

A Single Regret

For more than 20 years, Mr. Grant — a wealthy, now middle-aged man — has lived with a secret that has greatly affected his life: an illegitimate son who does not know him, born to a woman he has long stopped seeing. For more than 20 years, he has struggled with his unrealizable obsession to know the child, and with his complex feelings about himself and his family. On many occasions he tried to discuss the matter with his wife and his two daughters, but found it impossible to follow through. Now, feeling he has reached a critical point in his life, he is determined to tell them and to ask for their forgiveness; but still he cannot do it face to face. Instead, Mr. Grant decides to reveal his story on videotape. This, he believes, is the best and only way he can deal with his problem.

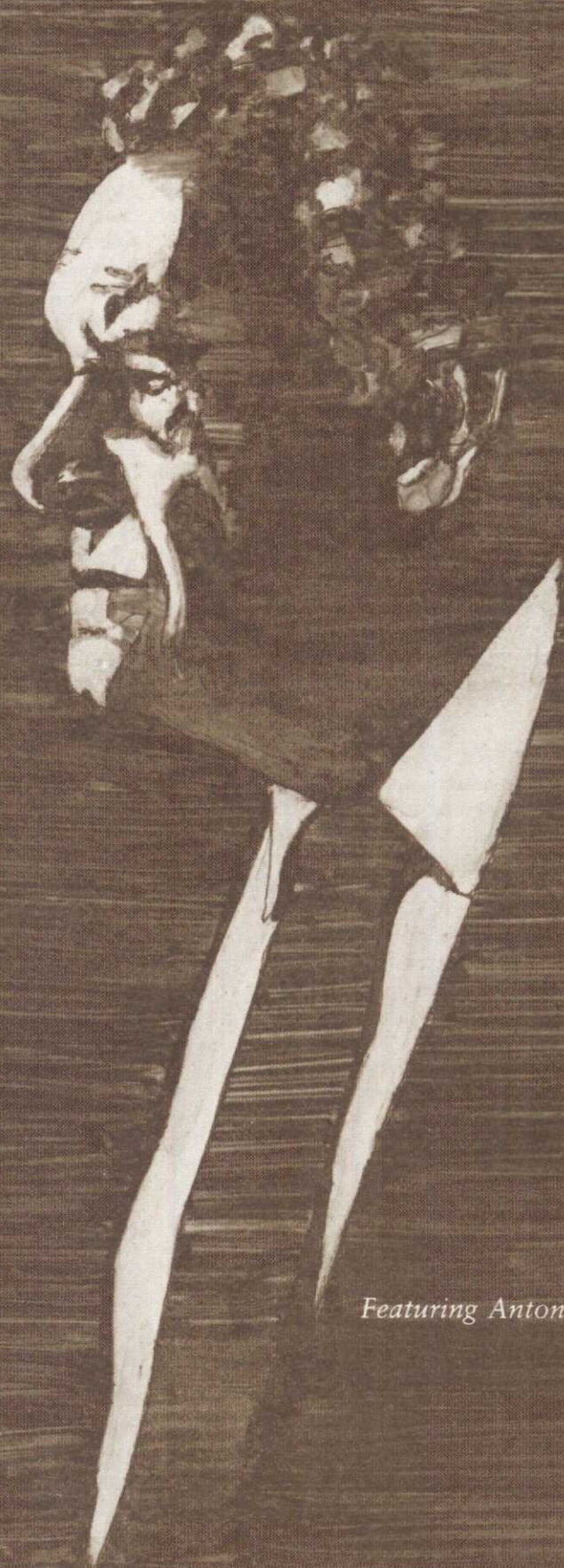
Based on a true story, Mr. Grant's confession, his verbal nuances, and unintentional gestures open up a wealth of issues for thought and discussion. Presented in the form of a short, open-ended drama, the film provides an excellent catalyst for discussion on questions relating to such topics as honesty in relationships; communication between spouses and within families; morality and personal values; guilt and remorse; trust and forgiveness.

A powerful and moving drama, *A SINGLE REGRET* is a particularly useful film resource for Couples Counselling and Marriage Preparation groups, and for Communications and Family Life Counselling groups within both church and community organizations. As well, it provides a provocative and controversial case study for students of counselling, psychology and social work.



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Featuring Antony Parr

A Single Regret

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THE FILM

BEFORE THE SCREENING

Group discussion leaders should preview the film and prepare for the kinds of diverse responses it may elicit from group members.

INTRODUCING THE FILM

The introduction will, of course, vary according to the focus of the group, but it is suggested that the group leader give as little introductory detail as possible regarding either Mr. Grant's secret or his means of revealing it. This will allow maximum "gut level," or emotional, response to the main character, his story and its presentation.

After some initial discussion based on the first screening, discussion leaders may want to screen the film a second time to allow viewers to note comments or feelings that are particularly relevant to them.

AFTER THE SCREENING... DISCUSSION IDEAS

For Couples, Marriage Preparation, Communications and Family Life Counselling Groups:

- Encourage group members to discuss their reactions to Mr. Grant, to his decision to reveal his secret after twenty-five years of silence, and to his decision to use video as his means of communication.

- Consider the importance of absolute truth and openness within families. Are there times when it is appropriate not to share information? If so, why?
- Mr. Grant speaks of his guilt and remorse. Ask group members to describe these feelings and ways in which they have dealt with such feelings in their own lives. Are there other ways of dealing with these feelings? How might the alternatives be more or less effective?
- Mr. Grant says of his "confession" that it is his way "to let go and to stop regretting the past," suggesting that his admission will have a certain cathartic effect, that it will mean a kind of absolution. Will it? What effects do confessions have? To which parties can we turn, and what roles do we expect our listeners to play?
- Mr. Grant hopes to be forgiven by his wife and two daughters. Discuss what that "forgiveness" will mean for him; for them.
- By the end of the film, *both* Mr. Grant and his wife have secrets they must guard. At this point, what should *she* do? Discuss the consequences of a family member — a parent or a child — knowing another's secret and being afraid to acknowledge it.

For Counsellors, Social Workers and Psychologists in Training

- Consider the preceding questions and ideas.
- Screen the film a second time, and describe what can be learned about Mr. Grant by watching his body language and listening to the tone of his voice.
- Discuss how you would feel if Mr. Grant came to you with his story. Do you think he should tell his wife? As a professional, what approach would you take toward helping him?
- Suppose Mr. Grant's wife came to you with her side of the story. How would you work with her? Would you consider seeing both Mr. Grant and his wife?

Written, Directed & Edited by
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Featuring
Antony Parr as Mr. Grant
Cinematography
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16 mm Color

Screening time:
21 minutes 42 seconds

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