

For Immediate Release

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Acclaimed Director Michael Apted Brings “49 Up,” Latest Chapter of Unique Documentary Project, to P.O.V. In Special Broadcast on Tuesday, Oct. 9, 2007 at 9:00pm

Six Films and 42 Years Later, the “Up” Series’ Children Are Middle-aged Adults With Surprising Views on Love, Marriage, Work, Class – and the “Up” Series Itself

“The ‘Up’ series is on my list of the ten greatest films of all time.” – Roger Ebert

How do people change over the years? Can the adult already be found in the child of seven? What account would you give that child of the life you have lived since? These are the questions that have been explored, with mounting tension and surprise over four decades, in one of cinema’s most remarkable enterprises, the *Up* series. Inspired by the Jesuit maxim “Give me the child until he is seven and I will give you the man,” England’s Granada Television began in 1964 what would become a unique record of English life and Western culture at the end of the 20th century.

In 1964, Granada’s “World in Action” team, including a young Michael Apted (*Coal Miner’s Daughter*, *Gorky Park*, *Gorillas in the Mist*), interviewed a diverse group of seven-year-olds from across England, asking them to describe their lives and hopes. The original *Seven Up* was a beguilingly unselfconscious social self-portrait from a time when cinema was still young and television an infant — in fact, *Seven Up* was television’s first experiment in recording real people living their real lives.

P.O.V. presents a special broadcast of Michael Apted’s **49 Up**, the seventh of the *Up* films, on **Tuesday, Oct. 9 at 9 p.m.**, during the series’ 20th-anniversary season on PBS. (Check local listings.) P.O.V. continues to bring diverse and independent voices to public television. Since 1988, P.O.V. has broadcast over 250 nonfiction films, including three Oscar® and 18 Emmy®-winning documentaries, becoming American television’s longest-running showcase for new documentary filmmaking. The 2007 season of P.O.V. runs Tuesdays at 10 p.m., June through September, with primetime fall and winter specials.

“The broadcast of **49 Up** during P.O.V.’s 20th-anniversary season marks a milestone in television documentary,” said P.O.V. Vice President Cynthia Lopez. “Twenty years ago, P.O.V. was created because there was no place else on national television to see the passionate, committed voices of the best independent nonfiction filmmakers. Michael Apted is a filmmaker who has persisted in a lifelong endeavor, and in the process redefined the documentary genre. **49 Up** is not just a film; it is an institutional study of society and the human condition.”

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Simon Kilmurry, P.O.V.'s Executive Director noted, "Michael Apted's *Up* series represents one of the greatest achievements not only in documentary film but in all cinema. *49 Up* is a chronicle of society as it moves from post World War II to a very modern 21st Century captured in loving and painful detail, and epic in scope. "

Over the years, as Apted has tenaciously pursued the *Up* series, revisiting the children every seven years as they have grown up, navigating the divides between childhood dreams and adult reality, not all have participated in each succeeding film. Some have reacted against the series' intrusiveness. Others have embraced their roles. As **49 Up** revisits questions of love, marriage, career, class and prejudice – deftly inter-cutting footage from earlier films with contemporary interviews — it discovers surprising ruminations about the *Up* film series itself as well as unexpected turns in individual lives.

Apted has come a long way from his beginnings as a researcher at Granada Television to directing major award-winning feature films in both England and the United States. But he has never flagged in his dedication to the *Ups* and the pure documentary impulse they represent. In **49 Up**, Apted of course rounds up the usual suspects. In fact, he manages to round up more of them than for any of the earlier sequels. The last time the series saw **John**, for example, he was a new barrister just graduated from Oxford. Married to Claire, he decided to stop taking part in the films. In **49 Up**, John reveals why he has come back to the series, and tells the tale of his life from then until now.

More familiar to the series' fans will be **Tony** who, as a seven-year-old, wanted to be a jockey. He became a cabbie instead. Still, it was a good life for an "Eastender." In *42 Up*, Tony showed viewers around the solid middle-class home he shared with his wife, Debbie, and their three children. But he never quite gave up dreams of glamour — embracing his role in the series and even trying to break into show business. **49 Up** reveals how Tony and Debbie, now grandparents, saved their marriage from infidelity and just what has become of Tony's acting ambitions.

In *Seven Up*, upper-class public schoolboy **Bruce** wanted to be a missionary in Africa to "teach people who are not civilized to be, more or less, good." The series followed Bruce from Oxford to teaching in Bangladesh. At *35 Up*, returned from foreign missionary work, he was unmarried and lonely. By *42 Up*, Bruce had met a fellow teacher, Penny, while working in London's East End, and the pair had tied the knot. Has the couple managed to have the family they dreamed of?

Sue, Jackie and **Lynn** began the series as girlhood friends, voicing the half-realistic, half-dreamy hopes of working-class girls for good husbands and decent jobs. The *Up* series subsequently saw **Sue** marry at 24 and divorce by 35. In *42 Up*, she was a struggling, single mother with a son and daughter from her marriage. But she had met a new man. **49 Up** asks if Sue has finally found a stable life with Glen.

The series similarly followed **Jackie** through marriage in her 20's and divorce by age 35. In *35 Up*, she had a son from a brief relationship after her divorce. By *42 Up*, she'd had two more sons from passing encounters, and was living with all three boys in a council flat near Glasgow. **49 Up** finds Jackie and sons in Scotland. Surviving on benefits and suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, she says wistfully that Scotland reminds her of the close-knit world of London's East End when she was growing up.

In *Seven Up*, **Lynn's** ambition was to work in Woolworth's. Instead, she went to work in a library and by *42 Up* was still there, a rock of stability among the three friends. But **49 Up** finds Lynn devastated by news that her job as a children's librarian might be abolished. The mother of two wrestles with her anger over losing her life's work, and with her fears over how it will change her family's life.

The young **Suzy** had had a difficult upbringing and dreamed of raising her own children in a more stable environment. By *42 Up*, however, Suzy was having problems getting along with her own children. Has she managed to break the cycle of miscommunication between generations?

The series saw **Paul**, who lived in a children's home as a seven-year-old, emigrate to Australia in his early teens. Now, in **49 Up**, he has a wife and children, and talks proudly of his daughter, the first member of his family to go to university. But there are clouds in Paul's sky — a change in career by his wife bodes ill for his own hopes.

Simon lived in the same children's home as Paul in *Seven Up*. By *42 Up*, Simon had a new wife and son — and children from a first marriage who refused to see him. In **49 Up**, he is back with a touching update.

In *Seven Up*, farmer's son **Nick** said he wanted to learn about the moon but firmly refused to answer any questions about girls. In *14 Up*, the shy teenager stuck to his guns. By *21 Up*, Nick had met Jackie and in *35 Up* they were married and living in America. By *42 Up*, the couple had a son but Jackie was missing home. Both the marriage and Nick's career were at stake.

The series also catches up with the fortunate **Andrew**. In *42 Up*, he had been happily married to Jane for over 15 years and was a partner at a law firm. The eldest of his two sons was planning to go to the same boarding school as he attended. How fortunate has Andrew remained?

And what's happened to **Neil**? A happy child in *Seven Up*, he was, by age 28, wandering lonely and homeless in the Highlands. He surprised viewers when, in *42 Up*, he was rediscovered working as a Liberal Democrat councillor in Hackney. The once-homeless man hoped to win a seat in Parliament. Has he succeeded? Has he still got a roof over his head?

49 Up is a marvelous jewel box of stories as individual as they are entwined. It is a reminder of just how real cinema can be.

"The *Up* films had a modest beginning," says director Michael Apted. "The first was just an episode in the groundbreaking, in-your-face 'World in Action' series. It had a sly, ingenuous surface, the charming and amusing thoughts of a group of seven-year-olds ruminating on sex, money, school, race, love, mum and dad, the future and each other. It's a cruel trick to confront people with the cold reality of the past. Despite that, some enjoy being in the film and claim it as a thing to treasure; others take part under sufferance, persuaded that the films are unique and we should finish what we started. I thank them all for their generosity and courage in making these films possible. For me, the *Ups* are a priceless gift."

About the filmmaker:

Michael Apted

Director

Director Michael Apted's credits include such acclaimed, award-winning films as *Coal Miner's Daughter*, *Continental Divide*, *Gorky Park*, *Gorillas in the Mist*, and *Incident At Oglala*. His newest feature, *Amazing Grace*, about the anti-slavery movement in 19th-century Britain, stars Ioan Gruffudd and Albert Finney, and was released in February 2007 to coincide with the 200th anniversary of the date the British Parliament banned the slave trade.

Apted was born in England in 1941 and studied law and history at Cambridge. He began his career in the early 1960s as a researcher at Granada Television, becoming a director and reporter on the news series, "World in Action," and subsequently directed episodes of Britain's long-running series "Coronation Street." Apted went on to direct 60-plus television programs, earning British Academy Awards for Best Comedy Series, Best Children's Series, and Best Dramatic Director.

Apted made his directorial feature film debut in 1972 with the war drama *Triple Echo*, with Glenda Jackson and Oliver Reed. *Coal Miner's Daughter* (1980) marked his first directing project in America. The movie garnered seven Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture, and won an Oscar for Sissy Spacek. Other credits include *Kipperbang*, *First Born*, *Bring on the Night*, *Critical Condition*, *Class Action*, *Thunderheart*, *Blink*, *Nell*, and *Extreme Measures*. In 1994, the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival premiered Apted's documentary *Moving the Mountain*, which won the grand prize at the Heartland Film Festival and an International Documentary Association award. In 1999 Apted directed the James Bond film *The World Is Not Enough*, starring Pierce Brosnan, and the feature *Enigma*, written by Sir Tom Stoppard and starring Dougray Scott, Kate Winslet and Saffron Burroughs. In 2004, Apted filmed the first three episodes of the HBO series *Rome*.

Apted was elected president of the Directors Guild of America in 2003, after having served as a member of the National Board and as the fifth vice president. He also serves on the Board of

Governors for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in the documentary branch, and is on the Board of Trustees for the American Film Institute.

Credits:

Director: Michael Apted
Producer: Claire Lewis, Michael Apted
Executive Producer: Bill Jones
Cinematography: George Jesse Turner
Editor: Kim Horton

Running Time: 146:46

Festivals:

- Seattle Film Festival, May-June 2006
- Silver Docs, June 2006
- New York Film Festival, October 2006
- Three Rivers Film Festival, November 2006



Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and celebrating its 20th season on PBS in 2007, the award-winning P.O.V. series is the longest-running showcase on television to feature the work of America's best contemporary-issue independent filmmakers. Airing Tuesdays at 10 p.m., June through September, with primetime specials during the year, P.O.V. has brought more than 250 award-winning documentaries to millions nationwide, and now has a Webby Award-winning online series, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. Since 1988, P.O.V. has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. More information about P.O.V. is available at www.pbs.org/pov.

P.O.V. Interactive (www.pbs.org/pov)

P.O.V.'s award-winning Web department produces special features for every P.O.V. presentation, extending the life of P.O.V. films through filmmaker interviews, story updates, podcasts, streaming video, and community-based and educational content that involves viewers in activities and feedback. P.O.V. Interactive produces our Web-only showcase for interactive storytelling, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. In addition, www.pbs.org/pov houses *Talking Back*, where viewers can comment on P.O.V. programs, engage in dialogue and link to further resources. The P.O.V. Web site and P.O.V. archives, including special sites from previous broadcasts, form a unique and extensive online resource for documentary storytelling.

P.O.V. Community Engagement and Education

P.O.V. provides Discussion Guides for all films as well as curriculum-based P.O.V. Lesson Plans for select films to promote the use of independent media among varied constituencies. Available free online, these original materials ensure the ongoing use of P.O.V.'s documentaries with educators, community workers, opinion leaders and general audiences. P.O.V. works closely with local PBS stations to partner with museums, libraries, schools and community-based organizations to raise awareness of the issues in P.O.V.'s films. P.O.V.'s *Youth Views* expands these efforts by working with youth-service organizations.

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American Documentary, Inc. (www.amdoc.org)

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation. Simon Kilmurry is executive director of American Documentary | P.O.V.

TAPE REQUESTS: Please note that a broadcast version of this film is available upon request, as the film may be edited to comply with new FCC regulations.