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No No: A Dockumentary

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No No: A Dockumentary

Abstract

This is a film review of *No No: A Dockumentary* (2014), directed by Jeffrey Radice.

Author Notes

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

No No: A Dockumentary
(2014)
directed by Jeffrey Radice
U.S. Documentary

No No: A Dockumentary is the story of Pittsburgh Pirate pitcher, Dock Ellis. Dock played for the Pirates at a time when many baseball players used drugs of various sorts and Dock was no exception.



Although he once pitched a no hitter under the influence of LSD, for the most part his drug use cost him two marriages and shortened his career. After reaching rock bottom, Dock Ellis checked himself into rehab and stayed there longer than necessary, determined to be successful in his rehabilitation. Eventually Dock Ellis became a drug and alcohol counselor, helping others who were dealing with drug and alcohol addiction.

Dock Ellis' story is one of redemption. In the later years of his life, he made a significant effort to make up for what he had done in his younger years. He made the effort to redeem himself. There are many redemption stories in film. We enjoy them, primarily because we like to think that there is hope, hope that we can make up for in some way the bad things that we have done in our lives. There is, of course, the Christian idea of redemption, where Jesus dies for our sins. But for many people redemption is not something we are given, but something we earn. We have to work for our redemption. This is a common thing in our lives, trying to make up for our mistakes, our bad behavior, the evil we have done. Redemption is an important part of our moral behavior, of who we are as moral beings, yet redemption is not something you will ever hear

discussed in a philosophy class. Redemption is not about doing the right thing, but rather about being a good person. Movies, unlike philosophy classes, give us examples of characters who seek redemption, who earn their redemption and who make up for the wrong they have done. For this reason redemption movies are inspiring. They teach us that it's not too late to be a good human being. They put redemption in our hands and give us hope.

— William L. Blizek