Lights, Camera, State Crime

By

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Over the past two decades, a steady amount of research on state crime has been conducted. While most of this research has been documented and distributed in written form, scholars have also begun to make better use of the mass media to disseminate information on state crime. Unfortunately, no one has yet chosen to write about films that focus predominantly on state crime. In order to understand this body of work, we asked experts in the field to submit titles of movies dealing with state crime, reviewed the databases of major online DVD-rental businesses and nongovernmental sources geared toward addressing the worst forms of state crimes, and then performed a content analysis of the films. Based on the database of films collected, we then briefly summarize their content in the following paper, and then discuss how these movies can contribute to students' understanding of state crime in the context of courses that focus on this topic. This paper concludes that films on state crime are useful pedagogical tools in the classroom.

Keywords: state crime, media representation, media depictions of state crime

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Over the past two decades, scholars have concentrated a growing amount of research on state crime<sup>1</sup> (e.g., Barak, 1991; Friedrichs, 1998; Grabosky, 1989; Green and Ward 2004; Kauzlarich and Kramer, 1998; Kramer and Michalowski 2006; Pearce, 1976; Ross, 2000a, 2000b; Rothe and Friedrichs 2006; Rothe and Mullins, 2006). While most of this research has been documented and distributed in written form, scholars have also begun to make better use of the mass media to disseminate information on state crime.

Our primary interest focuses on which types of films and subject matter are available as supplemental tools to teach students about state crime. Beyond this, our paper has two additional objectives: 1) to develop a database of movies on state crime as a resource for

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other scholars and instructors, and 2) to explore general trends and/or patterns of these movies and discuss how they can serve as a teaching tool.

Unfortunately, to date, no one has written about the films that focus specifically on state crime. In order to understand this body of work, we briefly examine film's educational importance, review our methodology in creating a database, present the results of our analysis, and discuss the value of using films as a pedagogical tool to teach crimes of the state.

# THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF FILM AND STATE CRIME

In the post-World War Two era, instructors began to incorporate film as an educational tool, using movies as part of classroom instruction, homework or short paper assignments (Giglio, 2002). More recently, advocates of using film as an instructional tool have come to appreciate the role this medium can play in explaining political, criminological, and sociological concepts to undergraduate students (Beaver, 2002; Giglio, 2002; LeBlanc, 1998; Lichtenberg et al., 2004; West, 2005). This is especially relevant since educators now teach to a largely 'visual' generation that is able to more readily identify with images and visual movement than with traditional forms of printed text. As noted by Paris (1997), the current generation's view of the world has been "largely formed and shaped through visual culture." As such, visual media can be "a powerful pedagogical tool" in the classroom. Additionally, visual media can serve as a means of incorporating different learning modalities: film can aid students who are primarily visual learners by making the necessary course material more accessible.

The inclusion of visual imagery can also represent an event more readily to a learner than the traditional reading of a text or multiple articles by themselves. This can allow students to more quickly identify with what are often viewed as abstract concepts and farremoved events. As other scholars have noted (Day et al., 2003; Friedlander 1979), teaching about genocide, crimes against humanity, state-sponsored terrorism, war crimes, illegal occupations, and other forms of state criminality is difficult on a number of levels. The main issue involves the amount of background knowledge necessary to understand specific cases of the crimes. For example, some familiarity with the history, politics, economics, and culture of the state(s) involved is essential in order to understand the events. This is especially true when teaching crimes of the state to undergraduate students, who may often be unaware of any political or catastrophic events outside of their own narrow experiences often circumscribed by their demographics.

As noted by Day et al. (2003), an additional challenge involved in teaching such subject matters is the difficulty in communicating the levels of horror associated with types of crimes that are entirely beyond the personal experience of most students. Day et al. (2003, p. 10) state,

Students in American universities may have some personal experience of violence, but only the very few who are themselves refugees have experienced anything like forced expulsion, internment in camps, or mass

rape, torture, and murder. There are many difficulties involved in trying to communicate such suffering to students who have no comparable experiences. There is a risk that the victims of such extreme violence may seem distant and unreal, their experiences unimaginable, and thus incomprehensible. A failure to convey the realities of individual experience can make the whole topic seem abstract and unreal.

As such, lecturing to students or asking them to read statistics wherein hundreds of thousands of people have been victimized by a state conveys little to nothing of the victims' experience. Film, on the other hand, can assist students with understanding the emotional context of the case. Further, as Abrahamson (1998) stated, "What a person usually remembers the longest is information that has an emotional impact" (p. 1).

Movies can serve to bridge the gap between abstract and distant cases and can also act as an enhancement to information portrayed to students in other formats. As noted by Dede (1995), "Sensory immersion helps learners grasp reality through illusion" (p. 2). As such, films are one means through which storytelling can occur, "and few forms of communication transmit stories into the minds more effectively than movies" (Abrahamson 1998). Movies can offer an ongoing experience of time creating a feeling of presence in the event being presented. They can also visually display a case of state crime more convincingly and immediately than other forms of dissemination (e.g., scholarly case studies).

Due to the number of films that depict crimes of the state, they can also supplement the extant criminological case studies (see Friedrichs, 2000; Green, 2005; Kramer and Michalowski, 2006; Mullins and Kauzlarich, 2000; Mullins and Rothe, 2007; Perl, 2004; Rothe and Mullins, 2006, 2007). An additional benefit to using film is that the numbers of criminological case studies and research on state crime is, at this stage, relatively small in comparison to research on traditional street crimes. As such, the diversity and number of videos and documentaries can add to the literature on crimes of the state.

### **METHOD**

In September/October 2006, we e-mailed a survey<sup>2</sup> to 15 colleagues who conduct research on and/or teach classes on the subject of state crime. The questionnaire consisted of 16 open- and close-ended questions ranging from the kinds of materials they ask students to read, to their impressions of how much students benefited from taking the course, to teacher evaluations. Once the surveys were returned, we compiled all the data to search for patterns of experiences, including opportunities and/or obstacles. In addition to trying to understand what kinds of texts instructors used, the investigators attempted to determine the kinds of films these instructors used in classes that focus entirely or at least predominantly on state crime.

In November 2006, in order to develop a database of movies on state crime, we sent an informal follow-up survey to these colleagues asking them for recommendations of films that illustrate crimes of the state. The suggested films were added to the list generated from the inventories of major rental companies, nongovernmental sources (e.g., Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, The Holocaust Museum, and The Armenian Genocide Museum, etc.) focusing on state crimes, and the largest online retail seller of DVDs<sup>3</sup>. The researchers performed a simple content analysis of these movies using a coding sheet that expressed their conceptual rubric. For example, in a preliminary search, many films were found to include a theme of corruption, particularly committed by police. Although this act has been considered a state crime by some scholars (as police are an agent of the state), for purposes of this research, we view these as occupational<sup>4</sup> instead of state crime and, as such, eliminated them from the final database (see appendix A). Simply put, these movies were omitted because they focused on crimes committed by individuals for their own self-interest and not in the interest of or in the name of the government or state. This includes well-known films such as *Serpico* (1973), *Prince of the City* (1981), and *Copland* (1997).

Analytically, the movies that dealt with state crime were first assessed on eight key issues: 1) What type of film is it?, 2) When was the film produced?, 3) Where did the setting of the film occur?, 4) In what decade was the film set?, 5) What was the primary type of state crime portrayed?, 6) What portion of the film dealt with state crime?, 7) Did the film portray the issues involved in controlling such actions?, and 8) Was the film combined with any other dominant themes?<sup>5</sup> Such a rubric enabled us to identify commonalities of the crimes, the presence (or absence) of core theoretical concepts (e.g. motivational factors, opportunities, constraints, and controls), and historical context as potential pedagogical aids for enhancing students' understanding of state crimes.

#### **FINDINGS/DISCUSSION**

Our discussion is based on 56 films (71 percent) documentaries and (29 percent) Hollywood motion pictures--which contained subject matter relevant to crimes of the state. Indeed, there are distinct differences in the format and presentation of state crime when comparing these two broad categories of movies and this could be a factor to consider in classroom adoption. For example, the time allotted to depicting crimes of the state was significantly different between the two types of films. Documentaries dedicated between 80 and 100 percent of the film to examples of or specific issues associated with state crime. Case in point: *Congo: White King, Red Rubber, Black Death* (2003) uses the movie's entire running time to describe how, between 1885 and 1908, King Leopold II used Belgium's private colony of the Congo as a slave labor camp. The shocking brutality that took place within was responsible for the death of nearly 10 million people. On the other hand, Hollywood style motion pictures ranged from the low end of 20% up to 70% of coverage to the state crime.

Additionally, Hollywood-style films included the use of alternative themes that involve love, money, family, friends, brotherhood, and sisterhood to the role of karma, moral choices, and individual morality. As an example, the overall theme of *Paradise Now* focused on the Palestinians' resistance to Israeli occupation. The focus was on two friends who had vowed to become suicide bombers together. While this was a constant underlying theme, the film also covered issues of family, love, friends, loyalty, fear, and death. Yet there was no time given to historical explanation of the Palestine/Israel conflict. As such, this film would be best suited to depict the interactional level decision-making processes of participating in these types

of crimes, while being less suited for providing an understanding of the larger historical, political, or cultural factors of the situation. The issue of varied themes, along with the range in coverage of the crime within the overall running time, its description, or historical context of the actual crime, may be factors to consider for courses that devote a relatively small portion of the curriculum to the topic of state crime (this will be discussed further).

The types of state crime varied throughout the movies analyzed. Crimes included: 1) crimes of aggression, (generally post-2001 films discussing the U.S. invasion of Iraq, such as *Grand Imperial Strategy* and *Iraq for Sale*); 2) movies on genocide, which were most prominently set in the pre-WWII era through the 1950s, including *Stalin: Man of Steel*, the *Armenian Genocide*, and *Schindler's List*, or the more recent documentaries covering African genocides such as *Darfur Diaries: Messages from Home* and *Ghosts From Rwanda*; or 3) several crimes together (i.e., crimes against humanity, human rights violations, genocide, war crimes, and crimes of aggression). For example, *Liberia: The Promised Land* and *Heart of Darkness: The Democratic Republic of Congo* both illustrate a combination of crimes that often go hand in hand. Other themes were also present, though on a much smaller scale, including nuclear weapon production and testing (e.g., *Historic Atomic Bombs Testing Films: Atom Bomb Test Explosions*), torture (e.g., *Soldier Child*), political prisoners (e.g., *Imagining Argentina*), and crimes of colonialization (e.g., *Savior*).

Most films did not pay attention to issues of control. In all, less than 1 percent of the movies dealt with controlling state crime. Of this small percentage, half were documentaries focusing specifically on issues of formal social control. For example, *In Search of International Justice* only discussed the renewed commitment to the international rule of law through the creation of the International Criminal Court and the hope of the International Criminal Court to end impunity among state leaders. The documentary *People on War: Even Wars have Limits* commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions by the International Committee for the Red Cross. This film discusses how these conventions, which are central to international humanitarian law, are the most important instruments to date to defend human dignity in war. They are also among the most widely ratified treaties in the world.

Of the films the researchers used as their data, 52 percent of them were produced since the year 2000. An additional 22 percent were made during the 1990s and 11 percent during the 1980s. Perhaps this is the result of movie production becoming easier and less costly. The timeline also coincides with the change in the international culture among intergovernmental organizations that has been occurring since the end of the Cold War. From an international perspective, it is during this time period when we see the onset of a greater push to realize an 'international community,' and an international ethos based on universal human rights and criminal law to end the impunity that has been present among states and heads of states for decades (e.g., Rothe and Mullins, 2006). The goal of an international collective consciousness and ending state crime would also be reflected in movies. After all, media coverage influences the awareness that media consumers have about events and issues. According to Mansfield-Richardson (2000), when filmmakers choose to emphasize an issue or event, the public will deem it important and will then become excited about those events and issues. As would be expected with the increase in films covering state crime since the 1980s, the time periods in which these movies were set followed a similar pattern. However, these findings were skewed by a large proportion of documentaries set in the end of the Cold War. As we noted, this is an expected outcome with the international push for codifying universal criminal law and the renewed emphasis on an international collective consciousness. Less than 1 percent of movies were set in a pre-WWII context, while 19 percent took place during the WWII era (mostly depicting the Holocaust or Stalin's Gulag system of genocide). A total of 35 percent of films were set during the Cold War era and 40 percent took place after the end of the Cold War. This should come as no surprise, with the growing technological advances that accompany globalization, the push for an international awareness by nonprofit international activist organizations, and the increase that has occurred in international humanitarian interventions by states and the United Nations, civil wars, and genocides that have taken place since the late 1980s.

Having created a general database for films on state crime and provided a brief review of the overall topics covered and notable differences between the documentaries and Hollywood-style motion pictures, our final goal was to link these movies with the idea of teaching about crimes of the state. After all, film is no different than texts in the sense that both often need "unpacking" and analysis for students to grasp the connection with the larger theoretical and conceptual issues. As such, we have chosen to illustrate how film can complement scholarly work with a recent case study by Mullins and Rothe (2007) and a documentary.

## **TEACHING WITH FILM**

#### Crimes Against Humanity, Genocide, and Darfur

Using film with scholarly case studies exposes students to the concepts and theoretical factors required by the curriculum and to the voices and the experience of those involved. We use as an illustration the film *Darfur Diaries*<sup>6</sup> and a recent case study by Mullins and Rothe (2007), "The Forgotten Ones". Assuming the history of state crime, standards, definitions, and theoretical concepts have already been introduced in the course; students can be given the case study by Mullins and Rothe either prior to seeing the film as part of their reading assignment or as an assignment after the viewing. "The Forgotten Ones" provides a detailed history of the situation in Darfur, extensive details of the conflict since 2003, and an analysis of the situation using an integrated theoretical model that address motivation, opportunity, constraints, and controls at four levels of analysis: international, macro, organizational, and interactional.

What is missing in Mullins and Rothe's (2007) article are the voices of the victims. While quotes and examples are used, it is often very difficult to imagine the faces or emotions of the victims. By using the film *Darfur Diaries*, students are able to see and hear the people of Darfur and their experiences as well as their reasoning for support or inclusion in the insurgency. This film, in particular, provides an array of facts that are also provided by Rothe and Mullins. As such, the film and case study act as complementary tools to provide the necessary details of the case for students. It also brings to life the motivational and opportunity factors of such crimes. For example, Mullins and Rothe's article reviews the motivation for the 2003 insurgency by the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) and their actions as a response to years of marginalization by President el-Bashir regime.

The film draws this idea out further with the individual members of the SLA explaining their personal and organizational motivation. The issues of opportunity and enactment patterns by the regime as a means of accomplishing its genocidal goal (Mullins and Rothe, 2007) can also be identified by students in the film. For example, individuals in the film discusses Bashir's use of the Janjaweed (a state-sponsored militia) along with the Sudanese military to carry out the atrocities, including the common enactment procedures of burning and bombing villages and refugee camps. The difference between the case study and the films discussion is primarily two-fold: 1) the case study is far more extensive in the details and analysis, and 2) the film provides the victims' voices and experiences with several brief synopses of the situation. On its own, the film omits the expected academic level of understanding and analysis; however, the article omits the emotive context that can act as the most effective means for memory and comprehension of a situation. As such, the film can complement the case study. Students can be asked to identify core theoretical concepts of the case as they watch the film (assuming the readings were done in preparation).

As another example, movies can be used to introduce a case and the subsequent controls. The films *Gacaca, Living Together Again in Rwanda*? and either *the Ghosts of Rwanda* or *Sometime in April* can be used to present both the genocide in Rwanda and the issues of dealing with the offenders and victims of such a massive scale crime. *Sometime in April* allows students to visually see the conflict faced by the victims, the scope of the genocide, and the role of everyday Rwandans in perpetrating the genocide. However, the film does not provide any resolution to the atrocities. As such, *Gacaca, Living Together Again in Rwanda* illustrates how states must often adapt their responses to these types of crimes when such significant portions of the population were involved in their commission. Using films together can provide the basis for a more detailed discussion on not only the example of state crime but also the need for varied systems of accountability for a country to heal and move forward. These movies can be further supported by assigning students additional readings that fill in the more academic conceptual components that may be missing in films such as *Sometime in April* or *The Ghosts of Rwanda* (e.g., Haveman, 2007).

Occasionally the biggest difficulties instructors have are communicating the ideas of their respective fields and providing the appropriate pedagogy in these areas. The integration of films tied to specific case studies is one way this can be done.

## CONCLUSION

At the very least, educators should use different media in order to capture students' attention and guide them into being critical thinkers. By their own accounts and those of their critics, today's students are part of a video generation (Paris 1997). As such, incorporating films into the subject matter provides a 'comfortable' means through which to convey complex, abstract, and often far-removed topics. Movies on state crime, whether Hollywood-

produced films or documentaries, have the capability of doing just that. Additionally, using movies as a teaching aid provides faculty with multiple venues for addressing a wide variety of topics.

Nonetheless, there are logistical problems with using films in this manner. For example, there is a concern about the tension between objective versus subjective data included in the films. In other words, it would be easy to make the claim that the documentaries listed in our appendix were objective and did not contain any hidden agendas, and that the Hollywood movies were produced for entertainment purposes only and thus were more subjective (or would play with facts if it benefited the storyline). Such a statement would fail to address the ethical question of dealing with the hidden agendas of the films (Barsham, 1979).

No matter how 'fair and balanced' a filmmaker may attempt to be, the issue of special interests and his/her own agenda for the film plays a role in the presentation of material--in this case, state crime. This is no different for documentaries than it is for Hollywood films. While documentary images provide evidence of a 'reality' that actually exists/existed outside the world, they are selectively created and edited as well. As Morris (2005, p. 1) stated,

Evolving as they have through their own stages of development...documentaries draw their potency from the editing of image and soundtrack, as well as the varying degrees of relationship between argument/interpretation and evidence/reality.

In other words, documentaries are not devoid of an underlying objective. Indeed, as has been shown in previous content analyses of the media, the selectiveness of events, issues, and topics is influenced by interactions with the cultural environments, including governments. (Dominikowski, 1993; Ruhrmann, 1993).

These issues raise larger questions for those of us who use films to teach about crimes of the state. For example, is it enough to show a film on state crime in hopes that our students can grasp the idea of a state being criminally liable, regardless of the accuracy? Or are we bound to explain the ideological undertones and/or subjective nature associated with all movies? After all, used in this context, the accuracy of a film forms the awareness and/or knowledge students have about the events and/or issues covered. We suggest that, when using films as the sole pedagogical tool without the aid of other scholarly support of state crimes, the issue of the director's agenda must also be addressed.

Other logistical problems must also be addressed. This includes how to work movies into the context of an already burdened timeline that is typical for any course and its materials. On the one hand, our suggestions for incorporating film to teach state crime assumes that this is a course solely on government or state crime or that a significant portion of the course is devoted to the topic (e.g., white-collar crime; corporate-government crime; political crime courses). Using these types of films in a regular criminology or criminal justice course presents situations in which one must choose between 1) discussing the history of the field of state crime, the longstanding debate on definitional issues, types of crimes, patterns, costs, and theoretical concepts to analyze these crimes at the expense of other topics to incorporate film, 2) merely introducing the concept of state crime, assigning the readings and watching a film to depict what they hopefully have read, or 3) assigning a few movies as an out of class assignment.

This, too, can present challenges for students as far as accessing some of these films unless the University's library is well equipped or the faculty has copies to share. Additionally, if one chooses to use a film to introduce crimes of the state, it seems the better choice may well be a documentary type of film. We base this recommendation on the findings that documentaries tend to spend nearly the entire running time illustrating state crime in some form. However, as we noted, Hollywood movies range from the low end of 20 percent to the high end, which is still far below the amount of content of the lowest running time spent on a case. The potential value of using the film may be compromised by the extra storylines and the time needed to unravel these 'realities' with students.

Additionally, most of the documentaries we have listed are not in all university's libraries. Thus instructors need to go through some interlibrary loan mechanism. However, many libraries put restrictions on lending videos to other schools making it difficult to acquire them. Requesting the institution to purchase them can also be problematic due to the high costs and, in many cases, universities' reduced budgets. It is much simpler to rent it from Blockbuster or Netflix or to purchase the movies and create a personal library.

On the other hand, since our focus here is on courses on state crime, there is ample time to provide the history, contextual background, and theoretical models for analyzing crimes of the state. In this type of environment, students can be assigned scholarly case studies to read the week before being shown a film on that topic. The film can then provide the visual aid which can help solidify the facts that they were presented in the case studies and lectures. This ensures that all students had the same opportunity to see the film and provides a situation conducive for discussion immediately following the movie. However, the issue of temporal order may be of importance. For example, one may prefer to read cases and/or lecture before having students watch a film, or one could watch a film first and then study the case of state criminality to make sense of the issues the film raised. This is simply an individual style preference. For example, is it best to teach criminological theory before the patterns, trends, etc. of crime, or is it best to teach what crime is, the patterns, etc and then try to get them to understand the etiological factors of crime? In the example provided here, we used the order of case study and/or lecture first, followed by the viewing of the film.

There is no doubt that using film as a pedagogical tool presents dilemmas and choices; however, we believe that these are outweighed by film's utility as a heuristic device for teaching state crime. Our hope is that, with the database we have created here and with the limited examples of incorporating film with specific cases and theory that more people will be inclined to teach courses devoted to these types of crime.

#### ENDNOTE

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# NOTES

1 State crime has been defined as any action that violates international public law, and/or a states' own domestic law when these actions are committed by individual actors acting on behalf of, or in the name of the state (Rothe and Mullins, 2006, p. 2-3).

2 The authors used a snowball sampling technique. The survey was conducted informally and generated additional comments. The survey had an 80% response rate. We also drew information from several conversations we have shared with our colleagues.

3 While we recognize that we may have omitted films, we made a conscious decision to stop at the point of over 70 films, though this was later reduced once we determined that 15 of those films were occupational crimes versus state crime. Additionally, through several conversations back and forth, we concluded that the pool of films we arrived at were representative of those currently on the market.

4 Occupational crimes and political crimes that are committed by individuals during the course of their occupation for their own self interests or self gain and not in the name of or on behalf of the state differ from the state crimes discussed here.

5 The movies were coded by one of the investigators. The authors believed, in order to make what appear to be subtle value judgments, that minimal value added would be achieved by having all films coded by both authors and averages between the scores used.

6 The running time for Darfur Diaries is 55 minutes.

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## Appendix A

List of Documentaries:

- Armenia: The Betrayed---genocide
- Back to Ararat---genocide
- Biography: Pol Pot Secret Killer---genocide

- Congo: White King, Red Rubber, Black Death---genocide
- Cry Freedom---apartheid
- Darfur Diaries: Messages from Home---genocide
- *Death in Gaza*---illegal occupation, crimes against humanity, human rights violations
- Everyone's Not Here---genocide
- *Gacaca. Living Together Again in Rwanda?* Genocide, restorative justice, mass perpetrators
- Gaza Strip--- illegal occupation, crimes against humanity, human rights violations
- Ghosts of Rwanda---genocide
- Grand Imperial Strategy---crimes of aggression
- Heart of Darkness: The Democratic Republic of Congo---crimes against humanity
- *Historic Atomic Bombs Testing Films DVD: Atom Bomb Test Explosions w/ WWII & Hiroshima History---international humanitarian law*
- Horror in the East---International humanitarian law violations, torture
- Immortal Fortress: A Look Inside Chechnya's Warrior Culture---war, political terrorism, torture
- In Search of International Justice---international social justice and controls
- Inconvenient Truth---crimes of aggression, international humanitarian law
- Iraq for Sale: the War Profiteers---crimes of occupation
- *Liberia: The Promised Land*---civil conflict, human rights violations, state interventions
- Looking for Fidel---political dissidents, human rights, political terrorism
- Lost Boys of Sudan---refugees of major conflicts
- Peace, Propaganda and the Promised Land—crimes of occupation
- People on War: Even Wars have Limits---international social justice, controls
- School of Americas---torture, assassinations
- School of Assassins---political assassinations
- Soldier Child---child soldiers
- Sometime in April---genocide
- *Stalin: Man of Steel*---crimes against humanity, forced displacement, torture, slavery
- Stolen Freedom: Occupied Palestine---crimes of occupation
- The Armenians---genocide
- The Armenian Genocide: Annihilation of the Armenian Population of the Ottoman Empire 1915-1923---genocide
- The Forgotten Genocide---genocide
- The Nazis: A Warning From History---genocide
- The Road to Guantanamo---torture
- Uncovered The Whole Truth About the Iraq War---crimes of aggression and occupation
- *Wall*---crimes of occupation
- Why We Fight-John McCain---crimes of aggression
- Zimbabwe: Countdown---crimes against humanity

List of Hollywood Films:

- Ararat---genocide
- Blood Diamonds-crimes against humanity, forced slavery
- *Hotel Rwanda---*genocide
- Imagining Argentina---forced disappearances, murder, political dissent
- *In the Name of the Father---*insurgent groups, political prisoners, Ireland CJ system
- In the Time of Butterflies---political murders, coups, conflict
- Lord of War---illegal arms trade and smuggling
- Nuremberg Trials: Judgment at Noon---social justice, controls
- Paradise Now---terrorism
- Salvador---human rights, conflict, state sponsored terrorism
- Savior---genocide, crimes against humanity
- Schindler's List---genocide
- Sophie's Choice---genocide, victimization
- The Damned
- The Killing Fields---human rights, conflict, war
- The Official Story---political prisoners, human rights, forced disappearances
- The Pentagon Papers---war, propaganda, corruption, civil liberties