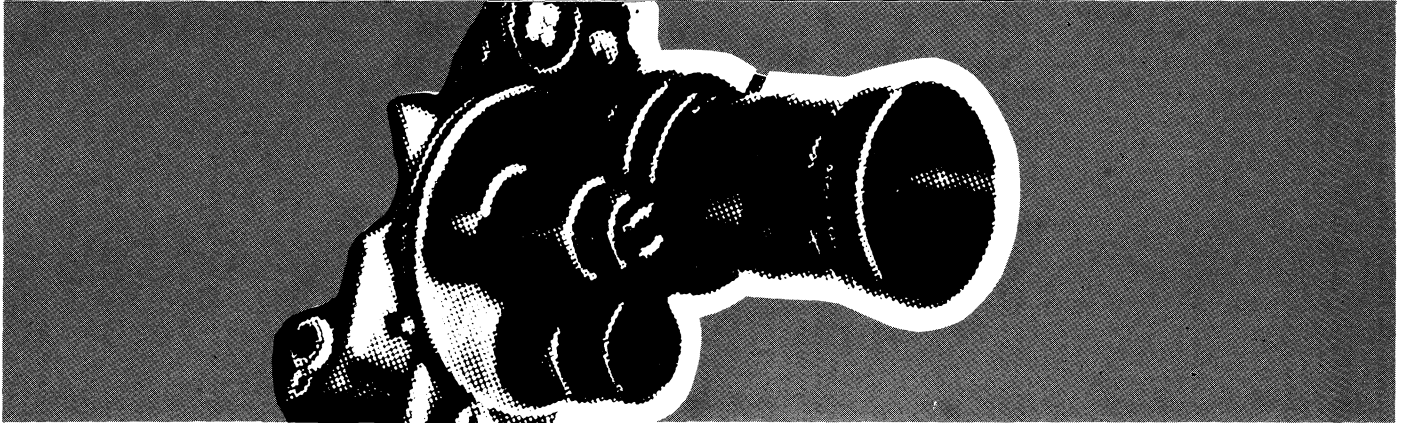


# Film Review



## FILM REVIEW 'MARIA'

Laurell Ritchie

*Maria* is a unique film. Its power and appeal lie in the subject-matter — the fusion of the personal and political.

*Maria* tells the story of a young Italian-Canadian woman who decides to organize a union at her factory. The decision is provoked by an incident between an abusive foreman and Maria's mother, who also works at the factory.

It's the last straw on an already heavy burden of injustices, poor working conditions, and low wages.

Maria rallies her co-workers to begin the difficult work of organizing to fight for justice and respect on the job. Against the wishes of her family and boyfriend, she becomes a leader in the union campaign.

The film could have stopped there. It could have simply dramatized Maria's personal education and individual development in the course of the campaign.

But the film goes beyond that. *Maria* shows the forces at work in every union campaign. We see the company management anxiously trying every tactic open to them in their effort to defeat the workers' union. We witness the seemingly endless delays at the government's Labour Relations Board. We watch the organizing committee trying to mould strength and unity among fellow-workers, many of whom are immobilized by fear and divided by language, nationality, and sex.

The film was made in black and white and a style reminiscent of the twenties and thirties. This gives it a sense of documentary realism and ensures no distraction from the subject-matter of the film. *Maria* simply tells the truth about a real organizing campaign in Toronto — and real people.

The film is a classic and is quickly building the large audience it deserves.

Produced by CBC-TV

Directed by Allan King

Written by Rick Salutin

Available from \*National Film Board (416)369-4092 or locally

\*Ontario Ministry of Culture & Recreation  
(416)965-6763 or through nearest regional office

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(56 minutes, black and white, 16 mm.)



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THE DOLL FACTORY An ABC Film

THE DOLL FACTORY, to quote the press handout, is 'a fable which comments on the obstacles, real and imagined, which interfere with a contemporary woman's career aspirations.' An unknown woman, Jayne Eastwood, is on her way to the 18th floor of an office building for a very important 2:00 p.m. interview. She has taken the advice of every job hunter's manual and arrived early. Once she enters the elevator, her misadventures begin.

Do not allow yourself to be put off by the theme or the plot. THE DOLL FACTORY is far from dogmatic. It is both enjoyable and humorous and makes succinct comments concerning this woman's difficulties in rising to the top. The film takes the form of several vignettes with each giving life to Murphy's Law — whatever can go wrong, will go wrong. Most of the obstacles confronting our heroine are of men's doing.

In spite of its tremendous humour, THE DOLL FACTORY is quite sad. Our heroine does not make it. Granted that it is difficult for anyone to succeed in life, it is still more difficult for women to make it in a man's world. Contrary to the cigarette ads, we have a long way to go before we can make the grade as easily as men can.

With the exception of Jayne Eastwood's character, all the roles are caricatured in order to more fully make the points. Although all the pieces are excellent, I took particular, masochistic delight in one about a sophisticated director who has a penchant for strong, assertive women and who is going to help her make it. As someone I know flashed into my mind, I squirmed in my seat and thought 'how true'. Other women, I am sure, experienced the same thing with other characters.



#### Suggested Discussion Topics for Use After Viewing

##### General

What personal illusions and fantasies prevent people from reaching their goals?

How are fantasies fostered and reinforced by our society?

##### Specific

How does advertising determine self-perception?

How do contemporary attitudes about sexuality effect women's lives?

Are we victims of our own technology?

In what way do pseudo-religions complicate issues?

Do individuals really have any control over the anarchy around them?

How do love relationships help or hinder career aspirations?

Could the woman have made other choices which might have altered the outcome?

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SHEILA PATERSON —

Cinema Canada, No. 44, February/1978

#### FILM REVIEW: 'THIS FILM IS ABOUT RAPE'

Joanne Kates

She must have been asking for it.

Rape happens when a man is so sexually turned on by a woman that he can't control himself.

Women should lie back and take it.

The rapist is a loony lurking in the bushes.

The film is called 'This Film Is About Rape'. It's just under half an hour long, made by Vancouver filmmaker Bonnie Kreps. It takes a machine-gun to the major myths about rape, and shoots them down for what they are: crap.

The film opens with a grandmother talking. She isn't what our society calls sexy, but that didn't matter when a man got her into his car on a ruse on a dark night on a deserted street. She talks later about her daughter, who had a similar experience twenty years ago. The difference was that they found out her daughter's rapist was married, and his wife was pregnant at the time.

And then the film attacks the major myth about rape: Woman as worse than Eve. She must have turned him on so much that he couldn't help himself, poor man. We see a convicted rapist on the screen: 'The woman had nothing to do with my raping. It was just a coincidence, that that woman was there. It didn't matter who she was. I felt like raping and she was there.' That man is in a rehabilitation program (for sex offenders) in a hospital near Tacoma, Washington. Maureen Saylor, the director of the program, comes to the screen: "Rapists are the actors-out of the male cultural value system. There's no stereotype of the rapist, because they're the exaggeration of the masculine mystique, which says that men must be dominant and impressive. When they fail at that they act out."

Another convicted rapist is on the screen: 'If women fight back when I'm raping them, it stops my aggressiveness towards them. I don't like women to fight back.' Why not? Because rape is an act of domination, and expression of power of one person over another. A woman who fights back short-circuits the power relations. Even if she could never in a million years beat the man in a fight, if she *fights back*, he doesn't feel so powerful. And sometimes, when people aren't getting what they want, they go away.

We move to an assertiveness-training class for women at the University of British Columbia. Women are reading scripts in which they respond in two different ways to a man trying to pick them up on an empty bus. After each scripted 'encounter' they describe how they feel. The passive woman in the script lets the man come on to her. She feels scared, threatened, not in charge of what's going on. The active woman refuses the man's advances right off the top, firmly and with strength in her voice. She feels confident and not particularly vulnerable.

The film goes next to a women's self-defence class, where the teacher suggests to the women that the traditional female response to an adrenalin rush — to freeze with fear — is not the only response. She suggests ways to use the adrenalin physically — to run faster, to kick harder, to defend yourself against attack. Traditionally, women have not been able to say 'no' to men. That fact — woman as property of man — is even ensconced in the Canadian law which says that a man cannot be convicted of raping his wife.

What that means is that every woman is a potential rape victim. It doesn't happen because women wear short skirts and provoke it. It doesn't happen because they drive men to distraction. According to a recent study, fifty-eight per cent of all rapes committed by individual men are premeditated, and ninety per cent of all rapes committed by three men or more are premeditated.

It is not an act of sexuality. According to that same study, fifty per cent of all rapists do not ejaculate. Rape is an act of violence and power. Of those women who report being raped, more than half have been injured. One out of four of them (in a University of Toronto Criminology study) was threatened with death during the rape. More than a third of those rapists were married at the time of the rape.

According to Bonnie Kreps's study of the statistics, a woman is raped every seventeen minutes in Canada. Infants get raped. The oldest rape victim on record is a woman of ninety-three. And as the film ends, it reminds us — with still photographs of all the women in the film — that every woman is a potential victim.

'This Film Is About Rape' is available for thirty dollars rental from the Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre (406 Jarvis St., Toronto, 921-4121). It comes with a Rape Prevention Resource Manual.

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#### *Film release:*

### WOMEN'S HEALTH: A QUESTION OF SURVIVAL

#### WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU QUESTIONED YOUR PHYSICIAN?

Women live longer than men. Women visit doctors more often than men. Women have nearly twice as many operations as men. In general, women have more health problems than men and most of these problems are connected with their ability to reproduce. This ABC News Closeup report investigates the care women receive — mostly from men. And they don't like what they see.

Potentially dangerous drugs administered to pregnant women. Untested IUD's and birth control pills dispensed without regard to possible short and long term dangers. Questionable mastectomies and hysterectomies. Disinterested doctors, drug manufacturers, government regulators and legislators have led women to question whether their desire to remain healthy might not be dangerous to their health. So much of a danger that some women feel it is necessary to open self-help clinics to enable women to become more aware of their bodies and their special problems. This film should be seen by all women; and, as one reviewer said, by all men — particularly physicians.

For women studying in secondary schools, colleges, universities, outreach courses and through social service agencies.

Code No: 106894-5 — 54 min. — Colour — Purchase \$764.50  
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