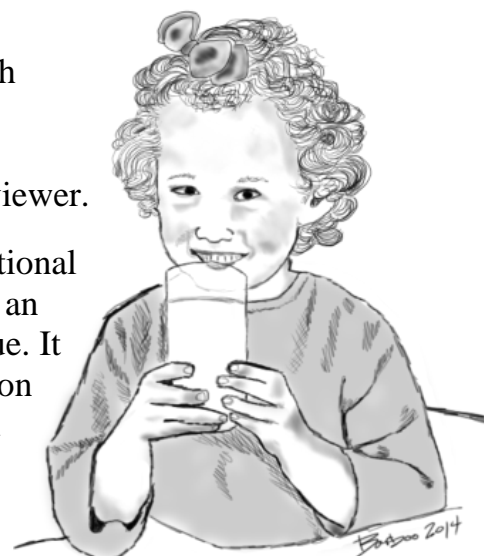
In *Utopia*, we see the terrible living conditions of some Aborigines and the luxurious circumstances of non-Aborigines.

The contrasts in both examples shock the emotions and moral sensibilities of the viewer.

It's a powerful emotional technique -- but not an intellectual technique. It creates the impression of having distilled a problem into essentially two images that together amount to one conclusion:

unfairness and injustice. Furthermore, the "haves" are held accountable for the condition of the "have-nots". By being juxtaposed it feels as if they have a self-evident causal connection -- which may or may not be true.

Activist films seek to arouse enough outrage in people to motivate action as quickly as possible, so they need to be emotional. But the very people motivated in this way, may be ill-equipped to act carefully, prudently and effectively.



Well-off child from "Beautiful Melbourne"

CHECK!
Your film society's details at
fvfs.org.au/members
Is everything in order?
For corrections, updates, changes, email
info@fvfs.org.au

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Items for possible publication are welcome,
including your StarBox results,
info about your Film Society's activities & any
ideas!

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The FVFS does not necessarily endorse the statements or views
contained in any personal statements in articles, letters to the
ed., films, etc., mentioned in this newsletter.

Part 2: UTOPIA ...

Focusing on the Failures

By Dr Anthony Dillon

[Editor: Dr Dillon is a part Aboriginal academic at the Institute for Positive Psychology and Education at Australian Catholic University, NSW. He is the co-author of *In Black & White: Australians All at the Crossroads* and a frequent commentator in the press. Dr Dillon was a guest speaker at the recent FVFS AGM, where he spoke on “How Indigenous Australians are Portrayed in Film & the Media”.]

Indigenous Australian, Mick Dodson, when talking about Aboriginal Australians has said:

“The media story is largely one of failure, despair, violence and abuse. Perhaps the quiet successes are not front-page stories, but they ought to be recognised and celebrated.”

I think it’s important for Australians to know of both the successes and the failures. But perhaps when a journalist or filmmaker is deciding between covering successes or failures, their choice may be based on which perspective is more likely to stir up a frenzy and win the praise of many -- a story about the successes or a story about the failures? What sells? Good news or bad news? We all know the answer.

John Pilger’s latest documentary, *Utopia* most definitely focuses on the failures.

In one regard that could be considered good. For Australians who don’t know of the suffering faced by some Aboriginal people, a film like this could, conceivably, be useful. For people who already know of the suffering, I don’t think they need reminding.

Excessive focus on the failures solves two dilemmas for those who live in a safe environment, have food on the table, aren’t forced to share their mattress with a dog, have access to clean water, fresh food etc..

Dilemma #1: How to not feel *guilty* about their relative advantage?

Dilemma #2: What to do to help address the problems highlighted in the documentary?

By watching a film like *Utopia*, the viewer can walk away in a self-righteous manner declaring “That’s disgusting!” or “There is so much racism in Australia!” – a kind of moral masturbation.



He can then think to himself, “Ahhh! I feel so good now. I’ve taken a stand against racism! I’ve done my bit to help Aboriginal people”. If only such self-gratification was helpful.

Psychologist Mark Leary, said “Our tendency to self-enhance prevents us from seeing that we self-enhance.” Could the reaction of “That’s disgusting!” merely be a way of self-enhancing, making us feel good, but we can’t/won’t see that it is merely self-serving self-enhancement?

Of course shouts of “That’s disgusting!” or “There is so much racism!” are so much easier than coming out from behind an ideological shelter and dealing with real issues of violence, drug/alcohol abuse, unemployment, etc., that some Aboriginal people face.

There’s nothing inherently wrong with feeling ‘disgusted’ as it can -- potentially -- motivate one towards action to addressing problems. However, if one is led to believe that most of the problems facing Aboriginal people today are due to history or a racist society and government, then one is not likely to be able to solve the problems. Solving problems usually entails understanding the causes of the problems.

But why are Pilger followers not also “disgusted” over the bashings, rapings, and killings committed *by* Aboriginal people *against* Aboriginal people today? Such as is happening in *Utopia* and across Central Australia. Why was this not featured in the film?

Why are these same Pilger followers not outraged over the fact that Aboriginal people are 21 times more likely to be hospitalised for head injury than non-Aboriginal people?

This figure peaks for Aboriginal females, who are 69 times more likely to be hospitalised for head injury. To mention these statistics invites the question, “Who are the perpetrators of skull injuries?” Though Pilger followers know the answer, it is not something they are comfortable talking about.

How does Pilger feel about these statistics? Surely he must be familiar with them. Indeed, he is well acquainted with Rosalie Kunoth-Monks who was the president of Barkley Shire Council in which Utopia sits. What did she do all those years?

I have participated in my fair share of discussions on Aboriginal topics to know that once I mention the “unmentionables” (bashings, rapes, killings, etc.) conversation either stops dead or I become the target of attacks. Why is this?

Perhaps Einstein was right when he said “The ears won’t hear what the heart can’t accept”? Are some journalists only interested in reporting on what the ears *want* to hear and what the heart *craves* to hear?



StarBox Ratings

StarBox results received since ReelNews Issue 100 - November 2013

Send your StarBox results to starbox@fvfs.org.au - See what others are screening at www.fvfs.org.au/ideas

DVD Title	Society	*
Intouchables, The	St Andrews FS	4.9
Sapphires, The	Whitehorse FS	4.7
Intouchables, The	Goulburn Valley FC	4.7
First Grader, The	Whitehorse FS	4.6
Searching for Sugar Man	St Andrews FS	4.6
Intouchables	Portland FS	4.6
Crackers	St Andrews FS	4.5
Live and Become	Yarra Ranges FS Healesville	4.4
Live and Become	Yarra Ranges FS Warburton	4.4
Babette's Feast	Yarra Ranges FS Healesville	4.4
In Darkness	Horsham FS	4.3
Sapphires, The	Southern Fleurieu FS	4.3
Quartet	Portland FS	4.2
Lincoln	Whitehorse FS	4.2
Winter in Wartime	Camberwell FS	4.2
Drift	LVFS	4.1
In the Good Old Summer Time	Camberwell FS	4.1
Salmon Fishing in the Yemen	Bright FS	4.1
McLean's Money	FVFS AGM	4.1
Life of Pi	Whitehorse FS	4.1
Babette's Feast	Yarra Ranges FS Warburton	4
What Maisie Knew	LV Film Society	4

DVD Title	Society	*
Royal Affair, A	Bright FS	4
Angels' Share, The	IFG	3.9
Pearls of the Far East	Whitehorse FS	3.9
Mud	Croydon FS	3.9
Amour	Whitehorse FS	3.9
Cries and Whispers	Barossa FC	3.8
Edge of Heaven	Whitehorse FS	3.8
Midnight in Paris	Goulburn Valley FC	3.8
Behind the Candelabra	Portland FS	3.8
Love Is All You Need	Yarra Ranges FS Warburton	3.8
Love Is All You Need	Yarra Ranges FS Healesville	3.7
Barbara	Portland FS	3.7
Romantics Anonymous	Bright FS	3.6
Margaret	Goulburn Valley FC	3.5
Hunter, The	Yarra Ranges FS Warburton	3.5
Skin I Live in, The	Croydon FS	3.4
Your Sister's Sister	Croydon FS	3.4
Turning, The	Horsham FS	3.4
Somers Town	Myrtleford FS	3.4
Amour	Horsham FS	3.3
Before Midnight	Croydon FS	3.2
Cloud Atlas	Portland FS	3.1
Pearls of the Far East	Goulburn Valley FC	2.8
Hunter, The	Yarra Ranges FS Healesville	2.5
Damsels in Distress	Croydon FS	2.2

Independent Film: McLean's Money

Reviewed by Marilyn Martyn

The decision by semi-retired gynaecologist/ obstetrician, Dr. Gerald Lawson, to get into film-making happened at a film society: "I'd go along to films that were put on by the Melbourne University Film Society, and the day came when I thought 'It's all very nice to go and watch films, but how about making a film?'"

On making low-budget films, he says: "With a small budget, by definition, it means you have a small film crew. But that also means you've got a flexible film crew. (For instance) ... there were a number of occasions where we ... did a u-turn on a ten-cent piece to rapidly move to another location."

It took 3 years to complete McLean's Money.

A group of FVFS members previewed this film and gave it a Star Box Score of 3.8.

It was then screened at the FVFS 2014 AGM and scored an impressive 4.1.

Lawson has produced an award winning, self-funded, "low budget" film that is intriguing, entertaining and thought provoking.

A wealthy tycoon, with three sons who have not lived up to his expectations, has a health scare. He uses it to test the level of each son's attachment to inheriting his money. He tests them by faking his imminent death and announcing all his money will be left to charity. It will be distributed through "The McLean Foundation".

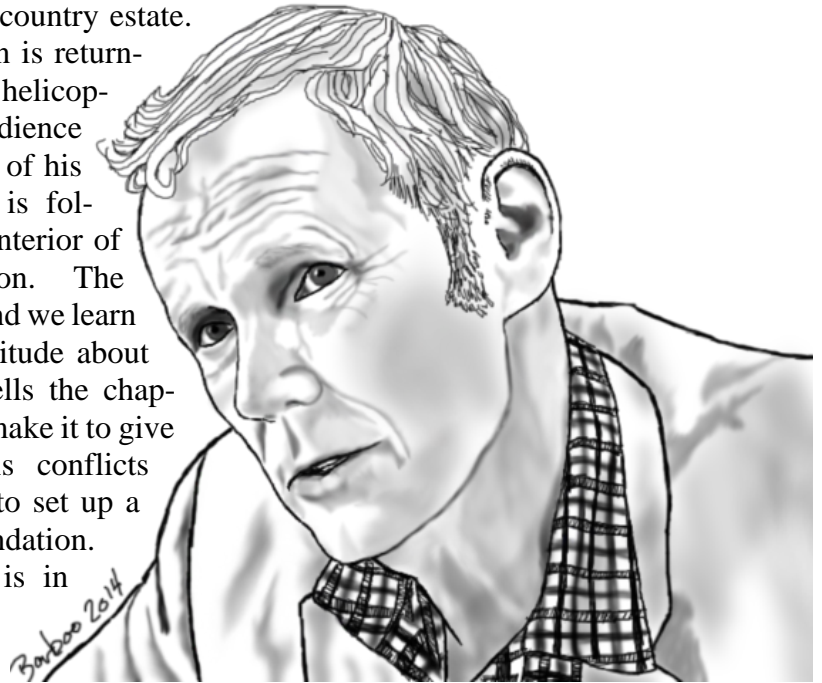
An Aussie crime boss with two sons, a wayward daughter in law, a devoted housekeeper and a personal assistant, a hospital chaplain and three sons who love their father, but are more concerned with where their lives are heading rather than their father's money, are skillfully woven into a well written script.

The opening scene is an aerial view of a luxurious country estate.

An elderly man is returning home in a helicopter. The audience sees the extent of his wealth. This is followed by the interior of a huge mansion. The plot thickens and we learn the father's attitude about money. He tells the chaplain, "I didn't make it to give it away." This conflicts with his wish to set up a charitable foundation. The audience is in on the joke.

The film was shot around Gerald Lawson, writer, producer, director of independent film, "McLean's Money".

Newcastle, New South Wales. The cinematography shows McLean's opulent lifestyle as well as capturing the Australian countryside. In contrast the hospital is ordinary.



The film contains no political correctness which was appreciated by the audience of FVFS members who previewed it with me. We gave it a Star Box Score of 3.75 and all agreed it was a film worth viewing.

Our view was it was very professionally produced – all the more impressive, given it was made on a rather small budget.

The most engaging element of "McLean's Money" was the way it explored a rich tapestry of complex relationships: father to son, brother to brother, boss to worker, husband to wife, and so on – coming at them from surprising perspectives, all cleverly intertwined with compelling and often entertaining subplots, driven by clear, strong characters, forced into having to make life-changing choices at every point.

The film received an honourable-mention at the Sunset Film Festival Los Angeles in 2013.

Official Website

<http://www.mcleansmoney.com/site/>



The film was written, produced and directed by Gerald Lawson. Its release date was September 2013.

The cast includes Henri Szeps, who is wonderful as the tycoon, Rod Ansel, Barry Sheperd and Paul Malaith – all experienced Australian actors.

"McLean's Money" is an Australian film with a comedy, crime, drama classification and runs for 97 minutes. It also contains infrequent course language. Although the film has an Australian sense about it, the characters are universal.

Did you know?

INDI Films Through the FVFS

By Ian Davidson

The FVFS has been putting some effort into finding good INDI (Independent) films for member film societies to screen at reasonable prices.

Generally these films will be unknown titles and not available in Australia through the normal channels. They will also be unlikely to be screened on the cinema circuit or TV.

The Federation has five “unknown” titles at the moment, which are available for screening, although not all have yet been fully evaluated.

PEARLS OF THE FAR EAST

The first is *Pearls of the Far East*, from Canada/Vietnam and was described in recent ReelNews and ACOFS Bulletins. The FVFS has negotiated non-theatrical screening rights at \$55 to member societies and you may borrow the DVD from the FVFS and screen it for just the screening rights and the cost of postage. This award winning Vietnamese/Canadian film from director Cuong Ngo is highly recommended, with the FVFS scoring it 4.7 stars out of 5. Contact admin@fvfs.org.au for details, to book a screening, or pay for the screening rights. Read more in the ACOFS Bulletin # 35 or at <http://www.youtube.com/user/OrientalPearlsMovie>

Trailer:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmmplSLsjQQs&list=UUvQKFTBeYW26nVPacm8N2yA>

A DAY IN A LIFE

A Day in a Life is a film directed by the Canadian distributor of *Pearls of the Far East* and is also being considered for recommendation by the FVFS. It can be purchased from www.createpace.com/228259 for just \$29.95 and comes with a public screening licence at no extra cost. One DVD / license per location is asked, but you can use it multiple times. Given the low price, we ask that everyone get their own copy / license.

Promo/Trailer is on YouTube at:

<http://youtu.be/7042MdFp0to> or in higher resolution at: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/aday> (Full download at \$29.95 is also available on Vimeo with the same small group licence.)

Please let us know if you go ahead with purchasing or downloading a copy.

Three other independent films being considered for the FVFS library were produced and directed by Gerald Lawson from Newcastle, NSW. They are distributed through Novofilms, and rights are available under the ACOFS agreement for \$55 to member societies for non-theatrical screenings. The FVFS does have copies available for loan for just \$5 to cover postage.

McLEAN'S MONEY

Australia, 2013, 97 min. PG, Drama/comedy.

McLean has a health scare and when in hospital decides to test the integrity and honesty of his adult children and their families.

This DVD was reviewed favourably at the FVFS AGM in March 2014 and received a StarBox score of 4.1.

LITTLE LIES

Australia, 2004, 90 mins. PG, Comedy/crime.

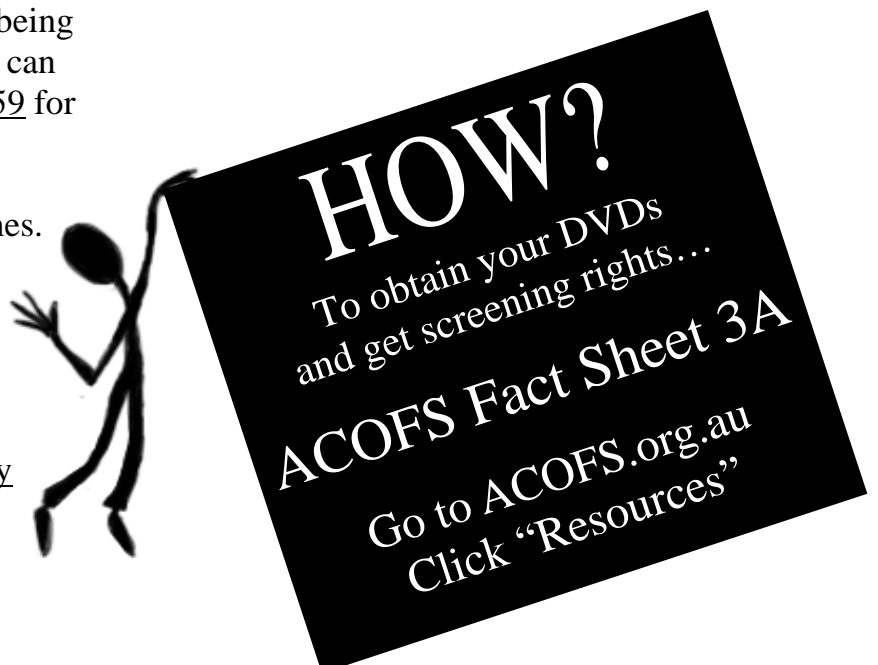
Little Lies is a minor film of a crime caper. Not too bad for a first film.

BLUE LIES

Australia, 2008, 80 min. M, Crime.

Blue Lies is an intriguing story of a young police woman who investigates a seemingly minor incident but finds herself on a dangerous path that leads unavoidably back to her own father and a secret that threatens to unravel the family.

But there must be many more independent films looking for an outlet. If you know of any please let us know at the FVFS and we will consider following them up and making them available for any film society wanting something a bit different.



16 mm Film Takes Skill and Professionalism

By Roger Seccombe & Prodos -- 16mm.org.au

It's a *real skill* to be a good film projectionist. Many of my friends are (or were) professional projectionists in the cinema. Professionalism was -- and is -- the word!

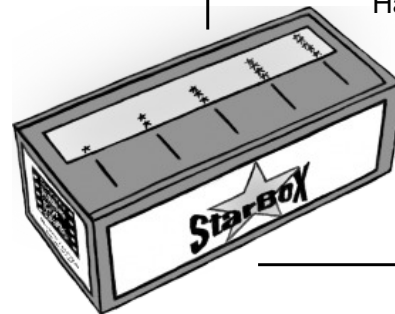
Maintaining your machines to the highest standards: regular repairs, cleaning the gate, checking sound, constantly monitoring light output so that the next reel that hits the screen would be at the same light level as the outgoing image, making 'invisible' reel changes, choreographing auditorium lighting with curtain opening and mood music to create anticipation in the audience for the show about to begin etc etc.

Does that sound like a lot of hard work? Yet, for some of us it's an absolute pleasure.

In comparison, there's scarcely *any skill* needed to load in a DVD and press the start button on a DVD player! Of course, that's part of the purpose and the appeal of much modern technology. It makes things easier.

But does this come at a cost? A detachment from the elegant machinery of cinema and a loss of those habits of professionalism that make civilisation function? One wonders.

If we were prouder of the fast-vanishing, traditional skills and the art of the former exhibitors in the cinema we surely would want to see them perpetuated wherever we can ... and that includes the Film Society Movement!



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Enrich Your Program with Supporting Film Material

By Roger Seccombe & Prodos -- 16mm.org.au

For early film society stalwarts, carefully putting together a “supporting program” -- to support the main feature film -- was an opportunity to select short subjects creatively: like an early work by the director whose feature was the main item on that month’s program; or some of the brilliant animation work by Norman McLaren; or surviving early Australian pioneering shorts; or a short that reflected a similar theme or subject matter as in the evening’s feature selection; or even a shorts program that recreated the ambience of a traditional cinema program of the past for a bit of nostalgia ... especially if the feature had something to do with the cinema!

One objection raised to this approach is that hiring shorts is too expensive. It’s true the hire costs for the National Library collections have been hiked up prohibitively for smaller film societies.

But, don’t despair as there are alternatives!

Plaza Classic Cinema Group regularly screen shorts on 8mm!

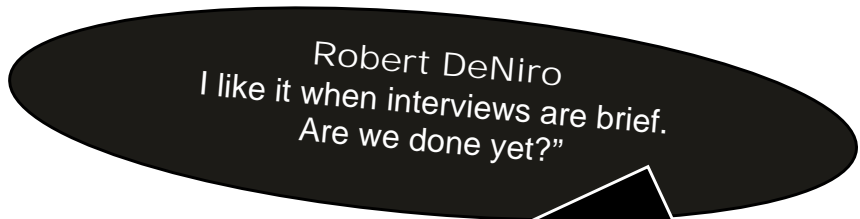
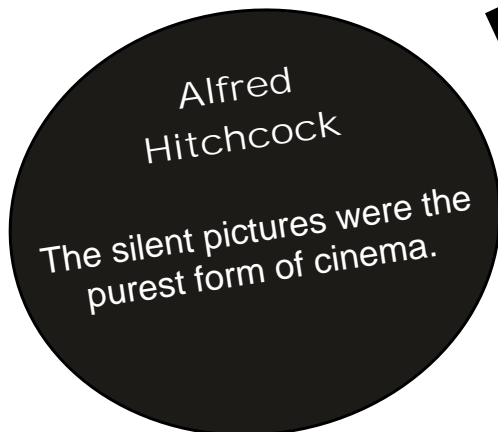
Ask around and see if any members still have 8mm projectors with lenses (and performance) to suit your screening venue.

Home cinema fans in the past used to collect prints of old comedies, Disney cartoons, old newsreels etc and some of these might be just the ticket to create variety in your supporting programs.

We recently screened a lovely French Technicolor print on 8mm of the Cousteau classic “The Silent World.” We also regularly include quality cartoons on 8mm and early Mack Sennett and Hal Roach shorts.

So, give some thought to enhancing your main feature with relevant, thoughtfully chosen supporting films. It will add a whole new dimension to your screening events and your members will appreciate it.

Editor: As well as 16mm.org.au, film societies are invited to contact the FVFS 16mm Working Group: info@fvfs.org.au



AGM Feedback Table

	John Arkins' Workshop	Dr. Anthony Dillon Talk	Lunch	Movie Appraisal	Useful Day?	Mixing with Others	Delegate
1	3	3	3	4	3	4	Y
2	4	3	4	5	4	5	Y
3	3	3	5	4	5	5	Y
4	5	4	5	?	5	5	Y
5	4	4	5	4	3	4	Y
6	3	1	2	2	2	2	?
7	?	5	5	4	4	5	Y
8	3	5	5	5	4	5	Y
9	4	5	4	4	4	4	Y
10	3	4	3	4	4	4	Y
11	4	4	5	5	4	5	Y
12	4	5	5	3	4	5	Y
13	4	4	4	5	3	4	N
14	2	3	5	4	4	4	Y
15	4	4	5	?	4	4	Y
16	3	5	4	3	3	3	Y
17	4	4	4	3	3	3	Y
18	3	5	4	5	5	5	Y
19	4	3	5	5	5	5	N
20	4	4	4	5	4	5	Y
21	3	4	5	5	5	5	N
22	4	5	4	5	4	4	Y
23	3	3	4	3	3	3	Y
Average	3.55	3.91	4.3	4.14	3.87	4.26	

This table shows numerical scores given by some of those attending the FVFS 2014 AGM – combining both Delegates and Visitors – in the following categories: workshop, guest presenter, lunch, film appraisal (McLean's Money by Gerald Lawson), whether they found the day useful, and how they enjoyed mixing with others.

This sort of scoring and “averaging out” is valued by some people. Use it wisely and at your own risk.

FVFS Committee

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The largest number of costumes in any one film was 32,000 for *Quo Vadis* (1951). *Waterloo* (Italy/USSR, 1970) used 29,000 costumes, and *Cleopatra* (1963), 26,000 costumes.

The first cinema to present a double bill of feature films was The Glacarium in **Melbourne, Australia**, on 15 May, 1911. The program for the week was *The Lost Cord* (Australia, 1911) and *The Fall of Troy* (Italy, 1910).

Source: “Film Facts” by Patrick Robertson.

Screen Trivia

The first animal star to appear regularly in films was “Hepworth Picture Player Rover”, an English collie belonging to pioneer producer, Cecil Hepworth, who made his debut in his master’s outstandingly successful low-budget box office hit, *Rescued by Rover*.

A simple melodrama about a dog rescuing a baby who has been kidnapped by gypsies, it was in such demand by exhibitors that the negative wore out and the film had to be remade twice. Rover, whose real name was Blair, starred in at least 7 other films before his death in February, 1914. American historian, Kenneth Macgowan dryly observed that Rover was the first screen performer who did not overact.

The longest screen kiss took place between Steve McQueen and Faye Dunaway in *The Thomas Crown Affair* (1968) and lasted 55 seconds.

The largest number of film cameras used for a single scene was 48 for the sea battle in *Ben Hur* (USA, 1925, silent film). Another 42 cameras were employed on the chariot-race scene concealed in statues, in pits on the ground, and behind soldiers’ shields. The 42 operators took 53,000 feet of film – equivalent to 7 full-length features – in a single day.

The most prolific composer for Hollywood films was Max Steiner, with a total of 306 feature film scores from his debut on RKO’s *Symphony of Six Million* (1929). His output during his seven years with RKO and 30 years with Warner Bros. included the score for *King Kong* (1933), *Gone with the Wind* (1939), and his 3 Oscar-winning movies, *The Informer* (1935), *Now Voyager* (1943), and *Since You Went Away* (1944).

The first woman composer to write a complete score for a Hollywood feature was Elizabeth Firestone, daughter of tire magnate, Harvey S.F. Firestone, who scored the Robert Montgomery comedy, *Once more, My Darling* (1947).