



LARC Resources on Civil Rights

American/Sandinista

In the 1980s, at the height of the Cold War, a bloody civil war between the Soviet-friendly Sandinistas and U.S.-backed Contras ravaged Nicaragua. Despite the danger, thousands of Americans disobeyed White House warnings and descended upon the Central American nation, determined to lend their skills and labor to the social-democratic Sandinista cause. Using an eclectic mixture of rare archival footage, arresting still photography, and contemporary interviews, *American/Sandinista* tells the story of a small group of controversial U.S. engineers who went further than anyone expected, and paid the ultimate price. 2008. English, 30 minutes.

Approach of Dawn

A personal view of the human rights struggle in Guatemala, this documentary shares the story of three women whose lives were shattered by genocidal war--the longest civil war in Latin America. A deeply moving look at the severe cost of violent conflict. English, 52 minutes.

El Charango

This short documentary is about a little instrument, a large silver mine and the highest city in the world. Cerro Rico in Potosi, Bolivia, was discovered by Spanish conquistadors in 1545, who enslaved the local indigenous people. It is said that 8 million people, including African slaves, died in the mines of this mountain while providing Spain with immense wealth. The Spanish culture spread into Potosi, and the local people became aware of something they had never seen or heard before: a stringed instrument. Forbidden from ever playing the Spanish guitar, the miners copied it and created the charango. The story of the charango symbolizes the larger struggle for human rights and a quest to keep traditional culture alive among indigenous people. 2006. Spanish with English subtitles, 22 minutes.

Chiapas: The Fight for Land and Liberty

This film was produced by Award-winning producers John Alpert and Maryann DeLio in the aftermath of the events of the first week of January, 1994. This behind-the-scenes film portrays the life of the indigenous in Chiapas and shows why, for them, revolution makes sense. Contains interviews with peasants, human rights workers, and government officials, among others. 1994. English with Spanish subtitles, 28 minutes.

Children of the Sun

This film is a documentary about the *Awas Tingni vs. Nicaragua* case, known today as the first legal victory for an indigenous community at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. The



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Awas Tingni community attempted to bring a communal land rights case before a Nicaraguan tribunal court but after years of delay and inaction, the community finally turned to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. In 2001, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights ruled in favor of the Awas Tingni community. The Court considered the right to indigenous ancestral lands a human right. 2001. Various with English subtitles, 48 minutes.

Dance of Hope

Against the backdrop of the 1988 plebiscite which led to the defeat of Pinochet's government, this film examines key issues of social policy and human rights in Chile through the portraits of eight women. Many of the women are members of the Association of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared. 1989. Spanish with English subtitles, 75 minutes.

The Dark Light of Dawn

Commissioned by the Guatemala Human Rights Commission, this documentary examines the recent years of conflict in Guatemala. Traces the manipulation of political power in the country and shows that after the return of civilian rule, military repression has not abated. Includes depictions of human rights violations, especially against the Indigenous population. English, 28 minutes.

The Facilitator (El Facilitador)

A political thriller about human rights, *The Facilitator* is one of the most successful films to come out from Ecuador in the last few years. When Miguel, a successful businessman finds out about his illness, he asks his estranged daughter Elena to come back to Ecuador. She complies, but keeps a cold and distant relationship with him, opting to spend most of her time with friends using drugs and alcohol. After a close call with the law, Miguel sends her to spend some time with her grandfather at the family's estate. In this nostalgic house that brings up so many memories and nightmares, Elena meets her childhood friend Galo, who now promotes water access rights for the indigenous community. Elena is compelled by their way of life and gets involved with the political organization of the community. When her nightmares intensify, Elena starts digging behind the reports of the car accident that supposedly killed her mother. Elena will gradually understand that among family secrets, crimes, corruption, and dark previsions commitment and beauty can emerge. Spanish with English subtitles, 83 minutes.

Funny Dirty Little War (No habra mas penas ni olvido)

A civil war erupts in a quiet rural Argentine village when a local Peronist politician claims a municipal clerk is a communist. This savage, black comedy exposes the roots of the official terrorism that Argentina suffered under the dictatorship. The political content is relevant. Spanish with English subtitles, 80 minutes.

Human Rights in Haiti

In a masterful blend of exclusive historical footage, interviews, and artwork, this film takes viewers through the history of the Haitian people and their struggle for their rights. A slave



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revolt in 1791 and a second war against colonial France led to Haiti becoming the first independent Black republic in 1804. After suffering under tyrants for decades, most recently the infamous Duvalier (Papa Doc) and his son, the Haitians finally elected Jean Bertrand Aristide, a reformer. Haiti's troubles continued when the military overthrew Aristide, although he later returned. The film focuses on the victims of the more than 40,000 human rights violations that have taken place in this troubled country. UN observers are instituting new methods such as town meetings, mediation training, and community policemen. 2000. English, 58 minutes.

I Defend the Jungle

The CGC oil company invades the Sarayacu territory to conduct geographical surveys without the permission of the people who live there. The people attempt to defend their society, culture, and environment against pollution and human rights violations when the government decides to support the oil company. 2003. Spanish with English subtitles, 22 minutes.

Justice and the Generals

At a time of civil war in El Salvador -- when 75,000 people were disappeared or killed -- four American churchwomen were abducted, raped, and murdered. Many Salvadorans were tortured, and some lived to tell their tales. Who was responsible for such atrocities? In separate but related cases, two Salvadoran generals face trial in American civil court. JUSTICE AND THE GENERALS investigates these human-rights cases. English, 86 minutes.

Killer's Paradise

Since 1999, more than two thousand women have been murdered in Guatemala, with the numbers escalating every year. Yet lawmakers and government officials just turn a blind eye. Powerful and uncompromising, Killer's Paradise uncovers one of the most emotionally wrenching human rights abuses taking place, while exposing the impunity allowed by an inept judicial system. No one knows who is behind these atrocious acts and nothing is being done to find the culprits. Cases are routinely closed and the murdered women dismissed as nobodies. But there are traces of hope: a grassroots human rights movement is emerging. Fuelled by frustration, anger, great sadness and loss, women and men like Norma Cruz, Maria Elena Peralta, and Jorge Velasquez are coming together for a common fight in the name of their daughters, wives and sisters. Killer's Paradise documents their heartbreaking stories and gripping testimonies to the stark reality in Guatemala. English and Spanish with English subtitles, 83 minutes.

The Man We Called Juan Carlos

Wenceslao Armira, the man we called "Juan Carlos", was a farmer, teacher, guerilla, priest - and father of two children murdered by death squads. This film is an extraordinary story of an 'ordinary' Mayan from the highlands of Guatemala, who, in unexpected ways, affected the lives of the Canadian filmmakers for over 25 years, as they recorded his life. A very personal story, it explores the intersection of disparate lives, North and South, through coincidence and timing, across borders, and history. The life of "Juan Carlos" raises difficult questions about all of or



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connections to human rights, and social justice, and how we choose to make a difference in the world. 2000. English and Spanish with English subtitles, 53 minutes

National Stadium

After a military coup overthrew the elected government of Chile on September 11, 1973, the capital's National Stadium became the scene of the indiscriminate mass detentions of more than 12,000 suspected dissidents. This film is the first in-depth investigation into the events that took place in the stadium, using testimony from more than 30 witnesses including former prisoners, priests, soldiers, journalists, nurses, and neighbors. This film opens with the 2000 presidential elections held in the stadium, where one of the vote counters who was also a detainee muses on the irony that in people were exercising their democratic rights in the same place where people were detained and robbed of their freedom. Moving back and forth through time, the film juxtaposes historical footage with contemporary interviews with survivors. 2001. Spanish with English subtitles, 60 minutes.

Para la comunidad Desde la comunidad (By the People for the People)

An enduring problem in the history of human relations is to see others as they really are. Every culture creates its own perceptual world, and every culture must be seen in its own terms. When ethnographic film first began, it pioneered a movement to document the disappearing lifestyles of non-Western cultures. But after the 1960s, the desire emerged to shift away from documentation by outside observers and towards an overall assertion of the natives' right to self-determination, allowing indigenous people to create their own image for the first time. For indigenous groups in Bolivia, the acquisition of film technology has spurred a movement to create their own body of mass media, using it as a powerful tool for cultural and political self-determination. As they continue to demand greater representation in the national political process, Bolivia's indigenous majority has discovered that the key is producing their own audio-visual media, showing the realities and problems of various communities throughout the country to what has become an international audience. 2007. Spanish and English with English subtitles, 14 minutes.

Radio Venceremos

The founding of Radio Venceremos corresponded with the beginning of a civil war in El Salvador that pitted a group of militant rebels, the FMLN, against a brutal military dictatorship. For the next 11 years, Santiago served as the voice of the clandestine FMLN radio, broadcasting his reports with a 40-yr-old transmitter that had seen service in World War II while constantly evading capture by the military in the northeastern hills of the nation. Radio Venceremos was one of the few sources of oppositional press in El Salvador during the reign of the repressive military regime. As such, Santiago and his team were among the first to report on the infamous massacre at El Mozote and other atrocities committed by government troops, played a major role in recruiting campesino support for the rebel cause, and provided popular education about



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socialist ideals and Salvadoran history. Radio Venceremos was also used to assist in military operations. English, 12 minutes.

Rebel: Loreta Velazquez, Secret Soldier of the American Civil War

In 1861, at the outbreak of the American Civil War, a teenager from New Orleans headed to the front lines. Under the alias Harry T. Buford, he fought at the First Bull Run, was wounded at Shiloh, and served as a Confederate spy. But Buford harbored a secret - he was really Loreta Velazquez, a Cuban immigrant from New Orleans. By 1863 Velazquez was spying for the Union. She scandalized America when she revealed her story in her 1876 memoir, *The Woman in Battle*. Attacked not only for her criticism of war, but her sexuality and social rule-breaking, Velazquez was dismissed as a hoax for 150 years but evidence confirms she existed, one of over 1,000 women soldiers who served in the Civil War. Actors and historians bring Velazquez' story to life in this documentary, weaving drama and animation with historical and archival material to unravel the mystery of this secret soldier. *Rebel* is a detective story about a woman, a myth, and the politics of national memory. English, 51 minutes.

Rigoberta Menchu: Broken Silence

This program presents a profile of this extraordinary woman, winner of the Nobel Peace prize in 1992 and outspoken human rights activist. Her life has become a symbol of the sufferings of the indigenous people of the Americas. 1993. VHS ONLY. English, 25 minutes.

The Situation

Portrays two years of daily life for a fictional peasant family in El Salvador amid the death squads and CIA intrigues of the civil war. The film was produced by a team of U.S. journalists including Richard Boyle, whose experiences in filming this documentary formed the basis of the fictional film Salvador. Bridgestone Production Group. 1985. English, 90 minutes.

Sweating for a T-Shirt

This movie begins with UCLA freshman Arlen Benjamin stopping by the campus gift shop to buy a T-shirt and noticing that it was made in Honduras. This sends her and us on a journey through Honduras' sweatshop industry. She meets with workers, factory owners, union organizers, and human rights activists. Then she interviews her fellow students back home who then rally at Brown University where the students have just forced their administration to adopt fair labor standards for the production of clothing bearing their college logo. 2000. English, 24 minutes.

Txai Macedo

Deep in Brazil's Amazon Forest, Antonio Macedo leads an alliance of Indian and White rubber tappers in a fight against rubber barons, land owners, drug lords, and the corrupt legal system which protects them. This film reveals the exploitation encountered by inhabitants of the Alto Jurua Reserve, and the steps Macedo has taken to defend these people's rights in the dwindling



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rain forest. At the time of release, Macedo had survived a seventh attempt on his life. 1992. English, 50 minutes.

Without Papers (Sin Papeles)

Without Papers chronicles the lives of two undocumented students attending college in America. 2008. English, 12 minutes.

A Woman's Place: Footprints of Sorrow

This program focuses on war widows in Guatemala. Today there are 45,000, mostly uneducated, women who lost their husbands as a result of decades of political violence, and who have been marginalized in Guatemalan society. But a group of them formed Conavigua (The Committee of Guatemalan Widows), which is fighting back, holding literacy classes and encouraging political participation. They are demanding that their rights as indigenous women be recognized and that human rights violations are brought to an end. The film comes from the "A Woman's Place" series, six 10 min film produced for the UN Beijing Conference on Women, filmed entirely on location by women directors. Spanish with English subtitles, 10 minutes.