



*Films from a series of workshops encouraging Indian children to explore their surroundings with video cameras  
- creating new perspectives on Indian society*



# The Child's Eye

12 films from India by child researchers

PROJECT DIRECTOR: DAVID MACDOUGALL

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*The Child's Eye* is the result of a five-year project that encouraged Indian children to explore their surroundings using video cameras. In six workshops held in different locations across India, they became active collaborators in creating new knowledge, often on subjects they knew better than adults. Their films give an intimate view of modern Indian life, seen as only children could see it from their unique position in Indian society. Made in an observational style, without spoken commentary, the films are remarkable for their sense of intimacy and the details they give of life in Indian communities today.

The project, conducted by ethnographic filmmaker David MacDougall, held workshops lasting from six to twelve weeks and involved children from ten to thirteen years old. They came from a variety of class and religious backgrounds, in both rural and urban settings, from New Delhi to Rajasthan, Kolkata to Ladakh.

Organised as research projects, the workshops asked children to choose topics they considered important in their own families and communities. After several weeks of basic instruction in using video cameras, they began using them to explore their chosen topics, producing twenty-four films from which the twelve on this DVD were selected. The workshops gave the children a chance to investigate subjects that are often known only from an adult perspective, a challenge they embraced with enthusiasm. Their films attest to the competence and sophistication children can achieve as filmmakers when offered the opportunity.



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## Curriculum links

*The Child's Eye* is suitable viewing for students in upper primary classes and secondary students at all levels.

The selected films constitute a unique resource for teachers to explore the society, culture and technology of modern India. The fact that they were all made by children aged from ten to thirteen years, and reflect children's perspectives, gives them a special advantage in exciting the curiosity of Australian children about another country.

These 12 films, and the project as a whole, can serve as a useful model for Australian schoolchildren who may be inspired to make their own films about significant aspects of their lives.

In Years 5 – 10, the films are suitable for study in the following learning areas:

- English
- Science
- HASS
- The Arts

The films can also be used to teach the general capability of Intercultural Understanding and the cross curriculum priority of Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia in the subjects listed above.

In the Australian Curriculum students develop intercultural understanding as they learn to value other cultures, languages and beliefs as well as their own. They come to understand how personal, group and national identities are shaped, and the variety and changing nature of human societies. These insights help students to engage with diverse cultures and, in recognising commonalities and differences, to make connections with others and achieve mutual respect. Approaches to integrating the general capability of Intercultural Understanding across the curriculum can be accessed at <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/intercultural-understanding/>.

In the Australian Curriculum students develop knowledge and understanding of Asian countries, cultures, beliefs and the connections between Asia, Australia and the rest of the world. Asia literacy gives students the skills to engage and communicate with others in the region and to live, work and learn effectively in Asian countries. This involves recognising the diversity of countries in the Asian region through knowledge of their traditions and diverse environments, and how these affect the lives of different peoples. Details about integrating the priority of Australia's engagement with Asia across the curriculum can be accessed at <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/cross-curriculum-priorities/asia-and-australia-s-engagement-with-asia/>.

In Years 11 and 12, the films are suitable for study in the following subjects:

- Society and Culture
- Geography
- Modern History
- English
- Earth and Environmental Studies
- Visual Arts
- Economics
- Media
- Hindi

Teachers are also advised to consult the curriculum outlines relevant to their state or territory.



## About the project

*The Child's Eye* films derive from the long-term project "Childhood and Modernity: Indian Children's Perspectives" directed by David MacDougall and conducted at various locations in India.

The project had four interconnected objectives:

1. to create visual records of contemporary Indian society, seen from the unique perspective of Indian children;
2. to contribute in a more general way to an understanding of children's concerns and distinctive ways of seeing;
3. to preserve visual and aural records of Indian children's lives and surroundings as a scholarly resource for future study; and
4. to provide worthwhile experiences for the children themselves, through which they might come to see themselves in a new way and gain a fuller understanding of the world around them.

The project was funded by the Australian Research Council and based at the Research School of Humanities & the Arts at the Australian National University.





## India

India is a country in South Asia. It is the largest country in South Asia and the seventh largest country in the world by area. The population of India is more than 1.2 billion. The capital of India is New Delhi.

### Recommended links:

Encyclopedia Britannica: India

<https://www.britannica.com/place/India>

Factslides: India Facts

<https://www.factslides.com/s-India#top>

National Geographic Kids: Country Fact File – India

<https://www.natgeokids.com/au/discover/geography/countries/country-fact-file-india/#!/register>

The locations (see map) featured in the 12 films include:

**NEW DELHI**  
**DELWARA**  
**KOLKATA**

**LADAKH**  
**JODHPUR**

Google Earth allows students to explore India. Using the search function, students can locate the places featured in the films set for study.

Teachers should spend time talking with students about their experiences of India. Some students' knowledge of India may have been informed by television and film. Other students may have travelled to India, have family or friends who live in India or have migrated from India to Australia. A class KWL table\* may also prove useful in scaffolding student knowledge and understanding of India before and after screening the films.

\*A KWL table is a graphic organiser. The table is divided into three columns titled **K**now, **W**ant to know and **L**earned.

## Anthropology

Anthropology is the study of the many societies and cultures of the world. The scope of anthropology is both global and local. Unique perspectives of societies and cultures are gained by exploring the different ways people live their lives.

Child-focused anthropology recognises that children are valid subjects and gives prominence to children's perceptions and understanding about their own lives and the world around them.

The "Childhood and Modernity: Indian Children's Perspectives" project is child-focused anthropology. The children as researchers provide important insights about their lives and their understanding of their world.

## Ethnography

Ethnography is the study and recording of a culture or society. An ethnographic work is generally based on participant-observation by a researcher during an extended period of fieldwork with the people being studied. It usually results in a written account describing such aspects of the society as its social structure, belief system, political organisation, arts, and economy.

## Ethnographic Film/ Visual Anthropology

Visual anthropology is the branch of anthropology that either uses visual research methods—photography, film, video—to study human society or focuses on the visual expressions of human culture: painting, costume, religious rituals, television, cinema, and so on. The difference in the two can be best summed up as: using a medium or studying how a medium is used. Visual methodology can be used to make photographic records to analyse such subjects as posture, gesture, or facial expressions, but it is most familiar in the form of *ethnographic films*. Among the very first of these was *Nanook of the North*, which appeared in 1922 and showed the lives of the Inuit people of the Canadian arctic. Since then, hundreds of ethnographic films have been made about societies all over the world as well as many subcultures in Western countries.





## Children as Researchers

THE CHILD'S EYE provides good evidence that many children are as capable as adults of conducting research and making films. Here they chose topics of importance in their own families and communities and then explored them using video cameras as their primary research tool. Their subject was life as it was taking place around them, neither directed nor re-enacted nor fictionalised.

The films exemplify the approach of *Observational Cinema*. In this kind of filmmaking the images are not created to illustrate a pre-determined script. The filmmaker begins with certain questions and interests, but it is the subject that then directs the filmmaker, not the other way around. The camera becomes a tool in searching for new knowledge and understanding. The filmmaker observes and records various aspects of the subject and gradually forms these into a revealing study of it.

In the "Childhood and Modernity" project the children took this task seriously, and also took great delight in filmmaking. They showed remarkable creativity in approaching their subjects, often inventing methods that adults would never think of. And although observing actual life was their main concern, elements of playfulness, poetry, and performance enrich these films.

The films in THE CHILD'S EYE make a significant contribution to our knowledge of contemporary India and to our understanding of children's perspectives and capabilities.

## Key ideas and issues

- Family life in India
- Children's lives in India
- Girls' and boys' lives in India
- Indian children's relationships with their parents
- Children's responsibilities in the home
- Commerce and types of work in India
- Foods and cooking in India
- City and village life in India
- The place of animals in Indian life
- Indian housing and the uses of living space
- The observance of religion in India
- Social change and technology
- The role of electronic media in Indian society
- Sport, entertainment, and pastimes
- The varied cultures in India

## First impressions

Use the following questions to guide the initial discussion of each film:

- What did you see?
- What did you hear?
- What were you thinking?
- What were you feeling?





## The Films

### THE NEW DELHI FILMS

The three films from New Delhi were made by children at a government primary school during April-May 2012. The school, like most government schools in India, had very limited resources. The children who made the films came from among the poorer neighbourhoods of Delhi and lived close to the school. All were eleven years old. The workshop was conducted by David MacDougall, assisted by Kajri Akhtar and Sunder Sri Vastive. The films selected for study are [My Lovely General Store](#), [Why Not a Girl?](#) and [My Funny Film](#).

### THE DELWARA FILMS

The two films from Delwara were made in a large village in southern Rajasthan, in the western part of India. The workshop was held during February – April 2013, in a government primary school. The children who made these two films were ten years old. The workshop was conducted by David MacDougall, assisted by Himmat Vaishnav Das. The films selected for study are [Mayank's Family](#) and [Our Life with Goats](#).

### THE KOLKATA FILM

[Inside Outside](#) was made by an eleven-year-old girl, Soma Chatterjee, who lived at a home established by the Project Teesta Social Welfare Organisation, a non-government organisation in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), eastern India. The workshop was held during July and August 2013 during the monsoon season. It was conducted by Rowena Potts, assisted by Baidehi Sengupta.

### THE JODHPUR FILMS

The films selected here were made in the video workshop conducted at the Modern Bal School in Jodhpur, one of the main towns in Rajasthan in western India. The young filmmakers were between eleven and twelve years old. The workshop was conducted by Natasha Raheja, assisted by Sushila Goyal, in February and March of 2016. The films selected for study are [Flowery Film](#), [Friends at Play](#) and [Stitching Sisters](#).

### THE LADAKH FILMS

These films were made by children who participated in the video workshop held at the Moravian Mission School in Leh, the capital of the northern Indian region of Ladakh, in July-August, 2014. The filmmakers were ten and eleven years old. The workshop was conducted by David MacDougall, assisted by Mabel Disket. The films selected for study are [Animals at Home](#), [The Monastery of Phyang](#) and [The Food](#).

Click on  
hyperlink to  
jump to film



ASHA



AAYON



RAVI



ANSHU



REKHA



KIRAN



NAMGYAL



NAREISH



SOMA



JIGMET



MAYANK



ANIKET



# My Lovely General Store

A FILM BY RAVI SHIVHARE. LENGTH: 15 MINS

In this film Ravi explores the day-to-day workings of a small general store near where he lives, where his uncle has a part-time job. The store stocks a wide range of items and caters largely for local customers. Ravi was interested in researching everything about the store with his camera: what the owners were like; the relations between them and the customers; what sort of customers came to buy; what sorts of things were bought; how the store maintained its stock; how they made deliveries; and how they handled the money involved. The film focuses in part on a young delivery boy not much older than Ravi. The resulting film is a close-up portrait of the store, from dawn to dusk. If you look carefully, half-way through the film you will see Ravi serving customers, shot from a camera that he has mounted on a tripod to film himself.

## Before viewing

Prior to the title card, Ravi explains his objective as a filmmaker:

*'When I've finished shooting the film, when I see it myself, I will know how a shop functions and how it is run daily because I don't know this, and what happens there. Because I haven't gone to the shop often, that's why. Each shop is different. There's a lot of variety in products and the personalities of the owners vary. For example, someone comes. He could be calm or angry. And it might depend on the owner's mood too. Who gets angry first. And what type of customers come.'*

- Ravi's film is about a shop in his neighbourhood. Draw a map of the shops in your neighbourhood. Which shops do you visit often? Why? Which shop is your favourite? Why?
- What is a general store? What shops in your neighbourhood might be called a general store? Give reasons for your choice.



## Close analysis

- *My Lovely General Store* begins with a long shot of the location of the Kakar General Store. Describe the streetscape that is captured in this shot.
- Watch the film again, this time focus on the soundtrack. Listen carefully. Make a list of the sounds. What do the sounds highlight about the shop and its surroundings?
- The Kakar General Store sells Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG). Make a list of the goods that are for sale at the general store. Describe how these goods are displayed.
- What does the audience learn about the people who work at the Kakar General Store?
- Describe the customers. What do they buy? Do the type of customers and what they buy change during the day?
- Why do you think Ravi decided to title the film *My Lovely General Store*? What does this title suggest about the relationship between the filmmaker and the subject of his film?
- What have you learnt from watching *My Lovely General Store*?

## For senior students:

- General stores like the one featured in *My Lovely General Store* are commonplace in Delhi. How does Ravi's film capture the uniqueness of the store even though he is documenting the ordinary and everyday routines of the store?
- Ravi's film highlights that the store serves both a commercial and a social purpose in the neighbourhood. Discuss.

## Extension activity

Visit a shop in your neighbourhood. Take 10 photographs of the shop. Try to take photographs that depict both the commercial and social transactions that take place at the shop. Record the sounds of these transactions. Use the photographs and audio recording to make a Google Slides presentation.





# Why Not a Girl?

A FILM BY ANSHU SINGH. LENGTH: 16 MINS

In this film Anshu documents the oppression that many girls experience in their family life and the favouritism that is shown to boys. The result is a powerful indictment of gender relations in Indian society, in which girls shoulder much of the daily work in the home while boys are free to play and do as they wish. These conditions can lead to depression, poor health, and poor educational opportunities for girls, affecting their long-term chances in life. At the end of the film, Anshu is found alone on the roof of her house, speaking with great intimacy to her camera about the injustice she has uncovered.

## Before viewing

Prior to the title card, Anshu explains her objective as a filmmaker:

*'I will be talking to the school's headmistress. And talking to one girl about girls in general and get her to speak about her house, her brother, her sister, everyone. If her brother studies in school, I'll film their relationship and how her brother treats her. I will focus on the women of the house too. And how the children play and treat girls. Including these two. I'll film them. I'll speak to Akansha, who's in my class. I'll do an interview. I'll also film girls working and how boys scold them, how they go out to play and study. And how they prevent girls from studying. I will film things like this.'*

- Do you have a say in who you are and what your life is like?
- Anshu's film is about the lives of girls in Delhi. Her film also provides an insight into the lives of boys in Delhi. Drawing on your experience as either a girl or a boy, write a personal narrative that describes your life as a girl or a boy.
- Based on your experience, do you think boys and girls are treated equally?

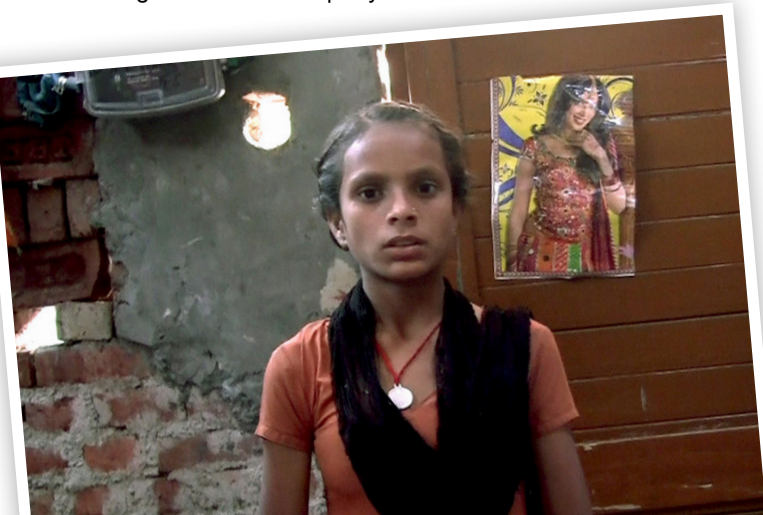


## Close analysis

The following transcripts of the girls' interviews are provided to generate classroom discussion and to help students complete questions and activities about the films.

*'I went to my aunt's house and my brother asked me to fetch water. I ran and I fell and I got hurt. When I brought the water my brother scolded me. It wasn't my fault but I got scolded anyway. And he didn't even put ointment on it... I love my brother but he loves me less. He has to do less work, and I have to do more. And my mother tells me not to mix with boys because they're dirty. I have to study, and my mother tells me to do the chores. She wakes up my brother lovingly. But she tells me just once and I have to get up. Nobody loves me. Papa loves me, but Mummy doesn't. Mummy doesn't do anything. When I ask Mummy for money, she doesn't give me any but Papa does.'*

*'My mother hits me so much. Sometimes she says to sweep, and sometimes to scrub. Because of that my thumb got cut. When I wish to wear certain clothes "Mummy, I want to wear this." She says, "You should only wear a suit or frock." And my brother can wear what he wants. Whatever he wants to wear, no one scolds him. And me, only frocks and suits, which I hate. I love traditional clothes. And Mummy scolds me and says, "Wash the clothes." She says, "Do this."*







*I'm like a servant in this house. She scolds me, but my brother can do anything. Normally, she'll hit and scream. "Sweep up, scrub, do this, do that." Doing this is back-breaking. I also have a life. Everyone has a life, and I do too. And she'll continue to beat me and not do anything to my sister.'*

*'Papa's at work and I have to prepare dinner. And I'm getting angry about it. If it's not done well, he'll beat me up. Everything's going badly, and I don't know what to do. Also my health is getting worse. And everything is going haywire.'*

*'My mother doesn't let me go out to play or go to school. If I bring an application from school, Mum says I still have to do the housework. I still have to do it. My brother makes me do all the work and doesn't do anything. He makes me do his homework. My mother doesn't allow me out to play. If I go, she calls me back and hits me. I have to wash all the clothes and do them properly. If I'm studying while I'm doing it Mum says, "Don't educate her. Send her to me." And even now she continues to hit me and always scolds me, and doesn't let me play. She says, "Don't play with boys. You'll be going to your in-laws so what use will you be to me? If you come back, you'll shame us. What else can you expect? Don't exceed your limits. Do your work in the house and stay here. Whatever you have to do, do it. Wash the dishes. Sweep, scrub, the whole day. Wash the clothes, collect them and take care of everyone in the house. You don't need to roam around anywhere," she says.'*

*'If people say, "You don't have a brother" or "There are only two girls in your family" my parents feel offended. My father says, "We don't need this. To us, girls and boys are equal." But if I start using the camera and it's dark and getting late he says, "On Sunday you don't like to study. You do all these things that boys do." That's what's said. And Papa scolds me. But today I have come up on the roof to shoot with*

*the camera. Even though Papa scolded me, I came up here. And this time it's with his permission. What I'm saying is the way boys get respect, why don't we get it too? Boys play with both girls and boys but if I do, I get scolded. And they tell me, "Play with girls. Study and don't do all this camera work. Don't play around with mobile phones. These are for boys not for girls." My father says, "Be friends with boys but not too much. Stay within your limits. Do what girls do. Study to become someone." But if I'm to become someone I want to change some things. Why do they say all these things? That girls can do one thing and not another? Why is this?'*

- *'We don't take any nonsense from you girls.'* What do the schoolboys who feature in the opening sequence of Anshu's film think of girls? How do the schoolboys view themselves? Explain the significance of Anshu's footage of the schoolgirls at the end of this sequence.
- Make a list of what the boys are allowed to do. Make a list of what the girls are expected to do.
- What is discrimination? What examples of discrimination are identified by the girls who feature in the film?
- The girls work, while the boys play. Is this fair?
- How did you feel when the girls said they are unloved by their mothers? What did you think when the girls described the violence that they encounter?
- What evidence is there that the girls are defying the conditioning of their society? Do you think the girls are courageous? Why?
- What do the girls fear? What are the girls' frustrations? What do you think are the girls' futures?
- In the final scene, Anshu turns the camera on herself. Write an analysis of this scene. What does Anshu say? What do her comments reveal about what she has gained due to her involvement in the project? What do her comments reveal about the costs of her involvement in the project?
- What have you learnt from watching *Why Not a Girl?*

#### For senior students:

- How are the girls' lives defined by others? How are the girls' lives defined by gender expectations? How are the girls seeking to define their own lives?
- 'Anshu's film is a portrait of marginalisation and oppression.' Do you agree?
- '*Why Not a Girl?* is a protest against the privilege of boys' lives.' Discuss.

#### Extension activity

.....

#whynotagirl

What is inequality? What is gender inequality? Your task is create a class activism campaign that uses the hashtag – #whynotagirl – to address the gender inequality experienced by girls.





## My Funny Film

A FILM BY ANIKET KUMAR KASHYAP. LENGTH: 16 MINS

*My Funny Film* is a high-spirited, kaleidoscopic view of Aniket Kumar Kashyap's friends and family, exploring the many diverse aspects of their lives, from play to work, cooking, love, and music. The film contains song-and-dance routines, based on Bollywood movies, as well as fights, meals, piecework done in the home, and the impact of television and mobile phones on daily life. It gives a vivid sense of Aniket's immediate surroundings, and more detail about the domestic life of ordinary Indians than most films made by adults. The film includes the arrival of a new member of the family, much to Aniket's fascination. It closes with a meditative scene of Aniket singing to himself some of the latest popular songs he has learned.

### Before viewing

Prior to the title card, Aniket discusses the difficulties he encountered making his film. He tells the audience that his film is about fights, pollution, singing and beauty.

- Do you use the video camera on a smartphone or another type of digital device? Have you ever used a proper digital video camera before? What do you film? If you have saved any of the video footage you have shot, watch it again. What does the footage reveal about who you are, where you live and what you do?

### Close analysis

- Make a mindmap that answers the following question. Use words, images and colours to construct the mindmap. What does *My Funny Film* show the audience about:
  - Aniket
  - Aniket's home and neighbourhood

- Aniket's family;
- Aniket's friends?
- What does Aniket's film reveal about domestic life in the Delhi neighbourhood where he lives?
- When Aniket tells his friends to do something, what do they do? What does Aniket and his friends' behaviour suggest about the influence that the media and technology have in their lives?
- Aniket is fascinated by his new sister-in-law who has come to live in his home. How does the footage depict her new life and how she is feeling about her new life?
- Towards the end of the film, Aniket's sister-in-law, asks '*What are you going to do with this?*'. Explain the significance of her question.
- Why do you think Aniket decided to conclude his film with a scene showing him singing to himself some of the popular songs that he knows?
- What have you learnt from watching *My Funny Film*?

### For senior students:

*My Funny Film* is an honest representation of childhood. Discuss.

### Extension activity

For younger students: Take a photograph that you think shows what your life is like right now. Cut and paste the photograph into a word document. Give the photograph a caption.

For older students: Look through the photographs of your childhood. Choose a representative sample. Who took these photos? How do these photographs represent your childhood? Are there any photographs in the family albums that were taken by you? If so, what do these photographs reveal about the way you saw the world as a child?







## Mayank's Family

A FILM BY MAYANK VED. LENGTH: 17 MINS

This intimate and engaging film, made by Mayank, a boy ten years old, began as a portrait of his father, a village barber, but soon expanded to include the rest of his family and wider scenes of village life. His father's day begins in the early morning as he eats breakfast, dresses, and performs puja to a Hindu god at the family altar. He opens his barber shop beside a busy market and a highway that links the village of Delwara with the other villages and towns of Rajasthan. As the day progresses, he chats with clients and gives haircuts, shaves, and head massages. Meanwhile at home Mayank's mother and other relatives carry on the work of the household. The film contains remarkably informal and playful scenes of family life, usually involving Mayank's younger brother. It ends with his brother at the barber shop, having his hair cut by his father. Mayank has succeeded in giving a well-rounded view of what daily existence is like for an Indian family who have limited resources but who live a life of dignity, cooperation, and happiness.

### Before viewing

- If you made a film about your family, what would it mostly be about?
- Have you ever been to work with a parent or another family member? What did you observe while you were there?

### Close analysis

- Make a mindmap that answers the following question. Use words, images and colours to construct the mindmap.  
What does *Mayank's Family* tell the audience about:
  - Mayank
  - Mayank's family
  - Mayank's home
  - the routines of family life?
- Mayank's father is the village barber. What does Mayank's father do at work?
- How does Mayank's mother spend her day?
- What religious activities are conducted in the home?
- Describe Mayank's neighbourhood.
- What have you learnt from watching *Mayank's Family*?

### For senior students:

Compare the representations of commerce in *Mayank's Family* and *My Lovely General Store*.

### Extension activity

Mayank's film, describes a day in the life of his family. Make a multiple panel comic (A4) that tells the story of a day in the life of your family.





# Our Life with Goats

A FILM BY KIRAN KHARTIK. LENGTH: 12 MINS

Kiran Khartik, who was ten years old when she made this film, begins with scenes inside her own house, but she soon moves outdoors to focus on the goats, who are an important part of the family's livelihood. Her grandfather and grandmother have a major role in taking care of the goats, and one can see in the way she films them that she has a close relationship with them both. In a key scene she films a conversation with her grandmother who, although wary of modern technology, is nevertheless curious about her filmmaking activities. The film is notable for a scene in which Kiran's grandfather drives their small herd of goats through the village, down narrow lanes, past a group of card players, and into their enclosure. The film is made with affection, understanding, and moments of quiet humour – a view of village life as only a young girl could see it.

## Before viewing

- What animals are part of your household? Are the animals pets or do they provide food for your family? What parts of your house are your pets allowed to occupy? Whose responsibility is it to care for the animals that are part of your household?
- Kiran's film portrays her relationship with her grandparents and the role they play in her family. Describe your relationship with your grandparents.



## Close analysis

- Describe Kiran's home and the village that she lives in.
- What does Kiran's film tell us about how her family earn their living?
- Explain the way that caring for the goats shapes the daily life of Kiran's family.
- Describe Kiran's relationship with her grandparents.
- 'We old people don't understand all this technology. Will they show it on TV?'  
What is Kiran's grandmother's opinion of modern technology? What does Kiran tell her grandmother about the filmmaking project?
- What have you learnt from watching *Our Life with Goats*?

### For senior students:

*Our Life with Goats* provides an insight into village life in India. Discuss.

## Extension activity

For Kiran, having goats at home and herding goats through the streets of her neighbourhood is an ordinary occurrence. What do you think someone growing up in another country, may find extraordinary about your everyday life?





# Inside Outside

A FILM BY SOMA CHATTERJEE. LENGTH: 12 MINS

This film is Soma's poetic documentation of the world around her, combined with her whimsical and introspective observation of herself within it. With patient camera work, her film unfolds from a place of deep curiosity and sensitivity to the environment in which she lives. Starting with a striking examination of her own reflection in a mirror, the film is shaped by Soma's careful attention to the behaviour of animals and birds, the sounds and patterns of Kolkata's monsoon season, and the varied activities that take place in her neighbourhood. Much of Soma's film is shot through the windows or from the balconies of the Teesta home where she lives, where she trains her camera on street-hawkers, labourers, and passersby as they go about their lives in the street below. With the camera as an investigative tool, Soma also ventures outside to film the neighborhood elders at the local store. Throughout the film, Soma documents her own image and explores her own sensory perceptions. The result is an intimate portrait of an eleven-year-old girl and a vivid window into her world.

## Before viewing

- If you look out of the front window of your home, what can you see? Take a series of photographs to capture the streetscape from morning to night. Write a caption for each photograph. Think carefully about the words you choose. Try to order the words you choose to form a poetic statement.
- When did your family move into your neighbourhood? What do you know about the history of your neighbourhood? Did anyone live in the house before your family? What do you know about the history of your house?

## Close analysis

- What does the opening sequence of Soma's film



tell the audience about 'inside' and 'outside' her home? What do these shots reveal about Soma and how she views her world?

- 'First it was a jungle of trees, now it's a jungle of houses.'

Soma's residential neighbourhood used to be a wetland. The land was cleared to make way for residences.

Describe Soma's portrayal of nature in her neighbourhood.

Describe Soma's portrayal of the built landscape of her neighbourhood.

- How does the rain change Soma's neighbourhood? When it rains how does your neighbourhood change?
- Soma interviews some of the older residents of her neighbourhood. She asks them, 'What's the story of this place?' What do the men tell her about the place where she lives?
- 'You must give Soma Chatterjee a chocolate. You must give her something for her hard work.'
- Describe the men's attitude to Soma and her filming project.
- Soma films herself. What does this footage tell the audience about Soma's sense of self?
- Why do you think Soma decided to title the film *Inside Outside*? What does this title suggest about the relationship between the filmmaker and the subject of her film?
- What have you learnt from watching *Inside Outside*?

### For senior students:

*Inside Outside* provides a window into Soma's world. Discuss.

## Extension activity

*Inside Outside* is set during monsoon season. Use the Internet to research monsoon season in India. Why is monsoon season important? How does monsoon season impact on Indian people? Use the thinking strategy 5Ws and 1H – Who? What? When? Where? Why? And How? to organise your research.







## Flowery Film

A FILM BY ASHA SIDOSIA. LENGTH: 8 MINS

The commercial growing of flowers is one of the many enterprises that exist in and around Indian towns. Flowers are used for both decorative and ritual purposes in Indian society. In *Flowery Film*, the cultivation of the flowers is shown to be primarily women's work, but the film gives an indication of the larger structure of supervisors and bosses who employ them, and the difficulties under which the women work. Here the beauty of the flowers is clearly offset by the arduous effort involved in producing them.

### Before viewing

- What is a flower farm? Have you ever visited a flower farm or a flower market?

### Close analysis

- Describe the commercial flower farm where the women work.
- What tasks are the women expected to complete?
- *'Hey Rati, keep quiet. Obey my orders, crazy girls! The boss is coming. Gao see this hose? Sarwan put on too much pressure last night. Look at the water running.'*  
*'Look, how can that rose grow? You can't grow roses if you don't work harder. My other workers worked better. Radha, plant all those roses here. Press down properly with your feet. Put*

*a plant here in each hole. Bring the small ones from there.*

What are the roles and responsibilities of the male supervisors? How do the women respond to his directions?

- Describe the relationships between the women workers.
- What have you learnt from watching *Flowery Film*?

### For senior students:

- What comment does Asha's film make about the working lives of women?
- Compare the portrayal of the working lives of women in *Flowery Film* and *Stitching Sisters*.

### Extension activity

Flowers are used for both decorative and ritual purposes in Indian society. Working in a small group, use the Internet to research the role of flowers in Indian occasions and celebrations. Make a short multimedia presentation about this subject.







## Friends at Play

A FILM BY NARESH KUMAR. LENGTH: 9 MINS

In an unusual move, this young filmmaker chose to make a study of other children's activities, creating a rare record of children's play actually made by a child. The group of friends live on the outskirts of Jodhpur, where they improvise games on a large empty tract of land and building site. They enjoy splashing in a water tank, playing a card game, building towers of bricks, and playing hopscotch on a board scratched on the hard ground. Notable in the film is a lively conversation about superheroes and TV wrestling and the spontaneous enactment of a play about a lovelorn man seeking the advice of a guru.

### Before viewing

- Make a list of the things that you enjoy doing with your friends.
- Make a list of the places where you and your friends go to play.

### Close analysis

- What did Naresh's film make you wonder?
- How do the boys spend their time?
- Describe the vacant land where the boys who feature in Naresh's film play. Is this the type of place where you would be allowed to play?
- What does the film tell us about how children play?
- What does *Friends at Play* tell us about the boys' friendship?
- What have you learnt from watching *Friends at Play*?

### For senior students:

Compare the representations of play in *Friends at Play* and *My Funny Film*.

### Extension activity

For younger students: Take three photographs of you and your friends playing your favourite game. Use the photographs to make a three panel photograph strip titled *Friends at Play*. Write a short description below each photograph to add to the story told by the photographs.

For older students: Can you remember the games you played as a child. Write a 250 word personal narrative that recalls this aspect of your childhood.







## Stitching Sisters

A FILM BY REKHA CHAUHAN. LENGTH: 9 MINS

*Stitching Sisters* is a meticulous account of the work of four sisters who run a piecework business producing clothing and embroidered goods. The primary focus is on their production of men's white shirts, which the sisters assemble from bales of pre-cut fabric. Despite the routine nature of the work, the sisters seem to enjoy their life and the independence it gives them. They take pride in their skills and the operation of their machines, which the film shows in intimate detail. This film provides an alternative view of clothing production in a developing country, an activity which is more often shown as grim and exploitative.

### Before viewing

- Where do you buy your clothes? What do you know about where and how the clothes you wear are made?
- Do you sew? Does a member of your family sew? Have you ever made an article of clothing? If you have, tell the class about what you made and whether or not you enjoyed the process and were satisfied with the final product?
- What do seamstresses do?
- What is piecework?

### Close analysis

- How does *Stitching Sisters* portray Rashma, Monika, Haseena and Jamna Devpal and their relationship?
- What do the sisters make? How does *Stitching Sisters* show that the sisters are skilled seamstresses?
- Describe the sisters' workspace.

- What does Rekha's film reveal about the sisters' work? How does Rekha convey that the sisters are proud of their work? Why do you think the sisters enjoy their work?
- What have you learnt from watching *Stitching Sisters*?

### For senior students:

- Do you think the Devpal sisters are generating social change?
- Compare the portrayal of the working lives of women in *Stitching Sisters*, *Flowery Film* and *Why Not a Girl?*

### Extension activity

- *Stitching Sisters* challenges its audience's perception of clothing production in a developing country. Discuss.







## Animals at Home

A FILM BY JIGMET CHOZIN. LENGTH: 12 MINS

In many Ladakhi homes there is a close relationship between family members and the animals they keep. Cows provide milk for making cheese, butter, and other foods. Animals often occupy the lower storey of the house while the family live upstairs. Children learn from an early age to care for the animals, helping their parents provide them with fodder and water. In this film the ten-year-old filmmaker's affection for the cows at her home is evident. Handling the camera with skill, sensitivity, and patience, she shows how different members of the family carry out domestic activities, interact with the animals, and how the animals themselves become valued members of the family unit.

### Before viewing

- What animals are part of your household? Are the animals pets or do they provide food for your family? What parts of your house are your pets allowed to occupy? Whose responsibility is it to care for the animals that are part of your household?

### Close analysis

- Describe the relationship between Jigmet's family and the animals they keep.
- How do the cows provide for the family?
- Where do the cows live?
- How does the care of the cows shape the family's everyday existence?
- What have you learnt from watching *Animals at Home*?

### For senior students:

*Animals at Home* provides an insight into village life in India. Discuss.

### Extension activity

For Jigmet, having cows at home and herding cows through the streets of her neighbourhood is an ordinary occurrence. What do you think someone growing up in another country, may find extraordinary about your everyday life?



# The Monastery of Phyang

A FILM BY NAMGYAL CHOSPEL. LENGTH: 8 MINS

Namgyal Chospel's film focuses on the famous Buddhist monastery of Phyang, established in the sixteenth century and located about fifteen kilometers from Ladakh's main town, Leh. Like many monasteries of Ladakh, the monastery of Phyang welcomes visitors, some of whom we see in the film as they engage in prayers and view the many sacred paintings that cover the walls. The film also observes the priests and the boy monks as they go about their daily activities. The film is rich in detail and creates an atmospheric impression of the monastery's impressive architecture and inner life.



## Before viewing

- Namgyal's film is about a Buddhist monastery. What is a monastery? What is Buddhism?
- Places of religious worship are often popular tourist destinations. Can you think of any examples? Have you visited any places of religious worship when you have travelled? Share your experiences with the class. Explain why you decided to visit these places.



## Close analysis

- What questions did you have as you watched *The Monastery of Phyang*?
- Describe the monastery of Phyang and its surroundings.
- How does Namgyal's film portray the monks?
- What does Namgyal's film tell us about the monastery as a place devoted to religious faith?
- How does Namgyal's film show that visitors to the monastery are welcome?
- What have you learnt from watching *The Monastery of Phyang*?

### For senior students:

'*The Monastery of Phyang* highlights the importance of the observance of religious faith in Indian society.' Discuss.

## Extension activity

Use the Internet to research the Phyang Monastery. Drawing on your research, make a postcard that shows on one side the Phyang Monastery. On the reverse side of the postcard, write a message that conveys your interest in the Phyang Monastery.







## The Food

A FILM BY AAYAN MATEEN. LENGTH: 13 MINS

This is a high-spirited tour of the restaurant kitchens that provide a wide variety of meals to the tourists who descend upon Ladakh in the summer months. In open-air settings, these restaurants provide examples of Italian, German, Tibetan, Mexican, Israeli, and Indian cooking. However, in this film the emphasis is very much on pizza, perhaps the most popular item on the menu. As Aayan, the young filmmaker, makes clear, his interest is not at all in nutrition but in showing how the food is prepared, served, and consumed. He is given intimate access to the kitchens and the cooks, who seem willing and ready to accept his camera and instruct him in the secrets of their art.

### Before viewing

- Aayan's film is about some of the restaurants in his local area. Make a list of the restaurants in your neighbourhood. What types of food do these restaurants serve? Are these restaurants popular with people who live in the neighbourhood or are they destination restaurants for people who live in other neighbourhoods?
- When you travel, do you eat the food that is local to the area or do you try to find restaurants that serve food that you would eat at home?

### Close analysis

- What types of food are served at the restaurants that feature in *The Food*? Were these the types of food that you expected to see being cooked, served and eaten in the restaurants that Aayan visited? Were you surprised that pizza is one of the most popular items on the menu of one of the restaurants he visits?
- How does *The Food* portray the restaurant kitchens and the people who work in these kitchens?
- Is there humour in the film? Where?
- Describe the customers at the restaurants featured in *The Food*.
- What have you learnt from watching *The Food*?

### For senior students:

*The Food* provides an insight into the impact of tourism on the local culture of Ladakh.

### Extension activity

Use the Internet to research traditional Ladakhi food and drink. Based on your research, compile a menu for a Leh restaurant that serves traditional Ladakhi cuisine.







## In conclusion

How has your view of Indian society changed since watching the films in THE CHILD'S EYE collection? In responding to this question, make specific reference to the films that you have watched.

## Your turn

If you were given a video camera and asked to explore some topic in your immediate surroundings what would make a film about?

Just like the children who participated in the Indian project, you could make a film that gives an insight into some aspect of your community, the place you live, or your family.



## Making an observational film

Have you ever made a short film? Share your filmmaking experience with the class. What went right? What went wrong? What were the challenges?

**1. Before you begin**, discuss the idea with your peers. This is a chance for you to receive feedback and refine your ideas. What do you want to find out about your topic? What aspects of it are visible and can actually be filmed? What do you hope to show others by making the film?

**2. Write down your ideas.** Where do you intend to film? Who will you be filming? How will you get their permission to film them? Make a list of the various aspects of your topic that you think are filmable. Think how you would like to start. You can't know everything in advance, so plan on using the camera to find out more about your subject.

**3. What sort of film will it be?** If it is an observational film like the ones on the DVD, what should you avoid doing? Should you direct people to perform for the camera? Should you use interviews? What are the pros and cons of these methods? Whose point of view does the film represent? How can your filming express what you think is most important?

**4. Become familiar with your camera so that you know how to operate its controls.** Practice with it before starting your filming. Most important, can you hold it steady? Practice until you can. Does the camera have manual controls? If so, learn how you can control the focus and the exposure. Can you lock these so that they don't change during a shot? How and when should you use the zoom lens? Be careful not to over-use it. When should you move the camera, and when not? Think how people will see your film and how to keep their attention on the subject.

**5. What about sound?** It's important to get good sound, so how will you ensure this? Will you use an external microphone? If you use the microphone in the camera, how close will you have to be to get good sound? How will you avoid wind noise on the microphone? Does the camera allow you to use headphones or earbuds so you can hear what you are recording?

**6. While filming, think about the best position to film your subject.** Learn to choose a good position: don't try to film everything, from every position. Trust your own judgement. Should you be closer, or farther away? When and how should you film details? Are there times when you should use a tripod—for landscapes or sports action, for example?

**7. How will you edit your film?** Can you edit some scenes in the camera as you are filming? Is there editing software on a computer you can use? Learn how to transfer your material to the computer. Work out the overall structure of your film. How will it begin? How will it end? What are its main sections? What material is of central importance, and what can you leave out? What titles will you use, and where will you place them?



## Appendix 1: Teacher reference

**David MacDougall** is an internationally recognised ethnographic filmmaker and writer on visual anthropology and documentary cinema. He is the Project Director of *Childhood and Modernity: Indian Children's Perspectives* and Honorary Professor at the Research School of Humanities & the Arts at the Australian National University, Canberra.

The following article written by David MacDougall and reprinted from the *Journal of Krishnamurti Schools* (Vol. 22, 2018) provides an overview of the video workshops conducted as part of the project, 'Childhood and Modernity: Indian Children's Perspectives'.



### 'HOW CHILDREN SEE' DAVID MACDOUGALL

During the last few years two colleagues and I have conducted a series of video workshops with schoolchildren in different parts of India. The workshops were part of a five-year project entitled "Childhood and Modernity: Indian Children's Perspectives" based at the Australian National University and funded by the Australian Research Council. Our overall aim was to gain new knowledge about how these children perceived and interpreted their surroundings, and what their perceptions could teach us about contemporary Indian society. We also hoped the children would benefit from the experience of looking at familiar things in a new way. In all, we conducted six workshops, of which I conducted four and the two others were conducted by PhD student volunteers. The workshops also employed a number of local assistants. The project made use of relatively inexpensive video cameras – hand-held consumer models of the sort that are familiar throughout the world. The children came from a variety of class backgrounds. The workshops were held in both urban and rural settings and ranged from Andhra Pradesh in the south to Ladakh in the north, and from West Bengal to Rajasthan.

How does one go about understanding how others see, and what they choose to look at? One obvious approach is to equip them with instruments through which to look at the world. This is what we attempted. But the same thing has often been done for other reasons. In recent years there have been numerous projects with children that make use of both video and still cameras. A large proportion of these appear to have been designed with a therapeutic purpose, based on the assumption that if you give cameras to disadvantaged or troubled youth it will somehow solve their social problems. I immediately rejected this

idea on several grounds. I was not convinced that fostering self-expression alone had the benefits often claimed for it. Nor did I feel that simply giving young people access to camera equipment was productive without creating a structure in which they felt they were using it for some purpose. All too often, video and photographic projects with children appeared condescending towards them, implying they needed improvement and reinforcing existing power structures between adults and children. Children, I believe, ultimately sense this and feel diminished by it.

I took the view that because children see society from a unique position, they understand many things about it that adults do not, and there is much that we, as adults, can learn from them. It was important, I thought, that the children in the workshops understood they had something to contribute and felt they were actively engaged in creating new knowledge. The workshops were therefore organised as research projects. The children first chose topics they considered important in their own families or communities. They were then given basic instruction in using the video cameras, after which they began using them to explore their chosen topic. In the end they constructed a video report or film based on some of their material. The project offered them a chance to investigate subjects that are often not well known, or are known only from an adult perspective. For the most part they took this remit seriously and embraced it with enthusiasm.

The children were aged from ten to thirteen, and the workshops lasted from six to twelve weeks. For practical reasons each workshop could include no more than ten or twelve children, and most contained somewhat fewer than that. For the children, the workshops often seemed like a kind of experiment, but I regarded the entire project as an experiment, for to my knowledge nothing quite like it had been tried before. For this reason I was prepared to see it change and evolve. The biggest change occurred early, in the selection of topics and in choosing the children who would participate. In the first workshop, at Rishi Valley School in Andhra Pradesh, I proposed that the group decide upon a single topic, after which they would all



contribute something to it, either individually or in pairs. But this meant creating the group first.

I held meetings with the two sections of Standard 7 students. I explained the project as best I could, answered questions about it, and announced that I would post a sheet of paper on a notice board. Any student who was interested in joining the workshop could put their name on it. I would then speak to those interested and select the participants. There were 51 students in Standard 7. I discovered the next day that all 51 had put their names on the paper. True to my word, I interviewed all of them over the next few days and finally selected a dozen. I wanted a varied group, not necessarily the star students, but rather a mixture of those who seemed interesting in themselves and had interesting ideas. Half were boys and half girls. I included a few who seemed difficult or eccentric but on whom I thought it was worth taking a chance. The group of twelve began meeting, and after several days and much argument finally decided on a topic.

Following this first workshop, I concluded that the selection process, of both children and topics, needed to change. The workshop had been enjoyable, I think, for all of us. At least it had provided some variety and challenges for the students. But I felt the choice of a single topic was too restrictive. It allowed too little space for individuals to pursue their own interests, and it was often difficult for the group to come to any kind of agreement. In the next workshop, I decided to select the participants largely on the basis of the topics they proposed, as well as their reasons for wanting to join. This undoubtedly involved some subjectivity on my part, but perhaps no more than in the previous selection method, which had relied more on an assessment of individual character. This new method was followed in the next five workshops and I believe led to more diverse and useful results. Following this, each workshop produced several films, either made by individuals or small groups.

We made a number of observations while conducting the workshops. Because they varied so widely geographically and in the backgrounds of the children who took part, it would be unwise to try to draw any general conclusions about how Indian children see their society, or even their perceptual processes as children. One can, however, point to some interesting differences and unexpected results. Overall, we were constantly surprised by the children's choices and inventiveness. We had been careful not to dictate any particular style of filmmaking, for one of the aims of the project was to see how they used the means available to them and what part their exposure to public media played in their creative decisions. The initial video training was basically intended to teach them how to hold the camera steady and get reasonably focused and viewable images.

One of the surprises was the sheer variety in the ways the children used the camera. I had expected that with their limited familiarity with visual media, consisting largely of

television and Bollywood cinema, they would be likely to imitate the models they found there. But perhaps because we were asking them to do something quite outside their usual experience – to film the reality of their own surroundings, and to use the camera as an exploratory tool – they did nothing of the kind. I was constantly struck by the originality of their approach, and their departures from conventional cinema and television formulas. In a sense, they seemed to be reinventing filmmaking as they went along. As well, each film made by an individual reflected the personality of the child who made it.

This is made clear by the films from the workshop held in Delhi. The children were from fairly poor backgrounds and attended a government-funded school, although one with connections to the Department of Education at the University of Delhi. This workshop produced only four films, but they couldn't have been more varied. One, by a boy, was about the workings of a small, neighbourhood general store – the kind one finds on almost any street in Indian cities. Another was by a girl who wanted to explore the oppression of girls, and the privileges extended to boys, in families she knew in her area. Another, by a boy, is almost indescribable, so I will only attempt to describe it later. Still another was by a girl who asked the question: What do children do at home when no adults are present?

All these children were eleven years old. Besides the obvious range of topics, the style of each film was distinctive. The film on the general store seemed to have been made by a born ethnographer, for Ravi wanted to find out everything about the store and document it: who ran the store, who were the customers, what they bought, their relations with the owners, how the stock was replenished, how the money was handled, and so on. Anshu, the girl interested in the lives of girls, was the child most influenced by television and produced a kind of investigative journalism, interviewing different girls about their experiences and showing them doing piecework at home and household chores while their brothers played outside. She closes the film with a heartfelt address to the camera, filming herself at dusk on her rooftop, asking plaintively why girls can't be given the respect afforded to boys. Shikha, the other girl, made a calm, quietly perceptive film focusing on her younger brother and older sister, with simple scenes of getting up in the morning, playing with the family dog, and occasional interactions with adults.

Aniket's film, the fourth, is for me a special case, because it successfully combines in a kaleidoscopic, almost anarchic manner aspects of daily life, performance, media technology, erotic attraction, and touches of Surrealism. Even more than the other films, it feels nothing like an adult's film; it could only have been made by a child. For example, I know of no adult filmmaker who would think of singing while he filmed, but Aniket does. He sings to a dog, to other children, and to a minutes-long image of himself in which he appears half asleep. What is also striking is that about two-thirds of the way through the film a new bride,



aged about sixteen years, comes into the family. From then on, Aniket is fascinated by her, filming her in romantic images, and indeed, singing to her.

It would be possible to describe further intricacies of the twenty-four films produced in the project, since they vary greatly in topic, style, and interest. But I shall turn instead to some more general observations about the experience of working with children in such diverse geographical, cultural, and economic settings.

The project asked of these children several unfamiliar tasks: first of all, to examine their own immediate experience and surroundings, which few had been asked to do before, and second, to analyse a specific topic, both visually and intellectually. Filming is in fact essentially a process of analysis, since in conveying any event or situation the filmmaker must select certain salient points through the framing and selection of shots. Most of the workshops were conducted in cooperation with schools, and children from poorer areas and in government-funded schools often found it difficult to select topics or think about how to film them. They had rarely been asked to think independently, and their initial ideas for topics were very often those that had been impressed upon them by adults as being important. This kind of response was actually fairly widespread, for even the middle-class children tended at first to suggest topics they thought adults would approve, for example problems such as air and water pollution. Yet unexpectedly, one or two of the most analytical films were made by children from schools in which rote learning was predominant.

I had imagined that in an age-range from ten to thirteen, the older children would make the more interesting and sophisticated films. What I discovered was the reverse. The films that delved most deeply into their subjects, and that seemed to take the most care in observing the physical world, were made by some of the youngest and physically smallest children, aged ten and eleven years old. Two that come to mind were both made by ten-year-olds: a film by a girl about her goat-keeping family and one by a boy about his father, showing him at home and in his daily work as a village barber. Whereas both these films were inventive and multi-faceted, films made by children approaching adolescence seemed more circumspect and less experimental in their approach.

The actual physical size of the filmmakers also played a part in the ambiance the films conveyed. These films literally represent a “perspective from below,” because children see the world at a different level from adults. Physical objects seem to crowd in on one more closely and one gains a vivid sense of the spaces in which Indian families live – more so than in almost any films I have seen made by adults.

Differences in the social class of the children also revealed some significant contrasts. Before this project, I had conducted several trial video workshops in other schools

and institutions. One was in a shelter for orphaned and homeless children in Delhi. The young filmmakers there were quite fearless in filming the most intimate aspects of their lives, including dressing and bathing, which in that place offered little privacy. They frankly filmed the sights they saw every day. By contrast, middle-class children in some of the other workshops had many more inhibitions about what they felt could and could not be filmed. Anything related to the body or to sexuality was immediately off limits, despite – or possibly because – they were either experiencing, or were on the verge of, adolescence. In one case a fairly innocuous scene of a boy not wearing a shirt was considered by the group too intimate to be included in the finished film. It seemed that these children, whatever their behaviour in private, were highly conscious of what they wanted adults to see. They lacked the bravado of the children in the Delhi shelter, who would have been astonished at the reserve and seeming lack of independence of these middle-class children. The children in the shelter also tended to show more kindness to one another, and there was less bullying, than in a traditional, upper middle-class boys’ school where I conducted another workshop.

I have mentioned only a few of the observations that have emerged from the workshop project and its precursors; more will undoubtedly come to light as we reflect upon it and make further study of the films themselves. Most of these comments have concerned differences rather than uniformity, but I will end by noting one phenomenon that did seem universal. Children in the video workshops became inordinately attached to their cameras. The project had four camera kits, which were used in each successive workshop. The children took good care of them, but even so I was amazed that the cameras survived six workshops without significant damage and with the loss of only one cable and one lens cap. It was a sad moment when, towards the end of a workshop, it was necessary to take back and pack up the cameras. The children often resisted, begging to be allowed to film for a few more days. Something else also began happening. In several cases, the children began treating the cameras as living things, speaking to them as they recorded, sometimes in an embarrassed, half-joking way, as if they were friends or intimate companions. I will end by quoting part of what one boy said to his camera while walking along a grassy path as the workshop was winding up. It perhaps tells us that although the children’s films have taught us a lot, for at least some of the children the experience of the workshop went deeper than we realised at the time.

*Dear camera, we had amazing moments together ... and now is the day we have to leave. ... disjoined, as you go to another owner and I take a new step in my second part of life. You are a great friend of mine, and shall always remain. And we together have learnt something of each other. Farewell, my old friend. Shall you live a happy and good life. The same with me.*





## Further Viewing and Reading

*THE CHILD'S EYE* selection of 12 films is available from Ronin Films in Australia and New Zealand; from Berkeley Media in North America; and from the Royal Anthropological Institute in the United Kingdom. Their websites appear below.

<https://www.roninfilms.com.au/>  
<http://www.berkeleymedia.com/>  
<https://www.therai.org.uk/>

Also available are all 24 films from the 'Childhood and Modernity' project in the form of 'Compendium' films that include all the films from each video workshop. The compendium films represented by films in *THE CHILD'S EYE* are *Delhi at Eleven*, *Eleven in Delwara*, *Eleven in Kolkata*, *Ten and Eleven in Ladakh*, and *Eleven and Twelve in Jodhpur*.

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