

May 2005

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Feature: Finding the key to the education market

By Megan Wood and Georgia Blain

Over the last five years there has been a growing use of audio-visual material in the classroom, both in media studies and in other disciplines. There is no doubt that educators are incorporating film into their teaching across all areas; the question for filmmakers is how can they help teachers use their work and increase their reach into this market. A recent survey of subscribers to www.enhancetv.com.au, an online resource site for teachers, reveals some answers.

Enhancetv was set up by Screenrights to provide free resources for teachers wanting to use film in the classroom. Four years down the track, the team conducted a survey to try and find out more about what teachers want from the site. This information is particularly pertinent for filmmakers who want to access this market.

Prior to the establishment of the site, teaching with audio-visual material was changing. Many teachers suddenly found themselves required to use film in the classroom, with little back-up material to help them. Perhaps the biggest changes have been in the way English studies is taught in the Australian classroom. From a traditional text-based model, the English curriculum has evolved into a multi-faceted and culturally relevant area of study in which the term "text" can refer to anything from a novel, to a film, to a website.

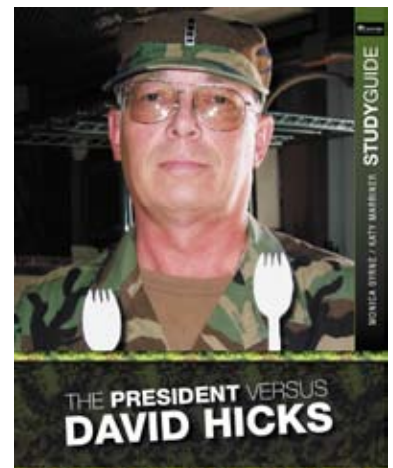
In addition to the changes in the various English curricula around Australia there have also been changes to other subjects. Acknowledging and reflecting the importance of visual and multimedia communication forms, these include Media Studies and Queensland's innovative new subject Film, Television and New Media. The latter is a highly unique subject as it actually aims to equip students with the skills needed to create their own visual texts. By teaching them the practical elements of filmmaking and editing, this subject aims to prepare students who are looking towards tertiary study in the area of media production.



As curriculum changes have taken place all over Australia, teachers - especially English teachers - have been dumped straight into the deep end of film analysis.

Teachers who had years of experience were all of a sudden searching desperately for resources to help them teach this new and challenging visual medium. The increase in popularity of services like www.enhancetv.com.au reveals that educators need help to find the right resources to teach with and when they find a reliable source they keep coming back. The recent survey of enhancetv users showed that more than 90% visited the site at least once every week.

The importance of audio-visual material in schools is, to some extent also reflected in the enhancetv survey. Sixty-seven per cent of respondents said that they copied from television every week, and it is not just programs on free to air channels that are being taped. Ninety-one per cent of respondents taped from free to air and over forty per cent taped from pay stations.



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Another key message to come out of the enhanceTV project, is that if educators are given the right tools to teach audio-visual material, they will do so more regularly and more confidently. In fact the enhanceTV online survey showed that more than 50% of enhanceTV users find the study guides to be the most useful resource on the website. There are currently 340 of these available for downloading and the number continues to grow. Furthermore, it could also be argued that the availability of a study guide means that educators are more likely to develop a lesson around that program, with almost 40% indicating that lack of support material is the biggest obstacle to teaching film and television.

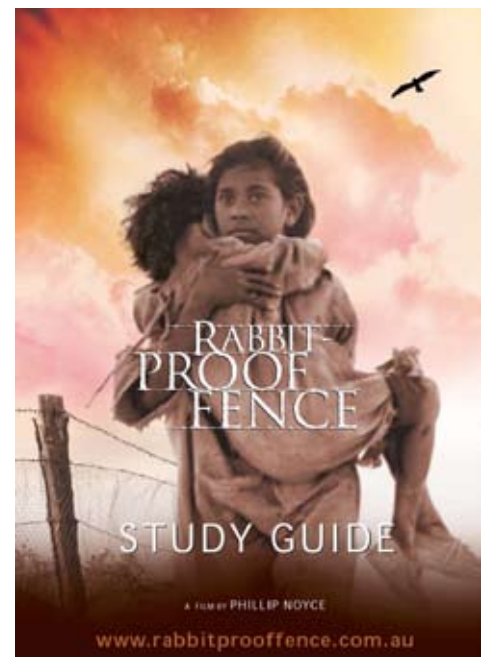
Supplying a study guide writer with additional material other than just the film can also help to ensure that the guide is a truly useful resource for educators. Exteacher Bob Lewis, who has been writing guides for more than ten years, told Off the Air that writing a thought provoking and relevant guide is made considerably easier when he is supplied with extras such as interviews with the filmmaker, relevant research material and the script. Other material that may be useful includes interview transcripts and stills, as well as information on the crew.

Australian filmmakers need to be aware of the fact that the changes in school curriculum have in many ways opened a new market to them. Filmmakers that would never have considered their material for the education market can now see the potential in marketing to this area. What filmmakers are not as aware of is the time involved for a teacher to create a lesson plan from scratch. By providing educators with support material for a program, filmmakers are enabling them to easily adapt their program to the classroom setting.

Lewis writes study guides through the Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM). ATOM is a non-profit association of primary, secondary and tertiary teachers and film and TV industry professionals.

If you would like a study guide produced for your film, DVD/video, or CD-ROM, you can contact Peter Tapp on 03 9525 5302, or email tapp@netspace.net.au

If you are interested in making content available on enhanceTV, email jamie@enhancetv.com.au



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According to Anthony Wallace, Director of the Aboriginal Artists Agency Ltd, which distributes Screenrights royalties to indigenous artists, educational copying royalties can be one of the main revenue streams for the artists he represents.

"We had one desert artist earn about \$1600 from Screenrights," Wallace said. "This is more than he would get for a work of art."

The royalties, which were part of the March – April round of payments, are also made through Viscopy, the national collecting agency for artists.

Viscopy's CEO, Chryssy Tinter, also stressed the importance of this money to their members.

"These royalties are a vital source of income for professional visual artists, who earn on average, a total of between \$14,000 and \$17,000 per annum," she said.

Rosylne Moriarty, a graphic artist who has received Screenrights royalties said: "it's very good to see copyright observed as it should be, and royalties distributed properly in return for use."

The money was part of a total distribution of \$2.38 million in Australian educational copying royalties made between 1 March and 30 April.

The distribution team is currently sending out the last round of reminders for 1999 royalties. Under its Articles of Association, Screenrights has six years in which to distribute the money it collects from Australian educational institutions. At the end of this period, any undistributed royalties are rolled over into the next distribution pool.

There is currently only 4.6% of the 1999 pool remaining and final deadline letters will be sent out by the end of May with money to be distributed by 30 June.

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Fair use paper looks at home recording levy

Screenrights will make a submission in response to the Government's Issues Paper on fair use exceptions to copyright, which includes a discussion of the ramifications of introducing a levy to compensate rightsholders for home copying.

The Issues Paper, which was released in May, is part of the Government's inquiry into whether changes should be made to the Copyright Act in light of digital technology and the challenges it poses to the balance between copyright owners and users of their work. The Paper looks at a number of exceptions to the copyright owner's right to control the use of his or her work, concentrating on the fair use provisions which allow for the personal use of copyright material in certain circumstances.

The Government is considering various options, including the possibility of introducing a levy that would compensate rights owners in television and radio when their programs are taped at home.

Screenrights welcomes the review and will respond to the Issues Paper by 1 July 2005. If you would like to obtain a copy of the paper, go to <http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/agdhome.nsf/AllDocs/E63BC2D5203F2D29CA256FF8001584D7?OpenDocument>

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Currently the New Zealand Copyright Act only allows for educational copying from television and radio under a Screenrights licence, whereas the Australian Act allows for these copies to be placed on a computer network or emailed to staff and students. The communication provisions ensure that educational institutions can make the most of technology, which now allows them to store and communicate audio-visual material in new ways.

To view a copy of Screenrights' submission, go to: www.screen.org/about/submissions.html

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According to the Copyright Law Review Committee (CLRC), its recommendations on government copyright have been informed by two important concerns:

- Ensuring that, as far as possible, Government is on the same footing as other parties; and
- Promoting the widest possible access to Government owned materials.

In relation to the first of these issues, the report recommends changes to the Copyright Act concerning Government ownership of copyright. Under current law, the Government owns copyright in scripts, sound recordings and films that it makes or has made under its direction or control, unless there is a contrary written agreement. The CLRC concluded that these provisions are unfair and inappropriate and has recommended that they be repealed. This would mean that the Government would not be accorded special privileges under the Act – instead, the question of copyright ownership in Government created or commissioned material would be determined by the general ownership provisions.

The CLRC also considered the appropriate period of protection for material in which the Government owns copyright. Currently, literary, dramatic, musical works, films and sound recordings in which the Government owns copyright are protected for fifty years from the end of the year of first publication and, in the case of artistic works fifty years from when the work is made. The Committee recommended that these terms be retained on the basis of the need for certainty and also the desire to allow greater access to government material. This means that where material is commissioned by the Government significantly shorter periods of copyright protection may apply than to other copyright material.

The CLRC also considered the application of the moral rights provisions of the Act and concluded that there should be no change in so far as they relate to Government.

The Government is yet to announce what action it will take in response to the Report.

To view a copy of the report, go to:

http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/clrHome.nsf/Page/Overview_Reports_Crown_Copyright