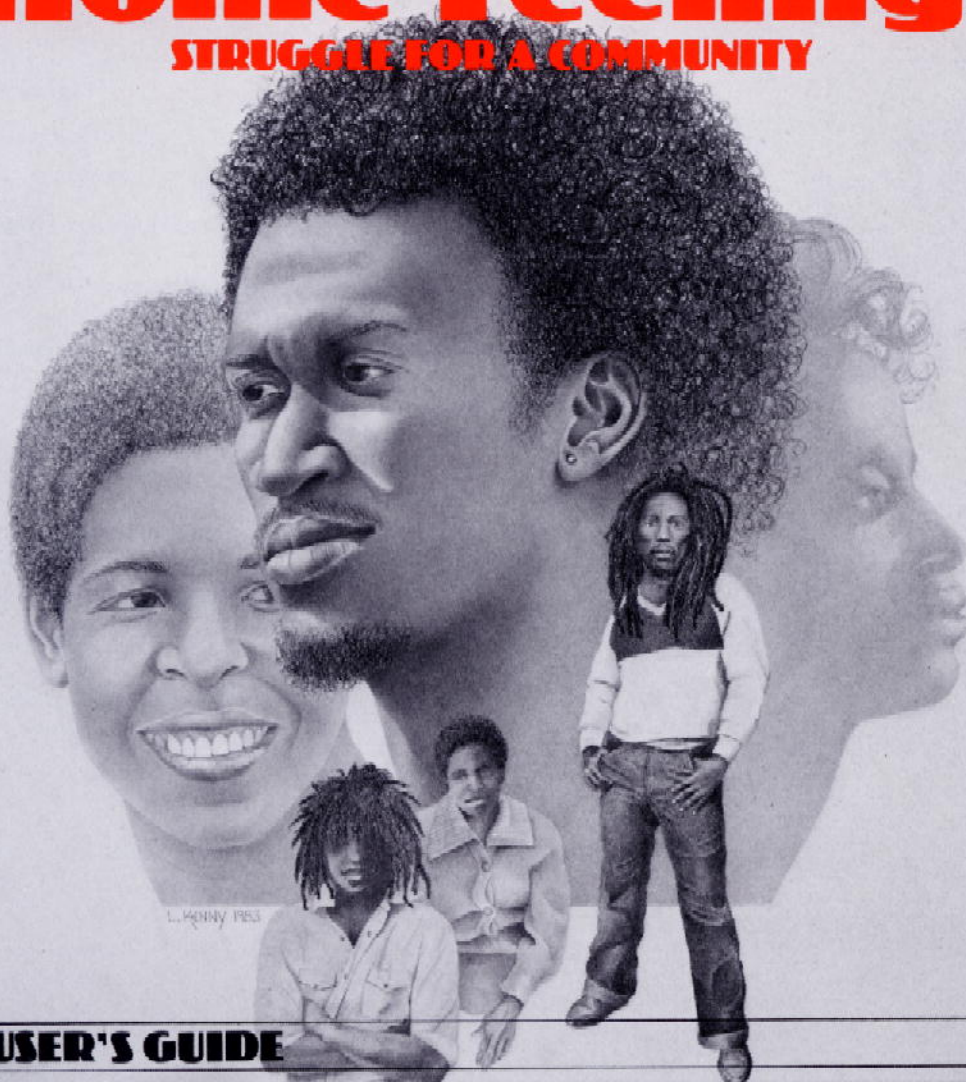


Home Feeling:

STRUGGLE FOR A COMMUNITY



A USER'S GUIDE

National Film Board of Canada, Ontario Production. A film directed by *Jennifer Hodge*, produced by *John Kramer*. Produced with the assistance of Multiculturalism Canada.



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ABOUT THE FILM

The film **Home Feeling: Struggle For A Community**, explores aspects of life in the Jane/Finch community through the eyes of some of its West Indian Canadian residents. They describe their relations with the police, and Ontario Housing; their daily struggles with: employment and unemployment, bringing up their children with dignity, living in a community which is viewed negatively by outsiders, and their fragile attempts to organize their community so that residents have more of a stake.



ABOUT THE FILMMAKER

Jennifer Hodge,
A Biography

Jennifer Hodge is a Fine Arts graduate of York University. She is an accomplished filmmaker who has worked for C.B.C., N.F.B., her own, and other independent companies as a producer/director, primarily of documentary films. Some of Hodge's films such as "Fields of Endless Day", a TV-Ontario/N.F.B. co-production on the history of the Black community in Canada, and "Helen Law: Portrait of an Immigrant Woman", deal with race and nationality. Her work is defined by broader interests and includes such productions as "Joe David-Spirit of the Mask", "The Edenshaw Legacy", "Myself, Yourself", "Dieppe 1942", "Potatoes", and others.



WHAT MAKES THIS FILM CONTROVERSIAL

"They were only looking for the bad," contended North York Mayor Mel Lastman, who admitted he hasn't seen the film, but said his executive assistant has. "There have been no problems in the community for a long time."

Al Mercury, co-chairman of North York's race relations committee, attacked the film for its "distorted view".

While some people have criticized this film for not exploring thoroughly enough the issues it raises, still others have insisted that the film presents the police and the community negatively and overstates the issue of racism. The following quotations from press coverage give some idea of the range of responses the film generated.

Rosemary August-Brown, a Jane/Finch resident featured in the movie, called it "terrific". "I think it's a positive film. It's the truth. It needs to come out." (*Toronto Star*) "Our negative feeling is about what is not expressed in this film" said Staff Superintendent Jack Reed; "I hope there's no damage done by the film. It's not a misrepresentation, but it doesn't depict any of the positive things going on." (*Toronto Sun*) "It voices the concerns of the ordinary people living in the area. This is the first time that anyone has made a movie where" the voices of the people are heard. These things must be said." (Bev Folkes, a resident of the Jane/Finch area, quoted in *Contrast*).

There appear to be key reasons why the film provokes such emotional responses from viewers. To begin, this film conveys Jane/Finch through the eyes of the people who live there, and who have had the least say in defining what their community is like, what their problems are, and how they respond to those problems.

Secondly, what the residents have to say through the film challenges mainstream perceptions of justice and of the police, and this makes many viewers, including the police, uncomfortable. One person remarked after seeing the film, "How can

this be going on right in Toronto, and we didn't know about it. I've never had any dealings with the police like that". That may be true, but it doesn't mean the people in the film haven't. One group of teachers were so incredulous that they suggested that the film crew had "set up" the sequence with the police walking the corridors of the apartment buildings. Why the police would put themselves in such a position is not clear. A couple of teachers from this group went to interview Jane/Finch residents to get "candid" reactions to these issues. The residents confirmed the representation in the film.

Thirdly, most people who don't experience racism are uncomfortable talking about it. Racism, more than any other issue except perhaps sexism, brushes both personal and social practices. It is significant that the media research company which monitored viewer responses to the film reported that black viewers identified racism and the police as the main issues in the film; whites saw socio-economic issues as the main focus. This discomfort with the issue of racism is expressed in a variety of ways. At one end of the spectrum is rejection. "If they don't like it here, why don't they go back to where they came from?" Other, milder but still uneasy reactions, are expressed in attempts at questioning the legitimacy of these claims of racism. "How can it be racism when one of the police officers is black?" or "I know black people who don't like this film." The implication is that black people must agree about racism before the suggestion of its presence can be taken seriously. When have all white people ever agreed, or been expected to agree, on a single issue?

Some black viewers have expressed similar confusion. One group of black students who saw the film was bothered by the fact that a black policeman would behave in this way to his "brothers". But the police officer is doing a job as a police officer, not as a black person. Black people, too, can

be caught up in society's definition of people as "black" or "white". Actions are not prescribed by ethnic or racial identification, although such definitions are significant in teaching people how to view themselves and others. This is part of the complexity of how racism works.

Finally, a point related to the foregoing factors is that people infrequently question their notions of where power should legitimately reside. The people in the film implicitly challenge where it **does** reside. Predictably, viewer's responses to this film are shaped significantly by their thinking on this issue.

The Question of Bias

Isn't Every Film Biased?

Some viewers have hurled the ultimate accusation at the film: it's biased! This, of course, is true. The film does have a perspective - a bias - as does every film, newsclip, newspaper story, or novel. In the course of including some things, other things are left out. The selection and de-selection of images, of information, of juxtaposition, or emphasis, is the process by which all representations of life are created. And it is true that this business of selecting and discarding reflects a perspective, or bias. But bias usually only becomes an issue when it is different from one's own.

The Viewer's Bias

Viewers come to a film with their own experience and understanding of life. These understandings very much shape what the viewer sees and does not see; hears and does not hear; learns and rejects. Key experiences and perceptions which appear to affect viewer response to this film are discussed above in "What Makes This Film Controversial?" Here, the interaction between the viewer and the film is an active one, and not just a straight imposition of a film's perspective on a passive and neutral

viewer. A useful skill to develop is the ability to identify and analyse perspective or bias so that what is presented, and the possible reasons for such a representation can be discussed thoughtfully, and in relation to the viewer's own perspective.

10 Things To Ask Yourself Before Looking At A Film

1. Who speaks and who doesn't?
2. What is the sequencing; what follows what? What is the effect?
3. What is in the foreground; what is in the background? What is the effect?
4. When is there music/other sounds/silence? What is the effect?
5. When is there light, and when darkness or dim lighting? What is the effect?
6. Are there "physical types" identifiable in the film? Who do they remind you of?
7. How is language used in the film? Whose accents are present, and what do they make you think of?
8. What activities and experiences make people in the film happy, unhappy, anxious, or angry? Would you respond similarly to such experiences?
9. How is life accounted for in the film? What problems are identified? Whose problems are they? What are the causes suggested?
10. Who makes decisions in the film? Do things happen as a consequence of people's actions, or do they "just happen?"

A final question should be considered for discussion and reflection on this particular film. How might the film have been made differently if it had been produced by: the police, the manpower office, the city council, the welfare office? How would the film have been "less biased"?

MAIN THEMES

1. Justice and the Police

The film's close scrutiny of the police presence in the area raises several unresolved issues. These are contentious issues because the view of the residents and the police diverge sharply on whom the police are protecting, what they are looking for, and what their effect is on the life of the community. There is the question of concentration of police in Jane/Finch. Addition of extra police to this neighbourhood has not been denied by the police, who see the area as a potential problem spot and their duty as preventative. The residents view this abundance as an added pressure, and a source of fear.

- Why are there added numbers of police assigned to low income areas?
- What assumptions lie behind connecting low income to crime?
- Do wealthy neighbourhoods command the same scrutiny?
- What are the drawbacks to "saturation" policing, particularly when the community claims to see no benefits?
- If a community has been targeted as a "problem area", does that mean that the residents are problems too? Whom are the police supposed to protect and from whom?
- Assuming that the police see their duty as protective of everyone's rights, can they actually do this if they are seen to be more menacing than helpful?
- What cues the police in identifying potential or actual lawbreakers? This is where the issue of policing becomes merged in the minds of the residents with the issue of racism.

Are individual police officers the issue here, or the job of policing? If this is true, does this mean that there are negative community perceptions of the police due to incompetent police officers, or are these perceptions due to the job itself and the power this job wields over the lives of the community residents? A related issue concerns police

powers. The police officers appear to possess substantial discretion to interrogate and arrest. Discuss this statement using references from the film or from your own experience.

Further Questions for Discussion

- Discuss the benefits or perceived disadvantages of increased police surveillance.
- What are the characteristics of a "problem area"? What are your reasons for this judgement?
- What is the role of the police? What possible contradictions lie in the dual functions of protecting and policing?
- To whom are the police responsible? Discuss your view of accountability.
- Many residents of low income communities feel more policed than protected. What difficulties might this pose for residents who, on occasion, need protection? What difficulties might this pose for the individual police officer who may feel resentful of suspicion of him/herself?
- What indicators do police officers look for in identifying *potential* lawbreakers? Is it possible to prevent trouble without being accused of, or being guilty of, harassment?
- "Community antagonism to police is a natural result of a heavy concentration of police officers in one area". Discuss.
- Should police regularly patrol the corridors of subsidized housing buildings? Discuss.
- What evidence, if any, should police have in hand before interrogating or arresting a person? How did you respond to the anger of the van owner when police interrogated him about ownership? How would you have responded to the same situation?
- Critics of the film have charged that police cannot be accused of *causing* the problems that Jane/Finch residents face in their daily lives. What actions by police impede or assist residents in solving their own difficulties?

2. The Experience of Racism

The issue of racism is never far from the surface of this film, even if it is not fully explored.

There is a tendency to immediately conclude that the film is about racism, **because** it focusses on the West Indian community of Jane/Finch. However, the relationship between black people and the experience of racism is not as mechanical as that. The viewer would be right to challenge an interpretation of every unpleasant encounter as racist. The nature of the experience or racism is made harder to unravel from the film, in that the viewer does not see the experiences of other visible minority Canadians in the community, nor do we see the relations between members of the various "communities" within the community of Jane/Finch. But the film does touch on several types of experience with racism:

- a) Racism can include such symptoms as high levels of unemployment and underemployment, and low income levels for visible minorities. 1978 and 1979 figures from the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto indicate that with adjustments for job qualifications, West Indian Canadian males still earn \$1900 less a year than the average Canadian male; West Indian Canadian women still earn \$4600 less a year than the average Canadian woman.
- b) The high number of visible minority Canadians in low income housing is another type. West Indian Canadians comprise less than 10% of the population of Metropolitan Toronto, but are 15% of the population of Jane-Finch.
- c) Black people of Jane/Finch see themselves as targets for the police. Greg Bob, who has been picked up numerous times by the police and always released, says, "I always seem to look like somebody."

If the police are acting totally properly, then the system supports these actions and police officers are simply doing their job. On the other hand, if

their actions are deemed racist, then it is a racism fully supported by the institution for which they work. However, if police officers are acting improperly, and these actions are deemed racist, then the institution should be disciplining and training the officers, otherwise it will be seen to condone the actions.

Discuss how transplanting one culture to another presents problems for the police and for the residents of Jane/Finch. Refer to incidents from the film or your own experience.

Further questions

1. Identify some specific situations in the film which you think exemplify some form of racism and explain why you think so.
2. Does the presence of a black police officer on the foot patrol exempt the police from charges of racism? If so, how? If not, why not?
3. Comment on Constable Burnett's statement, "It seems to me that it's fashionable at times to say that a particular group is being discriminated against, lately. I suppose you're talking about colour here. No, I don't see it in our society, really."
4. "Immigration laws should be tightened in attempts to limit 'immigrant ghettos' ". How do you respond to this view? Do you think such action would assist the residents of Jane/Finch? Explain.



3. Employment/Unemployment

Unemployment is a problem for over one and a half million Canadians. The issue of employment and unemployment is heightened in the Jane/Finch community because there is a concentration of people with such concerns in this densely packed area. We see the effects of these worries in the faces of the people in the manpower office, and in the lives of many of those depicted in the film.

Unemployment and low-salaried work often determines where people can live, and affects self-respect, access to further training, hope for a future, what they can eat, what they can do, and where they can go. Living in Jane/Finch, while it may offer affordable housing, can also affect job possibilities. This public perception of the Jane/Finch community as "a bunch of losers" is something which the residents battle when they look for jobs, when they invite friends from outside the community, and when they encounter the police.

Unemployment then, is not an issue peculiar to Jane/Finch. What is peculiar to Jane/Finch is the high concentration of people on the economic margins, and the conclusions which institutions and people outside the community draw about the people who live there... conclusions which compound the very economic problems which people already face.

Questions for Discussion

1. To what extent do you feel the film succeeds in challenging the stereotype of unemployed people as unmotivated and satisfied with unemployment?
2. Comment on the job of the manpower counselor. To what extent is he/she really able to offer hope for employment? What functions can manpower offices hope to play with so many unemployed and so few jobs available?
3. A speaker at one of the group meetings suggested that Ontario Housing should hire some of the

unemployed residents to maintain the buildings. What other options for local employment might people consider?

4. Life in the Community

Jane/Finch is a high density community; 60,000 people living in a space of six blocks. Housing is a mixture of government-subsidized and private development. It is a community largely without facilities, "whose residents cannot afford cars" to take them to places that do. In one building, half of the 1500 tenants are under nineteen. Kids have few places to go except the corridors and elevators, the "streets of their indoor city".

There is a sense though, that these hallways and apartments do not belong to the residents. Police walk the corridors routinely, as they would the streets. Some residents claim they have found police searching their premises.

About half of the families in Ontario Housing are led by single parents, most of whom are women. Employment and subsistence are primary preoccupations of most residents, whether they come from different parts of Canada, or the many other countries represented in this community, but a major pressure on the people who live here is the public perception of their community.

Jane/Finch, then, is a highly complex community. There are clearly supports for some people which provide a sense of "home feeling". There are also difficulties, some of which are due to marginal economic positions, and others which stem from questionable urban planning that has thrown so many people into a small space with so few facilities. These difficulties are compounded by the conclusions which the outside public has drawn about the community and the people who live there. This outside public, for the residents of Jane/Finch, includes the police.

Questions for Discussion

1. To what extent do you think the film is successful in presenting the community through the eyes of the residents? Account for the very different perceptions of the community held by the residents themselves.
2. Most of the people in the film are more dependent than they want to be, on institutions which directly affect the quality of their lives. How does this dependence affect people's confidence that they can change things? How important is it in affecting their ability to organize?
3. What, in your view, are the most fruitful issues to explore for community organizers in the Jane/Finch area? Why do you feel these issues hold the most potential?
4. "The film doesn't mention the over 120 different initiatives which outsiders as well as residents have attempted to take in order to change the community. It gives a feeling that government has been unconcerned with the problems of Jane/Finch" What resistance or support might outside organizers meet in the community? What would be the reasons for this resistance or support?
5. What role can the media play in impeding or assisting community organizing efforts?
6. Comment on one analyst's observation that the reason why so many viewers reacted negatively to the group meeting sequences, came from a resistance to people taking control over their own lives.

5. Community Organizing

The film is called **Home Feeling: Struggle for a Community**, suggesting a process of development which is ongoing. But this theme is largely represented in the person of Novelette Robinson, the community activist. Novelette's attempts to get her neighbours together to discuss and solve problems, are grounded in a clear understanding of the

obstacles to organizing in this community. There are a lot of rules that people on the economic margins cannot afford to break. There is a high dependence on financial assistance, and on the continued ability to live in affordable housing. A great deal can be lost if one stands up for oneself in ways which challenge those institutions. Despite these fears, she successfully organizes a community meeting where people air their concerns and find that there are others who experience the same problems. Indeed, shortly after this film was released, Ontario Housing did hire some of the residents to maintain the buildings, a suggestion voiced at that meeting in the film.

The film also shows a short clip of the Maroons, a local basketball team which sponsors a tournament for black teams from across the country. The team is self-sustaining, and is a source of pride to the black community in the area.

The issue for community organizers in Jane/Finch appears to be how to create situations where the fears can be acknowledged and confidence built, so that people can act to identify and solve problems. What kinds of assistance from outside builds on people's own attempts to develop their community? How can such assistance best be used?

Questions for Discussion

1. What are some of the fears which might make residents hesitant to organize? What evidence does the film provide that these fears might be valid?
2. How do police activities in the area support or impede residents' efforts to develop themselves and their community?
3. What kinds of supports does the community provide for the people who live there? What kinds of pressure does it place on the residents?
4. What aspects of life in the Jane/Finch community does the film suggest can be changed? By whom?

6. Power and Dependence

Power depends on having options, which few people in low-income areas like Jane/Finch have. The film touches on the many ways such people feel dependent. It reveals that the reverse side of dependence is power. The police are the primary authority figures in the film. They can interrogate or arrest. Some say they can, and do, beat those they arrest. To some, the system of justice is **not** seen to be just, but to be powerful.

Rosemary Brown, Greg Bob, and Novelette Robinson attempt to redress this perceived power imbalance. What the film does not explore, but which may be an element of audience reaction to the film, is that people's efforts to change things are often met with resistance. Power, to some, lies where it should. Predictably, people's thinking on this issue affects their reaction to this film significantly.

Questions for Discussion

1. Identify some sequences from the film where unequal power is evident. What are some of the responses of people in the film when they have less power?
2. The power of police receives considerable attention in the film. Discuss their powers in relation to "Home Feeling".
3. In what ways can schools, social service, and law enforcement agencies assist people in developing confidence and control over their lives and communities? In what ways can they increase peoples' dependence and powerlessness?



USING THE FILM

1. Teachers: Approaches for Using the Film

A common reaction among teachers who have seen the film is disbelief that the police behave in this manner and that racism, while foreign to them, is so prominent in the lives of others. Their dilemma is that they must either consider this new information seriously - a challenge to their current views of justice and how it is executed; or find ways to discuss or discredit the people whose stories are challenging those current views.

The job of the facilitator will be to create a non-threatening atmosphere for teachers who want to explore the issues in the film to do so; and to push their more reluctant colleagues to consider the implications of these issues for their own practice as teachers. As one teacher finally said to her peers, in a discussion session following the film, "Let's forget about whether it's true or not. What does it mean for us to have kids in our classrooms who may have gone through this?"

Such discussions are encouraged by the Ministry of Education guidelines and by the multicultural and race relations policies adopted by many Boards of Education. Such policies not only mandate professional development for teachers on multicultural issues, but charge teachers with implementing multicultural curricula in their classroom. The film can be used effectively in several contexts including the following:

- a) **Ministry of Education English as a Second Language courses** - to examine the experiences of some "immigrant" students.
- b) **Multicultural Issues courses or programs**, sponsored by the Ministry of Education or Boards of Education, to examine institutional obstacles to multiculturalism; to examine the issue of multiculturalism in film.

One educator has used the film in just such a program, beginning with a film called **Reflections**, produced by the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture in Ontario; followed by the film **Maria**, followed by



Home Feeling. The purpose of the program is to examine different perceptions of multiculturalism through film.

c) Professional Development days for teachers, on the issues of race relations, or multiculturalism.

Such a program might effectively involve community resource people and/or articulate high school students who can speak to the experiences reflected in the film.

d) Professional Development days on multicultural resources for the classroom, with an emphasis on how the film might provide a resource for discussion with high school students.

e) Training for teachers who are race relations representatives in school, as a catalyst for discussion on the effects of racism on students, and the implications for action in schools.

f) Questions from other sections in this manual can be used effectively by teachers to stimulate discussion.









2. Social and Community Workers:

Social service workers have been trained to help the community, and individual members of it. When communities attempt to organize themselves without outside assistance, this can be seen as a rebuke to those whose job it is to help. This may, in part, explain why many social service and community workers react negatively to the group meeting sequences in the film. But the issue may be slightly more complex than this in that such workers often get little feedback in their jobs, as they deal with case after case of individuals for whom they may be able to provide little assistance. One community worker remarked that it sometimes bothers her when there is no gratitude for all the effort she spends. Whether it is realistic to expect such feedback from people who already have enough to contend with, and who may see social service agencies as having both helping and policing functions, is another question.

For social service and community workers, all of the six themes identified in this guide are pertinent. In addition there may be an interest in obtaining more information about the culture and perceptions of the West Indian community itself.

Programs using the film with this group of people should draw upon and acknowledge some of the information and insights which they already possess about the communities with which they work. Discussion should stretch community and social service workers to examine power relations between themselves and community members; to examine the effects of racism on the lives of "clients", and on "client" responses to employees of social service and community agencies; to examine their own responses to attempts by community members to challenge current power relations through organizing; to explore the ways in which their own institutions work to increase the community's dependence or control their lives; to identify conditions of their own work which some-

times makes it difficult to respond to the community in ways which are satisfying. The film can be used in several contexts including the following:

a) One-day professional training sessions exploring any of the six issues identified in this guide. If possible, resource people knowledgeable about the particular theme to be explored should be used in conjunction with the film.

b) Training programs on Race Relations. Some agencies have put aside funding for long-term programming on this issue with their staff. Such training, which could make use of this film, should examine the staff's own concerns about this issue, including aspects of the topic they find difficult to discuss. Case studies which identify familiar situations and problems are easy to prepare, so that staff have the opportunity to identify and analyse the various dimensions of problems which involve racism. Case studies have the advantage of allowing a safe distance while at the same time probing familiar situations - thus encouraging reflection on personal and institutional practices.

Use of the film could reinforce observations made during analysis of the case study, and encourage staff to relate scenarios from the film to the experiences of some of their "clients".

c) Workshops on the West Indian community. Such seminars must be carefully planned to avoid collapsing into a stereotyped peepshow of "what West Indians are like". Participants should engage in discussion of what their current perceptions are of members of this "community", what further information they would like, and how they think such information could assist them in their work. The film presents a perspective on how some West Indian Canadians see their own lives. There is as much diversity within this "community", as there is between this "community" and any other. Participants should become aware that "information about a

particular ethnic group" is only useful insofar as it assists the user to become aware of his/her own cultural assumptions in personal and professional interactions.

3. Police

For police officers, the primary issues of concern raised by the film centre around community response to police, and the degree to which the public perceives justice to be done. The film can be used with police officers in several contexts including the following:

a) Training programs for new police officers.

Most police training programs now appear to include a component on race relations and multiculturalism. The film could be used in conjunction with resource people from the community, to examine actions by police which are deemed racist by the community. How do such perceptions affect the ability of police to do their job? How do such perceptions affect the way in which the media and the general public view the police?

If possible, police should be challenged on whether there is any basis for such community perceptions. In a larger context than race relations is the issue of justice and whether it appears to be done. What actions by police contribute to a feeling of confidence in the police by the community? What actions by the police build resentment and resistance?

b) Training for "Ethnic Squad" police Officers.

It is now common for urban police forces to have



special community police, often called "ethnic squads". Their role is to facilitate contact with community members and build trust and support, particularly among visible minority Canadians. However, the film suggests a community police officer from a non-mainstream background has not sufficient credibility. In fact, Constable States is known to youth in the community as "the bounty hunter". Discussion of the film could focus on any of the questions under "justice and the police," or the first three questions under "the experience of racism".

c) Discuss the following statements which have arisen in previous screenings of the film:

- Police do a lot of good in Jane/Finch (or the local equivalent) which is never reported.
- It is more difficult to be a police officer in Jane/Finch (or the local equivalent) than in other communities.
- Police harassment is exaggerated in this film and in other media. (This view is supported by police comments within the film itself).
- Police behave in the same way towards Jane/Finch (or the local equivalent) as they do towards youth in any other area.
- The media has exaggerated the amount of racism directed against Toronto (or other city) blacks.
- West Indians who come to Canada should behave like Canadians and not attempt to maintain their culture.
- Blacks have a higher crime rate than whites.
- Unemployed people could get jobs if they really wanted them; but they have unrealistic job expectations.
- People in OHC are in trouble with the law more often than others; they often lie and cheat about income.
- Immigration policies are far too lax, and are partially to blame for the development of immigrant ghettos.

4. Municipal Politicians and Bureaucrats

All of the six themes identified in this guide are pertinent issues for municipal politicians and bureaucrats. Many of these people feel they have put considerable effort into solving the problems which the film raises, but that their efforts are not acknowledged by the film. They may have considerable knowledge of communities like Jane/Finch and would like to examine, in constructive ways, what approaches work or don't work. The fragile attempts by community residents themselves to begin to address their own problems may be lost in the shuffle, and the facilitator should draw attention to them. In addition, the group should look at the degree to which police activity in an area can restrict or support residents' attempts to solve their own difficulties; the ways in which resources can be allocated to support the community in developing an increasing stake in its own welfare; and the ways in which development in urban planning can be put to good use for low income residents. Some contexts in which the film can be effectively used with municipal politicians and bureaucrats include the following:

a) City Race Relations Committees. Some Canadian cities have municipal community and race relations committees whose job is to facilitate the development of "better race relations" in the community. Such groups should be encouraged to look as openly as possible at the difficulties which this community is identifying. The fact that a community views its problems in this way makes this a concern for such a committee, even if the members of the committee do not concur with the perspective of the film. How can such a committee support the community in approaches which may address these problems?

b) Urban planners could examine which of the difficulties identified in the film stem from bad planning. How might these conditions be eliminated in future planning of communities?



5. High School Students:

Issues which might be of most interest to students include police and the law; the experience of racism; authority and youth. The film can be used effectively in several contexts including the following:

a) Law courses in the senior grades.

Discussion might be promoted with a lawyer who can comment on citizen rights, police powers, sanctions for abuse of powers. Students are often interested in how they can ensure that the rights they have are protected, and what can happen when they do try to protect those rights.

b) People and Society Courses at the Intermediate or Senior Levels.

The film provides an opportunity to examine conditions of conflict, as well as conditions which promote collaboration. Questions of state power, community organizing, youth and the law, immigration, are all appropriate themes which the film can assist students to examine. In addition, the exploration of the role of media in reflecting the views of different groups in society, would be an interesting topic.



c) Multicultural History Courses at the Intermediate level.

The focus here could be current issues which affect the lives of Canadians of different ethnic origins. Specifically, discussion might well focus on concerns facing the West Indian "community" itself. How are these concerns different or similar to the issues which have faced new immigrants throughout Canada's history?

d) After-school student clubs and organizations dealing with cultural and social issues.

Very often such organizations are interested in lively debate about contemporary issues and are prepared to engage in programs for the education of their members, or in sponsoring a program of interest to other students in the school.

e) Multicultural Student Training Camps.

Some Boards of Education now sponsor 3-4 day residential camps for intermediate and senior students, to alert them to multicultural and race relations issues, with a view to increased constructive activity in the school. This might be a particularly effective resource in a setting where

students have time to explore issues more fully, and where the program is explicitly examining the issue of racism.

6. Communities Wanting to Organize

a) Residents' Association Meetings for those communities which already have some structures. Adequate time should be allowed for a full discussion. In follow-up discussion, use video tape segments (if accessible) of the film, to review specific issues.

One low income community in Toronto has shown the film to their "Committee for the Prevention of Police Harassment" to encourage discussion of how and why such harassment occurs. This committee documents police harassment in their area by photographing police who interrogate or arrest residents. These photos are organized into a file and the committee maintains that this facilitates victims of harassment coming forward to discuss it when it occurs.

b) Initial Organizing Meetings in a Community. Communities which are unorganized can use the film as a catalyst to assist community members in identifying problems and experiences which are similar to, or different from, those reflected in the film. The film also identifies the fears which many residents harbour about coming together, and shows meetings in which frustrations are shared. These are important initial steps for communities which want to do things together.

c) Parent Meetings. The film has been used with parents in the Jane/Finch area to discuss police harassment, and its effects on their children. This film could also be used to stimulate discussion re the role of the school in challenging racism.

d) Programs by and for Immigrant Women. The experience of three women - Rosemary Brown, Pat Jones, and Novelette Robinson - can provide a catalyst for other women to discuss their experience.

e) Community Youth Programs. Activities organized by the youth of a community might effectively include viewing and discussion of this film.

SCREENING PREPARATION

General Comments

1. Use a facilitator, or discussion leader.
2. If possible, use this film and others in an ongoing program, or series.
3. If possible confine the group to no more than 30 people. Divide them into small discussion components with a leader who will, at the end of the discussion, report his/her group's findings to the general gathering.
4. Use the film in conjunction with other films which also reflect a "bias", but perhaps a different one from the film.
5. If possible, show the film more than once to the same group so that specific themes can be explored more fully.
6. Arrange seating for easy viewing and for face to face discussion.
7. Suggestions for Discussion Leaders:
 - a) Use a quote expressing someone else's reaction to the film to help trigger the group's reactions. People often have difficulty expressing how they feel about an audiovisual.
 - b) Anticipate some emotional responses to the film, and don't be afraid of them. Don't allow one, or a few people to dominate the discussion.
 - c) Don't avoid the issues which make this film controversial. Don't avoid the fact that this film, like any other, does have a perspective for which it provides reasons. People who are vehemently opposed to the film, may have other reasons than the ones they are stating. The film demands serious reflection on the issues of police and justice; on racism; and on power. These are difficult topics for many people.
 - d) Don't engage in a long debate over whether the experience related in the film are true or not. People in the film perceive these things to be true. What are the implications?

- e) Encourage viewers to relate situations in the film to their own experiences. Make similarities and discrepancies in experience a part of the discussion.
- f) Enjoy yourself. Good discussion should be fun as well as hard.
- g) If appropriate, whoever is leading the discussion should summarize and highlight the key points of discussion and provide some general sense of where the discussion can move at the next meeting. This provides a sense of continuity and expectation.

Further Suggestions

1. Preview the film at least once before working with the group.
2. Select one or two of the issues you think are most pertinent to the group.
3. Try to anticipate, using this guide and what you know of the group itself, what concerns and reactions might arise.
4. Select and make notes from previewing the film, on particular situations which illustrate the themes and concerns you anticipate.
5. Note any issues which might previously have arisen in the group (if it is one that is meeting on an ongoing basis), to which this film might be connected.
6. Check your equipment!
7. Have a couple of opening questions from this guide prepared or ones of your own which will provoke responses.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON RACISM

Between the Lines — (slide/tape show), 18 minutes, 1982.

This resource analyzes the way news is controlled, collected and disseminated. Useful for looking at the sources and effects of both class and racial bias in media.

Available: Development Education Centre, 427 Bloor St. West, Toronto M5S 1X7. Telephone: (416) 964-6560.

Emigrante — (film), 13 minutes, 1975.

Examines both prejudiced attitudes and racist actions. Interviews reveal the subtle and obvious conditions under which racism develops.

Available: Development Education Centre, or Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Centre, 299 Queen's Street West, 2nd Floor, Toronto.

If We Allow Ourselves to be Divided: Racism in the Workplace — (videotape), 30 minutes, 1983.

A series of interviews with lawyers, community workers, union representatives, and workers, examines the system of racism and how it is used against workers.

Available: Humber College Labour Studies Centre, 15 Gervais Dr., Don Mills, Ontario.

Maria — (film), 46 minutes, 1977.

A drama about a 24-year-old worker in a garment factory who becomes involved in organizing her fellow employees. The film exposes some of the ways in which ethnic differences can be exploited to determine union organization.

Available: National Film Board Offices.

Myself, Yourself — (film), 30 minutes, 1979.

Three adults and two teenagers speak about their experiences with discrimination, and how such experiences affected their sense of identity. The important role of the school in either reflecting or combating racism is stressed.

Available: National Film Board Offices.

Ravinder — (film), 29 minutes, 1979.

A drama about a teenage South Asian youth who struggles to find the best way to cope with the harassment and racism he faces daily, especially at school.

Available: National Film Board Offices.

Reflections: People of Ontario — (film), 19 minutes, 1982.

Produced by the Citizenship and Development Branch of the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, this film presents some experiences of Black, Greek, German, and Korean Canadians who recount some obstacles, and opportunities for people from different ethnic backgrounds. The tone is generally positive and hopeful.

Available: Resources Centre, Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, 77 Bloor St. West, Toronto M7A 2R9. Telephone: (416) 965-6763.

Reflecting Colour: Teachers and Students Talk about Racism — (videotape), 30 minutes, 1983.

Teachers and students in the Toronto Board of Education talk about how racism occurs in their schools, and what they are trying to do about it. The film stresses approaches in the classroom which move towards real multicultural education.

Available: Advisor on Race Relations, Toronto Board of Education, 22 Orde Street, Toronto, Ontario, Telephone: (416) 598-4931.

This Business of Immigration — (film or videotape), 60 minutes, 1974.

An overview of immigration policy over the last century and some insights into the crucial role played by immigrants in developing the Canadian economy.

Available: Ontario Education Communications Authority (T.V. Ontario) 2180 Yonge St. Toronto, Telephone: (416) 484-2660.

A Time To Rise — (film or videotape), 39 minutes, 1980.

Examines the efforts of farmworkers in British Columbia to organize a union. In addition the film examines the forms of discrimination faced by South Asian farmworkers and the efforts of farmworkers from different cultural backgrounds to work together in organizing and promoting the union.

Available: National Film Board Offices.

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HOME FEELING: STRUGGLE FOR A COMMUNITY

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**HOME FEELING: STRUGGLE FOR A COMMUNITY
— USER'S GUIDE**

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