

[Fade in.]

Hi. I'm Tony Conrad, the author of *Beholden to Victory*, which you are about to see.

Well, I suppose you'd say I'm not the **author**, since this is a film; but as the filmmaker, I'm still an **authority**.

Why do people read an author? --To learn from authority; to be led through an entertainment.

Beholden to Victory is about what an audience is and does. It uses role reversals to show the audience some of its own most embarrassing secrets.

Beholden to Victory heroicises two characters, the Soldier and the Sergeant. But neither of these characters acts like a mature member of society; the Soldiers have no redeeming characteristics except for their playfulness and their independence, and the Sergeants are mere tools of the hierarchy.

Suddenly those in the audience have no one to identify with except the Soldiers, who expose their powerlessness as Viewers to control their experience. After all, that is what the Soldier is doing -- controlling his experience. So the audience is foisted off into the role of Sergeant.

Watch this happen: you will find yourself saying, [Put on military hat] "What is this crap! How can anything function when the structure of authority breaks down completely? Is this civilization as we know it, or some new kind of society or culture?"

[Take off hat, smile, fade out.]