

Newsreel, Third World Newsreel, California Newsreel

Newsreel was a production and distribution company founded in 1967 in response to the political turmoil that surrounded the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights movement. Its mission was to find audiences for socially relevant documentaries with a New Left perspective.

Shunning the professional polish of mainstream productions, Newsreel embraced the aesthetic of raw immediacy that was prevalent in the newly flourishing underground press, rock music, cinema verite and poster art. The student movement (COLUMBIA REVOLT), racism (BLACK PANTHER) and Vietnam (NO GAME; PEOPLE'S WAR) were among the subjects Newsreel addressed. Feminist consciousness raising efforts were documented in films such as THE WOMAN'S FILM, produced collectively by women, and MAKEOUT. Films made in association with Newsreel were strongly influenced by the film style of Santiago Alvarez, who headed Cuban newsreel production units after the 1959 revolution. His films, such as L.B.J. and NOW omitted narration in favor of collages of found materials, stills, newsreel footage and fragments from speeches.



Films like Third World Newsreel's *Namibia: Independence Now!* (1985), pictured here, sought to increase awareness and activism by addressing political issues around the world.

In the early 1970's, many Newsreel offices disbanded. Today, Third World Newsreel in New York and California Newsreel in San Francisco continue to produce and distribute films which take a leftist position on subjects such as the role of South African women in the movement against apartheid (YOU HAVE STRUCK A ROCK!), the situation in Central America (THE MARRIAGE DINNER; CHRONICLE OF HOPE: NICARAGUA), feminism (PERMANENT WAVE), women in prison (INSIDE WOMEN INSIDE), the history of

Chinese immigrants in New York (FROM SPIKES TO SPINDLES) and battered wives and child abuse (TO LOVE, HONOR, AND OBEY; SUZANNE, SUZANNE). California Newsreel has also produced exposes of multinational corporations (CONTROLLING INTEREST) and economics in the Reagan administration (THE BUSINESS OF AMERICA).

COLLECTION PROFILE

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COLLECTION LIST

Please contact the Archive Research and Study Center (arsc@cinema.ucla.edu) to arrange research viewing

Young Lords (19--). History of Young Lords Party, a group of Puerto Ricans in New York City in 1969. Study Copy: VA6632 M

Hasta la Victoria Siempre (1965). ICAIC. Director, Santiago Alvarez. This film presents a strong indictment of U.S. military involvement in Bolivia. It contains televised speeches by Ernesto Che Guevara, intercut with photographs as well as footage from the hills of Bolivia. In his speech, Che discusses the importance of the Cuban revolution to Latin America and the role of the United States in perpetuating underdevelopment and poverty in Bolivia. [In Spanish, no English subtitles]. Study Copy: VA6618 M

Now (1965). ICAIC. Director, Santiago Alvarez. A powerful collage on racial discrimination in America set to a song sung by Lena Horne which had been banned in the United States. This short film essay is impressive not only for the resourcefulness with which it uses found materials, including pirated newsreel, but also for the syncopation of the editing, which intensifies the insistence of the song and leads up to its militant ending better than it would have done by slavishly following the music's surface beat. [In Spanish, with English subtitles]. Study Copy: VA6616 M

Troublemakers (1966). Blue Van Films. Directors, Norman Fruchter, Robert Machover. The film follows Tom Hayden and a contingent of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) activists who went into Newark's black community in 1965 to form the Newark Community Union Project. The film examines the problems faced by white organizers trying to effect change in the lives of poor black people. Study Copy: VA6621 M

L.B.J. (1967). ICAIC. Director, Santiago Alvarez. A striking compilation film, L.B.J. is a meditation on President Lyndon Baines Johnson, his life and times, as well as on some other "initialized" men who shared his spotlight in the tumultuous 1960's: JFK (John F. Kennedy); RFK (Robert F. Kennedy); and MLK (Martin Luther King, Jr.). Study Copy: VA6609 M

Black Panther (1968). Newsreel. One of Newsreels' most widely distributed and best made films, *Black Panther* provides a good overview of Panther philosophy and activity. Interviews with Panther leaders are juxtaposed with footage of rallies and demonstrations. The film also reiterates the ten-point program of the Black Panther Party. Study Copy: VA6623 M

Columbia Revolt (1968). Newsreel. Documentary film about the Columbia University student protests of 1968. It features a number of off-camera interviews with unnamed students who were involved in the takeover of university buildings. Study Copy: VA1974 M

Garbage (1968). Newsreel. During a prolonged garbage collectors' strike in New York City, a group of youths from the Lower East Side of Manhattan decide to use the situation to make a political statement. Collecting garbage from the streets of their community, they deposit piles of it on the grounds of Lincoln Center, "The Establishment's" cultural showcase. Study Copy: VA6629 M

No Game (1968). Newsreel. In October 1967, a hundred thousand people marched on the Pentagon to demand an end to the war in Vietnam. A number of filmmakers were there, documenting the event. They later pooled their footage to produce this film--the first Newsreel film. *No Game* depicts the peaceful march on Washington that turned into an occupation of the Pentagon grounds. Newsreel cameras were also there in the midst of fixed bayonets and billy clubs as the military turned on the peaceful demonstrators. The film provides valuable documentation of this historic event but little narration to explain the footage. Study Copy: VA6613 M

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Up Against the Wall, Miss America (1968). Newsreel. Filmmakers, Susan Adelman, Miriam Boxer, Beverly Grant, Carole Ann Jones, Karen Jones, Karen Mitnick, Allan Siegel. At the 1968 Miss America pageant, demonstrators introduced a sheep as the appropriate winner. This entertaining short film shows how Women's Liberation activists used guerrilla theater to raise awareness of what Miss America represents in American culture. An interesting portrait of the early women's movement in action. Study Copy: VA6607 M

Yippie (1968). Newsreel. Filmed as an official statement of the Youth International Party, this film is as freewheeling and irreverent as the yippies themselves. It presents a yippie view of Chicago 1968, with Mayor Daley and the pig the yippies ran for president. The film juxtaposes orgy scenes from D.W. Griffith's *Intolerance* and Keystone Cops chase scenes with yippie antics in Chicago. The film also explores the issue of police brutality--both humorously and with an undercurrent of deep anger. Although this film was actually produced by yippies, Newsreel adopted the film for circulation in its national network. Study Copy: VA6637 M

America (1969). Newsreel. Against the background of the November 1969 anti-Vietnam war demonstration in Washington D.C., *America* documents the escalation of the protest movement. Although there is little commentary to explain the footage, conversations with Vietnam vets, young teenagers, and black militants help put the newsreel footage into context. The film graphically depicts the mass protest actions and police repression. Study Copy: VA6614 M

People's War (1969). Newsreel. This film records the resistance to foreign military aggression through the mobilization and participation of the Vietnamese people as they fought for their country's independence. Moving beyond the perception of the Vietnamese people as victims, the film investigates a society committed to the long struggle for national liberation. A struggle for freedom that takes place on many levels and calls for all human resources of a society is referred to as a "people's war". Study Copy: VA6631 M

Primaveras (Seventy-Nine Springtimes) (1969). ICAIC. Director, Santiago Alvarez. Alvarez's impressionist biography on the leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Vietnam is a skillful interweaving of still photos, newsreel footage, and Ho's poetry. Depicting a life that spanned three revolutions, three continents, and three wars, the film charts Ho Chi Minh's progression from militant student to leader of Vietnam's revolutionary movement. The visual montage style of *The Seventy-Nine Springtimes* of Ho Chi Minh is accompanied by a dynamic soundtrack featuring the music of Adelberto Galvez. Study Copy: VA6622 M

She's Beautiful When She's Angry (1969). Newsreel. Filmed during an abortion rights rally in 1969, a group of women perform a piece of guerrilla theatre. The Capitalist, Ad Man, Boyfriend, and Mother all try to tell a young woman how to be an Ideal Woman. Before the performance, the all-female cast discusses these roles and what they mean. The performance itself is lovely, entertaining, and instructive. Study Copy: VA6634 M

Summer of '68 (1969). Directors, Norman Fruchter, John Douglas. This documentary provides an in-depth examination of activities surrounding the demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. The film explores draft resistance organizing, the growth of G.I. coffeehouses, the development of alternative media such as the underground paper *Rat*, and Newsreel itself. Central to all these concerns is the organizing of the Chicago protest. Newsreel cameras were there at planning sessions, rap sessions, as well as in the streets of Chicago during the confrontations with Mayor Daley's cops. Study Copy: VA6633 M

My Country Occupied (1971). Newsreel. American involvement in Guatemala. Study Copy: VA6624 M

Only the Beginning (1971). Newsreel. In April, 1971, thousands of G.I.s came to Washington, D.C., to protest the Vietnam war. In dramatic fashion, they stood in front of the U.S. Capitol and threw away their medals. From the point of view of the veterans themselves, this film examines conditions that led many decorated Vietnam veterans to such displays of non-collaboration. Study Copy: DVD9466 M

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The Woman's Film (1971). San Francisco Newsreel. Produced collectively by women, this film delves into the lives of ordinary women from many different racial, educational, and class backgrounds. The women talk about the daily realities of their lives as wives, homemakers, and workers. They speak, sometimes with hesitancy, often with passion, about the oppression of women. Filmed mostly in small consciousness-raising groups, from where the women's movement drew its initial impetus, *The Woman's Film* shows how far women have come--and how very much further they must yet go to achieve the changes that many women call for. Study Copy: VA6628 M

Janie's Janie (1972). Directors, Geri Ashur, Peter Barton. This historical film highlights the experiences of a divorced white welfare mother in New Jersey as she talks about her new consciousness and growing self confidence. Study Copy: VA6615 M

Makeout (1972). Newsreel. This film shows a young couple making out in a car. On the soundtrack, we hear the young woman's stream of consciousness thoughts. She worries about her reputation and whether he'll try to "go all the way". A good example of prefeminist consciousness raising. Study Copy: VA6606 M

From Spikes to Spindles (1976). Third World Newsreel. Director, Christine Choy. This raw and gutsy portrait of New York's Chinatown captures the early days of an emerging consciousness in the community. With bold strokes, Choy paints an overview of the community and its history, from the early laborers driving spikes into the transcontinental railroad to the garment workers of today's Chinatown. Study Copy: VA6619 M

Controlling Interest (1978). California Newsreel. This is a seminal expose of the role of multinational corporations in the Third World as well as in the United States. The film examines the role of multinationals in Brazil, Chile, and the Dominican Republic. The repressive, undemocratic regimes that rule these countries have opened the doors to U.S. investment--and resulted in the further impoverishment of the population. *Controlling Interest* also examines the issues surrounding plant closures in the United States and how this phenomenon ties in with expanding overseas investment. Study Copy: VA6625 M

Inside Women Inside (1978). Third World Newsreel. Directors, Christine Choy, Cynthia Maurizio. This award-winning and much screened film exposes the personal degradation that women prisoners experience on a daily basis. Personal testimonies from inmates at the North Carolina Correctional Center for Women and the Correctional Institute for Women at Riker's Island, New York, reveal the prevailing inhumane conditions, including overcrowded cells, lack of nutritious and properly prepared food, and feudal wages for backbreaking manual labor. The film also provides a unique view of how women are forced to deal with such commonplace occurrences as family conflicts, illness, and pregnancy while incarcerated. Study Copy: VA6610 M

To Love, Honor and Obey (1980). Third World Newsreel. Directors, Christine Choy, Marlene Dunn. Focusing on battered wives and including an in-depth discussion of child abuse, *To Love, Honor, and Obey* explores the social, psychological, and cultural factors that contribute to violence against women in the home and in society. The documentary was filmed in shelters for battered women, urban and suburban neighborhoods, counseling centers, and in a county jail where a woman has been incarcerated for the murder of her abusive husband. Produced to educate a wide general audience, *To Love, Honor, and Obey* uses material from magazines, advertisements, and historical documents, as well as popular music to illustrate the pervasiveness of this rarely discussed aspect of American family life. Study Copy: VA6627 M

Bittersweet Survival (1982). Third World Newsreel. Directors, Christine Choy, Orinne J.T. Tagaki. A story of the Vietnam war that was rarely acknowledged involved the resettlement of thousands of Southeast Asian refugees across the United States. Their reception in the United States has been a mixed one: in Monterey, California, the Vietnamese arrivals and local fisherman are at odds; in Philadelphia, a refugee resettlement in the middle of the city's poorest neighborhoods has kindled sparks of resentment from the black community. *Bittersweet Survival* examines the roots of these problems and efforts within the refugee communities to resolve them. Study Copy: VA6612 M

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Suzanne, Suzanne (1982). Third World Newsreel. Directors, Camille Billops, James V. Hatch. This short documentary profiles a young black woman's struggle to confront the legacy of a physically abusive father and a headlong flight into drug abuse. It is also the story of her mother and the wife battering she endured. This intimate film provides inspiration and insight for all who seek to allay the long-term damage of domestic violence. Study Copy: VA6605 M

The Business of America (1984). California Newsreel. This is an examination of plant closures in the steel industry and the workers' trust betrayed. Addressed to the disillusioned working class of a Reaganized America. Study Copy: VA6626 M

Chronicle of Hope: Nicaragua (1985). Third World Newsreel. Director, Allan Siegel. This film offers an intimate look at a journey undertaken by some ordinary Americans to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Nicaragua. It begins in New York City where a truck collects medical supplies, then continues down the Eastern seaboard to Florida, collecting more medical goods from church groups, human rights organizations, and individuals. The Americans travel to Managua, Corinto, and to the coffee-growing areas in the northwest. Through the poignant testimony of Nicaraguan peasant women, we see the real impact of U.S.-financed aggression. *Chronicle of Hope: Nicaragua* gives a privileged look into the hearts and lives of both North Americans and Nicaraguans as they struggle to create a more just world. Study Copy: VA6630 M

Namibia: Independence Now! (1985). Third World Newsreel. Directors, Christine Choy, Pearl Bowser. Filmed inside settlements in Zambia and Angola, *Namibia: Independence Now!* examines how Namibians, exiled from their homeland, are working to free their country from South African and transnational corporate exploitation. The film focuses particularly on the activities of Namibian women who are in the forefront of the struggle. Interspersing song and poetry with interviews and beautifully photographed images. Study Copy: VA6608 M

The Marriage Dinner (1986). Third World Newsreel. This dramatic film examines the frustration in a Salvadoran household where the young niece, Elena, has married a middle-class Chicano named Jim. Tensions arise when Elena's relatives invite Jim to a celebration dinner in their home. Jim, alienated from his own language and culture, is surprised to learn about the situation in Central America. Although initially only wanting to earn some "easy cash," Jim soon learns that there are many hard realities faced by Salvadorans living in the United States and at home. Study Copy: VA6611 M

Panic is the Enemy (1986). Third World Newsreel. Director, Karen Mason. In December, 1984, Bernhard Goetz shot four youths in a New York City subway car, allegedly in self-defense. This short video examines the press attention showered on Goetz and, through on-the-street interviews, examines the racist implications of Goetz's form of "panic". Study Copy: VA6620 M

Permanent Wave (1986). Film News Now/ Third World Newsreel. Directors, Christine Choy, Renée Tajima. Set in a shopping mall beauty salon during Christmas time, this fast-paced drama satirizes the familiar sitcom format with a serious twist. The "Beautiful Dreamer Salon" is owned by Eva, a single parent, who manages to juggle her clients, her employees, her daughter, and her stockbroker all in a day's work. Permanent Wave's humorous edge in no way diminishes the question of sexual violence; rather, it allows a deeper look at the so-called harmless sexual advances of men towards women and other issues that lie just below the surface of everyday life in the workplace. Study Copy: VA6617 M

Black and Blue (1987). Third World Newsreel. Directors, Lamar Williams, Hugh King. A vigorous array of archival, documentary and news footage, chronicles two decades of deadly force against people of color by Philadelphia police, and impassioned community response to police brutality in the "City of Brotherly Love". According to the film, over 1,000 incidents of police brutality against minority victims have been protested by victims, their families, and the community, in the past ten years alone. The filmmakers present these realities against the self-prescribed images of police as defenders of the peace. Study Copy: VA6635 M

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Mississippi Triangle (1987). Third World Newsreel. Directors, Christine Choy, Worth Long, and Allan Siegel. A richly textured, intimate portrait of life in the Mississippi Delta, where Chinese, African Americans and whites live in a complex world of cotton, work, and racial conflict. A varied and richly photographed landscape is interwoven with rare historical footage and interviews of long-time Delta residents. In lively verite style, Mississippi Triangle captures the pace and fabric of daily life. Study Copy: VA6603 M

PRINT RESOURCES

(for more information consult the **UCLA Arts Library**)

Third World Newsreel (Film/Video Catalogue). New York: Newsreel, 1998.

Nichols, William James. *Newsreel Microform: Documentary Filmmaking on the American Left (1971-1975)*. UCLA PhD Thesis, 1978.