

# The Main Feature

Season 31 - Issue Number 1

## An Education

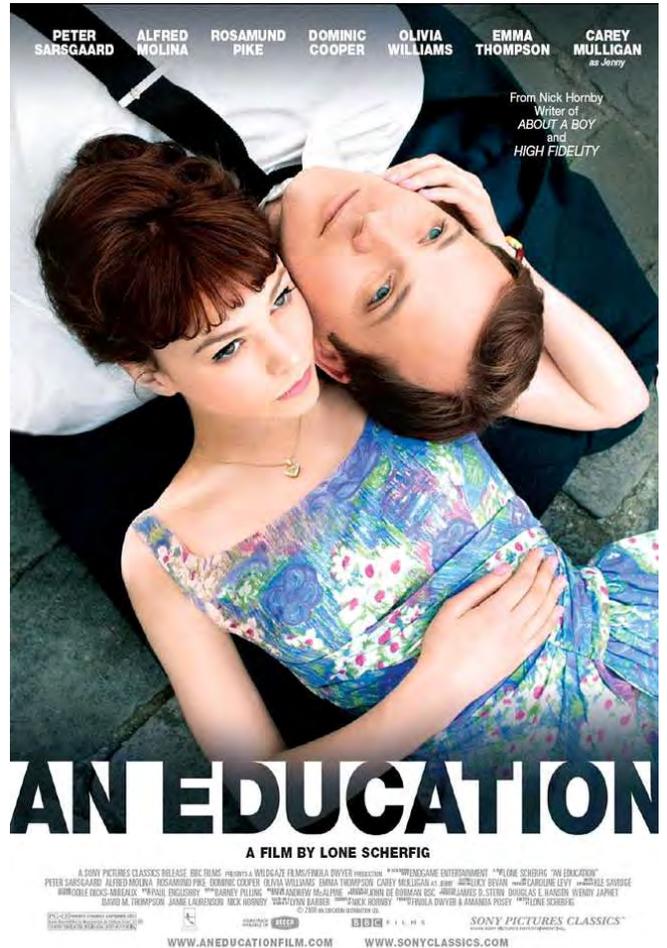
UK 2009      100 minutes      Certificate 12

Director                      Lone Scherfig  
 Writer                         Nick Hancock  
 Music                         Paul Englishby  
 Director of Photography    John de Borman

### Cast

Carey Mulligan	Jenny Millar
Peter Sarsgaard	David Goldman
Dominic Cooper	Danny
Rosamund Pike	Helen
Emma Thompson	Miss Walters
Olivia Williams	Miss Stubbs
Alfred Molina	Jack Millar
Cara Seymour	Marjorie Millar

It is 1961, and Jenny, has spent her entire life being groomed up by her parents for Oxford – “After I’ve been to university I’m going to be French”, she declares. It seems nothing can halt her progressing to the point where she can “talk to people who know lots and lots”. Of course, the irony of most 16-year-olds’ lives is that, despite vaunting ambitions, the education of the film’s title comes in many forms, with the hardest to beat (and quite probably learn) being life-experience.

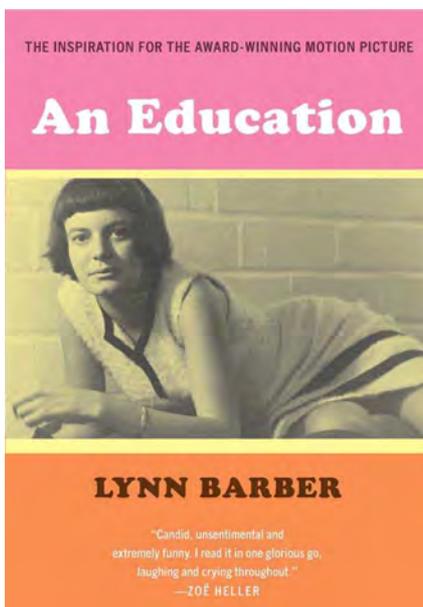


So when the witty, languidly suave David enters her life talking, of course, about lots and lots – think Ravel, jazz, Paris! - she is soon caught up in the sweet-sounding, near-sighted throes of romance. And it’s not just Jenny who falls for David. Her mum (Cara Seymour) and dad (Alfred Molina) become torn between the urge to see their daughter climb the social strata by using her head and the idea that maybe a relationship with David is a quick pass to higher society.

Will David be the making of Jenny or her undoing?

Nick Hornby's screenplay was adapted from Lynn Barber's book, which had originally been a short piece in an issue of Granta. Her full memoir was not published in book form until June 2009, when filming had already been completed.

Although the screenplay involved Hornby writing about a young teenage girl, he did not feel it was more challenging than writing any other character: "I think the moment you're writing about somebody who's not exactly you, then the challenge is all equal. I was glad that everyone around me on this movie was a woman so that they could watch me carefully. But I don't remember anyone saying to me, 'That isn't how women think.'"



Hancock lays out the progress of their relationship with great economy and wit. You see clearly how much Jenny needs the life David shows her, how little she needs him, and you see how, in her hunger for the life, she manages to look away from the pervasive shabbiness underpinning it.

The script is matched by Scherfig's very cool, understated direction, and some fine performances.



Mulligan manages to seem both childlike and middle-aged, and always appealingly curious. Molina, incapable of seeming boringly suburban, nevertheless conveys the frustrated intelligence that has found its flowering in his daughter. Olivia Williams is excellent as the teacher who needs Jenny's success more than Jenny does.

With the amount of attention given to Carey Mulligan, it is possible that Sarsgaard's wonderful portrayal of David may be cruelly overlooked.

David is the sort of role Colin Firth used to pick up, but it is doubtful he would ever have managed to strike such a careful balance between desirable and dodgy as Sarsgaard does.

It would have been very easy for his character to slip into sleaze, alienating the audience and making it hard to see what Jenny sees in him. But Sarsgaard – helped by incredibly smart scripting and direction – always seems to be just either on the debonair side of dodgy or on the dodgy side of debonair.

Carey Mulligan in her first major role delivers a captivating performance, as she inhabits Jenny's character. She's in her mid-twenties, but she believably looks and acts like a 16-years-girl and convincingly conveys Jenny's moments of frustrating boredom, thrilling excitement and profound sadness. Her performance drew comparisons with Audrey Hepburn.

One reviewer suggested the film could offer young women the following advice:

*"When a man seems too good to be true, he probably isn't -- good, or true. We all make mistakes when we're growing up. Sometimes we learn from them. If we're lucky, we can even learn during them. And you must certainly see Paris."*

This is a finely crafted film that touches every emotion.

Iain McGlashan



# Welcome to our 31<sup>st</sup> season from Iain McGlashan, Chairman

I trust you have all had a pleasant and relaxing summer break and are looking forward to another season of films here at Mayford Village Hall.

Firstly an apology – we had no volunteer to replace Michelle Smart in the Editor's seat for either the annual brochure or the film notes. Accordingly a brochure has not been produced.

I appreciate that this is a disappointment, but without a volunteer to become the Editor we had little option.

This does go to demonstrate how dependent the Club is on a core group and I do hope that within our Membership someone will come forward to offer to become responsible for the Notes for the rest of the season. We have a template for the format and therefore provided we have volunteers to write the notes, the editor's role is largely pasting the article into the template, adding a piece from cinema related news and report on the reactions from the previous film. (However the Editor has discretion to change the template as they wish).

It could be that someone else may volunteer to become the brochure editor. If you would like to discuss either role please have a chat with myself.

Of more immediate concern, we need someone to operate the projection equipment for our next film (23 September - First Day of the Rest of Your Life) as neither John or Steve could resist the appeal of Spamalot at the New Victoria that night (both having bought their tickets independently of each other!). Please see John or myself tonight as the film cannot be shown unless someone volunteers.

Having decided not to proceed with a brochure, we have made a significant improvement to our equipment, which you may not initially spot - all will soon be revealed!

With the 2.5% increase in VAT scheduled for the end of the year, allied to the very poor interest rates being paid on club savings, we have decided to look to purchase both a blu-ray player and a new projector before the VAT rise. The money not spent on the brochure will go towards this new equipment.

These investments will herald an exciting enhancement of our presentation and with the diverse selection of titles I think we promise another exciting and enjoyable season. Please help spread the word about the improvements and the films attractions we offer amongst your friends, families and colleagues.

Finally can I remind members that they can gain reduced price admission to the films presented by our friends at Chertsey upon presentation of your membership card. The upcoming films they will be showing at Chertsey Hall, Heriot Road, Chertsey KT16 9DR are:

The Hurt Locker	10 September
Mother	1 October
Four Lions	22 October
The White Ribbon	12 November
Julie & Julia	10 December

The Hurt Locker is the only title that both clubs are screening this season, so I know that Chertsey would extend a warm welcome should you attend any of their films.

## Reactions to .... Les Petites Vacances – 27<sup>th</sup> May 2010

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Votes	~	~	2	2	2	5	6	5	3	1	~

**Total Votes -26    Average Score – 5.65    Position – 16<sup>th</sup>**

Film	Score	Position
<b>Boy in the Striped Pyjamas</b>	<b>8.30</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>
<b>Slumdog Millionaire</b>	<b>8.04</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>
<b>Changeling</b>	<b>8.03</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>
<b>To Kill a Mockingbird</b>	<b>8.02</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>The Philadelphia Story</b>	<b>7.84</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Easter Parade</b>	<b>7.79</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Gran Torino</b>	<b>7.50</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>The Duchess</b>	<b>7.40</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>My Life as a Dog</b>	<b>7.29</b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Mountain Patrol</b>	<b>7.05</b>	<b>10<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Pot Luck</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Overlord</b>	<b>6.77</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Insomnia</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Jennings Shorts</b>	<b>6.89</b>	<b>14<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>XXY</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Les Petites Vacances</b>	<b>5.65</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Waltzing with Bashir</b>	<b>5.25</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Pauline a la Plage</b>	<b>4.89</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Samia</b>	<b>4.78</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup></b>

### Your Comments

No doubt about it, families are very difficult

Well acted and directed but depressing

Grandma was so well portrayed

What a lovely film and the music

Very perceptive of teenage development and very well acted  a moving film

A strange but interesting film  all rather sad

What an unlikely, tedious and unpleasant film

Our next presentation on Thursday 23 September at 8pm:

## First Day of the Rest of Your Life

(Le premier jour du reste de la vie)

The pleasure and pain of familial relationships come under the microscope in this cross-generational French drama directed by Remi Bezancon, which portrays five separate important days within a 15-year period in the lives of members of the close-knit but chaotic Duval family. Bereavement, parenthood, sexual awakening and sibling rivalry are among the issues faced by the five family members as the years roll by, bringing with them an array of experiences ranging from the hilarious to the tragic.



sponsors photocopying of *the main feature*