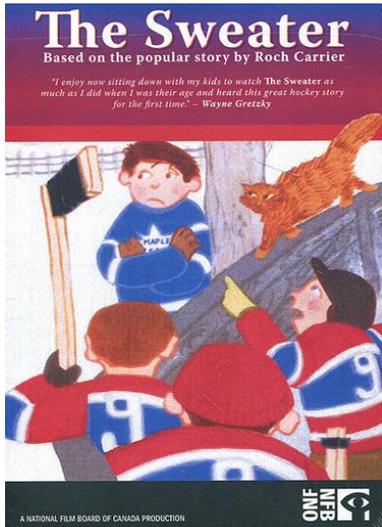


# SPOTLIGHT REVIEW



Like most Canadians of my generation, I look back fondly at those National Film Board short films that CBC television would sometimes air instead of commercials. Two of my personal favourites were *The Log Driver's Waltz* and *The Sweater*.

Looking back, I was somewhat hard pressed to discern why *The Sweater*, an adaptation of Roch Carrier's short story "The Hockey Sweater" appealed to me so much.

Kate and Anna McGarrigle's "Log Driver's Waltz" song remains as great today as it was then, so no mystery on that front, but I was not into hockey, I was not French, nor Catholic, and as all such details were prominent in *The Sweater*, why did it I love so much?

I watched it again recently and I certainly appreciated the sociological remembrances of 1940s Quebec—the prominent role of the church and sport, the language barrier between them and English Canada—but surely such angles were over my head as a child.

That aside, and overlooking the differences from own upbringing, it's no longer a mystery. Roch was loath to wear the Toronto Maple Leafs jersey, while his mother insisted. It turned out there were some similarities after all. From Roch Carrier to Will Smith who once famously rapped sang, "Parents Just Don't Understand" what child can't relate to a parent not "getting it"?

Plus, it was funny. The idea of five Maurice Richards playing against five Maurice Richards, of 100 million moths being sent by God to eat Roch's Leafs sweater is a hysterically accurate look at child imagination and hyperbole.

Finally, the illustrations by Sheldon Cohen are frenetic, keeping time with the accordion and fiddle soundtrack and deceptively simple, something that almost looks like a child could create and therefore perfectly capturing this classic memory of a Canadian childhood.

If you also enjoy, or are curious about, Canadian short films, visit the public library on Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 – 4:30 p.m., when we'll be airing great examples in our meeting room as part of National Film Day.

- John Mutford