

49 UP

A Film by
Michael Apted

135 minutes, color & b/w, 2005, UK



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SYNOPSIS

49 Up, the latest installment of Granada's landmark documentary series, revisits the group of people whose lives have been documented since they were seven, to see where they are now as they approach their half century.

The original *Seven Up* was broadcast in 1964 as a one-off World in Action Special featuring children who were selected from different backgrounds and social spheres to talk about their hopes and dreams for the future.

As members of the generation who would be running the country by the year 2000, what did they think they would become?

Inspired by World in Action founder Tim Hewat's passionate interest in both the Jesuit saying "Give me the child until he is seven and I will show you the man" and the rigid class system of 1960s Britain, *Seven Up* set out to discover whether or not the children's lives were pre-determined by their backgrounds.

The result was ground-breaking television – the very first example of a program recording real people living real lives – and the follow-up films have won an array of awards.

Director Michael Apted, who has since moved to Hollywood to direct films including *Gorky Park*, *The Coal Miner's Daughter*, *The World Is Not Enough* and *Gorillas in the Mist*, has returned every seven years to chart the children's progress through life.

Over the past five decades, the series has documented the group as they have become adults and entered middle-age, dealing with everything life has thrown at them in between.

Now the series is back to see how the group has progressed in the last seven years and there are some unexpected changes in store, including one of the original characters who's returned after a 14-year break. In fact, this installment of the series sees more of the original group taking part than ever before.

Eastender **Tony** told *Seven Up* about his ambitions to be a jockey. The series followed him as he saw his dream come true and then gave it all up to be a cabbie.

In *42 Up* he showed viewers around the new home he shared with his wife, Debbie, and their three children – but he confessed to cheating on Debbie and she bravely revealed her decision to stand by her husband.

He also talked about his ambitions to break into showbusiness with work as an extra and his appearances in shows like *The Bill*.

Now, *49 Up* will reveal what has happened to Tony and Debbie. The couple have become proud grandparents in the last seven years but has their marriage survived and what has become of Tony's ambitious acting career?

Public schoolboy **Bruce** was just seven when he said he wanted to be a missionary so he could work in Africa and "teach people who are not civilised to be, more or less, good."

The film followed Bruce as he graduated from Oxford before going on to teach in Bangladesh. At *35 Up* he was not married but confessed that he hoped he soon would be.

At *42 Up* Bruce revealed he had met a fellow teacher, Penny, while working in London's East End, and the pair had tied the knot.

The couple were seen living in a flat in London and expressed their desire to start a family – *49 Up* visits Penny and Bruce to see if their hopes have been realized.

In *42 Up*, **Sue** was living as a single mum with her son and daughter. The series had seen her marry Billy when she was 24 and give up her job to have her two children. By *35 Up* the couple had divorced and in *42 Up* Sue, who had returned to work, was supporting her family by herself.

She spoke about her life and the fulfillment she got from her children. At the end of the film, Sue revealed she had met a new man, but said, "it's early days yet."

Now *49 Up* reveals that Sue and her new man have been together for the last seven years. The couple share a home and Sue explains how happy Glen has made her life.

In *42 Up* **Jackie** was living with her three boys in a council flat near Glasgow. The series has followed her through her marriage, in her early twenties, and her divorce by the age of 35. In *35 Up* she revealed she had a son who was the result of a brief relationship she had after her divorce. By *42 Up* she had two more children but was no longer with their father.

In *49 Up*, the film visits Jackie and her sons at her home in Scotland. She is still living on her own, surviving on benefits and suffering from severe rheumatoid arthritis. She talks about her love for Scotland and says that the community she lives in reminds her of the East End when she was growing up.

In *42 Up* **Suzy** revealed that she had problems getting along with one of her three children. She spoke about the difficulties in her own childhood and said she hoped to give her children a more stable upbringing than she had. Will Suzy be getting on better with her children now?

49 Up also will meet up with the rest of the group including **Paul**, who lived in a children's home as a seven-year-old, emigrated to Australia with his family in his early teens and now has a wife and children of his own.

Paul talks proudly of his daughter, Katy, who has become the first member of his family to go to university.

Paul's wife, Sue, also talks about the last seven years and reveals how her change of career has meant a new lease of life for her – but a backward step for Paul.

Simon, who lived in the same children's home as Paul as a child, is back with a touching update on his life. In *42 Up* Simon had a new wife, Vienetta, and a four-year-old son, Daniel, but his children from his first marriage refused to see him. Have things got any better for Simon? Are he and Vienetta still together? Do they have any more children?

When farmer's son **Nick** was seven he told the series he wanted to learn about the moon but refused to answer any questions about girls. In *14 Up* the shy teenager made the same comment. But by *21 Up* Nick had met Jackie and in *35 Up* the couple had married and were living in the USA, where Nick was a Professor at a University. By *42 Up* the couple had a son but Jackie revealed that she missed home. Are the couple still together now? Has Jackie persuaded Nick to move back to Britain?

The series also catches up with **Andrew** who, in *42 Up*, had been happily married to Jane for over 15 years. Andrew was a partner at a firm of solicitors and the couple had two sons, the eldest of which was planning to go to the same boarding school that Andrew went to. What are the family doing now?

Last time the series saw **John** he had recently become a barrister after studying law at Oxford. He had also married Claire and decided to stop taking part in the films. In *49 Up* John reveals why he has decided to come back to the series and what he's doing today.

In *7 Up*, **Lynn** said when she grew up she wanted to work in Woolworths. She actually went on to work in a library and at *42 Up* was still there after 30 years.

But in *49 Up*, Lynn is devastated by the news that her job as a children's librarian could soon be abolished. The mother of two talks about her anger that the work she has done for years, providing education and pleasure to thousands of children, could all be about to end.

And what's happened to **Neil**? He appeared as a happy child in *7 Up*, but was wandering lonely and homeless in the Highlands at 28. He surprised viewers when he was rediscovered working as a Liberal Democrat councillor in Hackney at the age of 42. Did he manage to win a seat in parliament? Has he still got a roof over his head? Has he met anyone special to settle down with?

Director Michael Apted says: "The Up films had a modest beginning. The first was just an episode in the ground breaking, in-your-face 'World in Action' series...it had a sly, ingenuous surface, the charming and amusing thoughts of a group of 7 year olds ruminating on sex, money, school, race, love, mum and dad, the future and each other.

"The velvet glove of the early films hid a fierce indictment of the British class system but as the series got older it changed. It became less about a system and more about the drama of everyday life – marriage, children, holding down jobs, success, failure, love and loss; things we all relate to. Those in it have become part of the culture, a piece of all our lives.

"It's a cruel trick to confront people with the cold reality of the past. The 42-year-old librarian trying to steer her teenage daughters through school is reminded that her ambition at 7 was to work in 'Woolworts'; or the Hackney Borough councillor who thought at 7 that coloured people were 'purple, with red eyes and yellow feet'.

"Despite that, some enjoy being in the film and claim it as a thing to treasure, others take part under sufferance, persuaded that the films are unique and we should finish what we started. I thank them all for their generosity and courage in making these films possible. For me, the UPs are a priceless gift."

Producer Claire Lewis says: "The fascination with the group is that they are ordinary. These are real people and real lives. Every seven years we get a snapshot of their lives and of Britain. The issues the program raises about class and privilege are as relevant today as they were 42 years ago."

DIRECTOR BIO

MICHAEL APTEDE was born in England in 1941 and studied law and history at Cambridge University. Aptede began his career as a researcher at Granada Television and within a few years became established as a television director and investigative reporter on the news series "World in Action." He subsequently began directing episodes of Britain's long-running series "Coronation Street."

Two of his television series won British Academy awards: THE LOVERS for Best Comedy Series, and FOLLY FOOT for Best Children's Series. Aptede himself won Best Dramatic Director for ANOTHER SUNDAY AND SWEET F.A. and KISSES AT FIFTY. His other sixty-plus television credits include works by such leading English writers as Colin Welland, Jack Rosenthal and Arthur Hopcraft.

In 1972, Aptede made his directorial feature film debut with the tense war era drama TRIPLE ECHO, starring Glenda Jackson and Oliver Reed. Next, Aptede's great love for rock and roll made him a natural to direct 1975's acclaimed STARDUST, a journey into the dark underside of the music world produced by David Puttnam and featuring David Essex and Adam Faith. THE SQUEEZE, a thriller with Stacy Keach followed in 1977, and two years later, Aptede again teamed up with producer Puttnam to direct Dustin Hoffman and Vanessa Redgrave in AGATHA.

Shot in the Appalachian mountains, COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER (1980) marked Aptede's first directing project in America. The movie garnered 7 Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture, and won an Oscar for Sissy Spacek's moving portrayal of country-western singer Loretta Lynn. Next, he went to Chicago and the Rocky Mountains to direct John Belushi and Blair Brown in the comedy CONTINENTAL DIVIDE (1981). He went to Helsinki, Finland for GORKY PARK (1983) with William Hurt, Lee Marvin and Joanna Pakula, and later that same year returned to England to shoot KIPPERBANG, a project which garnered him a British Academy Award nomination. FIRST BORN (1984) was shot in America. BRING ON THE NIGHT (1985), which won him a Grammy award, chronicled the creation of rock star Sting's Dream of the Blue Turtles album and its subsequent concert tour. CRITICAL CONDITION (1987) starring Richard Pryor was filmed in the United States.

In 1988 Aptede traveled to the mountains of Rwanda and Kenya where he filmed GORILLAS IN THE MIST; Sigourney Weaver's performance as the doomed conservationist earned her an Academy Award nomination along with four other nominations for the film. In 1989, Aptede traveled to the Soviet Union for the filming of THE LONG WAY HOME, a documentary about rock star Boris Brebenschikov, Russia's answer to Bruce Springsteen. Reaching back to his roots in law, in 1990 he directed CLASS ACTION, depicting Gene Hackman and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio as father and daughter attorneys who find themselves on opposite sides of a heated legal battle.

1992 marked the release of three Aptede directed films - 35 UP, INCIDENT AT OGLALA and THUNDERHEART.

In 1993, New Line Cinema released Aptede's BLINK, a thriller filmed in Chicago starring Madeleine Stowe.

The 1994 Human Rights Watch International Film Festival premiered Aptede's documentary MOVING THE MOUNTAIN, which won the grand prize at the Heartland Film Festival and an IDA award.

Also in 1994, Apted directed the feature NELL which stars Jodie Foster, Liam Neeson and Natasha Richardson. The film earned over \$100 million in worldwide box office and Jodie Foster received an Academy Award nomination for her performance as Nell.

In 1996, Apted teamed with actors Hugh Grant, Gene Hackman and Sarah Jessica Parker to film the medical ethics thriller EXTREME MEASURES. He also filmed the documentary INSPIRATIONS, focusing on seven artists -- musician David Bowie, painter Roy Lichtenstein, sculptor Nora Narajo-Morse, architect Tadao Ando, glass blower Dale Chihuly, choreographer Eduoard Lock of La La La Human steps, and dancer Louise Lecavalier -- who speak on the images, memories, ideas, other artists' work - the inspiration -- that has nurtured their creative process.

In 1998, Apted directed ALWAYS OUTNUMBERED, starring Laurence Fishburne and also Bill Cobbs, Natalie Cole, Bill Nunn, Brigid Coulter, and Cicely Tyson.

In November 1999, First Run Features released the latest installment of Apted's life-long work, the much anticipated documentary, 42 UP.

Also in 1999, Apted directed the latest installment in the James Bond serial THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH, starring Pierce Brosnan, Sophie Marceau, Robert Carlyle, Denise Richards, Robbie Coltrane, Dame Judi Dench, Desmond Llewelyn and Maria Grazia Cucinotta. Apted also directed the documentary ME AND ISAAC NEWTON the same year, as well as the feature ENIGMA, written by Sir Tom Stoppard and starring Dougray Scott, Kate Winslet and Saffron Burroughs.

In 2002, Columbia Pictures released Apted's ENOUGH, starring Jennifer Lopez and Billy Campbell.

His documentary project for A&E Network, MARRIED IN AMERICA, premiered in June 2002. It is planned as a decade-long examination of nine marriages in Mr. Apted's adopted homeland (he moved to the U.S. in 1980). Also in 2002, Mr. Apted filmed a documentary on the Rolling Stones for their Forty Licks tour.

In 2003, he shot a pilot for HBO and Steven Bochco Productions titled MARRIAGE.

On June 28, 2003, Mr. Apted was elected President of the Directors Guild of America, after having served as a member of the National Board and as the Fifth Vice President. Mr. Apted also serves on the Board of Governors for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in the documentary branch and is on the Board of Trustees for the American Film Institute.

In 2004, Apted filmed the first three episodes of a new series for HBO titled ROME.

Mr. Apted completed filming on 49 UP, the latest installment of the longitudinal UP SERIES, in 2005. He also commenced filming on THE WORLD 2006 (provisional title), a documentary following soccer and its global influence leading up to the World Cup 2006 with a forward look to the World Cup 2010, which takes place in South Africa. He also filmed 6 spots for Nike's ID campaign.

Currently (2006), Apted is in post production on the historic biopic, AMAZING GRACE, and the documentary MARRIED IN AMERICA 2.

In addition to his Grammy, Directors Guild Award and British Academy Awards, Apted has been nominated two additional times for the Directors Guild of America award: for

the PBS production of Harold Pinter's THE COLLECTION, starring Sir Laurence Olivier, Alan Bates and Malcolm MacDowell, and for COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER.

In October 1999, Mr. Apted received the International Documentary Associations' highest honor, the IDA Career Achievement Award.

Under the defunct OSIRIS FILMS banner, a production company Apted started with producer Robert O'Connor, Apted executive produced: CRIMINAL JUSTICE, made for HBO Showcase and starring Forest Whitaker and Anthony La Paglia; DRACULA directed by Francis Ford Coppola; and STRAPPED which marked the directorial debut of Forest Whitaker.

Apted has executive produced the documentaries 14 UP IN AMERICA and AGE 14 IN RUSSIA, which along with 42 UP premiered on BBC in 1998.

CREDITS

In memory of
TIM HEWAT
Founder-producer of World in Action who inspired *Seven Up*

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