

# New book chronicles lives of female combatants during Salvadoran civil war to present day

*Former female guerrilla soldiers become non-violent activists in the post-war years yet few regret their original choice to fight.*

Mothers in Arms is a book featuring the stories of young mothers who took up arms during the 1980s' El Salvador civil war. The project began with seven social activists in the United States seeing a photograph of four Salvadoran women: the director of an international NGO, a translator, and their two daughters. These professional women were previous FMLN (Farabundo Marti Liberation Front) combatants, the political extension of an armed guerilla movement that fought back against an oppressive right wing government from 1980 to 1992. The picture inspired the US activists to write a book based on the questions of "what kind of world do these mothers feel they are bequeathing to their daughters" and "whether they believe that their sacrifices during the war have made the world a better place for the next generation of women" In the book you meet many strong women, from a member of the Central American parliament to an entrepreneur who dreams of ecotourism. All have become non-violent activists in the post-war years; few regret their original choice to fight.

- o Fighting between the Salvadoran Army and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), a leftist guerrilla organization resulted in the slaughter of more than 75,000 Salvadoran civilians.
- o Nearly one-fifth of the Salvadoran population was displaced by war and a right-wing government that gutted the working class.
- o More than 2.5 million Salvadorans live in the United States today (nearly one in 100 US residents) as a direct result. Their influence is undeniable. They are doctors, lawyers, politicians. They clean our homes, work our farms, mow our yards, and care for our elderly. And in one case, a displaced Salvadoran fueled one of the largest, most violent criminal gangs in the United States, Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13).

The horrors of the Salvadoran war are unfamiliar to many U.S. citizens. Yet from the dawn of war in 1980 to the cease-fire in 1992, some 75,000 Salvadoran civilians were killed by their own army- an army trained and supported by the United States. During Reagan's term, the Cold War mentality of the U.S. government linked all popular uprisings in Latin America to global dominance by the USSR. At the peak of the war, the U.S. was sending more than \$1 million per day in military aid to the government of El Salvador.

## Resources:

**Website:** <http://returntoelsalvador.com>

**Photos:** <http://www.flickr.com/photos/returntoelsalvador/>

**"Return to El Salvador" trailer (VIDEO):**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMU4y-Q-mUw>

**First 7 minutes of "Return to El Salvador", with Martin Sheen's narration (VIDEO):**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hlj63TGsgkQ>

**"The Mysterious Death of Marcelo Rivera" (VIDEO):**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvXm52BhSHQ>

<http://www.returntoelsalvador.com>

<http://www.jamiemoffett.com>

**About Us:** Jamie Moffett Media Design & Production, uses motion picture to document the stories of those struggling for peace and justice in their communities and around the world; ordinary people who do extraordinary things with some simple love and service. In addition two feature-length documentaries, "The Ordinary Radicals" and "Return to El Salvador", they have produced dozens of short films, music videos and commercials.

## Contact:

*Jamie Moffett, Director*

Jamie Moffett Media Design & Production, Inc.  
 Phone: 215.840.8552