

mosaic became pure forest or brushland. This situation proved harmful to much of the wildlife and also provided fuel for the very forest fires they were attempting to prevent. The Alberta Forest Service has now returned to the Indian practice of controlled spring burns.

Lewis's film shows all this in outstanding fashion: forest mosaic compared to pure forest, Indian burning compared to forest service burning, plus wildlife and nature scenes including moose, beaver, and ducks, meadows, lakes, and woods. For me, one of the best features is the testimony of the Indians. Since their spring fires were stopped only in 1932, there are many Indians still living who have firsthand knowledge of the practice. They are able to say not only how they did it but why. In Lewis's California work he was not able to get such evidence so that too often he was forced into inference. His earlier speculations are here triumphantly justified. I intend to use this film in my course on California Indian Ethnography. It will not be quite the same, of course, but the analogy is closer than might be thought. It should be useful for any course on hunters-gatherers.

The technical quality of the film is also very good—crisp, excellent color, good scenery shots both from ground and air. The film is partly narrated and partly live sound track in a mixture appropriate to its subject matter.

Lucy in Disguise. 1980. Written, produced and codirected by *David Smeltzer* in cooperation with the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Color, 58 minutes. Purchase \$750 (\$350 for 3/4" videocassette), rental \$75 from Smeltzer Films, 54 Second Street, Athens, OH 45701. [Ethiopia]

The First Family. 1980. Produced by *WVIZ* in cooperation with the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Color, 60 minutes. Purchase \$450 (\$125 for 3/4" U-Matic, 1/2" Beta or 1/2" VHS videocassette), rental \$50 (\$50 for videocassette) from The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Wade Oval, University Circle, Cleveland, OH 44106. [Ethiopia]

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The fossil hominid discoveries made by Don Johanson and his field team in the Afar Depres-

sion of Ethiopia from 1973 to 1975 have generated a great deal of public attention. The romantic lure of exotic places, remote antiquity, and hints of human origins combine to ensure that no one could fail to be interested. The topic lends itself well to visual presentation, and those who engage in the teaching of elementary anthropology will naturally welcome the appearance of a cinemagraphic treatment. In this case we have two. Both have their good points, but the *WVIZ* production, *The First Family*, despite the somewhat arch title, is generally of higher quality. The Smeltzer film, *Lucy in Disguise*, I should note, is not bad, it just smacks more of the amateur production.

Both films cover essentially the same topics in the same order, and the same central characters, Don Johanson, Tim White, Clark Howell, Yves Coppens, and Owen Lovejoy, are featured. The Smeltzer film throws in quite a few more to speak their pieces, and this is just one of the ways in which it is less effective since many of these additional speakers do not record very well.

The topic covered is the portrayal of the earliest hominids known so far, and this is done primarily by the device of alternating shots of the French-American field setting at Hadar in Ethiopia with the fossils and comparative anatomical specimens in the laboratories of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. The discovery of crucial specimens is reenacted, and the work of analysis, reconstruction, and interpretation is shown.

Each film starts with panoramic presentations of the scenery in central Ethiopia, but the Smeltzer film uses a stylized artist's depiction—in effect, an animated cartoon. The *WVIZ* film presents its picture of Ethiopia with dramatic aerial photography. The music that accompanies this exudes the inspired serenity that characterizes the 17th-century liturgical, and when the key discoveries are intoned by the narrator or when the focal character, Don Johanson, is introduced, the score is timed so that the tastefully unobtrusive sound of baroque trumpets can be heard in the background. The Smeltzer film, on the other hand, is at its worst when the music is dubbed in at beginning and end. There is scratch, blare, and wow, as though they had recorded from a warped and dusty old disc, and the music selected has nothing to recommend it anyway.

The handling of the verbal presentation in *The First Family* is generally much more successful. I admit that I gagged slightly when, at

the beginning, that professional voice pronounces that the discovery of Lucy "revolutionized singlehandedly" the entire field of paleoanthropology, but at least this sort of thing is generally left to the anonymity of the announcer. In the Smeltzer film, despite its title, there is no such disguise, and we actually see otherwise admirable anthropologists solemnly uttering one pompous platitude after another.

Although the same central characters are featured in both films, the strategies chosen for their employment are not the same which makes a clear-cut difference in the results. In the WVIZ film, the speakers generally address the viewer. When more than one speaker is present, they alternate and take turns. By and large, anthropologists make their living by teaching, and when they assume the role of teacher and speak to the viewer, they do it reasonably well.

In the Smeltzer film, however, the frequent group scenes depict the central characters talking to each other. Presumably the viewer than hears science in operation with facts and ideas being handled as the conclusions emerge. But the anthropologists involved are not professional actors, and since their conclusions were actually reached years before the film was made, what we see is very much after the fact, and this is painfully obvious even to the uninitiated observer. The dialogue is ponderous at best with the main characters preaching to each other in heavy, didactic fashion. It is one thing when they lecture to the camera, but when they lecture at each other in the same tone that they would use for the untutored public or a freshman class, it clearly strikes a false note.

Don Johanson comes as close to being able to do this convincingly as any. He photographs well, his voice records well, and he comes across as clear and articulate both to the specialist and to the general public. But even he cannot salvage the stagey attempts at dialogue.

One of the points made by both films is the extent to which interdisciplinary cooperation was used to complete the picture that we now have of the life and times of the earliest hominids. But whereas this is simply intoned by the narrator in *The First Family*, the Smeltzer film tries to present this in dialogue form. Don Johanson, as a capo seated on a sofa, speaks to Clark Howell, playing the role of Godfather in an overstuffed armchair, and asks if he would agree that he, Clark, had been the first to use the interdisciplinary approach to the study of

the past. To which Howell, trying to appear modest but failing in the attempt, agrees in effect that, yes, he really did deserve all of the credit. If this had been part of a Monty Python skit, we would roar with laughter but, alas, it is supposed to be serious. The students will think it funny anyway, and the archeologists who initiated Clark Howell to the approach in the field back in the 1950s will squirm with embarrassment. Geologists, of course, had been doing it since before he was born.

While the WVIZ film deftly handles its cuts, with continuity provided by the narrator's voice, the Smeltzer film nervously jumps from scene to scene. The banal twang of a tour guide in the Cleveland Museum is switched for the rapid French (with fuzzy English subtitles) of a similar setting in the Musée de l'Homme in Paris. The picture shifts from laboratory to field to laboratory to cartoon landscapes with a cartoon Australopithecine to interminable stagey talk sessions. The narrator speaks well enough when he is used, but he was not prepared as well as the WVIZ narrator. In the phylogeny section, *Australopithecus* is called "the ape-man" who became "extinct." And there is a real howler when the poor man tries to render in French the title of the CNRS. He pronounces "recherché" for "recherche" which transforms that venerable bastion of scientific research into the "National Center for the Scientifically Over-Refined."

Both films do a good job of showing the mixture of pongid and hominid features in the cranium and dentition of the early Australopithecines. Original specimens, models, reconstructions and straightforward description make the point simply and clearly. The same technique is used by both, here perhaps even better in the Smeltzer film, for showing why we know that *Australopithecus* was an erect-walking biped and completely hominid from the neck on down. The fossil footprints at Laetoli are shown in both, but the WVIZ demonstration of a human making footprints in a prepared sand bed are more effective than the cartoon Australopithecine in *Lucy in Disguise*.

Both films also allow Owen Lovejoy to declaim on the anatomical evidence for the origin of monogamy in the Pliocene. Admittedly one can point out that, to the embarrassment of our field, he got it published as a lead article in *Science* two years ago, but that only shows

that that otherwise admirable journal is less sure in its choice of anthropological reviewers than it is for those in the mainstream fields which account for the bulk of its reporting. With its perpetuation in cinematic form, we are going to be stuck with this vision of the origin of "true love" for an even longer time than we have been for other equally indefensible speculations such as Robert Ardrey's "killer apes," Philip Lieberman's inarticulate Neanderthals, and Grover Krantz's hair-parting brow ridges. The urge to offer such colorful inventions goes back to the "rickety Mongolian Cossack" of over a century ago and, as Lovejoy shows, is alive and well and doing our image as a science no good at the present time.

The genuinely scientific controversies that surround the interpretation of what Johanson's team found at Hadar are treated in different ways. The WVIZ film shows a series of headline stills of newspaper accounts reporting the widely publicized clash between Don Johanson and Richard Leakey. This is done without the glare of the sensational that has often accompanied it. The Smeltzer film, on the other hand, chose to show footage of the discussion at the plenary session at the 1979 meetings of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists in San Francisco.

When asked to do this review, I was under the impression that the Smeltzer film did not contain my own minor role, but there I am in a cameo shot at the San Francisco meetings. Since I am in it willy nilly at both ends, I should note that the response to my comment in which I raised my doubts about the necessity of creating a new species for the Afar discoveries does not meet the issue, and the editor simply cut out that part of my question that established my reasons for doubt. As I noted at the time, I did not disagree with a single one of the anatomical assessments proposed nor with the fact that the Hadar Australopithecines do tend to present a somewhat more primitive set of features at an earlier time than those in the Transvaal. As such, they represent a good version of the ancestral condition of all subsequent hominids. My point was, however, that if these were going to be taken as justification for separate specific status, then we would have to go back to calling Neanderthals separate species for precisely the same reasons. Not only that, early Upper Paleolithic *Homo* would have to be called a separate species and Australians and other modern human populations would also have to be

specifically identified. Tobias in Africa and others in England have made the same point independently.

This, however, is not the fault of the producers of the films under review although they do have to take credit for the unfortunately gimmicky titles. The 1975 discovery of pieces of more than a dozen individuals who were probably the simultaneous victims of some natural disaster, and hence may have been tied to each other by kinship, is the justification for the somewhat presidential-sounding title of the WVIZ film. Lucy, of course, was the name given to one of the most famous single fossil hominids discovered, the 40% complete skeleton from Don Johanson's 1974 field season. She got her name from the Beatles' song that was playing on the tape that evening in camp. I have to confess that I never paid very much attention to it when it first came out, and for years I vaguely assumed that it ran "Lucy in Disguise Is Dying," so that the use of the words "Lucy in Disguise" as the title of the Smeltzer film seemed only natural. But the real name of the song by John Lennon, describing a painting by his son Julian and inspired ultimately by Lewis Carroll, is rather different. "Lucy in Disguise" then is an attempt to be cute. The music does appear on the sound track at the appropriate place with no effort at disguise.

Both films show the discovery and treatment of a key part of our fossil past well enough to warrant use in the classroom, either for introductory general or physical anthropology. In practically every respect, however, the WVIZ film is a more polished job. Photographically the clarity of color and image is uniformly better even where precisely the same footage is used in both. In one final respect the WVIZ film is more convenient. The Smeltzer film is on a single hour-long reel which is just a bit much for the standard 50-minute college class. The WVIZ film comes on two reels of 30 minutes each which, with appropriate introductory and concluding remarks from the instructor, makes it just perfect for use in two successive classes. Reel one, which concentrates more on field setting and discovery, ends with a discreet background of baroque trumpet and a nice but not overwhelming Ethiopian sunset—a neatly finished show. Reel two is similarly designed as a satisfyingly finished follow-up—all that, and it costs a good deal less too. As a demonstration of how paleoanthropology is done, this should be widely useful for years to come.