

## UNDERSEA ENVIRONMENTAL FILMS

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thumbs, stereoscopic color vision, and a large complex brain are all related to the ways humans behave. The ability of humans to function in their environment is then related to the manufacture and use of tools and to the use of language.

The film should be used with primary or intermediate grades. The inquiry orientation of the film makes it an excellent teaching tool. My ninth-grade biology students found the film very interesting, but felt it was a little elementary for them.

The leader's guide is very complete and well done. Social studies or elementary teachers will find it a very helpful aid with vocabulary and recommended procedure.

*R. Bill Howard*  
 Franklin Junior High School  
 Valparaiso, Ind.

**ECOLOGY: WANTED—ALIVE!** Aims Instructional Media Services (P.O. Box 1010, Hollywood, Calif. 90028). 16-mm color-sound film. 10 min. \$155.

*Ecology: Wanted—Alive!* is filled with fine footage of animals in danger of extinction. The film is short and gives a cursory view of the many reasons why animals are facing extinction; good examples show hunting from planes with high powered rifles, insecticides weakening egg shells, and competition with domestic animals for food and space.

Also given are examples of the American bison and sea otter which have been protected and have again increased their populations. Ironically, the sea otter, once thought to be extinct, is now believed by some people to be competing with man for the tasty abalone.

It is unfortunate that in the first part of the film, which shows some twenty species of animals, the narration fails to name them or to explain where they live or why they are endangered. Photographs of extinct animals are presented, but they are made to disappear into the background through the hurried use of "fade-outs." These sequences are too fast to secure an adequate impression.

The film makes several strong and important statements, "We (animals and man) are all interrelated"; "Human population expansion is the [major] problem"; and "Man's own survival is in question." But again, the narration

fails to give cogent reasons and facts to support these important assertions.

This short film does not presume to tell the whole story of wildlife extinction. However, it is useful as supplementary material containing many good pictures not commonly found in one source. It would be a concise film to present after students have acquired some rudimentary background in man's influence on animal ecology and it could also be used as a summary to a discussion of causal factors of extinction.

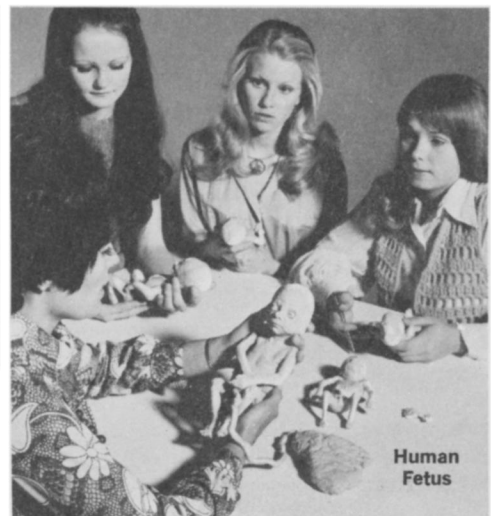
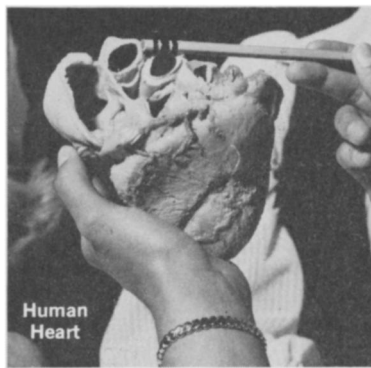
*Janet Pattee Chu*  
 Fairview High School  
 Boulder, Colo.

**WILDLIFE: AN AMERICAN HERITAGE.** 1974. West Wind Productions, Inc. P.O. Box 3532, Boulder, Colo. 80303). 16-mm color-sound film. 13½ min. Purchase \$195. Rental \$20.

This film is unique in several ways. It says much about the problems of pollution by effectively focusing on the aesthetics of wildlife and avoiding the usual, scare-tactic, pollution scenes. Unlike some environmentalist presentations that seem to deplore all human outdoor activities, this film points out that hunters, fishermen, and visitors to wildlife areas contribute large sums of money to the maintenance of wildlife environments.

The film is available at a most appropriate time—the bicentennial celebration. Basic historical facts about the effects of our country's development on wildlife provide the framework of the first part of the film. The film emphasizes that the natural resources of North America are in a large part responsible for the prosperity that the United States has enjoyed. One of the most valuable and diverse of these resources is wildlife. The latter part of the film is concerned with introductory premises of wildlife management. Wildlife persists today because we have cared in the past. It will continue to persist only if we continue to care now and in the future.

The film will be most useful to biology teachers, but social studies and English teachers will also find it a valuable teaching instrument. Because this is not the kind of film that is just run off to a class, it is unfortunate that the producers have not developed a teacher's guide. Nevertheless, the film is beautifully photographed, showing a large



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variety of ecosystems. One could turn off the sound and still enjoy the beauty of the natural scenes.

The presentation demands discussion of some very critical issues. I recommend it highly.

*Edward Drexler*  
Piux XI High School  
Milwaukee, Wis.

### • Television Programs

Check your local PBS television listing for dates and times of the following February programs:

#### Nova

*A Desert Place*—the Sonoran Desert of the American Southwest is an example of how triumphantly life has succeeded in coping with the harsh conditions of the desert: extremes of heat and cold and an almost total lack of rainfall.

*A Small Imperfection*—every year some 5,000 babies are born in the U.S.

with *spina bifida*, a congenital abnormality of the central nervous system in which the lower part of the spine fails to knit, leaving an open wound. This program not only examines the care and treatment of such children but also raises the issue of whether heroic methods should be taken to preserve the lives of severely malformed babies.

*Antarctica*—find out why hundreds of scientists from many nations spend much of the year working in the frozen wastelands of this giant refrigerator of the past.

*The Race for the Double Helix*—author Isaac Asimov tells the remarkable story of the discovery of the structure of DNA with the aid of unique footage of the major protagonists. James Watson, author of the well-known book *The Double Helix*, exchanges memories with his ex-colleague Francis Crick about the race for knowledge.

*Why Do Birds Sing?*—one of the most romantic of nature's sounds, bird-song is also swearing, squabbling, and

self-proclamation. The film shows how simple "playback" experiments have begun to unravel the role of song in territoriality and species recognition. It also reveals that some birds sing in dialect.

#### National Geographic Special #104

*The Animals Nobody Loved*—takes an objective look at "varmints" of the American West: the rattlesnake, coyote, and wild mustang. Few pioneers doubted that they should be crushed; but today the animals have their defenders.

#### Images of Aging

*Neither Blessing nor Curse*—the elderly as seen by themselves.

*What Are Old People For?*—the elderly as seen by society.

*No Preface to Old Age*—an examination of the thesis that no one knows what "old" is until he is old.

*From Resignation to Renewal*—new images of aging as seen in the growing awareness of the older citizens and their discovery of political power and influence: a study of the liberated elderly.