

**Reviews of Films Available for Classroom Use  
(Teaching Resources Center)**

**30 Frames a Second: The WTO in Seattle**

*Synopsis:*

"Ex-CBS cameraman, Rustin Thompson, takes his camera into the fray of tear gas, pepper spray, and police control; behind the lines and inside the convention center and press rooms; and along the marches, sit-ins, and demonstrations at the WTO convention in Seattle. Dynamic, up-close footage captures the passion, confusion, the anger, of everyone involved- from protesters to police to delegates to bureaucrats. Thompson goes in with an open mind, but as a result of what he witnesses, reflects on whether objective news coverage is ever possible. The result is an impressionistic journal of a decisive week that exploded into a massive expression of freedom: of speech, of assembly, and the press."

*Topics:* Politics, communications, social movements, citizenship, civil rights, mass media and society, globalization, and history.

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Volume 1: What is Statistics?**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

"Discover how this complex discipline is relied upon to get to the heart of great quantities of information. Historical anecdotes and brief profiles of contemporary applications provide an overview of statistics."

*Topics/Concepts:* statistics overview

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Volume 2: Picturing Distributions**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

"Are patterns perfect predictors? Construct stemplots, frequency tables, and histograms, and understand the importance of pattern deviations, including gaps and outliers, in examples drawn from meteorology, traffic control and television programming."

*Topics/Concepts:* distributions

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 3: Describing Distributions**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

A few good numbers can be worth a thousand words. Examine the difference between mean and median and learn of quartiles, boxplots, interquartile range, and standard deviation. Also discussed is the advantage of back-to-back stemplots. An example of pay inequity illustrates the principles.

*Topics/Concepts:* distributions

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 4: Normal Distributions**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

How do studies on batting averages in baseball and age changes in population find expression in density curves? A series of simplifications shows the progression from histogram to a single normal curve for standardized measurement. Included are mean, median and percentiles for density curves, and the 68-95-99.7 rule.

*Topics/Concepts:* normal distributions

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 5: Normal Calculations**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Vehicle emission standards and medical studies of cholesterol give practical examples of normal calculations at work. Covered are standardization and calculation of normal relative frequencies from tables, assessing normality by normal quintile plots.

*Topics/Concepts:* standardization, calculating frequencies

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 6: Time Series**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Discover how statistics can help identify patterns over time, answering questions about stability and change. Trends in the stock market and studies of sleep cycles illustrate these concepts. Topics include statistical control; inspecting time series for trend, seasonal variation, cycles; and smoothing by averaging.

*Topics/Concepts:* time series

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 7: Models for Growth**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Topics include linear growth, with review of the geometry of straight lines; an introduction to the least squares idea; exponential growth, and straightening an exponential growth curve by logarithms; prediction and extrapolation. Studies of children's growth problems and of world oil production provide examples.

*Topics/Concepts:* models for growth

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 8: Describing Relationships**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Scatterplots and their variations are discussed in examples drawn from weight-loss programs to manatee protection. Also covered are smoothing scatterplots of response versus explanatory variables by median trace; linear relationships, least squares regression lines, and comment on outliers.

*Topics/Concepts:* describing relationships

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 9: Correlation**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Find out how to derive the correlation coefficient and how to interpret it, using the relationship between a baseball player's salary and his home-run statistics as one example. A study of identical twins further illustrates correlation concepts.

*Topics/Concepts:* correlation

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 10: Multidimensional Data Analysis**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

This program recaps the presentation of data analysis by showing the use of computing technology and a case study at Bell Communications Research. A study on environmental stresses in the Chesapeake Bay demonstrates the value of statistical principles.

*Topics/Concepts:* multidimensional data analysis

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 11: The Question of Causation**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Observed association many or may not represent causation. The relationship between smoking and lung cancer is examined. A study of admissions date illustrates Simpson's paradox.

*Topics/Concepts:* causation

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 12: Experimental Design**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Distinguish between observational studies and experiments and learn the basic principles of

design including comparison, randomization, and replication. Case material from a heart disease study shows the advantages of a doubles-blind experiment.

*Topics/Concepts:* experimental design

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 13: Blocking and Sampling: Experiments and Samples**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Understand random sampling and the difference between single-factor and multi-factor experiments and the kinds of questions each can answer. A study of agriculturalists' efforts to find improved varieties of strawberries demonstrates randomized block design.

*Topics/Concepts:* sampling and samples

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 14: Samples and Surveys: Sampling and Sampling Distributions**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Can small samples give accurate information? Stratified random sampling is explained. A 1936 Gallup election poll yields important information about the concept of undercoverage and the importance of careful use of sampling. See how a survey is designed to ensure randomness and avoid bias.

*Topics/Concepts:* sampling distributions

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 15: What is Probability?**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Distinguish between deterministic and random phenomena, and understand sample space, events, outcomes and probability models. Examples include the work of statistician Persi Diaconis on probability and randomness and a computer that models traffic scenarios.

*Topics/Concepts:* probability

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 16: Random Variables**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

How does a statistician calculate the probability of a space shuttle accident? How do geologists use statistics to predict earthquakes? Learn about the idea of independence; the multiplication rule for independent events; and discrete and continuous random variables.

*Topics/Concepts:* random variables

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 17: Binomial Distributions**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Find out how to calculate the mean and standard deviation of binomial distributions, and see how the Boston Museum of Science, illustrates concepts. Addition rules for the means and variance of random variables are defined in an example predicting sickle cell anemia.

*Topics/Concepts:* binomial distributions

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 18: The Sample Mean and Control Charts**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Roulette and the manufacturing industry offer real-life demonstrations of the use of the central limit theorem, control chart monitoring of random variation, creation of x-bar charts and definitions of control limits and out-of-control limits.

*Topics/Concepts:* sample means

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 19: Confidence Intervals**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Understand the two aspects of confidence intervals- the interval and the confidence level- and see how they are used in blood pressure studies, political and population surveys, and primate research. Included are z intervals for the mean of a normal distribution and behavior of confidence intervals.

*Topics/Concepts:* confidence intervals

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 20: Significance Tests**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

A hiring discrimination case and a study of Shakespearean authorship illustrate the basic reasoning behind tests of significance. The strengths and weaknesses of significance tests are assessed. Defined are null and alternative hypotheses and P- values.

*Topics/Concepts:* significance tests

**Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 21: Inference for One Mean**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Discover an improved technique for statistical problems that involve a population mean: the t statistic for use when  $\sigma$  is not known. Paired samples are emphasized as the most important practical use of these procedures. The t confidence interval and test and “robustness of t procedures” are defined.

*Topics/Concepts:* one mean inference

### **Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 22: Comparing Two Means**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Learn how to recognize a two-sample problem and to distinguish such samples from one-sample and paired-sample situations. Give a confidence interval for the difference between two means. Demonstrate the two-sample t test with conservative degrees of freedom.

*Topics/Concepts:* comparing two means

### **Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 23: Inference for Proportions**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

How do federal government statisticians estimate how many people are unemployed? What size sample can give accurate results? Discover confidence intervals and tests for a single proportion and for comparing proportions based on paired and independent samples.

*Topics/Concepts:* inference for proportions

### **Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 24: Inference for Two-Way Tables**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

A two-way table can show the relationship between two categorical variables in a single population or compare the distributions of a single categorical variable in several populations. The chi-square test for independence/equal distributions in two-way tables is covered.

*Topics/Concepts:* inference for two-way tables

### **Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 25: Inference for Relationships**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Understand inference for simple linear regression, emphasizing slope and prediction. Recognize when prediction is called for and the distinction between predicting a mean response and an individual response.

*Topics/Concepts:* inference for relationships

### **Against All Odds: Inside Statistics: Program 26: Case Study**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

See how statistical principles come together in a case study that illustrates planning the data collection, collecting and picturing the data, drawing inferences from the data, and deciding how confident to be about the conclusions.

*Topics/Concepts:* case studies

### **Beyond Macho**

Running Time: 26 minutes

*Synopsis:*

This clearly presented documentary illustrates changes in men's work and family-related gender roles due to both structural conditions and feminist gains. Men are increasingly taking on more responsibilities in their homes for childcare and domestic tasks, a change that is associated with various feelings, both positive and negative. We see this bifurcated response to men's shifting roles through poignant scenarios of a few families. The latter part of the film features a panel debating several gender-related issues, including: 1) Are gendered behaviors a biological given or a social construction? 2) What impact will changing gender roles have on families and, in particular, men? 3) Are men resisting or embracing these changes and why?

*Review:*

Although making reference to the 1980s dates the film, the patterns and processes of gender role shifts are still quite relevant and timely. The short time is also a plus for crowded course schedules. The cases used in this film provide a context that can facilitate a great discussion. Students can, for example, discuss the limitations of the individual scenarios presented in terms of their generalizability. Yet they can also note the applicability of changing gender roles in their own lives. Overall positive recommendation.

*Topics:*

Gender versus sex, masculinities, consequences of economic change and restructuring, intersection of gender and social class, family, socialization

### **Can You See the Color Gray?**

Running time: 54 minutes

*Synopsis:*

This unusual documentary is sure to inspire discussion and self-reflection in any course that deals with racial differences and stereotypes. It shows numerous people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds as they grapple with probing questions about their own ethnicity. The video is particularly revealing in its exploration of the subtle development of racial attitudes in children

of varying ages.

### **Caught in the Crossfire (1993)**

Running Time: 60 minutes

*Synopsis:*

“A powerful hour inside one housing project in New York City reveals just how much damage violence and the fear of violence are doing to America. Explore the root causes of violence in the home and on the streets of America. Take the statistics and stereotypes and put human faces on them. Despite the constant threat of violence, the inner city's seven- and eight-year-olds still dream of becoming "someone" when they grow up. By the time they reach middle teens, most don't care about their future because they doubt that they have one.”

*Review:*

Caught in the Crossfire is a straight-forward look at the reality of violence in the inner-city. While the focus is on the hand-gun related deaths of young black males, the filmmakers did not overlook the broader picture of race relations, economic conditions, education, and the drug trade. Each aspect is revealed through the experiences of individuals connected to this New York City housing project.

*Topics/Concepts:* Urban sociology, race/ethnicity, criminal deviance, “culture of poverty”, contemporary social problems.

### **A Century of Women: Image and Popular Culture**

Running Time: 95 minutes

*Synopsis:*

“Every generation has a story to tell. This landmark program tells the story of women in the 20th Century- how they lived, loved, worked, played and, most importantly, changed the course of American history. Using diaries, letters and personal memoirs, A Century of Women: Image and Popular Culture brings women of the past to life again with never-before-seen archival film, photographs and interviews that retrace the extraordinary events that changed women’s lives. This unusual and entertaining storytelling is facilitated by an original drama woven throughout the show via a fictional family. As members of this fictional family, portrayed by Academy Award winning actresses, talk about their own lives, we move into the factual stories of women from the past whose stories are told by outstanding actresses, including Sally Field, Meryl Streep, Jessica Lange, Glenn Close and Cicely Tyson. Jane Fonda provides the program’s overall narration. “Image and Popular Culture” explores the changing concepts of “ideal beauty” and how women see themselves. From the silver screen to television, through music, dance and art, the changing image of women is an important and entertaining part of the 20th century. Roseanne Arnold, Carol Burnett, Twyla Tharp, Chris Evert, Linda Bloodworth Thomason and Maya Angelou are among the contributors offering their insight in this definitive program about women and their role in shaping America.”

*Review:*

This film would work well in an interdisciplinary course. The length of the film is unwieldy for

courses operating on a tight schedule, but its division into three main topics might allow for editing possibilities. The first section on women and beauty can be criticized for reifying the salience of women's physical and sexual attractiveness. However, women's agentic capabilities to establish independence, success, and economic viability have also been a consequence of beauty's historical importance. The drama woven throughout the film adds precious minutes and is likely to be perceived by students as "corny." The film is best for an advanced course due to the length, the need for critical thinking ability, and the specificity of the topic. For these reasons, I give an ambivalent recommendation.

*Topics:*

Gender and mass media; methods (archival data; historical accounts); women and history; culture; intersection of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation

**Child Labor (2 volumes)**

Running time: 30 minutes each

*Synopsis:*

The first part of this set explains that despite legislation in nearly every country banning the practice of child labor, there are still in early 200 million child laborers worldwide. The second addresses the moral responsibility of corporations and consumers to combat child labor abuses by knowing where and under what conditions products are manufactured.

**Deadly Force (1980)**

Running Time: 60 minutes

*Synopsis:*

"The use of deadly force is a recurring and divisive issue in communities across the nation. This powerful and provocative documentary examines police accountability for civilian fatalities by zeroing in on a case (the Burkholder killing) that rocked city hall, stirred national press and resulted in the re-writing of gun policy for LAPD officers."

*Review:*

The b&w format of this documentary helps draw attention away from its 20-year-old production date. The circumstances of a single case are sometimes limiting, but it does suggest more generalizable themes. While the filmmakers obviously side with the friends and family of the shooting victim, they are not completely unsympathetic to the political complexities or the side of the LAPD. Although well edited, length may challenge undergraduates.

*Topics/Concepts:* Deviance, social control, bureaucracy, occupational socialization

**Family: First Comes Love, Then Comes Marriage**

Running time: 52 minutes

*Synopsis:*

From prehistoric extended families to today's double-income and single-parent families, the family as an institution has undergone dramatic change. This program examines the concept of

family as viewed around the world and down through time. Topics include family structure in agrarian societies, life in a polygamous family, the practice of infanticide, the effects of the Industrial Revolution, the impact of the Baby Boom, and the upsurge in generational alienation.

### **The First Measured Century**

Running Time: 180 minutes on 2 tapes

*Synopsis:*

“Though history is often related in anecdotal terms, THE FIRST MEASURED CENTURY analyzes history through data and measurement. This statistical analysis reveals how the lives of everyday Americans changed over the last century. Viewers discover a century where the United States went from half the size of the four biggest European nations to twice the size of all of them combined, and a nation of 50 million taking in 25 million immigrants in the course of two generations. Viewers also witness the ever-changing flow of city populations, as America becomes the first majority suburban nation; a nation with less mobility today than in 1900; the sharp rise and slow fall of violent crime rates and the country's increasing wealth.”

*Topics/Concepts:* applied statistics; recent history

### **Food for Thought (1990)**

Running Time: 28 minutes

*Synopsis:*

“Featuring science writer Roger Bingham, this is a fascinating update of information... about the environmental consequences of a meat-centered diet. Comparing a cow to a gas-guzzling automobile, Bingham explains the inefficiency of using meat as fuel for the human body, especially in light of the environmental impact of raising all that meat--from loss of topsoil, and groundwater depletion and pollution, to methane's contribution to global warming, and the growing gap between the rich and poor nations.”

*Topics/Concepts:* environmentalism; rural sociology

### **Forgotten Fires**

Running time: 57 minutes

*Synopsis:*

This film investigates the burning of two African-American churches in rural South Carolina by a young convert to the Ku Klux Klan. Filmed over a one-year period in Manning, South Carolina, this film goes behind simplistic news headlines and examines the historical, economic, and social contexts to the epidemic of church burnings in the 1990s. Skillfully interweaving Ku Klux Klan home movies with gripping live sequences, informative historical footage, and startling confessional testimony, the film traces the coming of the Klan to this sleepy rural town. The film comes with a study guide.

### **Fragile Harvest (1986)**

Running Time: 49 minutes

*Synopsis:*

“How safe is the future of the world's food? FRAGILE HARVEST explores a growing crisis in world agriculture. Plantbreeding has created today's crops, high yielding but vulnerable to disease and insects. To keep crops healthy, breeders tap all the genetic diversity of the world's food plants. But that rich resource is quickly being wiped out. Filmed in Ethiopia, Peru, Turkey, and North America, FRAGILE HARVEST finds “development” that has driven farmers from the land, increased dependence on agrichemicals, and eliminated indigenous adapted varieties of food crops. This has dramatically reduced the world's genetic pool upon which all our food depends. The new genetic engineering tools of plantbreeding that could promise solutions to world hunger are increasingly in the hands of multinational chemical companies that have taken over seed companies and are breeding and marketing seeds to suit their agrichemical interests. The very future of our food depends on how we are able to conserve the world's genetic resources and re-direct the goals of today's plantbreeding.”

*Topics/Concepts:* environmentalism; rural sociology; biotechnology; globalization

### **Globalization and the World Trade Organization**

Running time: 119 minutes

*Synopsis:*

This C-SPAN coverage of the Seattle protest against the WTO in December 1999 explains the debate over globalization of the economy. Participants debate the pros and cons of the World Trade Organization. Proponents of the WTO argue that membership benefits the economy, could further democratic institutions in developing countries through regulation, and that WTO rules and regulations provide sufficient protections for consumers, workers, and the environment. Opponents argue that the WTO is beholden to corporate interests and brokered agreements that did not provide sufficient protections for workers, provided lower standards of environmental protection, and created great disparities in wealth.

### **Hablas Ingles**

Running Time: 30 minutes

*Synopsis and Review:*

Hablas Ingles addresses the current debate about whether English should be established as the official language in the United States. The film was made in 1988, so it looks and feels a bit dated. Yet it does a nice job outlining the issues that surround both sides of the debate over language. Further, it goes into some depth about more specific, related issues, such as whether Latinos should be instructed in Spanish and its effects. Related to immigration, it does touch on the growth of Latino immigrants since 1965, but this is not the primary focus of the film.

*Topics:*

Race and ethnicity, immigration, current events, critical thinking

### **A History of Education**

Running time: 52 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Although education throughout history has been predominantly a privilege of the elite, universal education is currently seen as a basic right, necessary for a country's prosperity. This program traces the evolution of education through the ages, from oral traditions to its role in today's ever-changing society.

### **The History of Sex**

Running Time: each segment is approximately 50 minutes

*Synopsis:*

"It has inspired great art and low humor, been hidden in shame and celebrated with pride. It has kindled debate and sparked conflict. Its influence in our history and heritage cannot be underestimated (though it is often overlooked). Narrated by Peter Coyote, THE HISTORY OF SEX takes a revealing, lighthearted and captivating look at the role of sex in society. From Adam and Eve to the sexual revolution and beyond, this eye-opening series goes between the sheets for a truly intimate look at humanity. The five programs in this 4-video set are:

*Ancient Civilization*--Egyptian contraceptives, Roman orgies and more.

*The Eastern World*--The Kama Sutra, behind the Great Wall and those sultry Arabian nights.

*The Middle Ages*--Sex and the church, bawdy knights and chasing chaste maidens.

*From Don Juan to Queen Victoria*--Passionate Pilgrims, Casanova, the Marquis De Sade and sexual extremes.

*The 20th Century*--Burning bras, Masters & Johnson, Viagra and beyond."

### **A History of Social Classes**

Running time: 52 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Marx divided the industrial world into two antagonistic classes: the bourgeois and the proletariat. In today's society, this simple dichotomy fails to capture the many segments of a global marketplace. From the communal hunter/ gatherers and agrarian cultures; to ancient empires and medieval fiefdoms; to the technocrats, executives, laborers, and others of the stratified modern world, this program examines how each era has organized its members into social classes.

### **Home Economics: a documentary of suburbia (1996)**

Running Time: 47 minutes

*Synopsis:*

"Coast to coast, every American city that is growing is doing so in the manner of Los Angeles, sprouting multiple urban cores, or "edge cities." Throughout the 1980s and 90s, these areas saw a tremendous boom in tract-housing. Home Economics takes an anthropological look at the American Dream of homeownership in one of these "edge cities" - the Antelope Valley, 55 miles outside of Los Angeles."

*Review:*

Jenny Cool brought her MA thesis to life with this documentary, producing an inspired account of family life and homeownership in contemporary suburbia. The film subtly exposes the superficiality and alienating nature of suburban life, but at the same time avoids judging said residents too harshly. In fact, it may be so subtle that undergraduates (esp. from suburban backgrounds) may have difficulty with the film. The filmmaker displays a great sense of timing with her editing (especially the construction and location shots) to create a sense of unease and restlessness in the viewer. Also, the presentation of the interviews seems deliberate. At first, the interviewees are optimistic and cheery (“This is my dream home!”). By the end of the film the interviewees are decidedly less cheery, painting a picture of dissatisfaction, despair, and even fear. At times this film is inspired; at other times it is mind-numbing. That very well may be the filmmaker’s point. Interviews with male and ethnic residents were noticeably missing.

*Topics/Concepts:* sociology of the family, urban development, social class.

**How Much Is Enough? (1992)**

Running Time: 26 minutes

*Synopsis:*

“Over-population and over-consumption contribute to serious environmental problems by encouraging over-development of pristine lands, contributing to pollution, and squandering our resources. In Mexico City, the world's second largest city, Carmen Leyte offers family planning education in her community with the support of MEXFAM. In the US and Canada, where a child will consume 50 times more resources than a child in Mexico, Vicki Robin's New Road Map Foundation encourages a less materialistic lifestyle.”

*Topics/Concepts:* environmentalism; consumerism; overpopulation

**Hurry Tomorrow (1975)**

Running Time: 78 minutes

*Synopsis:*

“Hurry Tomorrow is a compelling documentary about the loss of human rights suffered by psychiatric patients in a state mental institution. This highly acclaimed classic was filmed over a six-week period in a locked ward at Metropolitan State Hospital in Los Angeles. It shows patients being tied down with straps and cuffs, forcibly drugged with tranquilizers, reducing them to helpless zombie-like states. The film also illustrates how individuals struggle to maintain their dignity in a dehumanized environment.”

*Review:*

I was literally brought to tears watching this powerful film. The viewer is given a deep sense of the helplessness experienced by these patients, and many others like them. Since its intention was to expose the conditions in mental institutions at its time, it does not fully portray the subtler complexities of the institutionalized treatment of mental patients and other individuals in need of specialized care. Class discussion could focus on the characteristics of bureaucratic organizations to help explain why we find similar conditions in nursing homes, group homes for troubled

teens, and correctional facilities. Or one might also consider introducing the labeling theory of deviance as a starting point for a more symbolic interaction focused discussion. The only drawback is the occasionally poor sound quality.

*Topics:* Medicine and Health Care, Labeling Theory of Deviance, Human/Civil Rights, Social Control

### **In My Corner**

Running time: 57 minutes

*Synopsis:*

This acclaimed documentary provides an intimate and powerful portrait of two young Latino boxers on their journey through adolescence into adulthood and self-discovery. Filmed largely at a community boxing gym in New York City's South Bronx, the film draws viewers into the gripping drama of the young fighters' inner battles, their victories and defeats inside the ring, and the challenges and conflict they face at home, at school, and in the streets. *In My Corner* reaches beyond the stereotypes of break-through champions and reveals how one gym has offered small but steady rewards in a neighborhood more often known for quick deals and short lives.

### **Keepers of the Water**

Running Time: 38 minutes

*Synopsis:*

“KEEPERS OF THE WATER focuses on the success of tribal leaders and white residents to stop the building of a copper mine and toxic waste from entering the headwaters of Wolf River, located in the homeland of the Chippewa and Menominee tribes of Wisconsin.”

*Topics/Concepts:* social movements; activism; environmentalism; corporate crime

### **Keep Her Under Control: Law's Patriarchy in India**

Running time: 52 minutes

*Synopsis:*

This documentary explores the role of women in a Muslim-dominated village in Rajasthan, in northern India. The film focuses on the dramatic story of a woman, named Hurmuti, who refuses to live by the moral and legal codes of the village's Islamic patriarchy. Hurmuti is the eldest wife in an extended family, but she has had a long-term -- and well-known -- affair with another man in the village. The film examines her conflicts with her extended family and with the all-male Islamic Village Council over her own conduct and over her insistence on the right to arrange the marriages of her pre-pubescent daughters. As Hurmuti's fascinating story unfolds it is interwoven with scenes that illustrate the process of growing up female in the village: the play of children; the talk and the duties of adolescent girls; marriage customs; dowry issues; relationships with mothers-in-law; rights to land ownership; and even spirit possessions. Viewers will experience a wide range of emotions, grapple with an array of stimulating questions, and in the end be forced to consider how Hurmuti's life options would have been different if she had been born male. The

film comes with a study guide.

### **Killing Us Softly III: Advertising's Images of Women (2000)**

Running Time: 34 minutes

*Synopsis:*

“Jean Kilbourne’s pioneering work helped develop and popularize the study of gender representation in advertising. In this new film, Kilbourne reviews if and how the image of women in advertising has changed over the last 20 years.”

*Review:*

This is the latest installment in Kilbourne’s series on gender representation in magazine and television advertisements. (Familiarity with the first two is not necessary.) Kilbourne’s examples are very recent, and she provides a well thought-out narration that is both serious and humorous. These qualities help increase the salience of the topic to the students. Kilbourne also gives a good critique of the context in which African-Americans are portrayed, as well as a discussion on how sexual advertisements of males are contextually different from those of women. This film provides an excellent introduction to the often-used project where students collect and analyze their own examples of gender representation in advertising.

*Topics:* Gender Inequalities and Socialization, Media Ethics, Race/Ethnicity, Popular Culture, Visual Sociology.

### **The Language You Cry In**

Running time: 52 minutes

*Synopsis:*

This film tells an amazing story reaching across hundreds of years and thousands of miles from 18th century Sierra Leone to the Gullah people of present-day Georgia and South Carolina. It recounts the even more remarkable saga of how African Americans have retained links with their African past through the horrors of the middle passage, slavery and segregation.

### **Marriage: First Comes Love, Then Comes Marriage**

Running time: 52 minutes

*Synopsis:*

An institution supported by religious and civil authorities, marriage bestows both freedoms and restraints designed to promote social stability. This program tracks the development of marriage, from ancient times to the current day. Specific topics include cohabitation, arranged marriages, betrothal, dowry, the wedding ceremony, endogamy and exogamy, monogamy, polygamy, and polyandry, same-sex marriages, divorce, and remarriage.

### **The Merchants of Cool (PBS Frontline)**

Running time: 60 minutes

*Synopsis:*

”Teenagers today have more money and independence than ever before. Their lives have become

the object of obsessive focus by corporate America. Their tastes, attitudes and aspirations are sampled and resampled by marketers wielding the latest scientific tools to determine exactly who they are and what they want. And from this surging stream of data, the dream-weavers of Hollywood and Madison Avenue tell a version of teenage life in movies, television, music and advertising that is meant to appeal to their deepest sensibilities. FRONTLINE explores the culture in which today's American teenager is growing up and how they've come to view themselves and their parents.”

*Topics:* teenage culture

### **Middletown: Continuity or Change?**

Running time: 27 minutes

*Synopsis:*

Muncie, Indiana, is known to sociologists as Middletown and, since the 1920s, has been the site of influential studies on the attitudes and beliefs of the American people. This program explores the latest research on topical wedge issues and America’s ongoing struggle to reconcile once-traditional values with such trends as the improved status of women, suburban sprawl, and a growing permissiveness in society.

### **Minimum Wages (1994)**

Running Time: 57 minutes

*Synopsis:*

“In this program, Bill Moyers takes a piercing look at how global economic changes are destroying the lives and livelihoods of hardworking Americans. The documentary follows several individuals and their families in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as they fight to make ends meet in the “new economy.” In sheer numbers, more jobs were created than lost in America during the last decade, but a look behind the numbers reveals a shortage of jobs that pay enough to support a family.”

*Review:*

“The Moyers Collection” can be trusted for its well thought out and executed films. This film is no exception. It is most effective in its portrayal of a variety of personal and family situations. It would be especially suited to spark discussion about the stereotypes of unemployment and welfare. It does introduce global economic dynamics, but this is not the focus. Although the film can only be fully appreciated in its entirety, the segmentation of situations makes partial viewing effective under time constraints.

*Topics/Concepts:* social welfare, social class, the global economy, sociology of work.

### **The Myth of the Liberal Media**

Running Time: 60 minutes

*Synopsis:*

“Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky demolish one of the central tenets of our political culture,

the idea of the “liberal media.” Instead, utilizing a systematic model based on massive empirical research, they reveal the manner in which the news media are so subordinated to corporate and conservative interests that their function can only be described as that of “elite propaganda.” Part One outlines the key notion of the “filters” through which the process of news passes, ensuring that what emerges for public consumption reflects the interests that control journalistic practices. Part Two focuses on several examples of how coverage of key domestic issues shapes public understanding. In Part Three, Chomsky and Herman examine the way that international issues are framed by the media to reflect the interests of political and economic elites.”

*Topics/Concepts:* corporate crime; globalization; mass media; conflict theory

### **One Year in A Life of Crime**

Running time: 55 minutes

*Synopsis:*

The camera follows 3 professional criminals from Newark, NJ, for twelve months. It records their shoplifting excursions to the suburbs, the gloom and cruelty of their domestic lives, and their tangles with the law. While the program illustrates the daily and nightly struggles of individual criminals, it does not take a narrow view of their predicament. Its painful portraits of wasted lives prompt viewers to consider the broad social causes that underlie criminality and reassess the remedies in which our society places its faith.

### **Reefer Madness**

Running Time: 67 minutes

*Synopsis and Review:*

This film was made in the 1930s- a time marked by confusion and increasing intolerance over the unknown effects of drugs. Analyzing this film through a sociology of knowledge lens makes understandable the historically depicted paranoia over the effects of marijuana use. Yet it will also blatantly show your students how all knowledge is socially constructed through comparison of what was and now is known and understood about marijuana use. Now a cult film classic, *Reefer Madness* portrays marijuana users as crazed, overly emotional, hedonistic heathens driven to lust, passion, and even murder with just a few puffs. Students will be better able to critically evaluate the logic and justice of current drug policy, thus prompting lively and productive class debate.

*Topics:* Social construction of knowledge, relativity of deviance, history, critical thinking

### **The Righteous Babes (1998)**

Running Time: 50 minutes

*Synopsis:*

“In this new documentary, acclaimed filmmaker Pratibha Parmar explores the intersection of feminism with popular music, focusing on the role of female recording artists in the 1990s and their influence on modern women. Parmar argues that, far from being dead, feminism has thrived and expanded its reach through the direct, aggressive, and revolutionary medium of rock music,

and through the role models of performers like Madonna and Ani DiFranco. Intercutting performance footage with interviews, Parmar explores her thesis with some of the most outspoken female musicians, feminist theorists, and journalists of the UK and US.”

*Review:*

This film brilliantly illustrates how popular music and media frame public discourse. More specifically, the film shows the significant role of the female recording artist in shaping the ever-changing and multi-dimensional concept of feminism. The interviews with the recording artists are especially well produced and insightful. The artists covered are diverse, both musically and ideologically. A useful classroom discussion might be helping the students connect each artist’s image/message to different contemporary expectations of women.

*Topics:* Social Movements/Feminism, Gender, Popular Culture, Sociology of Music

**Run Like a Girl**

Running time: 57 minutes

*Synopsis:*

In this program, the sports of rugby, synchronized swimming, and double-Dutch rope jumping provide the context for teenage girls from a cross-section of ethnic backgrounds to probe the issues of adolescence. They discuss their feelings of liberation within the strict regimentation of competitive sports, their search for identity and self-esteem while revolting against the stereotyped expectations of others, body image, dating, and the importance of mothers and coaches as mentors.

**Seen Anything Good Lately**

Running Time: 90 minutes

*Synopsis and Review:*

The visibility of gays and lesbians in mass media is clearly increasing. Yet many portrayals continue to be marked by stereotypes and safety. That is, gay and lesbian depictions tend toward presence but not provocation. This 90-minute film (1997) will show your students how far media portrayals of gays and lesbians have come but also where new ground has yet to be laid. This film would be useful if you treat gender in any kind of in-depth way, since the time required is hefty. Discussion is also highly recommended, since some students might be offended by what they see or don’t see.

*Topics:* Sexuality, changing roles in mass media, gender, women’s studies, deviance, and social movements

**Serving with Dignity**

Running time: 26 minutes

*Synopsis:*

This insightful documentary spotlights an essential but usually ignored segment of working-class America: the women who make the food-service industry run. The film profiles three single

women who confront disrespect and exploitation as workers, sexual harassment as women, and the pressures of life as mothers working long hours at low pay.

### **She's Nobody's Baby**

Running Time: 36 minutes

#### *Synopsis and Review:*

I recommend what I view as a condensed version of A Century of Women. This short film shows the changing yet still static roles of women in contemporary times. This historical film documents the many events that have changed women's lives. It clearly shows how gender roles are socially constructed to fit societal conditions. This will be useful in lending credence to the culturally driven sociological perspective of gender. Fits well into a tight class schedule and leaves plenty of room for discussion or other.

*Topics:* History of women, gender and mass media, methods (archival data; historical accounts), family, and culture;

### **Smile Pretty**

Running time: 57 minutes

#### *Synopsis:*

What is the price for a room full of pageant trophies? In this powerful program – part indictment, part testimonial – the ultra-competitive world of beauty pageantry is presented from the perspective of those who walk the runway. Teenage girls from a cross-section of ethnic backgrounds open their hearts about life as a beauty queen, discussing the pressure to fulfill a societal ideal, the allure of celebrity, and the artificiality of the modeling trade.

### **Taylor's Campaign (1998)**

Running Time: 75 minutes

#### *Synopsis:*

“An intensely gripping, surprisingly humorous and insightful look at hardworking people living in cardboard lean-tos in Santa Monica, California, dumpster diving for survival. When new laws jeopardize their civil rights, a destitute ex-truck driver named Ron Taylor runs for Santa Monica city council. His candidacy becomes a quest for tolerance. Taylor's Campaign tells the story of one community's treatment of people who are homeless, yet "the film is a mirror of what is happening around the country" (Street Sheet, San Francisco). The issues of human dignity, civil rights, hunger, substance abuse, treatment by the criminal justice system, hope vs. hopelessness are universal and poignantly conveyed.”

#### *Review:*

Ron Taylor's campaign to be elected onto city council provides the thread that ties this film together. In fact, several other individuals are introduced and portrayed with such depth that Taylor's story often takes a backseat. Perhaps the strongest aspect of this film is its ability to bring multi-dimensionality to the homeless, and at the same time illustrate forces that encourage a one-dimensional view of them. Taylor's Campaign would be especially useful in an

introductory or social problems course to focus the often discussed topic of homelessness. It would also work well in an upper-level social movements course, or more creatively in a course on the individual in society.

*Topics:* Social Movements, Homelessness/Poverty, Prejudice/Stereotypes, Class Privilege.

### **“We’re Here to Stay”**

Running Time: 56 minutes

#### *Synopsis and Review:*

The purpose of this film is to document the history of gay rights group Hands Off Washington and the politics surrounding their cause. Key players within the movement discuss tactics, successes, failures, constituents, and issues throughout the early and mid-1990s. Students in a variety of courses and levels will find this documentary interesting and informative. It gives a good behind-the-scenes look at how a social movement and the organizations that support it are formed. Of note is the general difference in political ideology between the Midwest (our students) and the Pacific Northwest and how this difference lends support (via a larger pool of constituents) to liberal politics. A good recommendation due to its usefulness and applicability to a wide range of purposes.

*Topics:* Social movements, civil rights, discrimination, gay and lesbian issues, politics, history of the 1990s.

### **Women on Top**

Running Time: 30 minutes

#### *Synopsis and Review:*

This film looks and feels dated not only by the clothing and glasses, but also the focus of feminist debate. Are workplaces enhanced by opening space for women to compete with men by assuming the already structured male mode of instrumentality? Or do women have certain “feminine” characteristics”, whether these are socially constructed or biologically determined, that would create a kinder, gentler, workplace? Issues of race, class, and sexual orientation are not central topics in this film, which looks decidedly missing in gender’s current emphasis on intersectionality.

*Topics:* Gender stratification, family, changing gender roles, sociology of work, social stratification, sociology of organizations.

### **You Don’t Know Dick (1996)**

Running Time: 58 minutes

#### *Synopsis:*

“Simply put, this is the most profound, compelling, and thought-provoking documentary ever made on gender identity. It may also be the most entertaining. It provides extraordinarily honest and riveting portraits of six men who once were women. Each has lived within a body he didn't accept; each has tried to adapt to social expectations he couldn't fulfill; and each has experienced

devastating personal pain that could not be obscured by denial. All have embarked upon an enormous and transfiguring struggle to recover their dignity and an identity once denied to them. There also emerges a remarkable series of reflections on the differences between male and female sexuality, on social perceptions of gender, and on the relationship of one's personal history to one's present life. This is a film that challenges all of us to re-examine the foundations of our ideas and feelings about gender, personality, sexuality, and identity.”

*Review:*

Although some films best serve the course goals by introducing a particular topic, *You Don't Know Dick* might be best viewed after the students have a basic grasp of gender, socialization, and identity. Also, preparation for classroom discussion is a must; as students will be eager to respond to these issues. Without a guided discussion, students may have difficulty seeing the larger picture.

*Topics/Concepts:* Gender socialization/identity, sexuality, deviance, dramaturgy.