As a kid, I had many fly-fishing opportunities afforded to me as a result of my father’s work in the industry. One of those opportunities was to travel with him across the country as he taught in the Fenwick Fly Fishing Schools. Those schools were a strong part of my formative fly-fishing education, as well as later helping me to mature as an instructor.

There were a lot of things that I loved about those schools, but one of my favorite times was when my father would set up his 16mm projector and thread the single reel that contained the film, The Way of a Trout. Sitting on the floor—front-and-center—I watched that film over and over, never tiring of it. I don’t know how many times its flickering images and occasionally warbling sound saturated my senses, but it always seemed fresh.

Released in 1969, The Way of a Trout follows the imagined back-story of a six-pound rainbow trout and her meeting with a conservation-minded protagonist/angler. The well-crafted images, the orchestral soundtrack, and the carefully paced voice-over lend a sense of wonder, benevolent authority, and nostalgia to the film. Sort of like watching a cold-war-era educational reel, but with better production, better music, and better subject matter.

The Way of a Trout takes great pains to present both detailed and spectacular underwater footage (even if some scenes feel a bit on the “tank shot” side, they still cut in reasonably well with the natural, above-water shots). The water scorpion sequence alone is worth the time to watch the film (as a kid, it spooked me a bit when I saw it the first time, and the second time, and the third …). My favorite shot? Perhaps the slow stalk of a green heron, with its yellow feet easing along an underwater log, accompanied by a well-tuned bit of musical storytelling. Of course, I am also partial to the humorous (and certainly familiar) moment later in the film when the angler takes what one might call a “little misstep.” And then there is the well-choreographed and edited “big fight” near the end. And then … well, you can tell that I am a bit of a fan.

The film was shot in northern Wisconsin (my home state), on a stream that flows through property that was part of the old Seven Pines Lodge. Throughout my youth, I spent a week or so every year at Seven Pines, which happened to be one of the locations that my father had arranged for the Fenwick schools. So for me, The Way of a Trout was not only a fantastic, engaging story, it was also a real story, and one that I tried for years to repeat myself. I never got a six-pound hen rainbow, but I spent many Wisconsin spring mornings and warm, lazy afternoons plying the lodge’s waters.

Well, that’s all a long way of getting around to the real point, which is that the film is now viewable on-line. VHS copies may still be floating around out there for purchase, but [a Flash-based version can be watched at the Little River TU Chapter’s Web site](http://www.lrctu.org/movies/TheWayofaTrout/).

For me, The Way of a Trout will never get old, and every time that I see it, or simply think of its main musical theme, I am transported back to a time of wonder and awe and hope that permeated my angling youth. I hope that you enjoy the viewing.