

# COLLEGE SPEAKING PROGRAMS BY DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER ROBBIE LEPPZER

## 30 Years Of Chronicling Grassroots Social Change Movements

*"Filmmaker Robbie Leppzer is remarkably sensitive regarding the nuances of his subject matter and protagonists. The result is filmmaking that is both compelling and thought provoking."*

—**Geoff Gilmore, Director, Sundance Film Festival**

Robbie Leppzer is an award-winning independent documentary filmmaker with thirty years experience directing over thirty independent film, video, and public radio documentaries for national and international distribution. His critically acclaimed works about contemporary social issues, grassroots activism, and multicultural themes have been broadcast globally by **CNN International** and broadcast nationally in the United States and Canada by **PBS, CNN, Cinemax, Sundance Channel, HDNet, Black Entertainment Television, Link TV, Free Speech TV, Pacifica Radio, National Public Radio,** and the **Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.**

From the environmental protests of the 1970s, to the growing global peace and social justice movement of the new millennium, Leppzer has chronicled grassroots social movements over the last three decades. His films show engaged citizens who take personal risks to work for nonviolent social change and build bridges across cultures.

In his most recent broadcast work, **SOLDIER STORIES**, produced for and nationally aired on **HDNet World Report**, Leppzer presents gripping first-hand accounts of combat by U.S. veterans who served in Iraq and chronicles their activism both for and against the war upon their return home. In **DOWN AND OUT IN NEW ORLEANS**, Leppzer presents an exposé about the on-going crisis of public housing and homelessness as the federal government demolishes 4,500 apartments in post-Katrina New Orleans.

In his last independent feature documentary, **THE PEACE PATRIOTS**, American dissidents from a wide diversity of ages and backgrounds including teenagers, college students, teachers, clergy, and combat veterans protest the early stages of the Iraq war. In **AN ACT OF CONSCIENCE**, the IRS seizes the home of two pacifists for their refusal to pay federal taxes as a protest against military spending. Narrated by Martin Sheen, this film premiered at the **Sundance Film Festival** and was nationally broadcast by **Cinemax, Sundance Channel, Link TV** and **Free Speech TV.**

In **HARVEST OF PEACE**, an earlier U.S. involvement in a counter-insurgency war in Central America during the 1980s is the backdrop for harvest volunteers from the United States engaging in citizen diplomacy in Nicaragua. In **COLUMBUS DIDN'T DISCOVER US**, indigenous people from North, South, and Central America speak out about their common legacies of survival.

As nuclear power is currently being pushed as an "environmentally-friendly solution" to global warming and our dependency on foreign oil, the experiences of 1970's anti-nuclear power activists are more relevant than ever.

## SPEAKER REVIEWS

"Robbie Leppzer was extraordinarily well-received in his appearance in my classroom. Not surprising for such an outstanding documentary filmmaker, Leppzer is a natural teacher, both in terms of his presentation, as well as in his ability to ask the kinds of questions that can bring students into the learning process through engaged discussion. He was able to meld his personal stories with informed analysis that raised awareness of both the process of filmmaking and the subjects explored in the films themselves."

**Stephen Zunes, Ph.D., Professor of Politics,  
University of San Francisco**

"After the screening, Leppzer skillfully elicited an usually lively and prolonged discussion. In a perceptive way, he built on the students' knowledge and differing opinions to arrive at insights about media, democracy, and social change. His presentation was so successful that it remained a topic of conversation for the next several weeks."

**Carlos Fontes, Ph.D., Professor of Communications  
Worcester State College**

"Robbie Leppzer has an engaging presence. His enthusiasm for the subject of film and the social consciousness it can express is infectious. He is high on our list of repeat performances next year."

**Rembert Briggs, English Teacher  
Franklin Delano Roosevelt High School, Hyde Park, NY**

"Robbie Leppzer is a seasoned filmmaker who helps elicit from viewers their own response to his films. Leppzer's documentaries, along with his personal presence as a speaker, are definitely conversation starters that continue long after his visit."

**Michael Duffey, Professor of Theology,  
Marquette University**



Leppzer's first documentary, **SEABROOK 1977**, which has been newly digitally re-mastered, tells the story of a seminal protest of 1970's environmental activism when 1,414 people were arrested for blocking the construction of a nuclear power plant in Seabrook, New Hampshire and jailed en masse in National Guard armories for two weeks.

Leppzer challenges audiences to think critically and uses his own documentaries to spark discussions about media, culture, and contemporary social and political issues. He will lead discussions after the screening of his films highlighting the importance of grassroots citizen activism in a participatory democracy. He will also critique mainstream media coverage of grassroots movements and underscore the importance of independent media. In addition, he will talk about social change in the context of an expanding world-wide movement for global justice.

In addition to presenting large venue speaking and screening programs, Leppzer is also available to spend one or several whole days on a college campus to visit classrooms and present a multi-part retrospective screening program featuring selections from his documentaries chronicling social change movements over the past three decades.



## SPEAKING PRESENTATIONS WITH FILMMAKER ROBBIE LEPPZER A 30-YEAR RETROSPECTIVE FILM PROGRAM



### **SOLDIER STORIES**

Five U.S. combat veterans who served in Iraq talk intimately about their first-hand experiences in war, followed by profiles of their activism both for and against the Iraq war on the streets of Washington, DC, after returning home. Produced for **HDNet World Report**. Nationally broadcast on **HDNet**. (2007) 45 minutes.



### **DOWN AND OUT IN NEW ORLEANS**

An exposé about the on-going crisis of public housing and homelessness in post-Katrina New Orleans as the federal government demolishes 4,500 apartments and its devastating impact on the African-American community. Produced for **HDNet World Report**. Nationally broadcast on **HDNET**. (2008) 35 minutes.



### **THE PEACE PATRIOTS**

An intimate portrait of American dissenters, including teenagers, college students, war veterans, teachers, clergy, and community activists, as they take part in vigils, marches, theater performances, and civil disobedience sit-ins to protest the U.S. invasion and military occupation of Iraq. Nationally broadcast on **Free Speech TV**. (2005) 78 minutes.

“In a time of sadness, thinking of the dead and maimed on both sides, this film gives us hope and inspiration.”

—Howard Zinn, Author of **A PEOPLE’S HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES**



### **AN ACT OF CONSCIENCE**

The story of a family in western Massachusetts whose home was seized by federal marshals and IRS agents after they publicly refused to pay federal taxes as a protest against war and military spending. Narrated by Martin Sheen. Produced in association with **HBO/Cinemax**. World Premiere, **Sundance Film Festival**. Nationally broadcast on **Cinemax**, **Sundance Channel**, **Link TV**, and **Free Speech TV**. (1997) 90 minutes.

“**AN ACT OF CONSCIENCE** is one of the most deeply moving films I’ve seen in years. Seeing this movie lifts your spirits, exhilarates, and offers hope.”

—Studs Terkel, Author of **WORKING, HARD TIMES**, and **THE GOOD WAR**

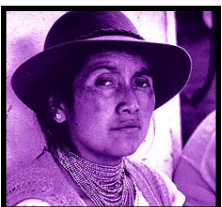


### **HARVEST OF PEACE**

U.S. volunteers travel to a war zone in Nicaragua during the height of the U.S.-backed Contra war in the mid-1980s to harvest cotton in a unique citizen-to-citizen peace effort. World premiere, **Telluride Film Festival**. Best Nonfiction Film, **San Antonio Cine Festival**. Curator’s Choice, **New England Film Festival**. Nationally broadcast on **Free Speech TV**. (1985) 29 minutes.

“A striking evocation of Nicaragua’s struggle and a moving expression of America’s best response.”

—Andrew Kopkind, **THE NATION**



### **COLUMBUS DIDN’T DISCOVER US**

Indigenous people from North, South and Central America speak out about the impact of the Columbus legacy—past and present—on their lives. Excerpts nationally broadcast on **PBS**. (1992) 24 minutes.

“This moving video offers an alternative view of Columbus’s place (or misplace) in history, seen through the eyes of Native Americans. A telling video, straight from the heart and the source.”

—Steve Garbarino, **BILLBOARD**



### **SEABROOK 1977**

A chronicle of a seminal event of 1970s’ environmental activism when 1,414 people were arrested in a civil disobedience protest at a nuclear power plant under construction in Seabrook, New Hampshire and jailed en masse in National Guard armories for two weeks. (1978) 85 minutes.

“**SEABROOK 1977** is an invaluable historical document about one of the critical issues of our time.”

—Howard Zinn, Author of **A PEOPLE’S HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES**

**Order DVDs, read detailed film descriptions,  
and watch video clips from documentaries, excerpts  
from Leppzer’s campus talks, and a television  
interview nationally broadcast on DEMOCRACY NOW!  
by host Amy Goodman at our website.**

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