

1 March 2007

Dear Polly,

I found your film brilliant and brave. Thank you for letting me look at it, especially after what you described as a rather unembracing reception.

I'm continually amazed at how much intriguing and rigorous work exists by women that I do not know about and which deserves immense attention, discussion and inclusion, and I would certainly put *The Daisy Chain...* at the top of that list. With this film you've created a contentious space where so many fascinating issues emerge-questions about boundaries and limits, family and gender roles, responsibility to self and responsibility to others, first person narratives (and third person obligations), public vs. private lives, the parental transmission of knowledge, the parental transgression of ownership-out - especially questions about filmmaking and what it means to introduce a camera (and crew) into a situation that purports to be objective "truth".

I'm fascinated by these questions myself, both those concerned with gender, authorship and familial role-playing, but also what a documentary means and is and how the (filmic) regard of others intensifies, disturbs and alters exchanges between people. The timing of seeing your film just now is uncanny, as I continue to ask myself these questions and look for ways to enter into the "documentary" situation that will reflect the personal and aesthetic problems that arise from a situation of recording.

I admire you that you made this film, that you turned your very real questions as an author, filmmaker and mother into such an intense portrait of that very conflict. Your insightful, poetic and self-reflexive commentary throughout the film is heartwrenching. One feels fascinatingly torn between empathizing with Daisy as a child on the brink of articulation and feeling for you as a woman struggling with questions of her own in a man's medium-film. And the lovely fantasy-like atmosphere of Harford, where these girls seem blithely lost in books and theater and closeness, the *in locus parentis*, such an interesting background for the playing out of the film's conflicts.

I can just imagine the reactions to a project such as this. I don't think people like to ask difficult questions, but especially not those that disturb both the sacred terrain of motherhood or the mother-child relationship *and* documentary's illusion of verisimilitude. I will carry your daring as a "lady filmmaker" with me as I move forward in my own projects. Thank you for this fortification and especially for sharing your work with me. A. S