Next programs:
Monday next, May 29: "Is My Face Red?" (1932, William Seiter) with Ricardo Cortez and Lisa Blount; "Twelve Streets; "Adventure in Manhattan" (1936, Edward Ludwig) with Joel McCrea, Jean Arthur, Segnaid Owen.

June 17: Two rare early sound Warner Bros. vehicles: "Their Mad Moments" (1931, director: Hamilton MacFadden) with Dorothy Mackall; and "Amateur Daddy" (1932, director: John Blystone) with Marlon Brando, Frankie Darro, David Landau, a charming and often quite strong Pickford-like film.

Schedules for June, July and September will be available at next Monday's show.

The Theodore Huff Memorial Film Society
May 13, 1974

"Drama De Luxe" (Educational, 1926; reel: 1927) Written and directed by Norman Taurog; Camera, Leonard Smith; 2 reels
With Lupino Lane, Kathryn McGuire, Wallace Lupino, Glen Cavender, Bob Kortman.

Although not by any means one of the best Lupino Lane comedies, this is nevertheless a good, average specimen — and thus automatically several notches above the bulk of independent 2-reel comedies of the late 20's. It's a little less original than usual, with some obvious borrowings from — or at least overappings with — Keaton and Langdon, but it's fast and amusing, and Lane is always a pleasure to watch.

"The Whip" (Paragon Films, 1916, released 1917) Directed by Maurice Tourneur
Adapted from the play by Cecil Raleigh and Henry Hamilton, by Charles Edward Whitteker. 6 reels
With Irving Cummings, Dien Titheredge.

This film, at least our use of it, illustrates some of the shortcomings of the present Huff operation. As we've mentioned in the past, time now is very much at a premium, and even keeping to a twice-monthly schedule isn't easy. Although I saw this print about a year ago, it didn't actually arrive for our showing until yesterday — and I'd forgotten that it contained no cast or other (camera man etc.) credits. With only a couple of hours available to do these notes, there was just no time for any research whatever — or indeed, to work out a proper score, since a film like this, with so many changes of mood and venue, would benefit from a carefully arranged musical accompaniment. However, it's either a question of keeping going as best we can, or close up shop, and I think films like "The Whip" are certainly interesting and important enough to transcend inadequate notes and ad-lib scores. So we'll ask you to bear with us once again, and hope that on other occasions discoveries as interesting as this may coincide with a slightly slacker work-schedule. In the meantime, though I haven't had the chance to dig them out to check, two excellent articles on Tourneur — one by Richard Koszarski in "Film Comment" about a year back, and one by George Geltser in "Films in Review" in the early 50's — may well have material on this film. It's certainly a curiosity, and is the first early Tourneur I've seen that shows a marked influence from Griffith. (Earlier Tourneurs, and especially "The Ring", were possibly even more sophisticated than Griffith at that time). It has the usual meticulous Tourneur lightening, composition and camerawork, and some extremely tight cutting in a chase sequence near the end, climaxd by a wheal of a train wreck, very much the real thing. The film itself is based on an old Drury Lane stage play ("The Whip", also by in the States) and while full of rich theatrical hokums and colorful characters, expands to embrace thrills and locations impossible on stage. Although filmed in and around Fort Lee, there are indications that initially the film retained its British locale. Its manners, morals, expressions and diversions, even such details as cars driving on the left side of the road, certainly suggest that a British milieu was originally intended. Then either a decision was made to shift to a U.S. locale while the film was shooting, or possibly it was later re-edited and partially re-shot, with new inserts (letters, addresses, American costumes etc.) This does result in a great deal of incongruity, including a Madame Tussaud's type wax museum dumped into the middle of rural America, and New Jersey apparently adopting riding-to-hounds as a local pastime. With its mixture of theatrics, thrills and near-horror, it's an odd bag of tricks, and obviously some chunks of footage are missing, but any early Tourneur is of major importance and we must be grateful to the A.F.I. for having discovered and saved this one.

--- intermission ---

** Erratum: correct title, "The Washing Ring".

Note: there are one or two highlight scenes from "The Whip" preceding the main title. Clearly these were not designed as a pre-title "teaser"; in all probability, some 1917 exhibitor used those scenes of a kind of trailer, then going into the first titles of the film to wrap-up.