



## 8mm. Films... A REVOLUTION

### Problems With 8mm. Films in Public Libraries

by Jack Chitwood, Director  
Rockford Public Library  
and  
Northern Illinois Library System

The problems related to library handling of 8mm. films are relatively insignificant.

Those which are noted here stem primarily from patron apathy toward instructions in use and handling, which is the likely root of most problems in any area of concern, and this is reinforced by the unsettled conditions in the industry.

Many users of mechanical equipment have a distressing lack of knowledge about its operation, and fail to observe even the most elementary precautions in its use. We have found, for instance, that the most common damages are film burns and torn sprocket holes. While harm to the subject matter can be forestalled to some extent by adding leaders and tails, one wonders why the projector user can't learn enough about the equipment to prevent these occurrences.

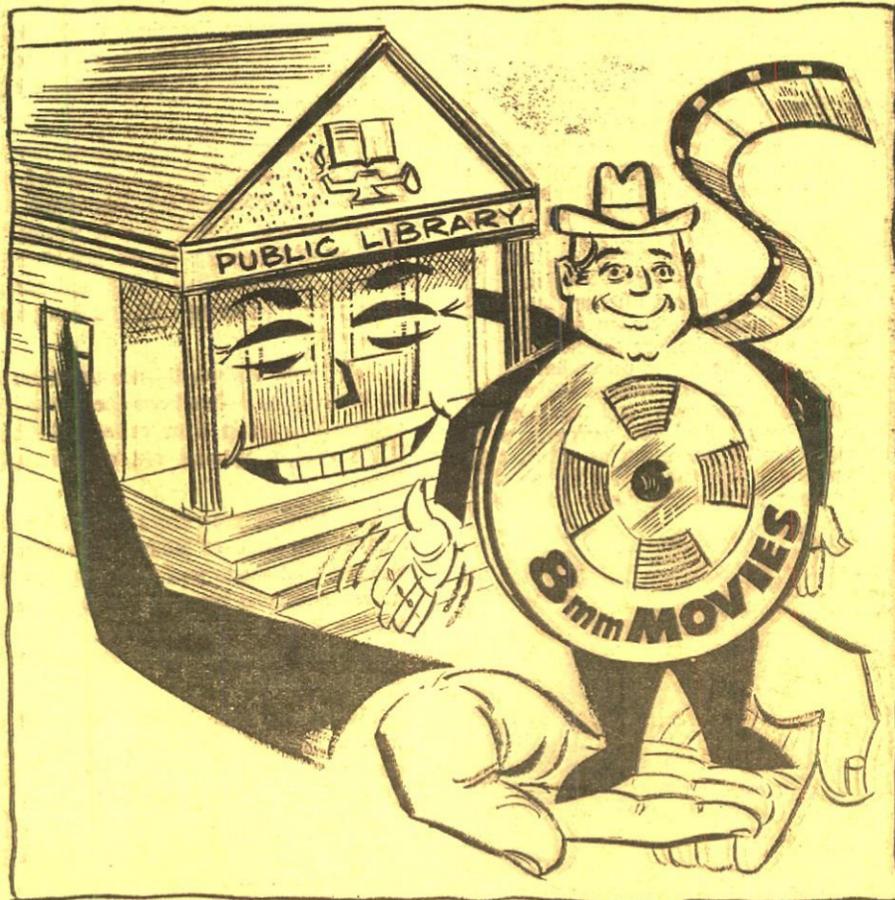
The cost of the equipment probably accounts for this indirectly. It is available in models so inexpensive that it becomes a valueless toy to many owners. The cost of replacement doesn't represent a large enough investment to make them more cautious.

The return of films on the wrong reel and the occasional return of a patron's films in place of the library's is an added problem. This becomes time-consuming and frustrating, particularly with difficult-to-contact patrons.

Mismatching of film and projector is an area of great concern for us. It is undoubtedly disappointing to the patron to find he is all set for an evening's film showing only to be confronted with this dilemma. The prevalence of 8mm. projectors, however, should provide a proper solution within his neighborhood without too much difficulty.

As stated earlier, these are not great or serious problems.

Our patrons are pleased with the availability of our 8mm. collection and look forward with us to its enlargement in quantity and variety. Sports and travel subjects appear to be the most wanted films at present aside from children's cartoons and the classic film comedies. As the 8mm. makers add to their production, we'll undoubtedly see a growth in interest in this medium. At present the lack of standardization on film size in the industry seems to hinder an immediate up-surge in the purchase of more home equipment, which in turn reduces use of our collection to some extent. Hopefully this problem will be solved soon to the benefit of all.



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### Silent Movies As An Art Form

(All quotations from "Tragedy and Comedy" are with Mr. Kerr's permission.)

In his recent book "Tragedy and Comedy",\* (Published 1967 by Simon and Schuster, \$5.95), Walter Kerr, drama critic of *The New York Times*, states "comedy often plays with the attempt to defy, or to ignore, the

#### EDITORIAL COMMENT:

Thoughts stated in the various articles are the considered opinion of the authors and reflect their thinking at the time the articles were written. No effort has been made to make the articles conform to our point of view.

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### 8mm. Films Can Be Educational

By ALBERT J. ROSENBERG

V. Pres., McGraw-Hill Book Company

Today there are probably millions of 8mm. projectors in the home. Virtually every parent buys an 8mm. camera and projector when the first child arrives so that he can take pictures of the baby. Later the camera is used for the recording of trips and vacations, and of the youngsters as they grow up. As the children get older, the projectors are used to show cartoons at birthday parties and other festive occasions. This is true in varying degrees in many, many families in this country.

Many libraries have accumulated large collections of sound motion pictures, recordings, tapes, and art reproductions for use in the home. Recordings are in wide demand because every home has a record player. Art reproductions are on loan in a number of cities. Sound motion pictures, although they have wide use, are usually only shown by groups and organizations.

Why not capitalize on these 8mm. projectors for education in the home? Let the library be the source of materials to use with these projectors. Eight millimeter films are available from many sources and are relatively inexpensive; therefore, they are easy to obtain and the investment by the library would be quite small. Such a collection will bring more people into the library, and it will extend the use of the library in the community. These 8mm. films cover many subjects, particularly the historical events of the 20th century. The more of these films the library adds to its collection, the more interest it will arouse in the youngsters using the facilities.

Why not discuss this with the local school system, give them a list of the 8mm. films available and let them indicate those titles that will be of value in the different subject areas. What better or easier way of bringing this information to the children than through the use of 8mm. right at home.

FUTURE—PAGE 4

Since the article on "The 8mm. Revolution" (which follows) appeared in the *Library Journal*, the Eastman Kodak Company has succeeded in embossing magnetic soundtracks into their new Super 8 film so that peeling of the track is prevented. The Super 8 film with an optical soundtrack is now a reality. Both these innovations happened within a few months, which shows how fast the field is developing.

In a recent talk before his fellow Cinematologists in Washington, Louis Forsdale gave a convincing demonstration of the future of the 8mm. sound film in cartridge form. When used with an individual rear-projection viewer, the possibilities are almost endless both for education and entertainment.

While the *Library Journal* article limited itself to 8mm. film on reels, it is conceivable that the cartridge could almost eliminate reels in the future, as well as virtually bringing the need for film inspection and major film damage to a halt. This would be good news indeed for the film librarian in schools, public libraries and even in the commercial film libraries.

The future of 8mm. film is now with the developers, but it will soon be transferred to the users. The sooner everything is standardized, the sooner these new concepts will be adopted by the film libraries. The Super 8 optical sound film seems to be the top choice as the industry standard and it would be a logical extension of the 16mm. sound film which we have worked with for so many years and which has served us well. The new gauge will not pronounce the death knell of the 16mm. film, but it will give it a run for its budget money.

One last point. As is usual in the case of new developments in the audio-visual field, the users (in this case the film librarians) are always the last to be consulted, if indeed they are consulted at all. Perhaps this time they will be allowed to be in on the revolution at the beginning rather than at the tail end.

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Dec. 15, 1966 Issue, *LIBRARY JOURNAL*

### The 8mm. Revolution

James L. Limbacher

Audiovisual librarian at the Dearborn, Mich., Public Library

Until the end of World War II, the 16mm. sound film was less than affectionately known as the "stepchild" of the 35mm. theatrical film. But as television took hold, a constant stream of 16mm. film fare kept appearing in commercial rental libraries, and public libraries developed 16mm. film collections for community use. By 1960, 16mm. film was entrenched in homes, schools, churches and community organizations of all kinds. Today, there is hardly a public library of any size which does not offer some 16mm. sound film service to borrowers—whether from its own film collection, or from a film circuit serving a group of smaller libraries with a series of rotating film "packages".

Now a new and important film revolution is beginning which most experts predict will completely alter the use of films in public and school libraries, much as the development of the long-playing record caused its own library revolution nearly 20 years ago. It is the development of 8mm. films for use in homes, schools, and churches.

From comics to classics

Until this year, few libraries bothered with 8mm. films, mainly because the selection consisted mostly of "entertainment" items (cartoons, sports, travelogs, and Westerns) which were roughly the equivalent of putting comic books into the children's book collection. However, those libraries which did carry 8mm. films (Glendale and Buena Park, California; Kokomo and Muncie, Indiana; Davenport, Iowa; Greeley, Colorado; and East Meadow, New York) found they were very popular with borrowers and worth

REVOLUTION—PAGE 4

### What May Be the Future of the Home Motion Picture in the Public Library?

Harold Goldstein, Professor, Graduate School of Library Science, University of Illinois

Anyone who attempts a crystal ball gaze at such a subject as the future of home motion pictures may be sorry he ever heard of the film as a media of communication. The development within a few years of a whole sub-group in society devoted to this art is phenomenal—as phenomenal, indeed, as the development of modern audiovisual devices. From the complicated technology of the 35mm. commercial product to the 8 or 16mm. home devices is a far step looked at one way, but a close step from another angle.

One such angle is the desire to compose on film—to create—in the same way others do through different media. Whether or not this composition is often times corny in its oozy focus on family expressions or groups, and whether or not it approaches a literate arrangement of travel or other experiences, the end product is a creation. The challenge is to help the less perfect creation become better, and to find and collect the best examples of amateur creativity. Public libraries do this kind of finding and

selecting for all materials; it should be possible to extend the process of finding, selecting, and acquiring to the home motion picture film for inclusion in library resources.

This kind of extension could have valuable results for the producer (the film maker) and the collector (the library). Identification of patrons who are active in this kind of composition can lead to their support, and demands also, for additional library facilities which would go beyond the home motion picture activity, study of principles of artistic expression; space in which to exhibit local work (which we now encourage among other artists); discussion and skill training programs for those interested in beginning such creativity; and cooperation among all kinds of audiovisual workers in a community, toward the building of a superior library resource and service for all nonprint materials. Another view may be evident also in the crystal ball.

Another view in the crystal ball suggests

# PRICELESS COLLECTION OF 8mm. FILMS

Reprinted from Blackhawk Bulletin No. 108, 1961

## Library of Congress films available from Blackhawk

by Kent D. Eastin, president, The Eastin-Phelan Corporation

When the first commercial use of motion pictures was made in the "peep shows" and penny arcades of 1894, there was no provision made for copyright protection. But, there was a provision for the registration of copyright claims for photographs. Thus, a number of the pioneer motion picture producers—Edison, Biograph, Vitagraph, Selig and others—protected their works by making paper contact prints from their 35mm. negatives and depositing these prints in the Copyright Office in the Library of Congress with applications for registration of their claims for copyright protection. This practice was followed until 1912, when the copyright law was amended to provide for the registration of claims for motion pictures as such.

For as many as 66 years these paper prints have been stored in the Library. The original films themselves were on nitrate stock and most of them have disintegrated or been lost, burned or otherwise destroyed, so these paper prints are in many cases *unique copies of the originals.*

The Library of Congress has long been aware of the importance of these motion pictures, both from an historic standpoint and as cultural documents concerned with the social history of the nation. For as long as fourteen years ago experiments were under way to determine practical means of reconvertting the paper prints to new 16mm. negatives, for under the copyright laws, upon expiration of the copyrights, the particular works involved fall into public domain and are available for anyone to use. These experiments proved successful in 1953. Under the sponsorship of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, 16mm. negatives were produced which the Library of Congress felt to be of good quality, and during the intervening years about half the 3500 titles, and about one-third of the footage in the paper print collection, were copied, and prints were placed in the Academy in Hollywood, and in the Library in Washington, for reference screening by persons interested in serious research. However, these 16mm. copies may not be duplicated nor are they loaned or circulated! But any qualified individual or organization, upon getting the approval of the Library of Congress, and providing the necessary insurance coverage, may themselves attempt to copy these 35mm. paper originals for their particular purposes.

Several years ago, after the Academy program was well under way, Blackhawk made inquiry as to the cost of having 16mm. negatives photographed from certain of the paper originals on railroad subjects—only to find that the cost was beyond that justified for our ultimate distribution principally in 8mm. We then had the idea that one of the 35mm. 2"x2" slide printers such as we use for our color slide manufacture—and which also prints 35mm. film strips—might be converted to make a 35mm. negative by reflected light from the paper positive, rather than by transmitted light through a transparent film. But the size of the paper rolls, and the problems of feeding perforated paper strips seemed to rule this out.



We did not abandon the project, however, but turned, in the summer of 1958, to the father and son team in Des Moines, David H. Bonine, Sr. and Jr., who for a period of years have been doing most of our 8mm. and 16mm. printing. In times past they had come up with some surprising answers to production problems for us, and we felt there was at least a chance that they might come through again.

Within two months after our supplying the Bonines with the first 35mm. print provided us for test purposes by the Library of Congress, they had rebuilt a 16mm. Cine Kodak Model A with a 400-ft. magazine.

This camera was then geared directly to a transport head built from an old 35mm. Simplex projector head, but with newly designed shoes and tension control to hold and protect the irreplaceable paper positives. A motor drive powered the camera and head combination at a speed providing two-frames-a-second exposure.

The problems of copying these 35mm. paper originals are not quite as simple as just making a new negative from a paper positive. Many of these paper prints were made in the years when photography, as we know it today, was in its infancy. "Snapshots" were a new thing. And photographic materials were anything but perfected. Many of the paper positives appear to have been printed on a sensitized stock resembling the brownline paper used in today's offset proofs. Others are on a pebbly-surfaced coated stock that aggravates the grain effect in the finished 16mm. negative and prints. Some are bleached and faded. All this leads to the need for different filtering, including the use of Polaroid filters, to get the best definition and to minimize the deficiencies. And a few of the paper prints have been torn and patched, or otherwise damaged through unknown uses and experiments down the years. And the perforations in the paper are by no means as accurate as perforations in film stock. But for all this, *results have been outstandingly successful.*



Many of the titles now offered by Blackhawk to their customers—including libraries—are copies of the Library of Congress' paper originals. Among the titles are: *From Horse Car to Subway in New York City; Railroad in the East; Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, 1898-1912; The Ruins of San Francisco, 1906; and comedies, Hogan Out West; Love, Speed and Thrills; Mabel and Fatty Viewing the World's Fair in San Francisco and Our Dare-Devil Chief.*

What will startle you when you screen some of these early films is the tremendous changes in our way of life in the past fifty to sixty years—for when some of them were filmed there were no automobiles, no airplanes, there was no long distance telephone, some of the locomotives were balloon-stacked wood burners, and ships of the United States Navy look like lake excursion boats compared to the mammoth battle-wagons and carriers of World War II! *You'll just have to see it to believe it!*

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November 13, 1966, Issue

THE WASHINGTON STAR

## Bring the Old Films Back Right in Your Own Home

By HARRY MacARTHUR  
Drama Critic of The Star

You say you are disenchanted with movies today? You say you'd like to return to the good old days when they made films short and funny?

Well, you can, if you'd like to take up a new hobby and if you are somewhat more solvent than most of us. You don't have to go see that picture that is having the "saturation" showing in 84 neighborhood theaters. You can stay home and see the films you want to see. All you have to do is buy them.

This whole new world—new to this movie reviewer at least—has been opened up by a catalogue from a firm called Blackhawk Films, which operates out of Davenport, Iowa.

This thing is even more fascinating than that Spring issue of Billboard used to be, the one that made you wish you had had nerve enough to run away with the circus when young. It is, at any rate, if you mis-spent your youth in movie theaters rather than pool halls.

Blackhawk deals in new prints of old movies, both silent and sound and in most cases 8 or 16mm. copies are available. They are not cheap, but neither is downtown moviegoing when you add up the cost of transportation, the dinner, the theater tickets and the sitter.

### The Most Expensive

The most expensive one seems to be one of the nearly four dozen Laurel and Hardy comedies available. You can get "The Bohemian Girl" for \$79.98 (8mm. or \$119.98 (16mm.)), but along with Laurel and Hardy you also get Thelma Todd, Antonio Moreno and the ever popular Mae Busch.

Remember this same pair's "A Chump at Oxford" You can own that one for a mere \$57.77 (16mm.), \$39.99 (8mm.) or \$19.99 (8mm. silent). The going rate now is only \$12.98 for 8mm. silent prints of such things as "We Faw Down," "Sugar Daddies," "Wrong Again" and "You're Darn Tootin'."

There's a considerable assortment of Charlie Chaplin silents available, too, the old ones made between 1914 and 1918 for Keystone, Essanay and Mutual. You can start your collection by spending \$5.98 for an 8mm. copy of "The Masquerader," which, in addition to Chaplin, has Fatty Arbuckle and Charley Chase in the cast.

You remember Charley Chase if you are a senior moviegoer. He has long since departed the scene, but there are two moments in two early comedies that one of his old fans never has forgotten.

In one of them he was clad in white tie and tails, considerably the worse for wear after a night on the town, riding as tillerman on the back of a runaway hook-and-ladder truck. Cut quite a swath down a Hollywood street.

In the other he was a desolate young man bent upon suicide. Leaped off a bridge and landed with a thud in a rowboat occupied by the most beautiful girl you, or he, ever saw.

There are nine Charley Chase comedies available to movie collectors. They span a decade from "Crazy Like a Fox," with Martha Sleeper (1926), to "The Count Takes the Count," with Antoinette Lees and Kewpie Morgan (1936).

### Benchley Shorts

Here's another one that has to be worth every penny of the \$39.98 price of the 16mm. sound print. It's a two-reel comedy called "Dangerous Females," starring Marie Dressler and Polly Moran, dangerous females if there ever was.

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A bit later in movie history another unforgettable man turned up on the screen—Robert Benchley. You can buy one or eight of those shorts he made between 1940 and 1942.

The list includes "Crime Control," "The Forgotten Man," "The Man's Angle," "Nothing But Nerves," "The Trouble With Husbands," "Waiting For Baby" and "The Witness." You can get any one of them for \$12.98 (8mm.) or \$22.98 (16mm.).

There is a wide selection of old silent comedies available, too, and some choice items are included. There is, for instance, "A Cure For Pokeritis," made in 1912 with John Bunny and Flora Finch starred. There also is one titled "The Cake Eater," which starred Will Rogers in 1924.

Or maybe you can go so far back as to have fond memories of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Drew. Their "Fox Trot Finesse" can be yours. Then there is "Call of the Cuckoo" (1927), which boasts a truly all-star cast: Max Davidson, Lillian Elliott, Spec O'Donnell, Jimmy Finlayson, Charley Chase and Laurel and Hardy.

There is a large assortment of both silent and sound comedies by the famed Mack Sennett. Any movie fan who could afford it would go for the whole bundle.

It includes three 1933 shorts—"The Barber Shop," "The Fatal Glass of Beer" and "The Pharmacist," all starring W. C. Fields. It includes a number of Harry Langdon vehicles, among them "All Night Long," "Boobs in the Wood," "Smile Please" and "Soldier Man."

There are some truly historic films on this list. There is "Teddy at the Throttle," in which Gloria Swanson and Wallace Beery starred in 1916. There is one made in 1924 titled "The Hollywood Kid," in which Sennett himself played a leading role.

There are others, featuring some famous names—Ford Sterling, Chester Conklin, Ben Turpin, Louise Fazenda, Karl Dane and George K. Arthur. The bargain of this lot may be one called "Mabel and Fatty Viewing the World's Fair at San Francisco." That's Mabel Normand and Fatty Arbuckle and Blackhawk calls it a collectors' item, featuring "Many hilarious situations . . . a fine view of San Francisco 1914-1915."

### Vintage Films

The offering of vintage feature films includes some genuine classics. You can, if you have the price, own your own library of D. W. Griffith films—"Intolerance," "America," "Broken Blossoms," "Hearts of the World." And "Orphans of the Storm" with Lillian and Dorothy Gish.

You can buy old films on almost any subject—railroads, automobiles, trolley cars, aviation, bathing girls, circuses and prize-fights, to name a few. You can buy a wide assortment of those musical shorts made in the late 30s and early '40s, when swing and the big bands were in vogue.

Just browsing through this catalogue can keep a movie buff out of trouble for hours.

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### LIBRARY EXPERIENCES CIRCULATING 8mm. FILMS

by Robert L. Evans, Sales Mgr.

How to increase circulation in libraries today has become a problem in many areas. During the past three years over 140 libraries have helped to answer this question by offering 8mm. films to their patrons as a new library service.

The procedure for handling these is kept to a minimum. Many libraries merely place these on the shelves and permit their patrons to "browse" thru their collection just as they do with books. No reservations are taken and no inspection is necessary—treat them exactly as you do books! To the trained audio-visual librarian this is a complete reversal of everything he has been taught, however, experience has proven that with 8's "minimum procedure prevails." People with 8mm. projectors are used to handling their own films so they automatically rewind the films borrowed from the library. Furthermore, they know the limitations within which film can be handled, thus, very little damage. So little, in fact, that most libraries no longer feel that they can afford to inspect an 8mm. film after each circulation. Forest Mills, Racine Public Library, Racine, Wisconsin, commented that during the first year their 70 films had over 1,400 circulations with only one film requiring repairs.

How popular is a service of this type? Many libraries are reporting circulation figures up to twenty times a year. It is important to place these films on the shelves where their patrons can have easy access to them. Quite typical of the comments from librarians about 8's is a remark from Robert Greenfield, North Point Branch, Baltimore County Library: "Our shelves are bare! People are calling us to find out if any 8's are available—if they are, will you please hold them and we'll be right down." Charles Hunsberger, Monroe County Library, Bloomington, Indiana, once told us "Of our 63 films we have 4 in the library today." Patricia Schaefer, Muncie Public Library, Muncie, Indiana, regularly mentions on her radio program the fact that 8mm. films are

available in the public library. Consequently, even with a limited collection their circulation remains high after three years of usage.

Many people start borrowing 8mm. films from the library for the purpose of entertaining children at a birthday party. While they are browsing thru the available material they suddenly discover that items are available which are of interest to adults. Vintage films such as "The Great Train Robbery" (now available in partial color), Charlie Chaplin's famous films, Laurel and Hardy comedies, and Mack Sennett movies are typical of a library's collection. Many classic newsreel events are available—i.e. Jack Dempsey's Greatest Fights, Titanic, World War II films, Gemini Space Walk, etc. Sports, travel, wild life, railroad and Christmas films are, also, part of the usual library offering. This wide range of subjects tends to attract new patrons into the library who have never before used any of the library's services.

How expensive is this service? Average cost per film is in the range of \$9.00—not too unlike the cost of a book. Many librarians having a watchful eye on the budget have been reluctant to attempt to offer a new service until they were sure it would be worthwhile. Consequently, they have asked for the privilege of trying this program with a full-return, full-credit option. Needless to say, a few did return the films; but only two reported lack of internal interest as the reason while the remaining five indicated budget cuts or major changes in their administration were the determining factor. Ninety-five percent of the libraries offering this service find it to be extremely successful!

How do you measure the success of any program in the library? Ease of handling by keeping procedures to a minimum; sufficient material to appeal to all classes of people; continued usage by the library's patrons over a long period of time; maintaining cost of material at a nominal level—all of these are factors considered by over 140 libraries. The conclusion is that these people helped find the answer to "how to increase library circulation" by offering 8mm. FILMS.

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**WANT TO ADD  
NEW  
SUPER 8**

or

**16mm. silent or sound**

to your

**Collection?**

**TRY**



**FUTURE**

that, if 125 libraries now have 8mm. collections, soon 250, or 1,000, libraries will provide such resources. When there is indeed a widespread availability, there should be created, a union catalog, perhaps computer based, which will disseminate information about the entire range of 8mm. films, of whatever specific physical form (super-8, 8-magnetic or optical). It would be important to include in the master finding list all home made products as well as commercial ones. This kind of tool could be a real community resource list, locally, regionally, even nationally. Imagine the value to schools, adult education programs, colleges, etc., in knowing the full extent of local production and availability of even only 8mm. prints. Through such a venture, schools—libraries—colleges might share not only a service, but also in the creativity aspect—a small end product with a great interest factor.

Should not libraries be a partner in potential creation as well as in actual dissemination of any learning-recreation activity? 8mm. film may well be a good one with which to experiment.

**ART**

properties of matter. It makes material puns, as it were."\* Kerr goes on to say, "But it required the invention of film to let us see matter, the juggernaut, bearing down on comic man at full speed or to let us see man, the unsteady colossus, wrestling with physical masses on the most precarious of perches; we shall have to rely upon film to help us grasp the full impact of the encounter."

In discussing comedy further, Kerr states "... I could see two contraries emerging, and they seemed to defy any rational principle. Buster Keaton produced one kind of comedy, Chaplin quite another. And Keaton's was the purer use of the form... that is to say, there was no admixture of sentiment, no bid for pathos, no confusing of the comic and tragic modes.

"Keaton was cool, detached, and very strictly funny, never suggesting for a moment that we need worry ourselves about what might happen to him..."

"... Chaplin's by comparison, was formally blurred... As comedy, Chaplin's work is hopelessly impure. Yet no one has ever questioned—no one questions now—Chaplin's superiority to Keaton. Even those who love Keaton without reserve, as I do..."

Kerr also speaks to the point about sound films vs. silent films. He says, "It was always easier to deal with fantasy, or to have the clowns behave fantastically, in silent-film comedy than it ever has been on sound film. A dimension of the actual universe had been conveniently removed: the dimension that defines and limits things by speech and telltale noise. Larry Semon could dive from a second-story window, land on his head, get up and walk away. Watching him do what was patently impossible, but not hearing him do it, we laughed. The same sequence in a sound film is not tolerable. If a clown's head hits the street, we hear the crunch. The crunch reminds us of the truth, the whole truth..." He does say, "Realistic sound can, of course, be used to comic effect in realistically organized films..."

The point, of course, is quite simple. Plays can be read. Comedy and Tragedy can be felt in response to the written or spoken words. This is not true of films. They must be seen.

\*"Tragedy and Comedy," copyright 1967 by Walter Kerr

Full length documentary  
**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Woodrow Wilson  
Theodore Roosevelt  
Adolph Hitler  
Mussolini and Stalin**



**REVOLUTION**

the investment in almost every case. Although 8mm. is still turning out warmed-over cartoons and Westerns, a large number of films are appearing with distinct cultural and educational value: the great silent film classics, for example, many of which never have appeared for rental in 16mm. because of problems of copyright, 16mm. rights, lack of a wide market, and high cost. They include the major D. W. Griffith films—*Birth of a Nation*, *Intolerance*, *America*, *Way Down East*, etc.; Lon Chaney in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*; the features of Douglas Fairbanks, William S. Hart, Mary Pickford, Jackie Coogan, Harry Langdon, Will Rogers, Houdini, and Buster Keaton and the short films of Charlie Chaplin and George Melies, among many others. Films not yet in 8mm. will probably come along in regular release order as their market increases. They are now being sold by Blackhawk Films, Film Classic Exchange, Entertainment Films, United Artists, and others, for outright purchase to public libraries.

McGraw-Hill films has already announced a series of its best-selling library items on 8mm., and most of the other major educational film producers are expected to follow with announcements of their own plans.

**Sight, sound and cartridge**

Technical improvements, particularly the development of the new Super 8 film by the Eastman Kodak Company, have renewed interest in just what 8mm. films can do. Conventional 8mm. films had always been a 16mm. film literally split down the middle but with twice as many sprocket holes—large, cumbersome, crowding the image over to one edge of the film. The new Super 8 not only reduces the sprocket holes to a logical size but expands the picture to half again as much per frame.

Eastman hopes also to incorporate the optical sound track (used for 16mm. films) for its new Super 8, and has hired John A. Mauer, who developed the optical sound track at JM Developments for his Format M size, to explore the feasibility. Eastman's original plan was to use a magnetic sound track (the kind used for 8mm. sound since its creation in 1960) for its Super 8, but found that magnetic tracks wear out and begin to "peel" after continued use. The marriage of the new picture size with a permanent sound track is now close to becoming a reality.

The 8mm. cartridge film and projector have already been put to use for school instruction, using the "single concept" theory of running a short length of film as many times as necessary to teach an idea to an individual student or a small class. The projectors are small enough to be carried by even a small child and can be focused on any light surface. The film cartridge clicks directly into the projector with no fuss or bother.

Certainly, 16mm. film will not be replaced by the weaker 8mm., which cannot be projected across large rooms, auditoriums, and other "long throw" areas. Thus, standard fare for community groups, churches and schools will continue to be 16mm.

But for the person who wants to show movies at home, 16mm. has nearly prohibitive drawbacks: 1) A ten-minute black and white reel costs about \$70; a color reel of similar length around \$130; 2) most home

movie buffs do not have 16mm. projectors; 3) many people find 16mm. sound projectors hard to operate.

Widespread use of 8mm. would solve most of these problems. It costs less; nearly eight million homes have 8mm. silent projectors; and for amateurs 8mm. is much easier to purchase and operate.

For libraries, the compact size of 8mm. will be an added advantage. First, the reels can be shelved on regular bookshelves. Further, they take up only half as much space as 16mm. film, e.g. an 11-minute 16mm. film on a 400-foot reel can be put on a 200-foot 8mm. reel.

When libraries adopt 8mm. to their circulating collections, a public information program will be needed to instruct the public, much as was done in the days when 33 1/3 rpm recordings were just emerging. This would prevent confusions with borrowers like the woman who recently called our library for 16mm. films to show on her Super 8 projector. The salesman had told her Super 8 was "comparable" to 16mm. but neglected to say it was not "compatible"—that she could not show 16mm. on her machine.

To allow home viewers to see sound films, a combination sound-silent projector might be developed with alternate film gate and sprocket wheels which could be clicked in to transform the machine from one to the other.

Widespread use of 8mm. film is coming sooner than we think—within the next five years, I would predict. Forward-looking libraries should start planning for it now.

**8mm. Publications**

"8" Newsletter of 8mm. Film in Education, Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N. Y. 10027.

8mm. Collector, 734 Philadelphia St., Indiana, Pa. 15701.

**8mm. Film Distributors**

Blackhawk Films, The Eastin-Phelan Corp., 1235 W. Fifth St., Davenport, Iowa 52805.

Entertainment Films Co., 850 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y. 10019.

Film Classic Exchange, 1926 S. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Cal. 90007.

Imperial Enterprise, 34 Park Row, New York, N. Y. 10038.

Johnny Allen, 116 North Ave., Park Ridge, N. J. 07656.

Minot Films, Minot Bldg., Milbridge, Me. 04658.

Moviedrome, 139 Maple St., Englewood, N. J. 07631.

Nick Fiorentino, 60B Newark Way, Maplewood, N. J. 07040.

Select Films Library, 138 E. 44th St., New York, N. Y. 10017.

Star Film Company, 79 Bobolink Lane, Levittown, N. Y. 11756.

United Artists 8mm. Films, 555 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022.

The three types of 8mm. film now on the market. When the optical sound track of Format M is combined with the larger picture of Super 8, there will be only two—silent and sound.

CUT ALONG THIS LINE  
**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

about

**8mm. FILMS FOR LIBRARIES**

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Blackhawk Films  
1235 W. 5th Street  
Davenport, Iowa 52808

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