

Citizens of El Salvador Seek Refuge in The United States

In the film “Return to El Salvador,” narrated by actor Martin Sheen, filmmaker Jamie Moffett and his crew travel to El Salvador to share the stories of those involved in the Salvadoran civil war. Moffett introduces us to a Salvadoran couple who fled death threats in the 1980s, finding asylum and a political platform in the United States; and to a couple who, after escaping during the war, returned to El Salvador to work with churches and poor communities; and to the family of a murdered anti-mining activist and the people seeking the truth about his death. In the retelling of these remarkable stories we find that we are more closely connected to the people of El Salvador than most Americans are aware:

- * Nearly one-fifth of the Salvadoran population was displaced by war, many choosing the U.S to seek refuge.
- * More than 2.5 million Salvadorans live in the United States today (nearly one in every 100 American residents).
- * The impact of the Salvadoran people on America cannot be ignored. They clean our homes, work our farms, mow our yards, care for our elderly and, in one case, fuel one of the largest, most violent criminal gangs in the United States, Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13).

This 12-year conflict was a result of rising tensions between the wealthy, land-owning elite and the impoverished rural majority. Many Salvadorans were forced to leave their homeland and seek a better life in the United States. This film forces us take a look at the not only the people of El Salvador but also as us as Americans and our knowledge regarding our involvement in Latin American. With the upcoming Census it is important for us, as Americans to see just how closey connected we are to the people of El Salvador. According to C.N. Le, Professor at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in describing why the Census is important he states that: “...an accurate count of the U.S. population forms the basis for many important but often overlooked political, economic, and social decisions that are made that end up affecting our daily lives.”* Through the information taken from the Census and provided by “Return to El Salvador” the people of El Salvador and their stories can no longer be overlooked by the American public.

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.

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