FILM AS AN IDEOLOGICAL PROCESS

KAREN: WOMEN IN SPORT

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis contains a paper entitled, 'Film as an Ideological Process' and a 15 minute video tape copy of a 16mm film called, 'Karen: Women In Sport'.

Film shelved in Special Collections, UBC Library.
1. The Paper:

The first part of this paper is an analysis of how ideological images and forms are made. A Marxian concept of the word ideology is used. The paper holds that ideological forms are the product of our material conditions and come into existence by the activities of people. It stresses that it is important to look at what sex as well as what class has control over the material conditions that create the forms of thought under which we live. Therefore special reference is made to the position of women in this process. The primary focus being that a woman's experience in her everyday life is not seen or heard in the dominant ideologies of our time, this includes film and video. This is because women have been withheld from the material and mental means of production as it refers to the ideological process.

The second part of this paper deals with the experience of the filmmaker. It outlines how the film was formed in relation to her past life experience, her financial conditions, her knowledge of film production, and her purpose in making the film. This section shows how the material conditions of our lives control the process of making an ideological form.

There were two main aims in making the film. The first was to show what society accepted as 'natural' characteristics for females, and then to illuminate the conflicts which arise for females when they step outside of these clearly defined boundaries. The second was to explore methods of presenting a female experience that would leave the audience with an under-
standing of how sexism takes place in our society. This would mean that the audience's consciousness on the topic of a female's experience would be changed. The film would give them a tool with which to re-evaluate that which they had previously accepted as a 'natural' situation in society.

2. The Film:

The content of the film takes the form of a Documentary concerning a young girls' fight to be accepted by her peers and local soccer league. Karen and her mother Nancy talk about the problem they have been confronted with, simply because Karen is a girl playing in an all boys league.

Due to lack of budget the film is made as inexpensively as possible. One of the results of this is that 99% of the film is not in lip synchronization; this means that the film is edited together from film footage and audio material that was taken at different times and places.

The editing of the film is organized from a feminist perspective. It attempts to interweave the four main speakers in such a fashion as to show that what is believed to be 'scientific facts' about the female physiology and female characteristics act as a restriction on how and where females perform in the world of sports.

At the same time it shows that the way in which women are seen as having 'female characteristics' is often in conflict with the calibre of their performance. To do this the film is edited and organized in such a way that the visual material
seen over the dialogue often contradicts what is being said. By doing this film creates a tension within the viewer that will both hold her/his attention whilst following the feminist perspective of the filmmaker. The film creates an atmosphere that gives credibility and sympathy to the main female protagonists, Karen and Nancy, whilst discrediting the male speaker who represents the values that society accept as 'normal'.

Two levels of consciousness are presented. The first is that of the academic, scientific data and research approach represented by two speakers from a conference held at U.B.C. called, Women in Motion: Health, Sports and Recreation. The second level of consciousness is presented by the actual experience of Karen and her mother in their fight to have Karen accepted in the soccer league. The film footage shows Karen playing in the soccer team, and other of her 'play' activities. This is interspersed with film footage of women active in both traditional and untraditional sports. This is edited in a fashion that the image presented is often in conflict with what is said. The end of the film is intended to leave the audience with the full impact of Karen's situation. The spoken word is dropped and only the creaking of the swing is heard as Karen shimmies up the swing post. At this point one could believe that she is symbolically successful in her fight for acceptance in the world. She reaches the top of the post and grins at us, but at that moment a written message tells us that she has had to drop out of summer soccer school because of sexist remarks about her pubescent figure.
The intention of this final scene is to leave the audience with the clear message that guts and individual effort cannot overcome the oppression that she is subjected to. Symbolically she slides down the post into reality and the end of the film.
This paper will appear under the authorship of my name, and is indeed my work. However, it is important to note that I do not exist as an isolate, and my work is shaped by the conditions I live within, and the relationships I have with others. Many people have influenced my work, and some women have actively supported my work. Namely, Dorothy E. Smith, Nicola Sumner, Helga Jacobson and Elvi Whittaker. To the latter, I wish to give credit for the completion and content of this paper and film.

Draft Copy typed by Judi Morton
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This paper is concerned with the relationship between women and the present day forms of the media.

The first part of this paper is analysis of how ideological forms are made. Special reference is made to the position of women in that process. The primary focus being that a woman's experience in her day to day life is not seen or heard in the dominant ideologies of our time. This is because women have been withheld from the mental and material means of production as it refers to the ideological process.

The second part of this paper deals with the experience of the filmmaker. It outlines how the film was formed in relation to her past life experience, her financial conditions, her knowledge of film production, and her purpose in making the film.

This is followed by an Annotated Bibliography of materials relevant to women in film and the media. The contents of some of the books and Journals overlap the academic disciplines of Film Production and Criticism, and Sociology, when this occurs they are listed in the Annotated Bibliography.
The present Women's Liberation Movement has raised many ideas that are of importance to me. The one that I shall write about here concerns the process of making film and T.V. (video). Many of the issues raised will have some relevance to other visual ideological forms, such as still photography, radio, books, newspapers, etc.

For women there is a special interest in rethinking past theories of how consciousness comes about. Marx's work on ideology started from the basic assumption that

'consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process'.

(Marx & Engels, 1974: 47)

The premise from which he began was

'the real individuals, and their activity, and the material condition under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity'.

(Marx & Engels, 1974: 42)

As women, it is important for us to understand that we too are 'real' individuals and that our consciousness is made by our inter-reaction with the material conditions that exist today.

What we must examine critically is which sex as well as which class has control over the material conditions that create the forms of thought under which we live. Marx and Engels held
'the class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it'.

(Marx & Engels, 1974: 64)

What Marx and Engels are pointing to here is that the control and production of ideas within a society is a very effective way for the ruling class to govern a society. This is the concept of ideology that is used in this paper. It is the same concept of ideology as is used by Dorothy E. Smith in her work on the structures of ideology. She refers to Marx and Engels by saying

'they are concerned with ideology as a means through which the class that rules a society orders and sanctions the social relationships which support its hegemony'.

(Smith, 1975: 355)

As women we will find the material conditions that we already exist in, reflect an ideology that was processes by a ruling class of men with male interests at its base. On this point Smith is quite adamant

'... women have been largely excluded from the work of producing the forms of thought and the images and symbols in which thought is expressed and ordered. There is a circle effect. Men attend to and treat as significant only what men say. The circle of men whose writing and talk was significant to each other extends backwards in time as far as our records reach.'
What men were doing was relevant to men, was written by men about men for men. Men listened to what one another said. A tradition is formed in this discourse of the past with the present'.

(Smith, 1975: 354)

Women have been excluded from direct participation in making the ruling or dominant forms of thought that exist today. These forms of thought are learned by us all through language, the written word, and more and more frequently the visual image, the most common of which is film and television.

Our experience of the world has by and large not been represented in these ideological modes. When we have been topics of stories, films, etc., our actions have been mainly misinterpreted by men with interests other than our own. Our true experience, starting from our place in society, has been 'hidden', (Rowbotham) 'excluded', (Smith) and warped by the ruling male elite.

We have become aware of this oppression and no longer passively receive the ideas, images and language of men. For a simple example, pick up any book or see any film not written or produced by a woman with a woman's consciousness, i.e. that she starts from her real place in the world and is aware that the majority of the world has not been defined by her sex, and when you come across the words man, mankind, humanity, workers, labour (other than that of childbirth), you will find that the subject is a male.
When we are mentioned specifically, our real experience of what we do is invisible or misrepresented. For example, half an hour before sitting down to write this paper, I was glancing through a book on the Black Panther Movement. In the second chapter, the author was giving biographic details on Huey Newton and wrote,

'His father was a labourer and at times a Baptist preacher; his mother, busy enough rearing the children (seven), never worked'.

(Marine, 1969: 12)
(parentheses are my own)

If we as women accept the inherent understanding of the word 'worked' as it is used in the above quotation, our real world and our work gets obscured. Sheila Rowbotham has pointed out,

'For instance, the Women's Movement has shown that housework is economically essential to capitalist society, though it is rarely seen as production. Because of the relationship between man and woman, mother and child, the work women do in the home is seen as purely personal rather than an economic activity'.

(Rowbotham, 1974: xxvii)

This happens because we do not have the means to produce our own forms of thought that reflect our experience.

With the advent of the Women's Liberation Movement, we have had the opportunity to question the images of the world which we have hitherto learned and, in most cases, accepted. We have become aware that the images we see on T.V. and film have very little to do with our lives as we live them.
This is due to the process whereby they are formed which includes both the mental and technical means of production.

The world of film is quite clearly ideological. Much of how we know ourselves and our world is mediated to us by the visual image. A much-reduced written symbolic representation of this process would look like this:

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Thought  ➔  Technical production

Experience  ➔  Ideology (film)
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The above diagramme represents experience from our life as we live it, followed by thoughts and ideas, followed by technical production, including both training in institutions and material needs that in turn produce the symbolic forms of ideas that make up the dominant ideology. This symbolic form, film for example, then feeds back into experience where the process starts again.

This process has the power to legitimize our reality by defining our everyday world to us, but as women we have very little control or input into its circular continuing development.

Since its inception, film has been the domain of men. It has reflected male interests, male fantasies, and issues that were relevant to them; as such, many female experiences and interests have been excluded. Even when we are aware that our daily experiences do not coincide with the ideological models we are familiar with via the media, we believe that the discrepancy is our own individual inadequacy. ¹
The partial exception to this male control over film was during the very early days of silent movies when women were directing, handling film equipment, and writing. They held these positions up until the late 1920's when the first sound track was introduced. With this new invention the small independent companies were eliminated, as were the women who worked for them. 2.

By producing 'Karen: Women in Sport', I hoped to gain the technical skills of film in order to have an input into the content and form of our present-day ideological structures. This would allow me to show how oppression takes place in our real lives.

Introduction to Part II

Since I have become involved in the media it has allowed me to see clearly the process whereby women are excluded from the means of ideological production. There are many barriers put in the way of women who seek to gain media production skills in order to make a film for example. When we are included in this area we are by in large alloted a place that is one of menial, low paying assistant, dead-end jobs and opportunities. This work is clearly under the control of men.

If you watch the credits on the films and television shows that you see you will rarely find female producers, directors, or writers. The two main barriers to film production are money and technical knowledge.
Because of the already existing conditions of society, women are poorer than men. Money is harder for women to attain. Access to technical skills have been traditionally withheld from women both by the institutions of learning, (formal courses), and the institutions of production (working with men who have technical skill, i.e. directors and producers in a quasi-apprenticeship). It is therefore very difficult for women to make movies or video unless she has the advantage of very special opportunities. What is also difficult to overcome for a woman starting from a 'women's consciousness' of her world is to try to find new ways to communicate the oppression that girls and women undergo. The following section will include some of these problems.

The Making of the Film

Video and film are two important ways for women to have an input into the ruling ideology. Therefore, it was important for me to learn the skills of production for both methods. I was familiar with video production and had for the last two years been teaching courses in the same. The crew that resulted from these courses combined with the co-operation of women who had other areas of expertise, i.e. research, writing skills, etc., culminated in the production of a two-year, weekly series of programmes by and about women called 'Women in Focus'.

In 1975 I decided to become familiar with film production. As I was a student at U.B.C., the most obvious route for me
at this time was to enroll in a 'Film Production' course. My enrollment would give me access to film equipment such as, cameras, lights, editing equipment, sound systems, transfer machinery, books, etc. However, the cost of the course enrollment did not include production costs, which are: film, audio tape, audio film, laboratory developing costs, money to live on, wages and costs for others. But in my favour it gave me the opportunity to make contact with men who had expertise in the technical production of film.

There was a problem inasmuch as I had to choose whether I should take a 'beginners' or an 'advanced' course. I had had wide experience in writing, organizing, and co-ordinating for video programme production. This included many of the technical skills that are common to both video television and film; for example, lighting, camera movements and direction, the timing of editing, directing, producing, co-ordinating, etc. However, in the world of film I knew very little about operations of film cameras, costs, laboratory procedures, different types of film, splicing, etc., I decided to take an intermediate course as this seemed to suit most of my needs.

This course cost $100.00 for enrollment, plus $50.00 for the estimated laboratory costs and materials needed for the projects that were necessary in order to complete the course. As I was faced with the fact that I was going to have to produce edited film footage as one of the assignments of the course, it quickly became clear to me that I should attempt to combine learning process, expenditure of money, and my time and energy,
into something that was going to be useful to me in my work, apart from simply satisfying the course requirements. What I wanted to do was to learn all the aspects of film that I was not familiar with, while producing a film with a content of which I could approve: a difficult task to say the least.

Having decided to attempt this rather difficult assignment I then cast my eye about for a suitable topic. Initially, I chose to consider the following points:

(a) the content had to be of interest to women.
(b) of a topic whereby I could do a political analysis of the situation.
(c) of a topic which I considered important to analyze.
(d) it had to be done quickly, as I only had a term to complete it in. (I of course over-extended quite badly on the time)
(e) that it could be taped and filmed quite simply, as I had no money for a crew.
(f) I had to find at least one person who had experience in filmmaking and work for nothing. (A crew of two is mandatory if you wish to get sound and film at the same place and time)
(g) that it could be completed without much expense, as I had no budget for production costs. (This is not possible, as I found out to my expense)
(h) that the film could be made without ethically impinging on the participants.
(i) that it had to be geographically close to where I lived and worked.
It came to my attention that the U.B.C. Women's Athletic Association was holding a conference on 'Women in Sports' as part of a programme to mark International Women's Year. The conference was organized into two main areas, the 'theoretical' to be given in the form of lectures, and the 'practical participation', to be given in the form of demonstrations followed by public participation whenever the conditions were suitable.

Although this conference was suitable for my purpose in many ways, my main concern was whether I would be able to support the ethic of encouraging women to put their energies into becoming as athletic as men. It seems that the logical extension of encouraging women to follow the competitive path of men in athletics would mean that they too would be aiming for that pinnacle of athletic prowess, 'the Olympics'. I am not one of those who are heartened by the sight of an increase in the number of female joggers that torture themselves by running up and down 'University Boulevard'. Nor do I connect this phenomenon with the aims of the 'Women's Liberation Movement'. However, as this conference was called WOMEN IN MOTION: Health, Sports, and Recreation, and the programme outlined topics including, 'The Inferiority of the Female: Reality or Myth?', 'The Identity Search', 'Shake the Cultural Pattern', 'The Politics of Programming', 'What is Feminine?', 'The Socializing Process and its Influence Upon Sports', I felt that there would be an analytic approach to the conference that was stressing recreation rather than competition.
I therefore decided to cover the conference with a mind to using it as a base for the film.

As a whole I was disappointed with the standard of the speakers as well as those that were participants in the conference. Some of the speakers were ill-informed of the situation of women within their chosen fields, and some openly espoused the most flagrant sexist myths concerning women and their physiology. I could detect very little opposition to this line of thinking from the participants in the conference. However, there were some women speakers who did know their topic and gave informed presentations. I should mention that I did not attend every session of the three-day conference, but I did hear all of the speakers present one lecture. The majority of them spoke more than once.

As my budget was very near to non-existent, I decided to cover the 'theory' side of the conference with sound equipment only, and at a later time pair up suitable statements with film footage that I hoped to get from the 'demonstrations' of sports that were to be held on a different day. This method is not a very organized way to proceed, but the combined problems of no budget and doing documentary work made this necessary.

The demonstrations varied in excellence. This was partly due to the conference's stress on public participation. The sponsors of the conference did not always want to appear too professional, as this would deter public participation by inhibiting people from joining in.
The quality of this film footage was uneven due to this problem as well as my inexperience in handling the film camera.

After the three-day conference, I was faced with four problems:

1. Most of the spoken audio I had was suitable only for presentation as a negative statement about the conference from a feminist point of view.

2. The action sports footage was very uneven in excellence. This left me with the dilemma of whether I wanted to present women in sports as other than at their 'best'.

3. A small amount of footage was unusable due to my inexperience with film camera equipment.

4. The material I had gathered from the 'action' side of the conference and the material that I had gathered from the 'theory' side of the conference did not come together in a way that would allow me to edit it into a film that would concur with my political aims, i.e. a feminist viewpoint. I felt that the most I could achieve was to be critical of many of the speakers in the conference. There seemed to be little point in doing this in a film.

I mulled over what I should do with my investment in 1,000 feet of unedited film footage and almost as much of 1/4 inch unedited sound. As I had invested a large amount of money, time, and energy even at this early point in time, I started to cast my mind about for a complementary topic with which to turn my failure into something worthwhile.

Luckily, I had a friend who had a nine year-old daughter who was going through a particularly deplorable ordeal of
struggling with sexist oppression in the Junior Soccer League. As this league had not finished its season and was still playing soccer matches, I decided to invest more money, time and energy in film and tape in order to get action shots of Karen on the soccer field and at play. I would then do an interview with her and her mother talking about the problems that they had experienced. Fortunately, this footage, taken in daylight as opposed to the conference footage which had been shot in very poor fluorescent lighting conditions, turned out to be technically acceptable. The interview with Karen and her mother was rewarding inasmuch as the responses to my questions showed quite clearly how sexism worked for young girls when they stepped outside their allotted position within our society. One small problem was that Karen, although a very active person, was rather reticent about talking, especially with recording equipment in the room.

My working knowledge of film production at this stage corresponded to the areas that we had covered in the film course that I was in the process of taking. Mostly, this covered use of film cameras, sound equipment, costs of and processes done in the laboratory, theory of editing, transfer of 1/4 inch sound tape onto magnetic film, and A. and B. Rolls. What was still hazy in my mind was the actual reality of doing all of the processes involved in editing, splicing, finishing a film and the many steps that complete this product. What I lacked was experience in the making of a film. It is true that there are books to inform you on "how to make a film", and I had read them, but many of the realities of cost and time involved would not become clear until I had had experience.
Whether this was due to my stubbornness in wanting to achieve my goal at all costs, or due to a variety of advice from different sources, some good and some bad, it is hard to assess accurately. It is probable that it was a combination of both.

Now came the task of deciding which pieces of film and audio tape to use and in what order. Editing a film is where the film is made. The time taken to do this part of the film can vary tremendously depending on how easily you are satisfied with your work, how experienced you are at making the decisions, how expert you are at splicing, what kind of equipment you have access to, how much time you have to work on it, and whether you are able to support yourself financially while you are doing this work. My own situation was rather unsuitable. My knowledge of film editing and finishing a film was theoretical only, the academic year was nearly over and I needed to get a job throughout the summer in order to return to school the next year. Perhaps the most har-assing condition of all was that I was attempting at this time to edit the film from the 'original' footage. Normally, film makers don't touch the 'original' footage until the very last stage of production, and then it is only handled by an expert in a dust-free room, and touched only with spotless white gloves. It is treated as some-thing of an 'operation'. The normal way to proceed is to have a 'workprint' made at the same time as the original film is processed from the camera. This 'workprint' is the actual piece of celluloid that you see and work with. It is an exact duplicate of the original except that it is of an inferior quality. To have a workprint made of the original footage I
had shot would cost me $100.00. Due to this cost, I had sought advice from acquaintances who had made films before. In retrospect, I can now see that the advice I received — that I should not attempt to edit the film without getting a workprint — was good. The not-so-good advice, which I listened to, was that it was possible to work without a workprint if you were really careful. Of course, I listened to the advice that would save me money. I found out that although in theory it is possible to work with the original if one is careful, it is impossible in practice if the film is a documentary using a technique of matching non-synchronous sound and film together (that is, sound and film footage that have been taken at different times and places).

This type of film-making by its very nature means that the editor must run the sound and the film footage through the viewer time and time again, thus scratching the 'original' and exposing it to many non-acceptable hazards. After several weeks of nerve-wracking work at this cheaper method, and much visible damage to the original, I gave in and ordered a workprint.

Due to the fact that I didn't have a budget, so that any money needed for the completion of the film would have to come from my own pocket, and the very limited amount of unedited film footage — approximately 1,300 feet — I decided to try to make a fifteen minute film. This was approximately half the time I had originally decided upon. On looking over my raw material, it seemed that although both the visual and the sound would be important, the sound — the dialogue — would be the medium
that would carry the essential message. (Of course, there were times when the visual effect would be the most important). For this reason, I decided to edit the dialogue first, bearing in mind suitable footage. The two, although taken at separate times, had to make sense when shown together. This meant that I had to be very familiar with both before I could start the cutting. Upon looking over the material, a pattern emerged. Whilst representing both incisive statements about women's position in sports and society, it allowed me to show how the conflicts and barriers that face women and girls when they step outside their positions within society are perpetrated and perpetuated.

Three people had emerged from the material on the audio tapes as having something significant to say. They were Karen, her mother Nancy, and a woman doctor of Physical Education. They were all female. A foil for these three women was a male guest speaker who presented dubious scientific 'facts' in an uncertain manner. These four speakers separated into two levels of consciousness.

The first was that of the academic, scientific data, the research approach, represented by the two speakers from the conference. The female doctor of Education spoke of how men and women were seen as having completely different characteristics, thus outlining the ruling ideas that exist in our society and under which we live. The male speaker presented 'scientific facts' about the female physiology. Although they were 'dubious' to me, the 'scientific fact' is generally accepted as a true
assessment of the situation. In our society this procedure, and much that gets slipped in with it, shows us one of the methods by which the ruling class verifies ideas.

The second level of consciousness was represented by the actual experience of Karen and her mother in their fight to have Karen accepted in the soccer league.

I decided that the best way to present these four speakers was to interweave them in such a fashion as to show that what was believed as 'scientific facts' about the female physiology and female characteristics and their advantages, actually acted as a restriction on where they were allowed to perform in sports. But at the same time, I wanted to show that the way in which women were seen as 'female' was often in conflict with the calibre of their performance.

I was able to add to this dialogue the dimension of the visual by showing film footage so that it, in some way, contradicted what was being said. By doing this, I hoped to create a tension within the viewer that would both hold her/his interest and follow my line of thought. I wanted to create an atmosphere that would give credibility to the women speaking in the film and discredit the male speaker. I wanted to create a sympathetic audience towards the women's position in their situation, and to use the male speaker as an unsympathetic element. I wanted to show that women were aggressive, co-ordinated, and could perform just fine in an area considered to be traditionally masculine.
As editor of the film, I was in potential command of a very powerful method of making or contradicting our present ideology. (Of course, any 'potential command' was dependent upon the film's circulation). As Christopher Isherwood has pointed out in his book about film making,

'The whole beauty of the film is that it has a certain fixed speed. The way you see it is mechanically conditioned. I mean, take a painting, you can just glance at it, or you can stare at the left-hand top corner for half an hour. Same thing with a book. The author can't stop you from skimming it, or starting at the last chapter and reading backwards. The point is, you choose your approach. When you go to the cinema, it's different. There's the film, and you have to look at it. He makes the points, one after another, and he allows you a certain number of seconds or minutes to grasp each one. If you miss anything, he won't repeat himself, and he won't stop to explain. He can't. He's started something, and he has to go through with it'.

(Isherwood, 1945: 46)

This 'fixed speed' that Isherwood delineates for us is only one of the inherent qualities of film. Film has colour, depth, and movement. It reflects our vision of the world and our physical beings in such a way that it is easy to recognize and therefore accept as believable. Also bear in mind that the conditions we see film in a darkened room in a comfortable chair - directing the attention toward the screen only.

With this kind of control over the 'approach' of the film in mind, I approached the editor's bench. The idea I decided upon was rather sophisticated. It meant that I first had to
present what society accepted as 'natural' characteristics for females, and then I must illuminate the conflicts which arise for females when they step outside of these clearly-defined boundaries. To set this scene I turned my title credit upside down, and faded through to a head shot of Karen hanging upside down - not a normal position. This made it very difficult to see what sex she was. I then cut to soccer scenes starting with the feet of the players and slowly zooming out to a long shot, where you could see all of their bodies. The game they are playing is easily discernible as soccer, and, as such, the assumption would be that the players were all male. Karen's sex is not readily seen even though we have been introduced to her by name in several preceding shots. Her size and skills become apparent at once and they jar with the general scene, and are to be explained later on in the film. While this is shown, a female voice of authority is telling us how society characterizes and sees males and females completely differently.

As the voice changes to male, he informs us 'seriously' of the anatomical and physiological differences between males and females. At this point we get our first good look at who is playing on the soccer team, and we see that it is Karen, who just contradicated much of what has been said.

I also wanted to depict visually the conflict brought about by the dual pressures of what is seen to be appropriate sports for girls and young women, and the sport Karen wishes to participate in. To do this, I used Nancy's voice answering a question about the pressure on young girls to conform to their
traditional image, while showing footage of a rhythmic dance group on the screen. These young women are extremely athletic, muscular, and lithe. However, their movements are cloaked in a ballet-like grace as they wave coloured ribbons in the air, making 'art nouveau' curves. They wear skimpy, legless leotard tops. (How pleasant to see the female dancers in the Shanghai Ballet wearing trousers). The scene is very seductive, and follows the 'normal' image of the female in every way. Shortly into this scene, I fade into a shot of Karen, who is active on the soccer field. I retain both scenes, giving a double image. The contrast between the two shots in facial expression, dress, and way of moving is quite startling. I then fade out the rhythmic dancers, leaving Karen frowning as she is told to transfer to a younger league made up of players younger than herself, simply because she is 'Karen, not Kevin'.

I wanted to avoid a light-hearted approach which presented a situation that appeared to be rectifiable by a few simple changes in the present situation. I didn't want my audience to feel that 'yes, things were pretty bad, but now it's getting better, much better'. I didn't want people to see the film and just feel sorry for Karen and her mother as individuals. I wanted them to see the film and understand how the problems came about and take away with them a lasting impression of the situation as I, Nancy, and Karen saw it. I wanted to make a change in the consciousness of my audience. I was attempting to 'shape the audience's mind', to use the phrase that Julia Lesage employs in her article, 'Feminist Film Criticism: Theory and Practice'. She says:
'A film which is a mere social critique ends with the audience saying, 'Isn't that terrible, I cried to see it'. A more radical work shapes the audience's mind, leaving the viewers the structures which go beyond their consciousness prior to viewing. They then have a tool with which to re-evaluate that which they previously accepted as 'natural'.

(Lesage, 1974: 15)

Although my film lacked a 'blueprint' as to how to go about making that change come about in reality, I hoped to challenge what many people would accept as the 'natural' situation of women and girls within our society, and to make the audience realize that the problem is not easily solved.

To challenge the accepted views of women in this society is a difficult task. In order to do this, I felt that I had to present my case with force and strength. But at the same time, I did not want to lose the 'natural' character of the two main protagonists. Therefore, I did not want to eliminate the special rapport that existed between Karen and her mother. I felt that by including their natural conversation I would present them as believable and real, and encourage the audience to respond to them in a sympathetic way. This is why I include the somewhat 'humourous' banter that was part of the way Karen and her mother spoke to each other. However, I wanted to finish the film with a very clear message, so that nobody could leave the room having any false feelings that guts and individual effort alone would cure the ills of women and girls in sports and in our society as a whole.
As I had progressed with the editing of the film, I had thought of many endings. None of them had the kind of impact that I wanted. I had reached the point where I was going to settle on the best of a poor choice, when I had a chance conversation with Nancy, Karen's mother. What she told me settled my mind as to how I would end the film. Fortunately, I was able to use for this ending a piece of footage that I had already shot. I combined this with a written message. The lack of spoken dialogue at this point in the film strengthened the force of the visual impact. I therefore managed to end the film on a visually provocative as well as an ear-jarring, and I hoped consciousness-jarring, note.
1. For example, some of the articles in *Women Look at Psychiatry*, ed. by Dorothy E. Smith and Sara David, speak to this common problem for women. In particular see 'Women and Psychiatry', p.1. by Dorothy E. Smith, and *I'm not Crazy After All*, by Barbara Joyce, p.183. Also see *The Dialectic of Sex*, by Shulamith Firestone. See Chapter 7 for an analysis of the process whereby this situation of conflict comes about.

2. In Sharon Smith's book, *Women Who Make Movies*, she tells us that Alice Guy Blanche was one of the first "to see the potential of the Lumiere brothers' invention for casting moving images on the screen". (p.2.) Alice Guy Blanche was allowed to make movies as Mr. Gaumont of Gaumont Camera Company thought the instrument of little value. He replied to her initial request for use of the camera by saying, "What! What! What! Alright, if you want to - it's a child's toy, anyhow". p.5.
GENERAL REFERENCES


Lesage, Julia. 'Feminist Film Criticism: Theory and Practise'. Appearing in Women and Film Vol. No. 1. 5-6, 1974.


Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*. Original date of printing: 1957

Semiological analysis is often used to discuss film. I feel it has limited uses for women interested in understanding the world from our place. 'Myth' is looked upon as a language. The use of the form is developed at the expense of the content, as Barthes stresses time and time again. Semiology is a science of forms, since it studies significations apart from their contents.

The analysis of myth is contained in the final chapter of the book.


Bazin holds that the painter's work is 'subjective' by virtue of the painter holding the brush with his 'intervening' hand. The lense, by contrast, is 'objective'; "For the first time, between the originating object and its reproduction there intervenes only the instrumentality of a non-living agent". (This so-called objectivity appears to be based upon the French word for a lens, 'OBJECTIF', and little else).

Bazin appears to hold the view that only when there is a painter does the subject become influenced by their relationship; and that through the lense we will see 'real' life. (Andrew Tudor, in *Theories of Film*, has written a critique of Bazin and Kracauer in Chapter Four; 'Aesthetics of Realism: Bazin and Kracauer. See also Pauline Kael, 'Is there a cure for Film criticism?' in *Sight and Sound*. 31,2,62).


An aesthetic of reality: Cinematic realism and the Italian school of liberation. Fellini, DeSica, Rossellini.

By writing this book Betancourt hopes to encourage College and High School Personnel who have audio-visual funds to show 'films that present real Women'. She wants teachers to become aware of the many different problems and interests that make up the world of women in order to get away from the narrow stereotypical images of women that are presented in many films today. There is a useful selection of contemporary films by women and a short bibliography on the women filmmakers, plus a filmography. The book recommends feminist readings suitable for the Film's critique.


A study on how the government attempts to deal with sexism and discrimination behind the cameras within the CBC organization.


This book shows clearly how American media decisions stem from political interests. It is written in a 'racy', easy-to-read style. It is a call for us to take a more active part in the 'democratic process'.


An important incisive work that is basic reading for any woman who is interested in her own sex. Of particular interest is the theory of women as 'other' outlined in the introduction of the book.


This book is a political analysis of sexism. She is mainly interested in the written word.

This is a large, glossy book with a maximum amount of good quality photos and a minimum amount of dialogue or analysis. It shows the history of film from Edison up to the 1970's. Very nice for those of us who like looking at old photos whilst educating ourselves.


Haskell follows the images of women in the movies from the twenties to the seventies.


A novel about making and writing a movie.


The introduction of this book states two main aims in publishing this collection of articles. The first 'is to put pressure on Parliament and the Civil Service to make radical change on behalf of women' (working in the media). The second is to 'have a go at peeling back the skin covering the eyes of people who'd been reared on traditional attitudes'.

The collection of articles in the book can succeed in achieving that goal. Women who have accepted the images presented to them via the various forms of the media would find this a suitable starting book. However, I was left unsatisfied with many of the articles as they implicitly use the 'role theory' assumption that a change in attitudes, i.e. psychological change, will rectify the oppression of women. I do not feel that this approach is radical enough for a full understanding of the process and the problems of women's images and the work situation of women in the media.

This book is organized into three parts: Perception, The Creative Process, and Multi-Media Presentations. Klima's idea is that we establish a "universe of discourse" to promote a reconciliation between the arts, sciences and humanities. He stresses the need for a "basic lexicon" of visual productions in order to understand the film process and human responses to it. The visual product must develop a "systematic methodology" by using a set lexicon or graphic representation. I am suspicious of a "universal discourse" of this nature because the model he suggests would exclude many of the social relations of the production which are important for women to articulate. (See Lesage's article.) As women we have been traditionally withheld from contributing towards the ideas and beliefs of the ruling ideology of our time. The idea of a 'discourse' is antithetical as a mechanism which will display our interests.

This is a good book for general theory and background reading.


Forty-two film makers and critics discuss the art and theory of film. A comprehensive background of film theory with notable stress on the human condition. The perspective is male.


This article starts from the point that 'the mass media plays a crucial role in creating and perpetuating America's dominant ideology: racism, imperialism, chauvinism, authoritarianism. It is as integral a part-and-defender-of this system as other major institutions: schools, the Army, corporations ... the tactical question is how to relate to the existing media, essentially how to use them now while we are not powerful enough to completely ignore them'. The options suggested are:
1) total non-co-operation 2) selective non-co-operation 3) attempts to influence the media. The authors give suggestions for criteria for co-operating with the media.


An inexpensive and thorough book on practical movie making. A very comprehensive and useful reference book for those interested in making movies or understanding how film is made.


This book outlines the images of women in the movies from 1900 to 1970, reducing them to a type for each decade. For example 'The rise and fall of Rosie the Riviter' for the forties. The author believes that 'films' have been a mirror held up to society's porous face. They therefore reflect the changing societal image. Although I see film as much more than just a mirror this book was interesting to read if only for its female content.


This book is not only an historical excavation, as the title might suggest, but also clearly outlines the conditions in which women have produced and reproduced their lives. Although not directly concerned with the visual image, it is necessary reading for a feminist analysis of most topics.


This book uses many of Marx's methods of analysis, but also attempts to start from the position of a woman. It is a very important book for women to read and use.


The book has some very good chapters. Chapter seven discusses how the media controls the portrayal of an oppressed group.
Smith, Dorothy E. 'An Analysis of Ideological Structures and How Women are Excluded: Considerations for Academic Women'. This article appears in Volume 12, No. 4, University of Toronto Press, 1975 of Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology.

Starting from an Marxian analysis of ideology, Dorothy Smith delineates how women have been excluded from the means of mental production. Although this article is not primarily concerned with the visual image, its thesis is very relevant to images of women in the media.

This edition of the journal contains only topics on women.


Although this article is written with the 'social organization of knowledge' as its basis of inquiry, I found it very useful as background reading for analysing the media from a woman's place (and therefore not the traditional starting point) within society.


As the author states, "the purpose of this book is twofold: 1) to present a history of women film makers, and 2) to identify the new women film makers". In part I she gives a worldwide picture of women film makers since 1896. Part II concentrates on new women film makers outside of Hollywood. Part III lists women film makers in the United States, Film Organizations, Distributors and also includes a bibliography. Good for general history and information on women in film, and an impressive collection of dates, names, references, etc.


This book contains the film script plus two interviews
with Gillo Pontecorvo and Franco Solinas. Both the film director and the script writer have thoughtful approaches to how and why they make films.


Eighty essays written by women in the media about their jobs. A full complement of first-hand accounts of how women are exploited in the business places of the media. Women who earn their livlihoods in the publishing and television industries discuss their jobs frankly and (in most cases) anonymously. The process of publishing the book, as described in the Introduction, sets the framework of the book.


A useful critique of Bazin and Kracauer, the realist aesthetic; "...They are both crucially involved in the attempt to create a non-social aesthetic of the real".

Tyler, Parker. *Sex,Psyche,Etcetera in the Film.* This book discusses film 'masterpieces' by Antonioni and Bergman.


A historical account of the different images of women's sexuality as it has been portrayed on the screen. The final chapter deals with 'man as victim', as seen in Hollywood, and Italian 'sex comedy' films. A rather peculiar critical perspective of misogyny.


Wollen suggests a number of ideas with which to discuss the problems of film aesthetics. The main areas that he covers are, Elsenstein's aesthetics, the auter theory and its semiology of the cinema. Wollen is a supporter of the auter theory.
2. Journals, Magazines and Pamphlets:


I have only scanned this journal. The articles are all by men, well-organized, and appear to be using a semiological approach to film criticism.


Contains articles on feminist film analysis using semiological and psychoanalytic ideas; well-written articles in rather esoteric language. I am often left with an incomplete understanding of the topics discussed. This is a new journal, and I look forward to reading more issues.

**Films by Women.** Published by The Canadian Filmmaker's Distribution Center, 406 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Ontario.

A catalogue of films produced by women from 1967 thru 1973. I should stress that many of the films are not intended to have any feminist content, and therefore reflect many shades of 'art'. However, there are some films that are made with a sincere attempt at a deeper analytic presentation of our world.

**Interlock.** No. 4 and 5. Donna Dudinsky, Editor. National Film Board, 1976.

This publication comes out of the National Film Board's Studio D in Montreal. It includes a history of women who have worked in the NFB, articles about women making films and video tapes, and some reviews.

**Jump Cut.** Jump Cut Associates, P.O. Box 865, Berkeley, CA. 94701.

The articles are thorough, dense and well-organized, consisting of critiques dealing with a variety of film theories. ... 'Film in a social and political context; its practical and political use, the economics of filmmaking and distribution, and the function of film in America today'. I recommend a subscription to this journal. It is not specifically aimed at a feminist
audience, but many of our viewpoints and arguments are acknowledged and analysed by the authors of the articles.


This is a useful feminist bi-weekly newspaper. I make reference to this issue because it was mainly concerned with 'women and the media'.

Media Report to Women. Dr. Donna Allen, Editor. 3306 Ross Place N. W., Washington, D.C. 20008.

This publication is issued in two parts. Part 1 is an index of who's doing what, where, and is useful for contacts and an overall view of 'non-professional' women's activities throughout Canada and the United States. Part 2 is described as 'What women are doing and thinking about the communications media'. It contains short articles on ideas and actions of women in the media.


This issue contains three comparative articles on film by women, and an interview with Nelly Kaplan.


This is a special issue on Communication and Control. Good political analysis is apparent in their articles. Well worth reading.

Take One. Phyllis Platt and Kay Armatage, Co-editors. P.O. Box 1178, Station B., Montreal 110, Canada. Special Issue on Women, Volume 3, No. 2., 1972.

This issue includes general articles on film critique, women directors, images of women, interviews, etc.

This booklet contains two articles analysing Arzner's work as a director. The first, by Claire Johnson, analyses Arzner's work from the point of view of feminist politics and film theory. She postulates that there are two levels of discourse between the participants in the film: a dominant ideology, the ideology of patriarchy, and the discourse of the women. She holds that a theory of Arzner's work can be developed in terms of the dislocation and contradictions between these two levels of discourse. Pam Cook's article stresses the point that the system of representation generated by classic Hollywood cinema fixes the spectator in a specific, closed relationship to the film. She uses concepts such as gags, pregnant moments and narrative reversal. The 'rare interview' given by Arzner is somewhat disappointing in as much as it does not look into the polemical articles it follows. It does not give us any indication as to the state of her conscious or unconscious mind.

A filmography of Arzner's direction, editorial and script works is included in the back of the booklet.


This is a journal of film history and criticism. I am not too familiar with this journal as I was only able to find the above copy. However the historical articles that appear in this edition on early women 'stars' are very useful towards understanding how women's image was shaped and her relationship to the men who shaped her, i.e. the director, and to other male actors. For example, the article 'Joe, Where Are You?' by Tom Flinn in the above edition, on Marlene Dietrich and Joseph von Sternberg.

Women and Film. Box 4501, Berkeley, CA 94704. Microfilm copies available from Xerox University Microlfilms, 300W Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

This journal contains many useful articles, critiques, theories, interviews, on women and film, both well-known and
relatively unknown. Unfortunately, it went out of print in 1976, but it is worth trying to get back copies, particularly Volume 1, No. 5-6, 1974. It contains an interview with Lina Wertmuller where she illuminates for us all how successful token women think. All the old cliches are there. However, this is followed by an article by Julia Lesage on 'Feminist Film Criticism: Theory and Practise'. I have found this article very useful in my thinking.