



Media Release

Event: DOXA Documentary Film Festival 2009

Dates: May 22nd – 31st, 2009

Venues: Vancity Theatre (1181 Seymour St.), Pacific Cinematheque, Granville 7—Vancouver, B.C.

Admission: \$10 plus one-time \$2 Membership; Full Festival Passes (includes Membership): \$125.

Tickets: DOXA website (www.doxafestival.ca), Videomatica (1855 W. 4th Ave.), Biz Books (302 W. Cordova St.), and Bibliophile (2010 Commercial Dr.)

Information: www.doxafestival.ca or 604.646.3200

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DOXA Takes a Hard Look at Ethics in Documentary Filmmaking

Vancouver, B.C.— DOXA tackles the ethics of documentary filmmaking not only onscreen, but also off-screen, in the public forum: *Where is the Line? Representation, Exploitation, and Ethics in Documentary Filmmaking*.

Carmen Meets Borat shows the repercussions of misleading those who participate in documentaries. Glod, a poor Romanian village, is chosen to stand in as Borat's hometown in the eponymous feature film. After realizing they've been duped by Cohen, the village is up in arms, mistrustful of anyone with a camera, and files a \$30 million lawsuit against 20th Century Fox. You can see *Carmen Meets Borat* on Friday, May 29th, 9:00pm at the Vancity Theatre.

In *Rough Aunties*, the filmmakers go deep into the Bobbi Bear Program to examine the fight to end child sexual abuse in South Africa. *Rough Aunties* shows young girls relating their stories of sexual abuse to counsellors. As they recount their stories on film, naming those who perpetrated these crimes against them, it begs the question: is this informed consent? Do these children know the ramifications of having their stories told publicly? In many cases they name their relatives and other members of their communities. What will happen when they're old enough to understand the significance of their roles in *Rough Aunties*? Friday, May 29th, 6:30pm at the Vancity Theatre, *Rough Aunties* screens.

Welfare provides a historical perspective on the ethics of documentary film. Frederick Wiseman intervenes minimally with his subjects to shed an unbiased light on the events captured. Does this allow for a less exploitive depiction of the subjects? In *Welfare*, the viewer witnesses the jam-packed welfare office as the many recipients essentially clamor for help. Clearly, Wiseman did not get consent from all the people in this room and it's unlikely that they knew their rights as film subjects. *Welfare* screens on Saturday, May 30th, 2:30pm at the Vancity Theatre.

Is it okay for filmmakers to profit, whether financially or in reputation, from their subjects who are often not remunerated? And who may unknowingly contribute to a negative portrayal of themselves?

The purpose of documentary is to document the truth, but where is the line between exploitation and exploration? Where does the filmmakers' responsibility lie? Is it to tell the truth at all costs, no matter the repercussions on the subjects? These, and many other challenging questions will be addressed in the forum *Where is the Line? Representation, Exploitation, and Ethics in Documentary Filmmaking*, which takes place Friday May 29, 3:30pm at the Pacific Cinematheque.

DOXA Documentary Film Festival runs May 22-31, 2009. Tickets to the Opening Night Film are \$15; and \$35 including the Opening Night Party. Single tickets for all other screenings are \$10 each plus one-time \$2 Membership. Festival Passes allow access to all films except Opening Night and are available for \$125. Tickets and Passes are available at Bibliophile Bookshop, Videomatica, Biz Books and online at www.doxafestival.ca. For further information, call DOXA at 604.646.3200. DOXA is presented by the Documentary Media Society, a Vancouver-based non-profit, charitable society.