Document Citation

Title	**Revolt in the fishbowl**
Author(s)	
Source	*Publisher name not available*
Date	1973 Oct 06
Type	article
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	2
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Tout va bien, Godard, Jean Luc, 1972

10/6/72

Revolt in the Fishbowl

While most American filmmakers are feverishly scrambling atop the crest of one fashionable new wave or another, the French film genius Jean-Luc Godard has been locked in a struggle far from the commercial waters to harmonize his obsession with filmmaking and his commitment to social revolution. With each new film, Godard tries and discards new forms—bits of photo-journalism, monologues to the camera, self-conscious references to his own presence on the set—all in an effort to find a way of entertaining his audience while elevating its political consciousness.

Godard's break with more or less traditional filmmaking traces itself back to the shattering "events of May 1968." It is not surprising, then, that Godard's latest effort, **TOUT VA BIEN** ("Everything's Okay"), undertaken with his youthful new collaborator, Jean-Pierre Gorin, dramatizes that social earthquake and then examines its impact on a leftist married couple—Yves Montand, as a serious filmmaker who has lapsed into the *dolce vita* of television commercials, and Jane

Fonda (top); Montand: Collision

Fonda, as an American reporter whose decision to quit Establishment journalism represents the first step toward liberation.

As in all of Godard's recent works, the revolutionary occasionally crowds out the artist. But his doctrinaire diatribes are buried in an avalanche of brilliant sequences and images. In one episode, reminiscent of the great traffic-jam scene from "Weekend," Godard captures the arid plenty of Western society with an extended tracking shot of an endless supermarket, panning past aisle after aisle of fruit, vegetables, meats, sweets, clothes, books, more vegetables, more meat, on and on, all to the accompanying clatter of dozens of cash registers whose din sounds the music of commerce gone mad. Equally stunning is Godard's transformation of the occupied factory into a fishbowl of French society with factory managers, union officials and liberated

workers articulating with fierce eloquence the dissonant dialectic of a splintered society.

Godard and Gorin then move on to examine the personal impact of the revolutionary movement on their protagonists, principally through monologues by Montand and Fonda that succeed on the strength of a razor-sharp script and the intense spirit of inquiry that turns Godard's lens into a kind of inquisitor. Montand wriggles, shrugs and snaps as he seeks to rationalize his cop-out. Fonda explains her exit from conventional journalism with the giddy relief of someone who's broken out of a gold-plated trap. Consistent with Godard's belief that all relationships are political, the couple collides in slashing quarrels on everything from eating to making love. This marital battle represents Godard's assessment of the unequal political evolution of the sexes. But it is also the perfect fusion of drama and didacticism at the heart of his quest for a cinema of ideas that, as he puts it, "will please millions of people."

—P. D. Z.