

LAND

and how it gets that way

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Reviews

“LAND is an extraordinary film that lays out all of the competing perspectives on land development without judgment or bias. A great film for undergraduate and graduate classes on urban planning, urban politics, or urban sociology. Enables students to really get inside of the minds of the different players in the land development game.”

-Todd Swanstrom,
Author of Place Matters: Metropolitics for the Twenty-First Century
Professor of Public Policy
Saint Louis University.

“This is the film I have wanted to have available for many years to use in my classes and in my extension work with communities to help them understand the complex nature of land use issues.”

-Dr. Lorraine Garkovich,
Professor of Rural Sociology
University of Kentucky

" ... a terrific film...LAND captures the inevitable choices facing communities trying to balance development and conservation interests. It also makes a strong case that our best hope in resolving such issues is through mutual respect, trust, communication, and understanding . . . I look forward to using the film in our courses.

Matthew McKinney
Public Policy Research Institute
The University of Montana

"Whether one considers urban sprawl to be a serious problem or simply the market in action, the arguments presented in the film can be heard in planning and zoning hearings throughout the Nation. A must see film for anyone interested in urban sprawl and land use issues in the US. I plan to show the film in my land use planning class and look forward to the debate I know it will stimulate."

-Dr. Sarah L. Coffin,
Assistant Professor of Planning and Real Estate Development,
Saint Louis University.

"Brock . . . has captured the kind of "environment vs. development" dispute that has deadlocked many communities around the United States."

Lawrence Susskind, Ford Professor of Urban and Environmental Planning at MIT
Founder of the Consensus Building Institute
co-author of The Consensus Building Handbook

"LAND presents a subtle story of competing interests in the conflict over conversion of rural land to suburban housing developments. By allowing the characters to speak for themselves, Brock engagingly presents land use conflict as human drama, not dry policy and planning decisions....Without forcing viewers towards a specific resolution, Brock allows viewers to consider the complexity of suburban development by addressing issues of social class, social mobility, and heritage, as well as the economic benefits and trade-offs associated with sprawl."

-Diane C. Bates, Assistant Professor of Sociology,
The College of New Jersey, Ewing, NJ

"I will certainly use this film in any sociology course I teach that discusses urban or rural issues, class, environment, and changes in the economy. I would also use it in public administration courses or urban planning courses so that students can truly understand the complexity of trying to regulate or plan land-use. I would also recommend it for viewing to every single planning commission. I have also visited your website and think that it is phenomenal. I can't wait to have students do some of the role playing exercises. Thanks so much for setting up such a useful site."

Dr. Lauren Heberle, Assistant Director
Center for Environmental Policy and Management
University of Louisville

"... tells a universal story... that by now must be familiar to nearly every U.S. community. It offers no clear answers to the development challenge, but by putting faces on its typical players, it's a perfect point of departure for anyone interested in finding a better way."

-Leo, The Louisville Eccentric Observer

"Beautifully filmed.....LAND is a masterpiece because as with most complicated issues, there are more than two sides of the story told....If there are "bad guys," you the viewer, not Walter

Brock, will make that judgment. And don't be surprised if you change your mind as you view Land. It is a film about change and its consequences....one of the best filmed 57 minutes you'll see in a while..Even the website is riveting."

-Virginia G. Smith,
Executive Director, The Kentucky Humanities Council.

Film Xtra: 'Land' documentary focuses on Ky. but tells universal story

The LEO, The Louisville Eccentric Observer
September 29, 2004

You can lead a horse to water, but can you make it drink? And you can lead concerned citizens to the edge of a conundrum, but can you get them to act?

That may be the overriding question of Walter Brock's new documentary, "Land (and how it gets that way)." The film trains its lens on the battle over land development in Woodford County, just north of Lexington.

Preservationists, including some with a lot of money and even more inherited land, have led the fight to limit growth there. Others, some with motivations to level the economic playing field, have a far different idea. They see golf courses and shopping centers where others see simple fields of grass, and houses for average people who want a nice place to live at a decent price.

The film is built around interviews conducted over a decade with five individuals with a role in the Woodford County battles. They are Libby Jones, wife of former Gov. Brereton Jones, and landholder Ann Richmond, both of whom reek of preservationist; Jack Kain, a regular old boy who builds a successful new car dealership and branches out into land development; Charles Baker, who only wants to farm his family farm but can't afford to and becomes an accidental developer; and Jim Boggs, a corporate refugee, lured by romantic notions of the farming life, who reluctantly fights back when his new neighbors' notions of living near that life don't include blood, guts and stink.

The interviews take on a great deal of poignancy as age-old prejudices and resentments are revealed. Development fights are not new, and Brock, who saw his hometown of Lexington lose almost all of its open land to development, expected to find certain predictable things when he started filming in 1993. He did, but he also saw more complexity than he expected.

"I wondered who these people were who were bulldozing these magical places, and wondered if they felt the slightest twinge of remorse," he says. Baker, the farmer turned developer, is the sort of figure who tends to draw the wrath of preservationists, but Brock says that's too simplistic. "A guy like Charles has to be addressed and listened to. It does no good to vilify them."

Brock teaches art at St. Francis High School in downtown Louisville. "Land" is his third documentary. His 1998 film "If I Can't Do It" profiled disability rights activist Arthur Campbell, and his 1990 film "A Season in Hell" follows a young woman's eight-year struggle

with eating disorders.

Both aired on PBS and won multiple awards. "Land" will be broadcast twice next week on local public TV and has also been picked up by PBS; it will air in April.

Although "Land" focuses on Woodford County, the film really tells a story that by now must be familiar to nearly every U.S. community. It offers no clear answers to the development challenge, but by putting faces on its typical players, it's a perfect point of departure for anyone interested in finding a better way. Whether that ever happens, of course, is the big "if."

BY CARY STEMLE
cstemle@leoweekly.com

Land development as age-old drama Filmmaker explores Woodford debate

Posted on Sun, Oct. 03, 2004 ON TV

By Rich Copley

HERALD-LEADER ARTS WRITER

Walter Brock started his documentary on land development with a definite point of view.

Growing up in Lexington, he watched the fields he played in as a boy turned into cul-de-sacs, blacktop and bypasses. It was traumatic, he says, particularly because no one talked about it.

Years later, he caught a news story about people discussing land development in Woodford Country and saw the makings for a documentary film.

That was 1993. He did a series of interviews with major players in the Woodford development controversy, including staunch preservationists Ann Richmond, a farm owner, and Libby Jones, wife of former Gov.-Brereton Jones; and developers Jack Kain, owner of Jack Kain Ford, and Charles Baker, a farm owner turned developer. He also talked to historian Thomas D. Clark and farm owner Jim Boggs, who makes an ideological journey during the course of the film.

Actually, everyone changes, because after shooting initial interviews, Brock lacked the funding to continue. Several other projects were completed in the ensuing years, and in 1999, he returned to Woodford County.

Earlier this year, the story came to a conclusion for Brock. The film, Land (and how it gets that way) premieres on Kentucky Educational Television this week and will be offered for national distribution on PBS in the spring.

Baker makes the most profound change of all the players, growing from a young farmer who wants to sell parcels of land to make a living but hates the title developer, to a full-fledged developer. Richmond, on the other hand, firmly holds to her belief that the land must be protected.

In the course of discussions, issues of class, culture and heritage emerge and sometimes muddy the waters.

"We come to it with a cartoon of what a preservationist is, a developer, a Republican, a Democrat," Brock said, "but it's a lot more complicated than that."

Along the way, Brock said he made some discoveries.

"If I ever had any notion that there was a right way for man and land to cohabitate, this experience divested me of that notion that we will ever agree on anything," he said. "People believe what they believe. Our feelings and philosophies are bred deeply in us."

Brock wanted to present both sides clearly.

"I hope I created a film that can create a space where we can consider these matters," he said. "The landscapes we inhabit are changing. How do we want them to change?"
'Land (and how it gets that way)'

When and where: 10 p.m. Mon. on KET; 9 p.m. Tue. on KET2.
Reach Rich Copley at (859) 231-3217 or 1-800-950-6397, Ext. 3217, or
rcopley@herald-leader.com.

LAND

New Documentary Examines Preservation v Development Up Close

Few topics outside politics and religion will engender the kind of controversy, at least in central Kentucky, as land preservation. Some believe that it is their civil right, through private ownership and a free market economy, to treat land as just another commodity. Others believe that preserving green space and farmland is a matter of stewardship rather than ownership, a legacy for future generations. The story goes much deeper, though.

Walter Brock's new film, *Land*, shows that it's not just an issue of individual rights over common good. It's also a matter of who owns which land. It's a matter of contested values based on traditions that may not be sustainable economically, and it's a matter of business that may not be sustainable because of careless changes.

Land is a masterpiece because as with most complicated issues, there are more than two sides of the story told. Consider the setting, for example. *Land* was filmed in Woodford County, one of the state's richest per capita. Situated between Frankfort and Lexington with good jobs and excellent roads, Woodford County is a great place to do business. But Woodford County is also richest in prime farm land. Perhaps more than any other place in Kentucky, owning land in Woodford County carries with it a 200 year old measure of wealth.

This is not just a Woodford County story. All across America, land issues are a battleground of conflicting ideas about progress, tradition, and the American way. Who doesn't take their land personally? Witness the important Connecticut eminent domain case about to go to the Supreme Court.

Filmed over 10 years, Brock uses his signature no-narrator style to let people tell their stories for themselves. Meet Jack Kain, whose Ford dealership is constructed during that time; Libby Jones, who lives on one of Kentucky's most historic and beautiful horse farms; Charles Baker, who at the film's outset is a struggling farmer, at its end a millionaire developer; Jim Boggs, a sheep farmer who reluctantly becomes a farm spokesman; and Ann Richmond, determined to preserve to her last breath her family's working farm and the way of life it represents. Not to spoil the stories, Brock films each person with respect and care. If there are "bad guys," you the viewer, not Walter Brock, will make that judgment. And don't be surprised if you change your mind as you view Land. It is a film about change and its consequences.

Land is one of the most beautifully filmed documentaries KET will broadcast this year. There are breathtaking aerial views of Kentucky's rolling hills and pastures, scenes undulating through moving grassland, and yes, newly developed neighborhoods that decidedly do not qualify as blights on the landscape. Brock has turned out one of the best filmed 57 minutes you'll see in a while.

For the interested viewer and also great for classroom use, the filmmaker and UK professor Lorraine Garkovitch have created an in depth and interactive website, [w. www.landfilm.com](http://www.landfilm.com). Even the website is riveting.

Land was funded in part through grants from the Kentucky Humanities Council, Inc. and the National Endowment for the Humanities as well as the Kentucky Heritage Council. The website, www.landfilm.com, nearly completed, will be fully operating in time for the KET broadcast.

Virginia G. Smith is Executive Director of the Kentucky Humanities Council.
(859) 257-5932

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A co-presentation of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and Kentucky Educational Television (KET)