

Favian Mostura

Sorbonne Nouvelle University Paris 3

English Department

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My thesis project aims to further analyze social guidance films that were shown in classrooms across the United States from the 1930s to the early 1970s and recontextualize them. I attempt to show how these films fit into an American postwar strategy of domestic containment, as theorized by historian Elaine Tyler May in *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (Basic Books, New York, 1988), which is a strategy aimed at curtailing behaviors considered as anti-American, therefore stopping the spread of communist ideas and reinforcing national identity and unity.

Whether it touched on public safety matters such as juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, safety rules, or personal development matters such as vocational and professional guidance, dealing with one's emotions, or dating and marriage, social guidance films sought to offer examples of how to better navigate an American society that changed drastically over the period of the Cold War.

This subset of educational films is often viewed by contemporary commentators and historians as a morally conservative genre of film discouraging anything other than a white, middle-class, heterosexual model of citizenship, fitting into the nuclear family framework. However, a closer look at social guidance films, along with a careful reading of guidance history in the United States, underlines the cautiousness with which educators, psychology experts, and filmmakers alike approached the matter of inculcating supposedly normative behaviors through film.

The main sources needed for my thesis project fall into two categories:

First, the educational films themselves, which are available in large numbers in digitized form on the internet (mainly on [archive.org](http://archive.org/)/The Internet Archive, but also on public platforms such as YouTube or Vimeo, as well as on the public databases of some universities and libraries). Some films are also available for purchase (example: [footagefarm.com](http://footagefarm.com)). The quality and completeness of the films vary according to the source, and this is not exclusive to digitized material, as films donated and archived are sometimes physically missing footage or are damaged.

The second category encompasses all kinds of ephemera related to the production, distribution, and reception of these films. This includes the teaching guides delivered with the film, which can take the form of a single sheet, but can also be small books or leaflets, film evaluations by teachers and education professionals, and finally deeds and receipts concerning the sale or purchase of films.

The immense digitization and archival work of American researchers has already allowed me to consult many of these sources from Paris, but it was not enough to arrive at an overview of the postwar educational film production.

The main objective of this trip was therefore to consult primary sources that were not available online, in order to complete the corpora of my thesis, and to also provide material for the part of my thesis dealing with the distribution and reception of these films. I also wanted to meet archivists specifically specialized in educational films.

Thanks to the generous EAAS grant, I was first able to go to Washington D.C. for two weeks, to the Moving Image Research Center of the Library of Congress, in the James Madison Memorial Building (1), where I viewed 2 digitized films that were not available online, as well as the copyright deposit catalogs of non-theatrical productions from 1930 to 1970. After selecting a number of films that seemed

to me the most representative of the theme of social guidance, I was able to view on microfilm the documents filed at the same time as the declaration of copyright, when they were available. These ancillary documents ranged from sometimes a small guide, to the entire script of the film with the producers' notes (2). I was also able, in the Thomas Jefferson Building, to view and partly scan film catalogs from several states, which gives us an idea of the extent of educational film production and distribution in those states. We can see, for example, that films from the 1950s are still being sold in 1970, and that there is a considerable drop-off in social guidance and guidance films in the 1960s. While some of these catalogs, sometimes doubling as periodicals, are available online (*Educational Screen* and *See & Hear* for example, courtesy of the Media History Digital Library), digitized state-level catalogs are scarce.

I then went to Bloomington, Indiana, where one of the campuses of Indiana University is located, including the university's Moving Image Archive at the Herman B. Wells Library (3). As a major university in the Midwest region, Indiana University (and in particular its Bloomington site) was one of the epicenters for the production and distribution of 16mm educational films of all kinds, and as such holds the largest comprehensive collection of educational films in the United States (4). I was able to meet with the archivists there and view a large collection of archive material, some of which I scanned, including pamphlets and informational material from the production companies themselves.

While it is still complicated to quantify the distribution and reception of educational films because of their ephemerality, I was able to get an idea of the impact they had, thanks in part to educational film evaluations of the EFLA (Educational Film Library Association), which presented educators' opinions on the quality of a film and its suggested uses in schools (5).

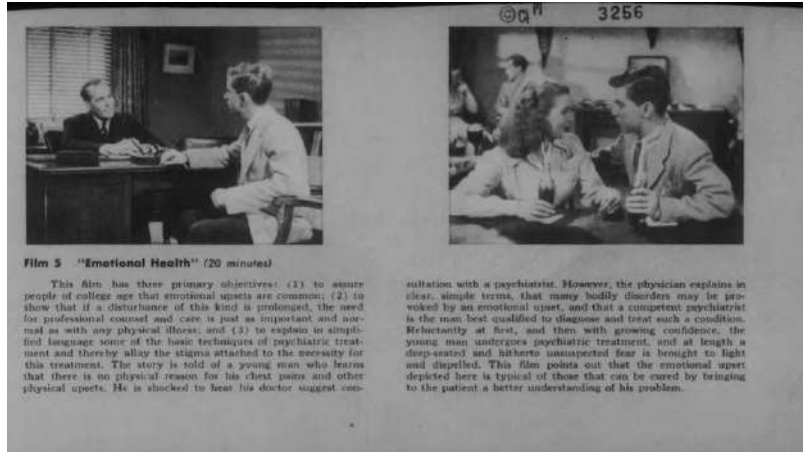
All these documents show the ways in which educational films were far from the clichés and caricatures according to which the genre of the educational film, and more particularly the social guidance film, would have been the fruit of naive considerations on the part of directors and educators.

This grant has given me the opportunity to greatly expand and organize my primary sources, as well as to meet with scholars specializing in my field of research, which will allow me to refine my analysis of the films themselves and better understand the production and distribution of educational films in a classroom setting.

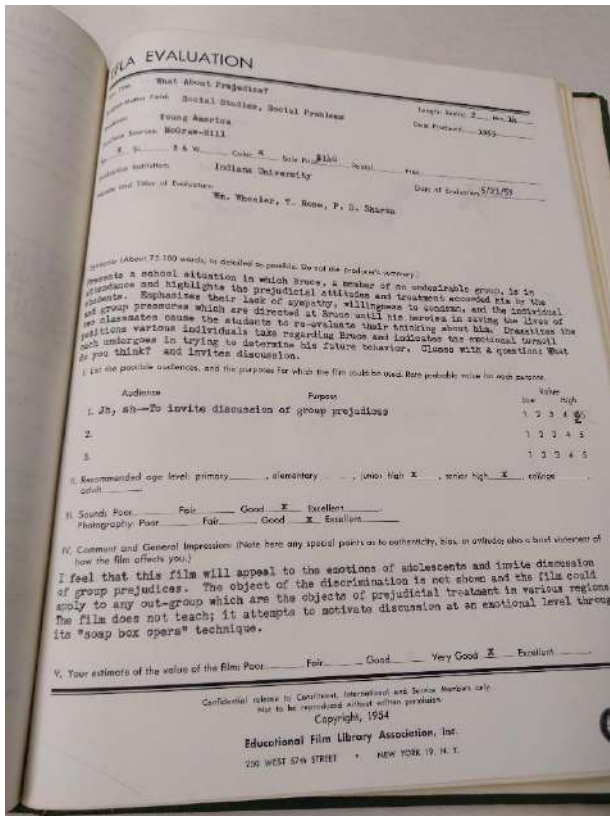
I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the EAAS for making this research trip possible, to the librarians of the Library of Congress, in particular reference librarian Josie Walters-Johnston at the Moving Image Archive who helped me in obtaining all the material I requested over the week, to the staff at the Moving Image Archive of Indiana University in Bloomington, in particular Rachael Stoeltje, Carmel Curtis, and Jamie Thomas, who all graciously made me feel more than welcome at Indiana University Bloomington, allowed me to dig through crates of sorted ephemera, helped me photograph and scan many documents, and assisted me in viewing numerous films from their collection. I would also like to thank Geoff Alexander who put me in touch with the Moving Image Archive, and answered any questions I had on educational films.



(1) The Moving Image Research Center in the James Madison Building of the Library of Congress (Washington D.C.).



(2) An example of a document (microfilm) accompanying a copyright description, for the film "Emotional Health" (McGraw-Hill, 1948). In this document, the producing company describes the story of the film and lists the educational objectives it attempts to fulfill.



(5) The EFLA evaluation of the film "What About Prejudice" (Young America Films, 1959), showing how peer pressure can invite prejudice. The film is rated for a use in a junior high and senior high school setting, and is considered "very good" by the evaluating educators even though it allegedly "does not teach" and merely "attempts to motivate discussion at an emotional level".



(3) The Moving Image Archive at the Herman B. Wells Library, Bloomington (Indiana).



(4) Film canisters of social guidance films from the educational film collection of the Moving Image Archive.