

Madison Ave. Help Given Film Office

New York—An off-the-beaten-path concern, the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures—and the Legion of Decency before it—is that despite its Madison Avenue address, it has had great difficulty "selling" itself.

Now, someone just down the street is helping to put an end to that. Leo Miller, an advertising representative for Parents Magazine, has put together a 40-slide "presentation" titled "Film Classification by the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures." After a year of research, testing and actual use in the New Jersey CCD program, it is now being "put on the market" nationally.

The color slides and accompanying commentary are being offered by Miller—with the approval of NCOMP—to interested persons or groups at cost. (He said reproduction of the slides and commentary would range between \$12 and \$20, depending on the volume of requests.)

The presentation was initially prepared by Miller in his capacity as audio-visual director for the CCD. High School of Religion in St. Anne's Parish, Fair Lawn, N.J. Himself the father of 12, Miller decided that he could best present the work and objectives of NCOMP to young people by adopting some of the techniques he has used in his advertising job.

"We've tried a little showmanship," says Miller, who has put together "presentations" to convince such advertisers as Crest Toothpaste, Gerber's Baby Foods, Dreyfus, Tide, Ivory Soap and GE Flashbulbs to purchase advertising space in the pages of his publication. "I think that how the film office's work is presented determines whether you will get any response on the part of the young people."

"We felt that the old approach—to simply say to a child, 'You can't see B and C and A-4 movies'—is not enough. You've got to sell the idea."

In his slide presentation—which requires between 30 and 40 minutes to give—Miller places heavy emphasis on motivation and on attention-getting gimmicks. (The very first slide, for instance, shows the NCOMP title of focus, and the accompanying commentary reads: "Our picture is a little fuzzy, but we will have it clearly in a focus in but one moment. Our objective tonight is to bring



Part of the NCOMP reviewing staff, with executive director Monsignor Thomas F. Little in front row.

into clearer focus your knowledge of this topic, often misunderstood by individuals within the Catholic faith, as well as those outside."

The slides, chosen from more than a hundred at the start of Miller's project, show in one segment of the presentation how sex is deliberately used as a come-on in advertisements. "I singled out are the recently condemned 'High Infidelity,' with its advertised tagline—'The motion picture with an immoral all its own'—and ads in which reviewers' comments are taken out of context. ('How the copywriter was able to create such a glowing ad from the consistently poor reviews is a tribute to his ingenuity, although not his ethics.')

"We have anticipated all the classic arguments against film ratings," said Miller, who in the course of testing his presentation showed it to a group of adults unsympathetic to the NCOMP's work. One result of this "market research" is a slide in the presentation that shows members of the NCOMP's reviewing staff at a screening. The slide requires no commentary to discredit one of

the NCOMP's long-time "images"—that the classifications are arrived at by older women.

One sequence of slides—using color patterns—attempts to show how what people see in films can have effect on their social and moral lives. Two shafts of wheat cut from red paper are shown, one against a green background, the other against a yellow background.

"It is difficult to believe that these two red forms were cut from the same paper," goes the commentary. "Note that the red form on the left seems brighter—it sort of glows. This color surrounding it is complementary—it brings out the best in the red. The right surroundings will bring out the best in you, too."

Another slide shows a can of Rosonol lighter fluid and a bottle of St. Joseph's aspirin, followed by a slide that shows closeups of the "warning" labels placed on them by their manufacturers. Labels reading: "DANGER, flammable, harmful or fatal if swallowed" and "No cap is 100 per cent safe—keep all medicines out of children's reach."

"All these fine safeguards for our body," reads the commentary. "How about warning labels on things that could harm our souls?"

From there, attention is given to the various NCOMP ratings and their meanings, plus assurance that adherence to the ratings will not deprive them of worthwhile films; a slide shows an attendance chart from the movie-trade magazine "Boxoffice," illustrating that rarely does a popular film have an "objectionable" moral classification.

Inquiries about the slide presentation can be made by writing to the NCOMP at 453 Madison Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10022—Attention: Slide Dept.—Catholic Press Features)

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T&C Slates 'Carousel'

"Carousel," a Rodgers and Hammerstein collaboration, opening on Monday night, July 4 and playing through Saturday, July 9, will start the second week in the schedule of musicals at East Rochester's Town & Country Playhouse.

Bill Carroze will play the leading role of Bill Bigelow and Jan McArt will play the role of Julie Jordan.

Town & Country Playhouse producer Barry C. Tuttle reports a fairly advance sale of tickets for "Carousel" and suggests early reservations. The box office is open daily from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m. The Playhouse telephone number is (716) DU 1-1001.

Recent Movie Ratings

Following are the titles of films reviewed recently by the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures.

- Class A—Section I
Munster Go Home
- Class A—Section III
Hotel Paradiso
Three on a Couch
A Man Called Adam
- Class C (Condemned)
Le Bonheur

In treatment the explicit depiction of love-making and numerous instances of nudity go beyond the limits of decency.

Fellini Uses Color, Fantasy In A-4 Movie

In the recent Academy Award presentations, the movie, "Juliet of the Spirits," now playing in the Rochester area, was named "Best Foreign Film of the Year."

Directed by Federico Fellini, this Italian color film employs a series of baroque visions to translate the fears and torments of a woman who discovers her husband is unfaithful.

The woman, played by Giulietta Masina, unsuccessfully consults a doctor, a spiritualist, a detective and a psychiatrist about her marital problems and then gradually withdraws into her own world of fantasy and memory.

As in another recent Fellini film, "8½," the influence of early religious training that was "excessively severe" plays an important part, according to the "Catholic Film Newsletter." "This is typified by her frequent recollection of herself as a child playing an early Christian martyr in a school play, a role she has subconsciously played ever since."

The newsletter notes that "the very fact that Fellini has expended more than two hours of film time and technicolor decor—a format usually reserved for musicals or historical spectacles—on the story of a woman's marital problems is in itself significant."

"To Fellini, people are important; they are worth laughing about and crying about and caring about."

It was rated A-4 (morally objectionable for adults, with reservations), with the observation that "although the style with which the apparatus are created is never intended to be purulent, nevertheless a literal approach in seeing the film could be the source of problems for the viewer. It is distributed by United Artists (Catholic Press Feature).

'With Reservations'

'Virginia Woolf' Approved



WARNER BROTHERS' stars Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton take lead roles in the controversial movie, "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"

New York (NC)—The review board of the Motion Picture Association of America's Production Code Administration has granted a code seal of approval to the film "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"

The movie, said to contain some of the frankest dialogue ever heard on the screen, earlier was granted an A-4—"adults with reservations"—rating by the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures (the former Legion of Decency).

The Catholic agency noted that Warner Brothers has adopted the "commendable policy" of admitting no one under the age of 18 to the film unless accompanied by his parent.

The action by the Production Code Administration review board came after code administrator Geoffrey Shurlock had withheld the code seal of approval from the film.

The review board said in a statement (June 10) that it was granting "Virginia Woolf" an exemption from requirements of the production code, the movie industry's voluntary self-censorship guidelines.

It stressed that this meant "approval of material in a specific, important film which would not be approved for a film of lesser quality or a film determined to exploit language for language's sake. This exemption does not mean that the floodgates are open for language or other material."

This was the second time in 18 months that the review board reversed a decision of the code administrator. The previous occasion involved the film "The Pawnbroker," which had denied a code seal because of nudity. "The Pawnbroker" was rated class C—condemned—by the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures.

The granting of the code seal to "Virginia Woolf" marked settlement of the first major controversy for former White House assistant Jack Valenti since he became president of the Motion Picture Association.

It also drew attention again to the movie production code. Reportedly a revised version of

COURIER-JOURNAL
Friday, July 1, 1966

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FILMS ABOUT TOWN

A MENTION OF MOTION PICTURES OF MORE THAN ROUTINE INTEREST

The Russians Are Coming — "What would Russians be doing on this United States of America island?" asks Alan Arkin as a Russian lieutenant trying to conceal from an American family the fact that he and his submarine crew have run aground on an island off the coast of Cape Cod. "With so many animosities and hatreds between us," he continues in such English as he can command, "it would be too funny for Russians to be here."

And delightfully funny the film becomes as the Russians try to convince the hysterical townspeople that they want nothing more than to get their sub afloat and be on their way. —Catholic Film Newsletter.

Maya — "The King Brothers have produced another film for children's enjoyment. It is an adventure story about an American boy who comes to stay with his father in India. There is a mystery about why his father, a big game hunter, does not want his son to stay with him. The boy disappears and eventually gets involved with an Indian his own age who is making a pilgrimage with a sacred while elephant to fulfill the dying wish of his father. The boys wait them in the wilderness, and there is also a villainous one-eyed man (played by I. S. Johar in the broad manner of Robert Newton) who keeps pursuing them. Before everything turns out for the best, there is a great deal of excitement and fun." —Catholic Film Newsletter.

Dr. Zhivago — "Boris Pasternak's novel has been turned into a romantic epic of the Russian Revolution and its effect upon the individual. Julie Christie, Omar Sharif, Alec Guinness, Rita Tushingham and

a number of other fine stars struggle to live in difficult circumstances. Robert Bolt's script concentrates on individual values disrupted by the pressure of external events. David Lean succeeds in making it a visual delight in color and widescreen." —Catholic Film Newsletter.

Born Free — "Joy Adamson wrote a best-seller about her adventures with a lion cub named Elsa who eventually had to be taught how to survive in the African jungle. The fact that so many people had enjoyed this true story and its sequel convinced a movie company that it would be worth the effort to film it. Carl Foreman, who, as executive producer, co-ordinated all of the various talents that were required to bring off such a difficult undertaking deserves to be congratulated for the result." —Catholic Film Newsletter.

Juliet of the Spirits — "A Roman housewife, played by Giulietta Masina, seeks to save herself from the horror of being middle-aged and unloved, and such is the genius of Federico Fellini that the picture is comic and beautiful and almost never sad." —New Yorker Mag.

Sound of Music — "As the irrepressible Maria in The Sound of Music, Julie Andrews adds to her growing list of outstanding performances on both stage and screen. She dazzled Broadway, and later London, as Eliza Doolittle in the unforgettable My Fair Lady and went on to new triumphs as stately Guinevere in Camelot, again on Broadway. Her motion picture debut in Mary Poppins charmed audiences and she garnered rave reviews for her film role in The Americanization of Emily." —RCA.



GIULIETTA MASINA, left, in Academy Award winning "Juliet of the Spirits," currently playing at Martina's Coronet Theatre in Rochester.

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