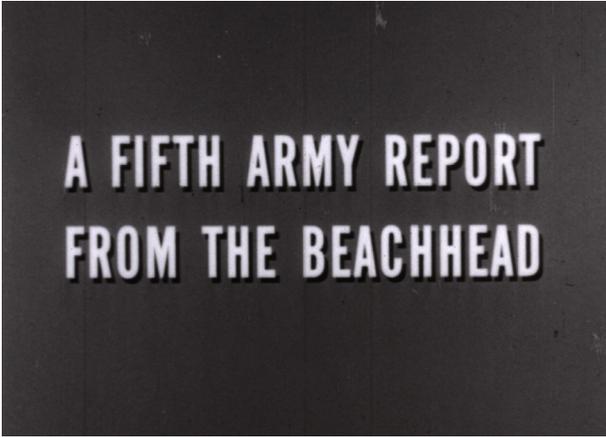


16mm



CLASS PICTURES



PRESENTED BY
JASON DOUGLASS,
PIERRE FOLLIET,
KATIE KIRKLAND,
SIMON REICHL,
JOSH VAN BIEMA,
and XUELI WANG

FILM & MEDIA STUDIES 604:
"THE FILM ARCHIVE"
SPRING 2018



An Evening of 16mm Films Presented by Student Archivists



PRESENTED WITH SUPPORT
FROM PAUL L. JOSKOW
'70 M.PHIL., '72 PH.D.



THE TOOLS OF PROVIDENCE

(Dir. William S. Hart, 1915, 16mm, 12 min., silent)

THE TOOLS OF PROVIDENCE (also known as DAKOTA DAN and EVERY INCH A MAN) is a silent western directed by, and starring, William S. Hart. Peter Milne, reviewing the film in *Motion Picture News* upon its release in 1915, proclaimed the film a “strong, virile picture of romantic western life.”

He could as well have been describing Hart himself, who made his career embodying the strong, stoic western cowboy. His characters were often described as the “good bad man,” hardened, rough and tumble figures who were nevertheless motivated by a greater moral purpose. Here, Hart plays Dakota Dan, the gun-slinging owner of a saloon and gambling hall. After falling in love with the parson’s daughter, Daisy, they make a pact—she will agree to marry him if he manages to control his temper and change his ways.

Trouble begins when a rival gambler named “Ace” Farrell comes to town and sets his sights on Daisy. Ace provokes a fight with Dan which Daisy ultimately witnesses; not knowing about the true cause of the fight and believing Dan to be renegeing on his promises for reform, she leaves him for Ace. Will Dan be able to win back Daisy’s love, or has he lost her for good?

Note: although the film was originally two reels, the print being shown tonight is a one-reel edit of the original and will be accompanied by an original score composed and recorded by Tristan Rodman, a composer and multi-media artist based in Los Angeles (tristanrodman.com).

Notes by Katie Kirkland, first year Ph.D. student in Film & Media Studies and Comparative Literature.



HENRY THE ACHE

(Dir. Raymond McCarey, 1934, 16mm, 17 min.)

Starring Bert Lahr as a vapid and clueless version of beheading-inclined King Henry the Eighth, a few years before he would reach some level of fame by rather ironically donning the costume of the Cowardly Lion singing “If I were King of the Forest” in *THE WIZARD OF OZ* (Victor Fleming, 1939), *HENRY THE ACHE* is a (originally) two-reel burlesque musical spoof on Alexander Korda’s 1933 *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF HENRY VIII*. Directed by Raymond McCarey, the short-lived, mostly forgotten, brother of screwball comedy virtuoso Leo McCarey, a prolific second-tier yet comically masterful filmmaker who specialized in low-budget B comedies, the film is typical of the kind of short subject comedies with which still second-rate studios such as Columbia were flooding the market, capitalizing on the possibility offered in the early sound era to adapt the act of vaudeville comedians who had made a hit on the circuit.

Shot at Van Beuren Studios, a small-budget, nine-year operation founded in 1928 specializing in cartoons, this gently sassy, pre-enforcement Hays Code musical takes advantage of the growing taste of Hollywoodian audiences for parodying self-reflexivity, to turn the avowed affair of Henry the Eighth’s fifth wife, Catherine Howard (Janet Reade), with the King’s courtier, Thomas Culpeper (Monte Collins), and the Tudor’s rumored late-life impotence, into a womanizing narrative of sexual inadequacy mostly resorting, in its comical structure, to strategies of double entendre. Bert Lahr—his stupendous presence, distinctive cadences, malleable rubber face, and boisterous stage-mannerisms—carries most of the film’s comical intensity, which otherwise rests on, quite unsurprisingly given the 16th-century setting, unequally opportune anachronistic skits.

Notes by Pierre Folliet, first year Ph.D. Student in Film & Media Studies and Comparative Literature.





A FIFTH ARMY REPORT FROM THE BEACHHEAD (Army Pictorial Service, 1944, 16mm, 12 min.)

This 12-minute documentary gives an account of the operation by US forces to capture the beach town of Anzio in 1944 as part of the Italian Campaign during World War II. It was produced by the Army Pictorial Service and sponsored by the United States War Department, with cooperation from combat film units from Signal Corps, Army Air Forces, Navy & Marines. Though the operation met mixed results, this government-sponsored film takes a predictably celebratory tone in updating the American public on this latest chapter of the ongoing war effort.



The film features documentary footage accompanied by rousing music and a voice-over narration, and takes viewers through early stages of the operation, from the surprise amphibious landing on the Anzio harbor; through the German air raids and counter-offensive, to the US army's march onwards. There is a clear effort to highlight American ingenuity, with shots of soldiers carefully defusing explosive mines planted by the Germans, as well as an acknowledgment of the human cost of war, with shots of heavily wounded casualties from the frontlines. Nevertheless, these sights are meant to strengthen American resolve, as the narrator declares: "the Germans have only one last hope: to make our victory so costly that we will weaken, compromise, make a deal with them and the Axis powers." The film ends with a message from General Dwight D. Eisenhower urging viewers to buy more war bonds.



An informative example of wartime propaganda, this short documentary also serves as an interesting point of contrast to later, lengthier, and more nuanced depictions of the Battle of Anzio, such as the 1968 feature film ANZIO (a US-Italian co-production starring Peter Falk) and the 1963 episode of Walter Cronkite's TV series *The Twentieth Century*, "The Beachhead at Anzio."

Notes by Xueli Wang, first year Ph.D. student in Film & Media Studies and History of Art.

BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY

(Dir. Thom Eberhardt, 1978, 16mm, 15 min.)

'Don't go with a stranger!' Who does not remember this, or a similar advice given to us when we were little kids? These days it almost seems common sense for parents to educate their offspring about the dangers of an unknown person 'offering them a gift'. However, child abduction and sexual abuse first turned into a major issue of public concern in the U.S. at the end of the 1970s. Located within this period, BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY (1978) is one example of a variety of educational shorts produced within that era, which pursued the goal of raising awareness on this controversial yet significant topic.

Produced by the Vitascopy Company and distributed by FilmFair Communications – an American production company focusing on kids' TV series, cartoons and advertisements – this film directly addresses children aged nine to fourteen and encourages them to assume more responsibility when it comes to their own safety. This is achieved through providing a set of possibly dangerous situations – for example, receiving a suspicious phone call while being home alone – and two confident peers giving advice on how to react appropriately in these moments.

Beside focusing on a delicate topic, BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY offers a unique insight into the early work of two well-known figures within the film world. First, the short holds the fingerprint of director Thom Eberhardt, who later would continue to focus on social-issue documentaries and features for a younger audience, eventually winning a Daytime Emmy Award for Outstanding Writing in a Children's Special in 2000. Second, it is one of the early works of cinematographer Russell Carpenter, who had an even more outstanding career ahead of him, eventually being awarded an Oscar for his work on TITANIC (1997) almost 20 years later.

Notes by Simon Reichl, M.A. Literature, Art and Media Studies Candidate at the University of Constance (Germany), visiting student in the Film & Media Studies Program and Baden-Württemberg Stipendium Scholar.



EXOTIC NIPPON

(Castle Films, 1963, 16mm, 8 min.)

EXOTIC NIPPON is an eight-minute tour of 'Japanese culture.' It is one of almost one hundred travelogues released by Castle Films, a home movie distributor that sold single-reel shorts on 8mm and 16mm. From 1937 to 1975, most camera shops and drug stores in America carried Castle Films: sports reels, war footage, condensed Hollywood features, and more. Each title was offered as a Complete Edition (about 12 minutes long) and a Headline Edition (3 minutes). Now, collectors buy them on the obscure corners of eBay.

But the once-popular shorts still have much to tell us about the people who displayed them in their home theaters. EXOTIC NIPPON was first released in 1963, a decade after the American occupation of Japan ended and during the height of Japan's economic growth. Japan held an elusive place in the American imaginary and on the American screen. In 1945, the Japanese transformed from the savage "monkey-men" of KNOW YOUR ENEMY: JAPAN into the democracy-starved allies of OUR JOB IN JAPAN. Now, Americans were grappling with the swift modernization of a country that was supposed to be backwards.

EXOTIC NIPPON is fascinated with "the paradox that is Japan." It somersaults from Buddhism to burlesque dance with little justification save for the through line of the ancient versus the modern. There is no real continuity, but the film constructs its subject to excuse its form: If EXOTIC NIPPON doesn't make sense, that's because Japan doesn't, either.

Notes by Josh van Biema, a Yale College sophomore majoring in Film & Media Studies.



THE BRAVE LITTLE TAILOR

(Dir. Rudolf Enter, 1985, 16mm, 11 min.)

This film is one of nine animated shorts released on 16mm in the mid-1980s by Benchmark Films as part of the educational "Fairy Tale Series." The tale upon which the film is based – Das Tapfere Schneiderlein – is commonly attributed to the Brothers Grimm and has been adapted variously by the likes of Disney (1938), Nippon Animation (1989), and HBO (1995). Sparse credits initially made it difficult to identify individuals involved in the film's production, but the presence of German intertitles and the "SHB" title card served as helpful clues during the research process. With assistance from Michael Loebenstein, Director of the Austrian Film Museum, this film has now been identified as a work by Austrian animator Rudolf Enter.

Enter began his career as a puppeteer and was an early member of the Austrian Amateur Film Association. He was commissioned to produce a number of fairy tale films for Austria's Ministry of Education (whose film division credited themselves at the time with the abbreviation "SHB"). Later, Benchmark Films dubbed and distributed THE BRAVE LITTLE TAILOR to schools across the United States. Included within the metal film reel case is a double-sided discussion guide prepared by Barbara Pawlak, an elementary school teacher from Briarcliff Manor, New York.

Before screening the film, teachers were instructed to inform their students about the following aspects of fairy tales: "They are make-believe. They usually begin with 'Once upon a time' or 'Long, long ago.' The numerals three and seven occur quite frequently. Often there is some magic object which performs tasks or grants wishes." So, be on the lookout for 3s and 7s!

Notes by Jason Cody Douglass, second year Ph.D. student in Film & Media Studies and East Asian Languages and Literatures.