

Recommended Films

Note: For an extensive listing of additional films about work and organized labor, see Tom Zaniello's collection *Working Stiffs, Union Maids, Reds, and Riffraff*.

***People Like Us: Social Class in America: 2001* dir: Louis Alvarez and Andy Kolker 124 min**

Features day in the life of Upper class and lower class families.

Class Dismissed: How TV Frames the Working Class

Featuring interviews with media analysts and cultural historians, this documentary examines the patterns inherent in TV's disturbing depictions of working class people as either clowns or social deviants, stereotypical portrayals that reinforce the myth of meritocracy. Directed by Loretta Alper. c2005. 62 min. DVD 4912

Modern Times (1936)

Directed by Charlie Chaplin, featuring Chaplin, Paulette Goddard, Henry Bergman, Stanley Sandford, Chester Conklin, Hank Mann, Allan Garcia, Stanley Blystone, Dick Alexander, Cecil Reynolds, Myra McKinney. The Little Tramp is an oppressed assembly-line factory worker who is used as a guinea pig for his employer's test of a new "Automatic Feeding Machine". He battles it out with technology, unemployment, jail, burglars, demanding customers and bosses. In the midst of his tribulations, he meets up with the girl of his dreams, "The Gamin". They win some and lose more but, at the end, they walk undaunted into the sunrise. 103 min. DVD 195; VHS 999:47

The UP Series: Seven Up, 7 plus 7, 21 Up, 28 Up, 35 Up, and 42 Up.

Directed by: Michael Apted

Takes a cross-section of 7 year olds and discusses their future lives and then follows them every seven years

class & race

1) Mayan Voices, American Lives Nov 2.

2) La Ciudad, Border Stories

3) *El Norte*

4) Bread & Roses - Immigrant Labor Organizing

**5) Fight in The Fields: cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers' Struggle
*Neighbors [videorecording] / Hollywood Television Theatre ; [written] by Arkady Leokum ; produced by Lewis Freedman ; directed by Fiedler Cook.:***

Drama about race relations in an all-white suburban community that depicts the confrontation between an upper-class white couple and a black couple from Harlem who plan to buy their expensive suburban home. In negotiating the sale, all four learn a little more about each other-- and a lot about their own latent prejudices.

6) Segregation -- Northern style [videorecording] / CBS News special report ; produced and written by William Peters.: HD7288.76.U5 S45 2000 VIDEO

In many places above the Mason-Dixon Line, a subtle form of bigotry was at work during the early 1960s, resisting the efforts of Afro-Americans to buy homes in historically white neighborhoods. In this 1964 program, Mike Wallace reveals the fallacies, attitudes and weak legislation that contributed to de facto segregation in the North by tracking the unsuccessful campaign of a middle-class black family to buy in upscale New Jersey. The positive contributions of fair housing and civil rights groups are also presented.

7) *The promised land* [videorecording] / a co-production of Discovery

Productions and BBC TV.: Documents the migration of rural Southern blacks from the segregated South to Chicago. Cultural and political gains become offset by overcrowding and increasing ghettoization, as Northern politicians ignore resentment that explodes in the Sixties. Finally, Chicago gets its first African-American mayor; many families move out of the ghetto to middle-class success; many others remain mired in a growing "underclass". Includes historical footage and personal interviews.

8) *Backlash* [videorecording] : *race and the American dream* / produced by Queen of Hearts Productions in association with Louisiana Public Broadcasting ;

directed by Bess Carrick, Christine Wiltz ; written by Christine Wiltz, Bess Carrick.: Discusses David Duke, KKK, and white working-class views on race and politics in Louisiana.

9) *4 Little Girls*: Dir. Spike Lee: Documentary on the church bombing killing 4 little girls in the south.

10)A. Philip Randolph: For Jobs & Freedom.

Biography of the African American labor leader, journalist, and civil rights activist, A. Philip Randolph. Randolph won the first national labor agreement for a black union, The Sleeping Car porters. His threat of a protest march on Washington forced President Roosevelt to ban segregation in the federal government and defense industries at the onset of WWII and again he forced Truman to integrate the military. Finally with the 1963 March on Washington, Randolph succeeded in placing civil rights at the forefront of the nation's legislative agenda as he passed the torch to Martin Luther King, Jr. Includes music of the labor and civil rights movements. 86 min. Video/C 4127

11) *Bamboozled*: Spike Lee: a satire about a tv network that resurrects a minstrel show to prove a point about racism but instead takes off as a hit.

12) *The Business of Fancy Dancing*: Sherman Alexie wonderful tale of modern American Indians and college/life.

class & gender

The Downsizing of America

A Balancing Act dir: Helena Cynamon 1992 :Wage earining mothers canada job performance and satisfaction

All Walks of Life: Huby's Ltd. :Wage earning women in male dominated employment - personal narratives.

The edge of each other's battles [videorecording] : **the vision of Audre Lorde / producer, director, writer, Jennifer Abod ; Profile Productions.**: Documents black lesbian poet and activist Audre Lorde's (1934-92) social vision, using footage from the four-day conference: I am your sisters: forging global connections across differences, held in Boston in 1990. At the conference 1,200 men, women and young people from 23 countries examined the issues of the relations between race, class, gender and sexuality through Lorde's work. Interviews with the organizers of the conference are intercut with conference footage, including performances, controversies and speeches. Connect to <http://www.jenniferabod.com/video.htm>

Breastfeeding and Returning to Work: Ruth Lawrence: Breasfeeding wage earning women - more of a guide on how to accomplish returning to work while breastfeeding.

Behind the Labels: Garment Workers on U.S. Saipan: Tia Lessin: Asain garment workers in US sweatshops.

Between Light and Shadow: Maya Women in transition: Kathryn Lipke: Indians of the Americas social conditions.

ERA - The War Between Women: Examines the confrontation over the Equal Rights Amendment to bar sex discrimination. Noted feminists argue in favor of ratification and women who oppose the ERA offer opposing views. 1977. 55 min. Video/C 414

Norma Rae: dir. Martin Ritt 1979: Sally Field as a textile worker organizer

Double Burden: Three Generations of Working Mothers: 1992 A multicultural multigenerational look at mothers and work

The Farmer's Wife: This film follows Juanita and Darrel Buschkoetter, a remarkable young Nebraska farm couple, to tell a compelling love story. Gleaned from more than 200 hours of film shot on location over three years, 'The farmer's wife' follows Juanita and Darrel as they face seemingly insurmountable economic hardship, only to confront an even greater challenge: repairing their damaged marriage. What emerges is an epic story of faith, perseverance, and triumph, and an indelible portrait of a real American family's struggle to hold onto their dreams and each other. 1998. 3 videocassettes (375 min.) Video/C 6115

Fast Food Women

Looks at the lives of the women who prepare the food at four different fast food restaurants in eastern Kentucky. These women, mostly middle-aged with children to raise, are often the sole source of income for their families. They work for salaries barely above minimum wage, have trouble getting full-time hours because of their employer's scheduling policies, and are without benefits. Scenes of women working at the various restaurants are included in this look at the other side of the counter. 28 min. c1991. Video/C 9702

The Empire's New Clothes.

Investigates the situation in sweatshops in New York City where thousands of women, primarily recent immigrants from Chinese and Latino communities, are sewing garments under dangerous and unfair labor conditions, which often lead to psychological exhaustion, permanent disability and even death. A production of the Witness Project which uses video technology to investigate human rights abuses. A production of the Witness Project which uses video technology to investigate human rights abuses. 2000. 10 min. DVD 3266

Take It From Me.

Follows four welfare mothers over the course of two years as they struggle to comply with new work requirements, find reliable child care and transportation, battle drug addiction and depression, confront domestic violence, and try to make ends meet in the new era of welfare reform. Concludes that though many welfare recipients are motivated to go to work, many are not landing on their feet and there are no easy answers to the problems of welfare dependency. 2001. 75 min. Video/C 9731

Trade Secrets: Blue Collar Women Speak Out.

Four women, an ironworker, welder, sprinkler fitter, and electrician reveal how their lives changed when they entered into the traditional male world of skilled crafts. 1985. 23 min. Video/C 906

On the Edge: America's Working Poor

Presents an examination of the working poor in the United States. Several families including single mothers as head of households describe their lives as members of the working poor community where one unexpected expense, sudden illness, or a missed payment could mean financial ruin. Originally broadcast on April 15, 2004 as a segment of: Nightline. 22 min. DVD 4655