


The Doodle Film

The National Film Board of Canada strikes again in this animation by Donald Winkler. The target of satire is deviance and the detached, scientific evaluation of humans based on incomplete information. The film carries much the same tone and message as W.H. Auden's "To an Unknown Citizen."

David Watt grew up normal but turned into a compulsive doodler. Soon images like this:
 began appearing all over the country. Did David Watt cause this national epidemic of doodles? No, but certainly his case is symptomatic of a growing deviation from the norm. The case of the compulsive doodler is fun and sharp.

About 10 min., color, animation, 1970. Sale \$150, rental about \$15 from Learning Corporation of America, 711 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Doodle film. A film by Donald Winkler. Produced by National Film Board of Canada. Distributed by Learning Corporation of America, 711 Fifth Ave., N.Y. 10022. 1970; released 1971. 11min., with notes, \$150. Order #ES011.

Doodling is used in this animated film as the objective correlative for a number of feelings, but ultimately those bound up in the need to escape conformity, to run out on responsibility in search of freedom and happiness. In voice over, a narrator reports the fictional life of David Watt, characterized by the development of his scratches and scrawls drawn on notebooks, papers, documents, place mats, napkins, television screens, car windshields, toilet bowls, and bed sheets, as he changes from a young boy to a mature man. Until later in his life, Watt is analyzed as a normal male with standard preoccupations. He confronts puberty without unnatural apprehension, indicated by his relatively common sketches of female anatomy. He attends college, graduates and marries, holds down a good job, and is a dependable citizen. Then, trouble begins. Watt's desk blotter fills up with strange drawings, his signature becomes less readable, and suddenly he disappears altogether, occasionally indicating his elusive whereabouts by leaving his new signature—a smile and two pinpoint eyes—on walls, in snow, and, finally, in the sky. A delightful, refreshing fantasy for senior high school language arts and social studies classes and for college courses in sociology and psychology. Also for public library film programs on society and the individual and for loan to groups interested in humorous, sophisticated social comment. Ages 14-adult.