



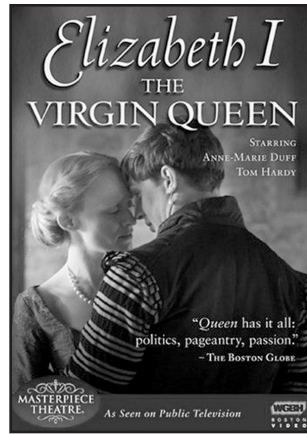
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and retaining power, and Mary Tudor's (Joanna Whalley) popish affiliation certainly endowed her with the means of holding power in an increasing polarized political landscape. However, the Protestant leanings of her half-sister, Elizabeth (Anne-Marie Duff), garnered support among Mary's detractors and gave Elizabeth ample cause to fear for her life. It was only with Mary Tudor's death that the Protestant movement could re-assert itself without fear of execution and it did so, fiercely, with Elizabeth's coronation. The irony of Elizabeth's imprisonment and eventual execution of the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, is certainly not lost on either the viewer or Elizabeth herself. Guilt and religious conflict appear to be standard issue with the Tudor crown, as Elizabeth was plagued by her conscience after the issuance of Mary Stuart's death warrant and her own bitter half-sister, Mary Tudor, is portrayed as having a crisis of conscience as she considered executing Elizabeth.

While religion and politics certainly played a significant role in Elizabeth's reign, her life could easily be described as revolving around three men: William Cecil (Ian Hart), her advisor and mainstay; Robert Dudley (Tom Hardy), a childhood friend and object of her affections; and Robert Devereux (Hans Matheson), Dudley's step-son and Elizabeth's eventual betrayer. William Cecil, Lord Burghley, provided a foundation upon which Elizabeth built her reign. As the head of the Privy Council and as Elizabeth's personal advisor, Burghley's strong and stable influence was a bastion in a court full of intrigue and in-fighting. Elizabeth tells him as much later in his life, as he contemplates retirement and she urges him to remain at court. Following Cecil's major stroke, Elizabeth tenderly informed him that he was her "alpha and omega" and could not possibly die. However, their relationship was not without conflict and never more so than in matters of love and marriage.

The filmmakers call particular attention to the role of marriage in Elizabeth's life. At the beginning of her reign, Elizabeth and Cecil were decidedly at odds regarding the issue of marriage. She feared the loss of her sovereignty, both personal and public, while her advisors believed that a marriage would serve the dual purpose of assuring her subjects not only of her ability to retain power but to also assure continuity through an heir. In a dramatic pronouncement to her privy council, Elizabeth vowed that there would be one mistress and no master over her kingdom, and that she would die a virgin. She further asserted this commitment to the one man in all her realm that might make her withdraw her pledge: Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.



A broad range of foreign royals was spurned while she tried to tamp down her passions for Dudley, but these passions were only barely quelled. His two marriages did little to intervene between them and, while his health declined, he still remained steadfastly beside her. Dudley's unexpected death devastated her and left her susceptible to attraction to his stepson (and possible bastard), Robert Devereux. Devereux proved the adage that the sequel is seldom comparable to the original and eventually attempted a coup against Elizabeth's Privy Council under the auspices of protecting her from their corruption. This act of treason resulted in his execution.

The loss of all ties to Dudley took their toll on Elizabeth, who withdrew to her chambers and slowly faded from view. Her sanity also appeared to fade in the months preceding her passing, as the film shows her stalking the halls of the palace, dressed in armor and swinging a sword in defense against invisible foes. Her quiet death marked the end of the reign of the Virgin Queen and the beginning of the Stuart era.

The film was glorious and compelling, lovingly crafted by a cast and crew that were clearly invested in the material. The balance between romance and politics, religion and intrigue was well-developed and the continuous threads of Cecil and Dudley through the film showed necessity of the roles fulfilled by both. In a reign that was fraught with the unstable and the treacherous, Elizabeth proved herself a survivor and, more importantly, proved herself worthy of the title Gloriana. The director and producer created a product that also lives up to her legend.

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**PIERRE BOURDIEU: SOCIOLOGY
IS A MARTIAL ART (2001)**
(LA SOCIOLOGIE EST UN SPORT DE COMBAT)

Pierre Carles, *director*



For some strange reason, contemporary documentaries of intellectual figures, whether academic or within the public sphere, share a tendency to bring to the screen literally the writings of their subjects. Two recent documentaries about Jacques Derrida and Slavoj Žižek (both iconic figures in Europe, North and Latin America) endeavor to portray the life and thought of these scholars while ending up reproducing exactly the same

thing we find in their books. The major flaw of these kinds of documentaries lies in the fact that they add very little, almost nothing, to what the audience can gather from reading them. To deploy the documentary genre in such fashion becomes a fruitless enterprise at two fundamental levels: as cinematic form and as communicative device. It fails as communicative device because the audience it aspires to reach becomes the same that reads their work. This means that nothing new transpires through the film that one could not get reading their work. The only incentive left to the audience is a voyeuristic one that although intrinsic to the genre, is the less valuable one. And this makes it a failure as a genre.

The first thing to be noted about *Pierre Bourdieu: Sociology is a Martial Art* is that the documentary succeeds at the two levels where others have failed, and it does much more. If you are interested in European social movements, the practice of sociology, a strong critique of neoliberalism and the sources of structural inequalities then this documentary is for you. Whether you are a teacher, a university professor, a graduate student, a social activist, or a concerned citizen, and have no idea who was Pierre Bourdieu, the film will inform you about him through all the themes above. And if you knew of Bourdieu and his work, then it will add in interesting and fruitful ways.

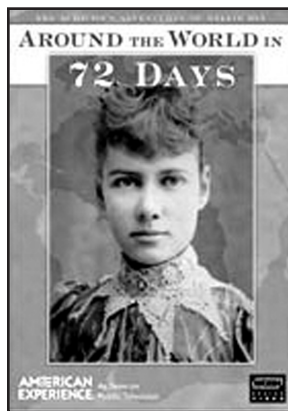
The first three scenes frame the structure of the documentary. It sets the stage at three different levels. The first is historical. We see Bourdieu as part of the audience in a demonstration headed by José Bové (leader of the French agricultural union *Confédération Paysanne*). This is historically important because it sets the social temporality of the documentary and frames Bourdieu as an implicated subject of his own object of study. This is what Bourdieu calls reflexive sociology. The second level is that of reception. Throughout the film we see an interesting representation of the reception Bourdieu's work has in Europe: how it has affected individual's choices at the personal and political level, how it has informed and misinformed activists in social movements, and the kinds of political and social questions Bourdieu's sociological practice can and cannot answer. The range of Bourdieu's work is exemplified by a moment in the film where Bourdieu receives a letter from the famous French filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard. A letter to which, after reading it, Bourdieu responds, "very mysterious, like all his work...I don't understand a thing!" This is probably the funniest scene, particularly so because it ends with Bourdieu saying about himself, without irony, "Poor old Bourdieu" as one who can no longer understand difficult stuff. The third level is that of Bourdieu's actual work. The film shows clips of radio interviews, live public performances, academic conferences, and exchanges with other public figures (we see him conversing with Gunther Grass). The first thing to notice is how his work is always historicized, from his experience in Algeria during the fifties and sixties where the practice of sociology was literally a matter of life and death, to his contemporary practice.

These three levels are present throughout the film and their intertwining gives us a very productive approach. Rather than

emphasizing only on the theoretical and sociological insights present in his writings, Bourdieu gives us the assumptions behind it, the problems behind the work he does, what motivates him and the questions he asks and why he leaves others unasked. The viewer also takes a peek at what we can call sociology at work. In a very interesting scene we see Bourdieu with several of his collaborators of the well-known volume *La Misère du Monde* discussing the social effects of liberalism and neo-liberalism. His engagement with social activism, as an active contributor but also as a spectator is stimulating. The conclusion of this documentary also provides a refreshing approach, although some may consider it patronizing. During a lecture, a heated debate takes place between the audience and Bourdieu regarding the socio-economic conditions of immigrants in France. The discussion comes to the point of anti-intellectualism, to which Bourdieu responds, "you have taught me nothing. I have read Sayad! I could teach you a few things about yourselves. If that sounds arrogant, what the hell...Intellectualism is not a disease." If there is a central theme to this documentary it is precisely this: intellectualism is a practice, reflexive, engaging, informative, insightful, and critical. All characteristics exemplified in this *tour de force*.

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***AROUND THE WORLD IN 72 DAYS:
THE AUDACIOUS ADVENTURES OF
NELLIE BLY (1997; DVD EDITION, 2006)***
American Experience, WGBH



About midway through this appealing, tightly focused, PBS "American Experience" episode, Catherine Robe points out that, "Always, the main character in any Nellie Bly story is Nellie Bly herself, and she was very much a character." This video biography plays that theme consistently, and in the process speaks to viewers who might have only a general sense of women journalists in the late nineteenth century, or none at all. The production is a compelling introduction to the energetic and influential Bly. But at the same time it only alludes to major themes of American female journalists of the period, lacking an expansive context except in one area. It is a splendid supplemental video work than can enhance a more rigorous study of women journalists.