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## Blood Brother

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# Blood Brother

**Abstract**

This is a film review of *Blood Brothers* (2013) directed by Steve Hoover.

**Keywords**

Orphans, HIV, India

**Author Notes**

William Blizek is the founding editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Professor of Philosophy and Religion at University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is also the editor of *The Continuum Companion to Religion and Film* (2009).

*Blood Brother*

Directed by Steve Hoover

U.S. Documentary



*Blood Brother* is clearly intended to be a savior movie. At the very beginning of the movie, Rocky's grandfather tells a story about a cat that has been badly injured. Rocky

won't kill the cat, but nurtures the cat back to health and the cat not only lives but survives. Later in the film, Rocky refuses to give up on one of the children in the orphanage. Against all odds, and with the constant nursing care of Rocky, the child survives. It is like Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead.

One summer Rocky Braat makes an impromptu visit to India.

Disillusioned by the tour, Rocky found himself working in an orphanage for children with HIV. He stayed with the children until his visa ran out. When he returned home, he applied for another visa and convinced his long time friend, Steve Hoover, to return with him to India to film his work at the orphanage. The movie is Hoover's account of life and conditions in the orphanage, as seen

through the eyes of his friend. In the end Rocky marries an Indian woman so he is able to stay in India permanently.

Rocky is known in the orphanage as Rocky Anna, which means "brother." Rocky is surely the blood brother of the children. He cares for them while they literally bleed from the sores on their bodies. He also is there when they die, as many of the children do. But Rocky is a blood brother to Steve Hoover as well. And so, while one Blood Brother helps the children, the other Blood Brother tells his story.

Rocky may be a savior figure, but he is a reluctant one. He does not take credit for what he does, but gives credit to the children for remaining positive in the horrible circumstance in which they find themselves. Rocky is not able to save many of the children. Conditions work against success. But, Rocky's motivation is his love of the children. In one important sense he does not know what else to do.

— William Blizek