



Global Environmental Justice Documentaries Focus on Asia

To be produced by **FACE TO FACE MEDIA**

In association with **WHITTIER COLLEGE**

with the participation of **THE GLOBAL REPORTING CENTRE AT UBC**

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WARMING UP IN MONGOLIA

Mongolian herders affected by climate change are moving to the city where many end up in live in sprawling, polluted slums. The government in Ulaanbaatar is working with international development agencies to help the herders – and the capital city – adapt to a modern world. (photo news.sohu.com)

Only a handful of films are picked up by established distributors and even fewer find their way into classrooms. The rest often remain undiscovered.

Overview

Global Environmental Justice Documentaries

Stories about ecology, environment, and human rights

Focus on Asia

Documentaries can increase awareness of environmental issues in Asia

The goal of this three year project is to create and distribute an innovative documentary collection that will increase awareness of under-reported environmental issues in Asia. The films, supported by classroom guides and curriculum units will support Asian studies faculty by enabling them to better address critical topics affecting the region. It will also expose students and faculty in other fields of study to environmental issues in Asia.

Faculty are looking for films

A survey conducted by Face to Face Media of 25 faculty from LIASE campuses and 75 faculty from other colleges and universities found that educators are looking for engaging and relevant documentaries that tackle these issues. However, the educators also felt they didn't have the time, funds, or expertise required to locate, license, or edit and close caption films for classroom use.

There is no shortage of films to choose from. Each year dozens of documentaries on related topics are produced and released at environmental film festivals around the world. But only a handful of these films will be picked up by educational distributors. The fees charged by distributors for educational licenses are, from the university librarian's perspective, high. As a result only a small fraction of the relevant films find their way into classrooms.

This project proposes to bridge this gap between filmmakers and educators by rounding up good films, editing them as needed, commissioning teaching guides and delivering the collection online.

The project will be carried out in collaboration with faculty at the Whittier College LIASE initiative and with support from the Global Reporting Centre at the University of British Columbia. Fiscal sponsorship will be provided by the Los Angeles based International Documentary Association (IDA).

The proposed project will launch with 15 titles from Asia. Another four titles will be added each year bringing the number of Asian titles to 23 or more by the third year. In addition to the Asian documentaries which will be supported by Foundation funding, Face to Face Media will – at its own expense – add programs from other regions. This will raise the total number of titles in the collection to 36 or more by the third year. As the collection expands, Asian documentaries will remain a primary focus.

The project is designed to be self-sustaining by the third year and has a projected life span of 7-10 years.



GOLD'S LETHAL TOLL IN INDONESIA

Small-scale gold mining, widespread throughout the developing world, is one of the biggest sources of mercury pollution. A film by photojournalist Larry Price, part of a PBS Emmy-award winning series.

Relevance: Asian Studies, Mining, Air and Water Pollution, Toxic Chemicals. Activism



DAYAKS AND DRONES: USING GPS AND DRONES TO PROTECT THE FOREST IN INDONESIA

Community rights, the environment and development go hand in hand in this story from North Kalimantan.

Relevance: Asian Studies, Sustainability, Agriculture, Development, Forests, Logging, Technology, Success Stories, Fishing, Water.

Why examine Asian environmental issues through an environmental justice lens?

We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental.

– Pope Francis

Environmental Justice is an excellent way to engage students in the study of environmental issues because it incorporates the scientific examination of the cause and effects of environmental issues with personal and community impacts.

– Interdisciplinary Teaching about Earth for a Sustainable Future
InTeGrate serc.carleton.edu

The field of environmental justice asks for fair treatment of all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, economic capacity, national origin, and education level with respect to environmental politics and their implementations.

– Amity Doolittle, Yale School of Forestry



SHELTER IN PLACE • USA

Texas industries are allowed to release millions of tons of toxic pollutants each year. When additional 'accidental' or 'unscheduled' releases take place local residents are told to stay indoors and "shelter in place." Communities living on the border of these Texas industries are often poor, African American and powerless to protest. This film is an intimate portrait of a community taking action.

Relevance: North American Studies, Air and Water Pollution, Toxic Chemicals, Law, Activism., Inequality, Community Studies, Sustainability

A global movement with American roots

Environmental justice originally emerged as a movement in the United States in the 1980s as activists drew attention to the disproportionate number of polluting industries, power plants, and waste disposal sites that are located near low-income or minority communities.

Today the EJ movement is expanding to become a loose-knit global movement that addresses the combined environmental and human rights issues raised by development, globalization, inequality and climate change worldwide. Many universities now offer courses, certificates and degrees in the field of social and environmental justice. To address this history, Face to Face Media will add – at its own expense – several documentaries that address environmental justice issues in North America. This will facilitate relevant comparisons between issues in Asia and those closer to home.

For example, comparisons could be made between the health problems caused by toxic emissions from factories near low income neighborhoods in the American south and the impact of toxic waste from factories in China, India or Bangladesh.

Creating a core collection of Asian environmental films with broad appeal

The documentaries in the collection will be chosen for the quality of their journalism and storytelling, their ability to engage students and faculty, and their relevance for use in diverse disciplines

For example, Kaylanee Mam's documentary *Fight for the Areng Valley* describes the efforts of villagers and Buddhist monks who are trying to protect their forests, livelihood and heritage which are threatened by the construction of a hydroelectric dam. The women in the village are taking a leading role in the protest. This film could be used in Asian studies, environmental studies, indigenous studies, anthropology, journalism, ethics, gender studies, religion, law, sustainable development, etc.

The selection of the films overall will be the responsibility of Dr. Jason Carbine and the Whittier College Working Group, a (a subcommittee of Whittier's LIASE working group). Dr. Carbine will have input from faculty and librarians at other LIASE initiative campuses. He will also coordinate the writing of lesson plans and classroom testing of study guides and instruction modules to accompany the programs.

Potential for more rapid growth

The budget will allow editing and close captioning of 36 titles over the first three years. But if some of the selected titles require little or no editing we will be able to increase the number of titles more rapidly.



Rethinking the connection between filmmakers and educators

WHERE WE LIVE: THE CHANGING FACE OF CLIMATE ACTIVISM

Organized grassroots movements, one of the fastest-growing and most effective forces combating climate change, are highlighted in this documentary.

Today any number of students can view streaming titles together in the classroom or out of class, individually, on laptops or iPhones.

Streaming video: a new kind of distribution platform

The technology required to distribute a collection of films online to subscribing universities has evolved rapidly. Educational video distributors like Kanopy, DocuSeek2 and Alexander Street Press now offer thousands of titles online. This technology is revolutionizing the delivery of educational films. In the past universities purchased a single copy of a program on DVD for several hundred dollars and faculty showed the films in class. This distribution system had drawbacks including high cost of DVDs and the need to have group screenings during class time. Online streaming overcame many of these limitations; today any number of students can view streaming titles together in the classroom or out of class, individually, on laptops or iPhones. Distance education students are also better served.

But a number of barriers remain.

- Many films that are suitable for educational use are not handled by major distributors and are hard to find.
- Educators lack the time and resources to track down films and clear intellectual property rights for classroom use.
- Where titles are available, the cost per title – \$175-300 or more for a one year license – is often prohibitive for libraries with tight budgets.

A curated online collection, developed in close collaboration with educators, with underwriting from the foundation, can overcome these obstacles.

- Underwriting will cover development costs and allow the collection to be offered at between a tenth and a fifth of the cost of licensing the individual titles. So even if a university only uses 4 or 5 titles in a given year, the collection is still economical. If they use more, it's a bargain.
- A diverse collection selected by educators and supported by teaching will be trusted by educators, reviewed by academic publications, and discussed on social media platforms.
- The collection can continue to grow, making it even more cost-effective over time.
- The collection is library friendly: it comes with MARC records and generates user metrics.
- Filmmakers are partners in the project and will provide supplementary information on their websites.



A NEW MOON OVER TOHOKU: A FILM ABOUT THE RECOVERY OF THE JAPANESE SPIRIT

Linda Ohama chronicles the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident that devastated the coastal Japanese region of Tohoku.

Relevance: Asian Studies, Environmental Studies, Environmental Disasters, Urban Planning, Nuclear Engineering, Religion, Displaced peoples.



THE WARRIORS OF QIUGANG

Villagers in central China confront a chemical company that is poisoning their land and water in this rare portrait of grassroots activism in contemporary China.

Produced by an award winning team.

The founders of Face to Face Media, Gary Marcuse and Betsy Carson, have been producing documentaries for public broadcast and curated collections of films for educational use since 1988. Their first documentary collection, *First Nations the Circle Unbroken*, distributed by the National Film Board of Canada, became a standard resource for indigenous studies in secondary and post-secondary institutions in Canada for more than 20 years. A media literacy resource *Scanning Television* also became a standard resource in Canadian schools for nearly 20 years and was widely circulated in the US. Additional curated collections prepared for Harcourt Canada, Nelson Education and Pearson Education put more than 150 documentaries into university classrooms.

Project coordinator Gary Marcuse, who holds a degree in regional environmental planning from Cornell University, is also documentary director with an interest in Asian environmental stories. His feature documentary *Waking the Green Tiger, A Green Movement Rises in China* won eight international prizes including the Grantham Prize 2012 Special Award of Merit for Environmental Journalism and the Green China Film Award. It was translated into 13 languages and was broadcast in the US, Canada and Europe. Please see the appendix for additional information about our projects.



SUMATRA'S LAST TIGERS

Do tigers have a right to survive? As Sumatra's forest disappears and prey species dwindle, tigers are attacking villagers. Hope for the species lies with a small group of dedicated individuals who are risking their lives to save the tigers.

Face to Face Media: Examples of previous collaborations with educators

Face to Face Media, based in Vancouver, Canada, has been producing documentaries for public broadcast and educational use since 1986. Producers Gary Marcuse and Betsy Carson often collaborate with educators and the National Film Board of Canada in the creation of collections of documentaries. Several of these projects have become standard resources and have been in circulation for up to twenty years. Previous educational projects include:

1994, 1998 • *First Nations, The Circle Unbroken*

Volumes 1-7. 36 short documentaries with accompanying teaching guides, developed in close collaboration with teachers. Distributed by the National Film Board of Canada. This project is one of the most successful projects in the history of the NFB. Widely adopted for use in teaching First Nations history in Canadian schools and universities for more than 20 years.

1996, 2003 • *Scanning Television: Videos for Media Literacy Studies*

A media literacy project with a total of 91 short videos and teacher's guides developed in collaboration with a national network of media educators in Canada and the U.S. Bronze Medal NY Festivals. Widely used for media education for 20 years.

Please see the appendix for additional information about Face to Face Media and biographies of the producers.