

EMPIRE

Star Ratings Explained

- ★★★★★ Classic
- ★★★★☆ Excellent
- ★★★☆☆ Good
- ★★★☆☆ Fair
- ★☆☆☆☆ Tragic

Film Details

Rating

M

Cast

Ken Dyers
Jan Hamilton.

Directors

Luke Walker
Melissa Maclean .

Screenwriters

Running Time
minutes

Beyond Our Ken (M)



Empire Review

Think cultish self-help gurus are the exclusive provenance of gullible Yanks? Then this skilful Aussie doco's for you. It chronicles the debate surrounding human potential group (read: cult) Kenja and its charismatic founder Ken Dyers, Australia's would-be L. Ron Hubbard. Mirroring the gradual induction techniques that cults employ, the filmmakers draw us into the controversy slowly, beginning with a demonstration of Kenja's keystone – the laughable but innocuous “energy conversion” principle – and then delving deeper into the layers of creepiness: physical and verbal abuse of members, Dyers's hands-on demonstrations of “sexual energy” with female disciples, and repeated charges of paedophilia. It's impartial at first glance, giving both sides of the story a good airing, but the sly juxtaposition of contradictory interviews and the unedited inclusion of Dyers's disturbing climactic tirade against his detractors give the film a clear point of view.



Reviewer: Lachlan Huddy