

Becoming the Media: How to Screen Films in Your Local Community

by Bob Banner

One of the purposes of HopeDance is to network with others who are doing similar projects in order to strengthen those projects, campaigns and activities. Also, it is to report on the successes of projects so others don't have to "reinvent the wheel." They can simply learn how the project became a "success." This is all about learning what works in ones region, learning not only how to cultivate the soil as it were, but how to grow and tend the seedlings and plants in this adventure called "Becoming the Media."

Introduction

With film festivals becoming more mainstream, according to some film makers I have talked to, what happens to the really excellent political/cultural documentaries? Where do they go? If they are lucky they hit some film festivals throughout the world for a period of time and then what? If you are lucky to even see a documentary at a film festival what are your chances of seeing it again? And perhaps you were out of town writing that blockbuster novel at a retreat somewhere near Laytonville, Northern California when the Festival hit your town in Santa Barbara? What do you do?

Hopefully you may watch it on cable, or PBS's POV (Point of View) or some satellite network channels like FSTV (Free Speech TV) or LinkTV? Or if you are lucky you will wait a few years and purchase the video for \$25-\$50 through some distributor, if you are so inclined to buy videos. Or you might get really lucky and see it advertised at Blockbusters Video Stores. I sincerely doubt it. Or perhaps you will find it at an independent video rental store that features documentaries? If it's the latter, it will probably be a large city whose demographics include people who want to rent documentaries, a rare breed these days.

So, how do good quality and potent and politically effective documentaries get out to the public arena after they have saturated the more popular market, if in fact they have even gone through the traditional market route?

Granted there are some festivals that are not mainstream ... and we need to pursue those avenues. Sometimes at Conferences I will see an excellent documentary being played in a small classroom sized room on a small TV with a VCR with perhaps a few diehards eager to see the film ... amidst a plethora of other workshops happening at the same time. Or at times, University and College campuses will get the rights to show an excellent documentary and show it on campus for free for a night.

What can be done? Is there a niche where this feeble and weak distribution system can be challenged and changed.

There are now communities throughout the country that are using video projectors (those very cool small boxes that can project a video or DVD to a large screen, 8 by 12 feet) to show very cool documentaries and short features to audiences in all sorts of unusual places. Whether it's a bar, restaurant, top of an apartment building [check out rooftopfilms.com for a very cool presentation of wild and fresh and new independent films atop a 5-story apartment complex in Manhattan], a building wall being used as a screen at some side street, or a church basement, films and videos and DVDs can be shown to larger and larger audiences. Because of the revolutionary technology of the video projector and because of its price being lowered, it is now possible to create a traveling theater. Pack the VCR, video projector, amplifier and speakers into a suitcase with wheels ... and away you go ... onward to the venue where gatherings can come and watch on a large screen some excellent educational and politically potent documentaries.

Locate the videos, DVDs or films. Buy them or rent them. Get permission from the director, producers or the distribution company. Show them at a favorite venue or move around to different cities or different venues in the same city. The possibilities are endless and you can make money for everyone involved. After you show them to the public, it is even possible to store them at a video store (with permission) and rent them out to even a larger audience, so there's more of a life to these excellent videos. So the education and passion and courage and artistic expression has a continuity to them ... so they live on! So dissenting viewpoints can live on... So awakening and political gutsiness live on!!

For example, my first encounter with a video projector and a very cool documentary on the Zapatistas happened in Seattle during the anti-WTO protests in November of 1999. After a long day at a conference sponsored by the very radical group of scholarly activists called the International Forum on Globalization (www.ifg.org), I was walking down the streets in Seattle. As I was sight-seeing (this was days before the cacophony/clash between protesters and the police) and browsing the numerous flyers posted on buildings, I came across a cool poster describing a film to be shown called "Zapatista." It was happening that night in a short time right near where I was walking.

I walked over a few blocks and to my amazement there was a crowd trying to get into a basement of what appeared to be sleazy bar. The line did not move. We waited and waited and talked and talked until the line started to move down the stairs. More than an hour later I found myself cramming into a dank and dark cellar with about 100+ more people eager to see the film.

A strange box emitting a blue light shining on a white cotton bed sheet taped precariously on the wall of the basement was what struck me initially. Suddenly the wall came to life with the beginnings of the film after a great introduction by one of the filmmakers who went to Chiapas in search of Marcos and the Zapatista rebellion. The dank dark cellar became a theater alive with pas-

sion, intellectual energy, courage and emotional potency. The film “Zapatista” was not only a hit for me and the rest of the tightly crammed audience but it started a whole new revolution in education, mobilization, activist campaigning and how to articulate one's cause to larger groups of people.

I bought the video from the director and promised that I would hold a screening in a small town called San Luis Obispo and would call them as soon as I got back. Three years later we are still showing radical films. We wrote this ebook to tell you all about it, how to do it yourselves so other people throughout the country who don't yet know about this revolution can get turned onto it and begin extending the life of very cool and powerful documentaries. And simultaneously help support right livelihoods and getting the message out about the many causes that are inundating us daily. Creating a traveling theater helps the directors, the producers, the film distributors, the video rental folks, the reviewers of documentaries and the people like ourselves, the new promoters of a new niche in the documentary industry.

May you learn well and succeed.

One day it dawned on me to show films. I had seen some very powerful documentaries and because of my peculiar personality (or something) I am not entirely content with just viewing a radical documentary alone. The same thing goes for books, movies, music and news. I want to share and broadcast the news, especially news that is alternative, independent, disturbing, outrageous and of an exposing nature. Also, since I intuited that people aren't reading much anymore and since videos have an “entertaining” component to the educational aspect, I thought it would be only appropriate to branch out and show documentaries and new genre films.

The most likely person to ask, in our specific region, was Jim Dee, owner of the independently run Palm Theater (in San Luis Obispo; www.palmcinema.com). I asked him if was possible to rent the theater during the off-time in order to show a film. I knew he had a video projector so it was just a matter of giving him a video or DVD, renting the space and doing the publicity for the event. He agreed. HopeDance FiLMs was born!

He also enjoyed that we were using the theatre space to make announcements of other activist type events within the community as well as discussing the films afterwards, time permitting. We rented it from 7pm to 9pm, which was the typical time for a feature film to be slotted. Fortunately we could get inside the theater around 6:40pm to set up literature, petitions, etc., since most films last about an hour or hour and a half, we have up to a half hour or more for discussion time. We usually waited until the very end before we had to leave. Frequently the discussions moved to the street or our favorite cafe.

Fortunately because of HopeDance (www.hopedance.org), a publication a few of us started, we could freely advertise the events. One of the benefits of owning your own publication! Also, because of the availability of the local media we learned how to send press releases in time for the film event. We had to learn the hard way. If we didn't get the press release on time to a specific

media (whether newspaper, radio, magazine or television) or if we didn't send it to the specific individual in charge we would not get the number of people we wanted or the people we were reaching. And with the rent of the theater costing nearly \$200 we had to have at least 40 in attendance to break even.

So a strategy was born to get the word out. Making flyers, finding volunteers to post them throughout the county (or paying them), creating an email media list, locating the fax numbers for the media, spending time using efax to fax the flyers [go to www.efax.com for your free efaxing account], dealing with people who wanted to be off your list, creating and discovering local listservs to spread the word. And calling the various media representatives making sure they received either the email or efax. (See the Publicity chapter for more details.)

That's the grueling part; but it is basic to having it work. But, and this is an important distinction, if you want to simply show videos to your friends at someone's home on a VCR, fine. That's relatively easy. But if you want to create a Revolution and spread the gospel to more people than your own small group of friends, then you will have to think differently and creatively. If you do not want to make money and simply be generous with your time, effort and spread your various cause's message then you simply need to understand that and not complain if there is no money for you to grow or even sustain where you are already at. Many groups are already doing the obvious: showing films at homes or offices or at church basements on someone's VCR connected to a TV.

I want to make this abundantly clear. I am doing this for both educational purposes and to make money, making a livelihood that complements my values. Education is quintessential since cineplexes are not in the business of showing radical documentaries, either the political ones, spiritual ones, the disturbing exposing kind, or the positive solution-oriented documentaries. Money is a vital factor since it is the basic fuel to strengthen movements. HopeDance is already free to the public with a very limited number of paid subscribers. And people seem to be under the impression that media ought to be free. However, people are already accustomed to spending money on films, up to \$8 to \$9 in our area. So asking \$5 for a documentary or two should not hurt anyone's bank account.

In any event, we want to make the film events fun, disturbing, educational, instructional and to include discussion time afterwards to find out what people can do or network with other people who are already doing something about a specific cause or issue. And the income is not just for us. It spreads to the film directors, various causes and organizations as well as money for creating posters, acquiring more films, etc. For example, during the war on Afghanistan we showed a documentary about Afghanistan from a local professor filmmaker who had travelled to Afghanistan (it even included footage of an interview with the head of the Northern Alliance shortly before his assassination). A particular percentage of our proceeds went to a fund to help set up educational centers in the rural areas of Afghanistan that she personally was going to set up.

How to Find Films?

The web is a great way. Being on numerous listservs help (since people love to

announce a film that they just saw at their university, on TV or video streamed on a website...) and just the simple fact of having your psychic antennae out there really helps a lot. In fact there is a great documentary that Greg Palast put together on the Bush family via the BBC... Well, one can watch the video stream through various video softwares (RealPlayer, Windows Media, etc.) but how does one turn it into a video. I am currently checking how iMovie (Macintosh) can take mpg's or .rams or Quicktime (.mov) and burn them into DVDs. Also am looking into the BBC, the original producer of the documentary, so I can purchase the video directly from them, if they have it for sale. This is the kind of work that lies ahead of you if you want the cutting edge videos to show in your community.

And of course now with youtube.com and googlevideo.com we are seeing many more films uploaded for people to see. However the main point is not necessarily the private showing of films but of building community, creating a place where people can come together to see a film and discuss it afterwards. For example, a number of us already saw Loose Change 2nd Edition online, but we decided to buy a number of DVDs, make reservations to have a screening at the public library. From all my 6 years of showing films this way, we had 60 people and the dialogue after the film was the wildest I have ever encountered. People were demanding more information, revealing how far they could go and couldn't go in relation to the "facts" presented. And the task of the facilitator is to hold the space sacrosanct so people can open up and express their views as well as their feelings. After a film presentation of Mike Shiley's Inside Iraq, a woman started sobbing and said sheepishly, "I never knew that was happening." That lead into a discussion about how "spiritual" people have abandoned the news since it all seems to be so disturbing and negative. Well, if we are going to turn off the news then we are also going to be turning off our awareness of what is happening to the people we love and to a country that we cherish.

Even reading the local and national newspapers or film magazines is relevant to see what new documentary is being shown at your local university or on the satellite channels. Or check out film distributors like Bullfrog or First Run Productions. You can subscribe to First Run listserv so you can get the latest in the new films as well as learning about the price reductions of older films. For example, the documentary on Noam Chomsky and Kissinger which were being sold for \$500 are now much less ... or when their 35 mm films go to video format. Check out various film festivals and see which films will be transforming into videos. For example, "Aftermath: Remnants of War" was a knockout block buster of a film at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival. It is now available on video for \$34.95.

Go to google.com and do a search for "radical documentaries," or "political films," or "films about social change," and you will get some very worthwhile websites and consequently some good selections. Even England has some great films that can be purchased through Amazon.co.uk but make sure it's in a NTSC format and not the PAL format. PAL will not play on US VCRs. And to get them converted can be a hassle and costly. If necessary it is better to have them change it in England before they ship it. Most foreign distributors, however, will list the two options on their websites.

Some urls include:

www.bullfrog.com
www.freespeech.org
www.linkTV.org
www.pbs.org
www.gnn.org (Guerrilla News Network)
www.arabfilm.com (Arab Film Distributing Company)
www.mep.org (the Media Education Project)
<http://www.vcn.bc.ca/doxa/>

Often times websites have video streaming capabilities so you can sample some of their videos. Also you can simply ask them if you can borrow a film before you decide to purchase the film. When I called the Arab Distributing Film Company their prices were quite high (even though their prices listed on their website for home purchases were reasonable). To show them publicly was a bit expensive plus they wanted a percentage at the door if we charged at the door rather than asking for a donation. Well, you can imagine I sent him (via an email correspondence and then later in real time phone conversation) a counter offer and asked him to send me copies so I could review them before purchasing or renting them. He put the videos in the mail the next day. The average rental fee was \$100 and the average purchasing fee was \$250. I countered again and they lowered it to \$50 rental per screening and if I wanted to purchase the video I could do it at their home video price that ranged between \$24.99 to \$49.99. You will soon learn all about this when you decide to get your feet wet.

Some films have not signed onto a large national film distributing company. Like “Hidden Wars of Desert Storm” (about Gulf War I). Fortunately I contacted them as soon as it was released. They were so eager to show the film they not only didn’t ask for any money but they were willing to drive up to our area and speak after the film. I was shocked and thrilled. I immediately started the publicity arrangements. I enlisted him to be interviewed with the County’s top radio talk show host and did my usual other publicity arrangements. They sent me a large poster that went up inside the theater where we were going to show the film. That helped! The director Gerard Ungerman, was thrilled at the packed audience in such a small town as ours. It was the largest they had ever encountered in a theater setting! Even compared to Los Angeles where they are from. We learned that the audience was eager to learn about our US foreign policy by independent film makers. They sold numerous copies of their video out in the streets, in front of the theatre.

Two years later when his current film “Plan Colombia” (2003) was released, he and his wife and co-producer Audrey Brohy drove up again. A small group of us treated them to a dinner (part of our policy is to set directors up for a place to spend the night and to treat them to dinner before the film’s premiere). Unfortunately only 40 people attended the premiere. Gerard and Audrey were very understanding. They sold a few videos and drove back to Los Angeles that night because of another engagement. Their next film might be about Iraq (check out their website at www.hiddenwars.com).

When we had film maker John Smilhula premiere “Hidden in Plain Sight,” a film exploring the School of the Americas (SOA) we had to pay \$250 for that privilege of showing the film to an enthusiastic audience. We even included a speaker who was released from prison because she had protested the SOA by crossing the line at Fort Benning, GA where the school resides. We lost money on that gig but it was worth it since he allowed us to show the film again at a film festival we put together called “Why They Hate Us” (more details will be written later about film festivals). But since he signed on with a distributor he could not sell videos that night and neither could we. The way we got the original video was that we learned about it from a friend who reads the anti-SOA newsletter where there was an ad for the video for \$25. I bought it immediately. It’s great to have a network of friends and associates who inform you of videos they learn about! Now you cannot purchase the video. The directors signed on with First Run Productions.

The secret is if the film just comes out start negotiating with the film director before they sign a contract with a distributor who calls all the distribution and screening rights. However, if you are a university or theater, there are other financial arrangements you can make. I don’t know much about those. Basically, this informational booklet is primarily directed toward people who want to show films in their community, perhaps 2-3 times a month or less, whether or not you are an entrepreneurial type. For government officials or nonprofit orgs or non-making money agencies, you may be able to pick up a few hints and tips from this booklet.

Some other sources for checking out videos.

Watch POV on PBS and check out two excellent channels on satellite: Direct TV or DISH TV. Free Speech TV (FSTV) can only be seen via DISH TV network. It’s channel 9415. LinkTV is available on both satellite networks and is on channel 9410 at DISH and 375 on DirectTV. For free installation of the dish (and to own your own dish rather than continually leasing it) go to freespeech.org and click on “becoming a member.” For \$25 a month you get very good channels (they offer 50 channels for that price) We decided to go for it since we were paying that much simply on video rentals a month.

Go to LinkTV.org to sample their documentaries. If you see one on their television station you can go back to the website and click “Buy Video” and learn how you can purchase the video and establish your negotiations right then and there for viewing the film in your community. Same thing goes for FSTV. If you see what you like, go to the website and browse. They even have a store with videos for sale that include video streaming and blurbs about the film. Most are in the \$25 to \$35 price market.

The advantage of both of these channels is that you can order the video or DVD online easily. For example, we saw a documentary/music video on LinkTV. I went to their website and located the schedule (unfortunately their “search” button is not operational currently) and located the CD and DVD... and immediately got the information I was seeking. Since I wanted to learn more about them I did a google search and came up with articles about the directors and certainly more information than I needed.

Since I am so pleased and appreciative of those two stations I asked them if we can use their 2 minute “commercials” to show during our film gatherings, either at the beginning or in between films, and they enthusiastically agreed! Remember, the whole idea is accessibility and rEvolution.

Buying The Films

And what kind of films do you want? Where to find them? and How do you get permission to show them in your community?

From my experience of showing films for the past three years, it depends on a number of factors:

1. Find the film
2. Either pay for it outright or rent it.
3. There are different arrangements for each director/production company/distributor as to gaining permission and negotiating a price arrangement.

Documentaries cost money. Filmmakers, like other people in the media, journalists, novelists, artists ... all need to pay the rent and pay back the usual enormous loan(s) they took out to create the documentary. If you have a huge venue/theater for cheap rent it is obligatory to request from the film company how much they want before you show the film (assuming you purchased the film as a video or DVD, for example). Even if you have a small venue and expensive rent you ought to make contact with the film director or producers to chat about your intent.

Since we are creating a new niche for film showing in the first place [basically because of the revolutionary technology of the VP (video projector) and the lowering of the price] the distributors, et al will often times will be open to creative financial arrangements that will be a win-win situation. For example, Mark Phillips (co-owner of the video projector and head of the People’s Video Project) gave me a copy he purchased of a “Crop Circle” video to take a look at. It was not in my usual “radical documentary” genre; but after seeing the two hour film I saw the possibility of it being shown to a different audience that might be sympathetic to other causes than the obvious “mystery” genre. I could give away copies of HopeDance and other related political and sustainability issue oriented literature, and tell them what other subversive films we were planning to show ... to broaden the audience... to attract other types of people, to stretch the Revolution into other areas that were not specifically “political.”

Months later I contacted the producers of “Crop Circle: The Quest for Truth” via their website [www.cropcirclethemovie.com] and called them. I recall that they initially said that they were not in a position to give it away for free since “we are not in the same financial ballpark as Michael Moore’s ‘Bowling for Columbine’.”

I told them of my situation. They had never heard of such a small group putting together public performances for documentaries. They are familiar with the traditional outlets of showing films: making deals with major film festivals, Universities, TV stations, i.e., Discovery, Sci-Fi Channels, LinkTV, etc., confer-

ences, and others. So, we talked. They gave me a price and I countered. Since we had the video projector and the video already purchased I offered them 50% of the admission income after expenses. They accepted. And they mailed me 2 very large posters and three smaller versions of the poster that helped greatly with publicity. We posted them at major places in town.

That deal was definitely a win-win situation. It was so successful, a full house at the local theater, that we showed it a month later at another venue and had almost the same number of people in attendance.

If, for example I had agreed to their first offer, I would certainly not have made the money necessary to even want to do it the second time. You also need to appreciate the work you put into this new niche endeavor and speak honestly to the producers or film maker or distributing company that you are desiring a situation that benefits both of you.

We also recently struck a deal with a producer who requested a “\$250 vs 50%” of the draw, which means whatever is the largest amount, that’s what you send them. It was a bit out of our range but when we learned that it could be for a run of 3-5 screenings then we accepted it immediately.

Buying a Video Projector

Since renting the theater and showing films at our local independent theatre became “successful,” I talked to other people and activist organizations about purchasing a video projector so we could:

1. Become independent of the costly rental arrangement with the local theater;
2. Show films in other parts of the county that were not as “liberal” as San Luis Obispo; and
3. So we could show cool documentaries at other venues like church basements, bars, restaurants, community centers, libraries, building walls outside, etc. (Mark discovered that there is a group in Manhattan that shows films atop a five story apartment complex called Rooftop films). The whole purpose is to make the films accessible. That’s what “become the media” revolution is all about, making vitally important documentaries accessible, with a win-win situation for all involved.

No activist organizations or enviro organizations were interested. None even initiated a conversation. When you get used to begging for your funds as your survival base, green entrepreneurship may be the farthest from your thoughts. Actually it ought to be right up there on the priority list but suffice it to say, it is not.

My permaculture expert friend Larry Santoyo responded, as did Mark Phillips who was getting very interested in using films as a way to educate the masses about 9-11 and the new outrageous right wing fascist government of Heir Bush and Company. So, the three of us put our money together and became partners in purchasing the video equipment. Mark investigated prices and formats via eBay and other sources. He actually wrote out a description of the process that is vitally helpful for any wannabe VP purchaser.

The following comes from Mark Phillips:

<<We purchased a Sony vpl-cs5 (they also have a more expensive vpl-cx5 model) \$1700 on 11/02 from: Projector Superstore (1-888-525-6696) (Jeff Phillips) svga resolution, 1800 lumens.

The 2 major features of interest are the resolution and the light output. Increasing resolution (and price) can be expressed as:

vga, svga, xga, sxga

Sxga was out of the question price wise so we debated svga and xga. Since most of what we would be showing would be videos, it was not deemed worthwhile to spend the extra (\$200 or so) for xga. Very high resolution computer input (such as power point presentation or computer graphics) might cause you to rethink this. Computers also require the proper cables to attach (such as USB).

We also wanted a sufficient amount of light in case we were not in a totally darkened room. The 1800 lumens we have is on the high end of what we were looking at. If you'll always be in a darkened room with no more than 100 people, then 1200 lumens ought to be sufficient.

I suggest you talk to Jeff at the superstore as he was quite helpful. I also looked at eBay to get an idea of what these things were going for which helped a lot. Another consideration is the bulb. They cost \$300 - \$500. Ours lasts 2000 hours though, so it's probably good for about 20 years.

Of course, you'll need a video machine as well. We purchased a DVD/VCR combo from Samsung (Sony comes highly recommended) for about \$200 which works fine. I use the CD/DVD player to play some music before the shows. To get sound you need an amplifier and a pair of bookshelf speakers (the cheapest that Circuit City had). I'm surprised at how well those cheap speakers work but we haven't done a really large room yet either. For 100 people, it's plenty.

I purchased the largest suitcase from Goodwill and packed in all the pertinent equipment (including connecting cables, 25' extension cord, a power strip, some duct tape, a small flashlight, etc.). The total weight is around 70 pounds so be prepared to have a strong dude or dudette carrying it. Make sure you have durable rollers on your suitcase so you can wheel it from your car to the venue.

It takes me about 20 minutes to set up or take down depending on how much I'm talking to folks at the time.

Our total cost was \$2200.>> Now in 2007 prices, it would be about \$800.

To work out the financial arrangements, we thought it would be best if we had our own businesses. That wasn't a problem. Mark and I came together to work

out how we would pay ourselves, what each's responsibility was, etc., so things could run smoothly. It has been a great relationship thus far since the camaraderie, the discussions and the exploration of new films, new film festivals, etc., have been in synch.

When it came to his specific passion for 9-11 Mark went ahead and edited 6 hours full of documentaries that we had purchased and transformed it into an unprofessional 2 hour video. We showed that to an audience of 45 people. Even though we think that 45 people are not a lot, we often agree reluctantly that the number of people may not necessarily correspond to what "successful" means. It is very often the quality of people who attend that makes a big difference.

Mark also has a passion for Amy Goodman's Democracy Now! program that airs on numerous cable, satellite and NPR affiliate radio stations. When he investigated where you could listen to in the state of California, he saw a gaping hole in Bakersfield and San Luis Obispo. He decided to edit three speeches of Amy Goodman and put together an edited video compilation of less than 2 hours. He wanted to show the film in three cities over a period of 6 weeks. We did and we broke even at all three gigs: 43 in SLO, 9 in Paso and 23 in Grover Beach.

The showing of the Amy Goodman did not go as well as showing the Michael Moore video that we showed numerous times throughout the county. That was a different story. Michael Moore is more popular than Amy Goodman. Michael Moore is not as attractive as Amy Goodman but he is definitely funnier and just as political. The way we got the Michael Moore video was through Ralph Cole's Justice Vision (justicevision.org). It came on an 8 hour videotape as part of Mark's regular subscription to Justice Vision's video series (the remaining 6 hours included talks by Michael Parenti, Noam Chomsky, Howard Zinn and others). Mark edited the Michael Moore speech out and showed it to me. I roared with laughter and said we gotta show this! We got permission from Ralph Cole. He is the one who got permission to set up the video camera at the Church in LA where Mr. Moore spoke. We promised Ralph that on our tapes (that we were selling as well as showing throughout the county and even in Santa Barbara) we would include a label that included Mr. Coles' www.justicevision.org website. So we were all cool.

But back to Amy. We didn't lose money, especially since renting some community centers are downright inexpensive ... but the point was education. Not just to educate people about "Democracy Now!" program but to get people knowledgeable about Amy Goodman's courageous news reporting. Within this educational effort lie Mark's initiative to create a campaign to get "Democracy Now!" on KCBX, the NPR affiliate in this area [go to www.hopedance.org and sign the petition].

So, together with the Campaign and showing the film and selling the edited compilation 2 hour video, we made some inroads. Also, if you write about your films you just might get them published in the more mainstream periodicals. Mark summarized one of Ms. Goodman's speeches about East Timor and it became a guest commentary in our local weekly entertainment periodical called New Times (not affiliated with the chain of the same name). I also

got a speech adapted and published in New Times because of a film event we called "Independent Media Evening," where we showed an hour film called "The Myth of the Liberal Media," featuring interviewed clips with Ed Herman and Noam Chomsky. We also had 7 people approach the mike for five minutes each to speak about their specific independent media projects. Some were filmmakers, cyber revolutionaries, and print people. We had over 100 people in attendance. New Times even sent over an intern to interview a number of us for an article that they ran with the speech/guest commentary. And all on a Friday night! Go figure. I think we were lucky. Even though we plan way ahead for these film gigs it is always difficult to know whether it will be a timely issue. It just so happened that the film gig came days after the FCC ruling favoring more corporate media conglomerates.

Setting up your Video Equipment

The following comes from Mark again. One day he wrote an email describing how to set up the video equipment. Even though he had given us a mini-workshop on how to set it up, it was good as a refresher course to have it written down. See, Mark is the main guy when it comes to the video projector, setting up and taking down. When we arrive in the venue we have about 20 minutes to set up. He does the video equipment while I take care of the tea juice, snacks and cookies table. Plus the table that has the free literature, various petitions and campaigns and videos and books for sale.² Plus the table that has the email address sign-up sheet and the money for when people start coming in to buy their tickets (we really don't have tickets or a punch or put splotches of ink on their wrist). They put their money in a basket and I sit idly by watching, giving change, talking, answering questions... and that's it.

Remember, it's not just purchasing a video projector. It's having the amplifier, the DVD/VHS VCR, the speakers and wires and table. Also, in venues that don't have screens, Mark built one using a canvas painter's cloth (around \$25, 10 x 12 foot). The screen is stapled to a 2x4 that has been ripped in half. When rolled up it requires a 6" pvc pipe (which was very expensive). You probably should attach the drop cloth to something smaller (like screws into a piece of 1" pipe) so when rolled up it can fit into a 4" pvc pipe (much cheaper). For transporting the screen, you can attach the pvc pipe to the top of your car and drive off to the sunset to your next venue.

From Mark:

<<The VP hooks up like a stereo. RCA plugs go from the output of the VCR/DVD (connections are labeled). Observe the color codes (red and white are sound, yellow is the video). Sound goes into the amplifier (I usually use the VCR connection but you can use any, as long as it agrees with what you have it set on in the front (CD, phono, VCR, etc.). The video goes to the video projector. Speaker wires go from speakers to the amplifier at the speaker connections (spring loaded). Once all connections are made, turn on the power for each item. The VCR and amplifier turn on with buttons on the front, the projector with the colored button on the remote. After a minute or so the projector will

put out some light so you can see how big the screen size is. It can be adjusted a bit with the zoom on the side but the major adjustment is made by moving the projector to or from the screen. Typically the VP is approximately 25 feet away from the screen in order to project a 10 foot wide image. The tilt of the screen is made by pressing the “keystone” button on the remote and then either the up or down arrow. Once you are set you can turn off the projector for the time being by pressing the colored button (twice). When you restart, the tilt and zoom will return to the previous settings.

You can do a speaker check by choosing “DVD” on the front of the VCR/DVD player and inserting a CD. When it comes time to play the VHS tape, turn the projector back on (it takes about 30 seconds to be ready), stop the CD, choose VCR and insert the tape. You can do the focus (on the side of the projector) at this time. At the end, stop the tape and turn the projector off (again, press the colored button twice). DO NOT UNPLUG THE PROJECTOR until the fan has shut off (about 2 minutes)!!!>>

Of course instructions come with your purchase of the video projector.

Finding Venues to show your films

During the investigating and final purchase of the video equipment (costing approximately \$2200 for everything and being totally housed in a large strong black plastic suitcase, weighing about 70 pounds [that was back in 2000, now in 2006 we purchased the same equipment via eBay for \$850), we made use of this time to explore a number of venues throughout the county.

Mark took the South County. I took SLO and North County. Traveling to them, checking them out, talking to people responsible, reading application forms, determining if they had a screen, checking prices, etc., all took time. We put our notes in a file so we could extract them later when we needed to know:

1. Price for rental for how many hours
2. Insurance
3. Did they have a screen
4. What was their sitting capacity
5. Directions to the venue

Ah, insurance you say!? Yes, some cities demand that you pay insurance in addition to the rental fee. It definitely eliminated 2-3 cities from our county-wide search for venues. They became unreachable because of this added expense. However, there was talk about using one’s home insurance as a way to sign on to the venue that demanded insurance. We simply walked away and have not pursued that line. You might wish to consider it depending on what you discover. It appears, cities have their own regulations about such things as renting their facilities. Churches are another matter altogether. Bars and restaurants all have various arrangement. It all comes down to relationships. And don’t forget showing films on WALLS outdoors. It is a fantastic feeling to say the least to

show films outdoors, broadcasting to a larger world vitally important documentaries or even entertaining music films such as 1 Giant Leap to a growing group of people who may not necessarily be interested in documentaries but may become curious since 1 Giant Leap combines music footage with interviews. (Go to <http://www.1giantleap.tv> for the latest of what they are up to.)

As far as renting the venues more often at these farther away cities, those less “liberal” cities where they “need” progressive films, it is not working out as planned. However, we did go twice to outlying cities like Paso Robles, Atascadero and Grover Beach. But I don’t think its worth it. I intuit that if we continue to go outside the comfortable liberal zone of San Luis Obispo, it will be because there will be another organization assisting/cosponsoring the event.

Speaking of other organizations possibly getting involved, you may want to create a policy about renting your equipment to nonprofit organizations. We came up with a price of \$100 which includes Mark setting up the equipment and taking it down. It also includes mentioning/advertising the event in our publication. It hasn’t happened that often and we are flexible depending on the cause and organization that wishes to work with us. You will discover this soon enough. It is wise to create policies now rather than later to eliminate any hardships or misunderstandings along the way. The situation emerges for a win-win situation to evolve.

More about venues:

Some cities only charge \$19 for three hours. Some wanted as much as \$400 plus a \$500 deposit. We decided that \$100 was our max for a three hour gig. If it’s more than that we might as well rent the local theater where people can buy popcorn and soda and coffee. If you can find a theater, just do the math. They supply the coffee, popcorn, juice, tea and snacks (for sale of course). You don’t get any of those proceeds but that’s okay since you didn’t have to work for it. The theater has a built in advertising since at the Palm they allow us to put our publication as well as film flyers there. And the theater is known for showing films. Duh. Some people may still “believe” that showing a film in a bar, restaurant or church will be shown on a tiny TV screen and not attend your event strictly for that underlying assumption. So it might take some time to educate people. Often times in our advertising we make certain to say “on a large screen” when the venue is a non-theatre place.

We pay up to \$30 for refreshments, snacks, juice, tea, etc., and often times get close to nada in the donation basket. So if I’m feeling lazy I’d rather rent out the theater. I just give them a video. Plus I don’t even have to stand around collecting money. It’s all done at the theater box. There are advantages on both sides of the equation. Even though the theatre only rents out for 2 hour increments we have more time to socialize and discuss the films in the non-theatre venues.

When you decide on the venue, book it soon. Quite frequently we would book the venue before knowing what film we’d be showing since we needed the dates. Community venues can get booked quickly with no regard for your gig. We are always booking 2-3 months ahead, and fill them up with films later on. We need

this much time so we can create the ads/flyers (that will go into the bimonthly publication). Your time constraints may differ than ours. Remember: get a note book and write in all the options, dates, seating limitations, rental fee, when you confirmed the venue, if you had to put down a deposit, etc. If you don't confirm they will simply not open the doors for you at the precious time, and you will have some very angry people to answer to. Always have a phone number in case you do confirm but they don't show up. Accidents happen. You want to cover all your bases. And remember, your success depends on Relationships. Relationships with the City, with the media, with the filmmakers/producers/distributing company, theater owner, partners, technical people, volunteers, yourself and the video!

Publicity

Publicity is necessary for your film events and causes; whether it is good or bad publicity really doesn't matter, since it is getting the word out. And that's what you want. It's also getting the word out about your literature that is on your tables/booths, i.e., periodicals, flyers, website notices, events, petitions, books, videos, etc. If people didn't know about us before the film event now they would certainly have to be blind not to see what we are up to since I usually announce the films with a brief introduction as to who we are ¹ and the tables of literature are near the entrance as they walk in to purchase their film ticket.

For more information about publicizing your event to the max, please go to <http://www.hopedance.org/39/articles/40.html>. After a group ("We the People") put on a very successful anti-Patriot Act forum in a sleepy town called Cambria where more than 250 people attended I asked the organizers to spell out how they did it. The url is their story. We also published it in HopeDance, the printed version as well as the online edition. Also, please go to page 31 that speaks about Publicity more in depth as well as footnote #1 in the sources page.

Film Festivals

This process is certainly organic as it is grassroots. Ideas come to us; we explore them and go with it. Sometimes we are operating "by the seat of our pants"... full of spontaneity, trust, intuition and blind faith that videos can alter consciousness so people can become more active politically and culturally. If we succeed, wonderful. If not, we may not try it again. Remember we are entrepreneurs. We don't have board members that we need to consult with meeting after meeting to convince or debate with. Since there is basically two of us we chat it out and that's it. If things aren't working we will sit down and hash things out to see what we can do to bring the balance up to par with our expectations or reevaluate our expectations. If they are too low we might need to raise them. If they are too high we might need to lower them. You get the drift.

Because of 9-11 and because the truth as we saw it was not being published/exposed in the mainstream media we decided to put together some of the best US foreign film documentaries into what we called a "film festival," called "Why They Hate Us Film Festival." I realize that that may not be the proper term for what we were doing. "Film festivals" usually happen annually, usu-

ally have new films that are premiering, have awards, have film directors who come and show and talk about their films, etc., and it might extend for an entire weekend or week. We did ours for one day, one long day. From 10am to 10pm. To see the films we showed, go to www.hopedance.org and click “Events.” We showed 7.5 hours of films all in one day. It was an experiment. It worked. It was pretty good.

Attendance was slow in the morning but picked up in the afternoon and evening. We did the usual advertising: a full page ad in HopeDance; New Times gave us a tiny blurb; KCBX radio aired us on their community calendar; the local college station was mute as always. KSBY, the major TV news station in SLO came out at the morning of the event. They interviewed me for about 7 minutes. I got a one-liner lasting 4 seconds on that evenings news broadcast. Seriously, I think it was the word “hate” that brought them out to the venue. When we organized a second film festival, all about “Solutions” six weeks later, there was not a peep from the local television station.

After our first film festival about “them hating us,” we asked the audience for feedback. The two major items were that they wanted time to eat lunch. In our impetuousness we deleted lunch assuming that no one would want to see ALL the films, all in a row. The second item was that they needed solutions. We were even thinking along those lines ourselves as we progressed from disturbing US foreign policy film to disturbing film. So we started working on a Solution Film Festival that included a lunch break. We even went to our popular healthy grocery store and deli and asked for a donation to the cause. They gave us a \$100 certificate to buy whatever we wanted. Reo and Cheryl were eager to help us out. They came with me to New Frontiers and bought the food for wraps... Very cool. They brought the wraps on time and sold them all. The money that they made went directly to their labor costs. Another win-win. We also advertised New Frontiers on our brochures. Earthflow, the permaculture folks, was another cosponsor and they advertised our event to their people (via email lists, etc.).

For the url about the Solutions Film Festival go to <http://www.hopedance.org/cgi-bin/yabb/YaBB.cgi?action=newcalendar&selmonth=5&selyear=2003>. We had a local university graphics intern come and design a brochure for us. We had it printed on 100% tree-free paper. We did more advertising than we did on the other events. In fact, for the Independent Media event we hardly did any advertising and got a full house ...

We thought for sure people would want to see and learn all about the great pioneers and bioneers doing incredible work working out the *solutions* for the planet ... both politically, biologically, chemically, metaphysically, etc. ... and nada. It was a big disappointment since our expectations had grown. We made a little more than HALF of the “Hate” festival. We can theorize forever about the reasons why ... but we need to simply let go... It was as it was and it is time to move on.

As I mentioned before, KSBY, the local TV station did not interview us. One thousand brochures were set out and posted throughout the county in various places. Some people from outside our area were in attendance. Some of those people are now including sustainability in their Solutions Film Festivals

in Santa Barbara and LA. So, education and the spreading of solutions seeds definitely happened even if it wasn't covered by the mainstream press. And even if we didn't have full houses at each time block. One should not depend on the mainstream press for your film events coverage but if you are nice and friendly to them and don't appear too radical for them and if they are desperate enough for news you might just get a 4 second plug. And don't forget to go to <http://www.hopedance.org/39/articles/40.html> ... the article that spells out the steps for communicating to "your local friendly media" for your film gig.

The folks in LA who are going to replicate the solutions film festival are not going to do it all in one day. They are planning on doing it in six consecutive weeks, in the evening.

Our next festival will be another experiment. We will go for the Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening format ... 8 hours of films over a period of three days. We shall see. If you are interested, write to us about the results. We are also experimenting with features and music videos instead of just documentaries ... to create a broader audience, to fuse various sentiments and viewpoints. Especially with a film festival featuring the Arab world, it is quintessential to show more than just documentaries.

Conclusion / Summary

I've tried to answer all the questions that a person who wants to show films in their community would ask. I hope this has been helpful. Thank you for buying this booklet, our first one, and thank you for stepping outside yourself and possibly entering into the world of service in a way that can be very beneficial to many people, especially in a climate where dissenting viewpoints are soon disappearing.

If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to call. If you want to get together with people in your area let us know. We might just have a list of people who have contacted us that we can share with you. We can initiate a network for others as well as for the films. For a list of the films we now own, email us your request.

At <http://hopedance.org/new/videos.html> we have about 80% of our films online, under categories as well as summaries of the film. The new films are coming in so fast we don't have an adequate system to keep them posted online. What we do have online are our PDF flyers and links to the film's trailers that we are screening. Go to www.hopedance.org and see the right panel of all the films that we are screening... and not just in San Luis Obispo but in Santa Rosa, Pismo Beach, Sebastopol, Ventura, Ojai, Santa Barbara and soon Cotati.

805 544 9663 • info@hopedance.org / www.hopedance.org

FOOTNOTES

¹ It would be very helpful if you or someone you trust announce the films, announce what you are doing, where the money is going. The purpose is to create a focus so they know the people behind the showing of these films and the work it entails. The person ought to be jovial and lively ... not a shouting angry

lunatic obsessed with the world collapsing but a respectful person who is eager to show dissenting films of a powerful nature, that often times words cannot do by themselves. The more they understand your passion the more likely they will return to future films since trust has developed.

Not all the time, but we usually ask the audience how they heard about it so we can do an informal survey to help us better market the film gigs. I mail out a flyer or postcard to all subscribers of HopeDance (locally). I have yet heard from anyone who has seen a blurb on television. Emails a year ago used to be quite slim but they are moving ahead, sometimes reading the same as the printed material. Word of mouth is slowly gaining as a means of advertising. A typical response from how they heard about our film events goes like this:

1. the weekly entertainment periodical	35%
2. HopeDance	36%
3. Radio	2%
4. daily paper	2%
5. emails	9%
6. flyers	9%
7. mailers	6%
8. word of mouth	1%
<hr/>	
TOTAL	100%

² Make sure you put out an email sign up list for people who want to be contacted for future films. Perhaps even include a section for “volunteers” because it can be quite hectic without any.

If the chairs are already out there, that’s great. Some venues make you put them out and put them back. Tables are usually hidden somewhere so its wise to find out before hand where they put them because you will need them when it comes time to putting the drinks, literature, etc., on the tables. 3- 4 tables ought to do it, depending on who else you will be having as cosponsors some cosponsors want their own booth especially if its an organization that is complementary to the film you are showing. Make sure you have plenty of baskets for money: for food, and refreshments, for donations for literature and publications or sales for books and videos and a basket for collecting the film money at the door. You can get some very nice wicker-type baskets for 25¢ each at your local 2nd hand store.

We just wad up the money at the end and I put it in my pocket and count it afterwards.

We advertise the film for 7pm. The doors open at 6:30. So it usually takes us 20 minutes to get everything together before we allow people in at 10 to 7pm. And that’s for the venues that have screens. If you are going to a venue that doesn’t have a screen add some more necessary time to put up the screen. We often times need to bring our ladders at certain venues so we can lift the screen together to hang it.

It can be grueling at times. That’s the reason we like to pay ourselves back with money. I mean we both have day jobs but what a great way to gather

people, entertain them, disturb them, educate them and to find out what is really happening in the community especially when people speak out during the discussion that follow the film. Sometimes you will notice people exclaiming, “Why hasn’t the mass media told us this?” It reminds me of the old town hall days when local people came to talk about their lives, their disappointments, their anger and their solutions.

I am not a leader. I simply facilitate discussions and sometimes I can usually tell when people want to leave. I’m intuitive enough not to force them to stay when they are leaving but then I also want to be able to remind them that a discussion is going to happen afterwards if they all start pouring out of the theater like lemmings? It also depends on the film and the audience energy. Friday nights are rife with escapist energy. A disturbing film like “Afghan Massacre” or “Gaza Strip” or “Satya” will leave people motionless at times and you need to respect what they just saw and are now trying to process their feelings. And if anyone gets unruly at a film director for example, you need to prepare yourself for a calm yet direct comment that keeps the question and answer process moving.

An educational consultant suggested that I allow for small groups to coalesce after a film and discuss it in a more intimate way and if anyone wishes to summarize their discussions afterwards to use that as a way to open up a discussion to the general audience. Haven’t used that one yet. If you discover some cool strategies let us know.

If you feel qualified to announce the films, fine. If you don’t, then find someone or find an assortment of people to call on for this simple task. What we used to do to is to have someone in the community who already is knowledgeable, come and present the film and facilitate the comments afterwards. His/her answers and facilitation can be superb. But you need to be careful especially since the audience has just been sitting for almost an hour and a half being talked to and they certainly don’t want to be talked to again. If you have someone in mind, make sure they understand this and suggest they simply facilitate and be there for questions the audience might have. Also, let the audience answer. We are all experts. If I don’t know an answer I always throw it back into the audience and for sure there is someone who knows the answer. This business of experts talking *at* people has got to be reinvented. We are facilitating and drawing out the truth from the group / audience.

At one event we showed a Bill Mollison film, the one he did before Global Gardener. It is very cool, more flexible and spontaneous. I think it is called Falling Out of the Sky or something like that. After the film I knew we would have plenty of time and I knew I didn’t have all the answers to the audiences potential questions so I asked our permaculture expert Larry Santoyo to come and answer questions after the film. He was great. It was good for us ... made us look good. He even got some jobs from people in the audience and the audience loved that we had someone in our community who was working in this most precious of areas: solutions. He gave a brief and very funny rundown of his relationship with Bill Mollison, once his teacher, and spent the rest of the time answering enthusiastic questions from the energized audience.

More than Waking Up: We Need to Use Documentaries as Community Activist Tools

by Bob Banner

[The Ecologist ran an essay contest a few months back. Out of a selection of their top 25 documentary films they wanted applicants to answer the question of how a particular film “woke you up.” I had seen 17 out of the 25. But rather than focus on one film, I focussed on something else. The following is the winning essay. The award will be the 25 films which will go in the HopeDance Film Library.]

The first film, “Zapatista,” of the 25 you listed in your excellent December/January 2006 issue, woke me up in two ways. As I was walking the streets of Seattle during the WTO ministerial event in November of 1999, I saw many posters taped to buildings advertising a film screening of “Zapatista.” I had read much about Zapatistas but really wanted to see them, or at least see a film about them. After an hour-long wait to get into the basement of a darkened, smelly bar we finally managed to get inside. This was not a typical film theater or art house. Crowded tightly and staring at a white sheet taped to a wall with a blue light streaming from some obscure techno gadgetry, we were eager to see what it was all about. One of the 3 young filmmakers started to introduce the film: Three young guys from the US had purchased the necessary video cameras on credit cards and gone south to interview Subcommandante Marcos in the mountains of Chiapas. Marcos is the collectively-decided spokesperson for the Zapatistas, a very popular movement of indigenous people, made more popular because of their knowledge of using the Internet in the early years, right after NAFTA was issued into power.

The film came alive on the white sheet. A “video projector” was doing the work along with a sound system and video player. Not only did I wake up to the problems of the indigenous people but learned how the Zapatistas were creating a provocative blend of performance art plus political action to make people aware of NAFTA and other globalization crimes and the neo-liberal ideology of free trade (which is just another word for imperialism: raping the resources and exploiting the people) so prevalent in our global solution think tanks in the US.

I also woke up on that day to the revolutionary capabilities of the video projector showing politically astute and progressive radical films to communities throughout the country. I immediately purchased a number of copies and asked the filmmakers about screening the film in my hometown. That was the beginning.

We had a packed audience some months later to see “Zapatista” and to have the filmmakers answer eager questions from the audience. This latter wake-up call started us on the process of obtaining other documentaries for showing to the public.

We purchased “Culture Jam” before its filmmakers signed their rights away to a distributor, which allowed me to screen the film. That film blew me away. Not only did I first learn about the incredible, outrageous antics of Reverend Billy but saw the Billboard Liberation Front actually doctor those huge billboards in Silicon Valley in the middle of the night. We have shown that film numerous times, inspiring people when they learn about these brave people culture jamming and adbusting. When I saw “The End of Suburbia,” I was shocked to my core. This film is still reverberating throughout my body and psyche. To know (as much as it is possible to know) that our lives, our civilization, our behavior, our life styles have been predicated on cheap, limited oil has been a major wake-up call. We bought boxes of the DVD and sold every single one of them. We screened the film in four different cities to audiences who always left in shock, a good kind of disturbance, a waking-up.

One thing I have done is to learn how to facilitate a discussion after each film we show — to gather people’s responses and to have them speak about their projects in our communities. It is definitely not enough to screen a film and have them walk away in a stupor. We need to talk, to share, to cry, to scream, to do whatever it takes to embody the message of the film. And what better way to do it than with a group of people who have just seen the film. Also, from time to time, we have had the filmmakers come to the screenings or to have some expert on a particular subject speak after the film or answer questions. It makes the connections and the dialogue all the more pertinent and powerful.

Out of your 25 films listed, we have screened 17.

“Life and Debt” blew me out of the water when I first saw it on POV on PBS two years prior to its DVD appearance. It is the most powerful film about globalization, especially in its contrast of Jamaica as a resort place and Jamaica as a country to be raped by various global trade organizations.

“McLibel” blew many of us away because we did not know there was a trial happening in England by some green peace activists who had the balls to actually take McDonalds to court against their labor practices and a plethora of other social and environmental injustices. We were shocked — and thrilled — when the decision came down primarily in favor of the two heroes who had taken them to court.

“Blue Vinyl” is both hot and funny, definitely a wake-up call for us who are ignorant of the various supplies that go into building our precious homes. A chemically sensitive woman told me about the film years ago, and because of her personal sensitivity to vinyl as a toxic substance, she gave the audience (after the

screening) an added jolt to their already shakened response.

“The Take” was powerful and expensive (the film distributors made it almost impossible to screen the film; they charge way too much and their antiquated notion of film screening does not include the new breed of community activists who use film as an organizing tool.) We took the chance and lost money. More activists need to negotiate seriously with certain political film distributors. More of this is in my book (see below). With all the hype about the film, it had some serious flaws. It focused ONLY on the workers in Argentina taking over the factories. Yes, that’s a great idea and to see it implemented was in fact fantastic! But a much broader film, and more accessible, is the film called “Argentina: Hope in Hard Times” that not only and simply and elegantly illustrates the workers taking over the factories but includes farmers, food, community, recycling the waste, starting up businesses and much more. Go to bullfrog films for more details about that film and how to order it (“The Take” just recently became available in the U.S. After two years! Avi Lewis and Naomi Klein: What were you thinking??!!)

“Affluenza” is another major film that can be shown time and again especially around the overconsumption maddening holidays. But a much better film is the sequel “Escape From Affluenza,” especially for those who already know what the problems are and want to do something about it — and who have a desire to find out alternatives to break out of the affluenza disease. The same type of film is in the makings called “Escape From Suburbia,” a sequel to “The End of Suburbia.” Stay tuned in August of 2006.

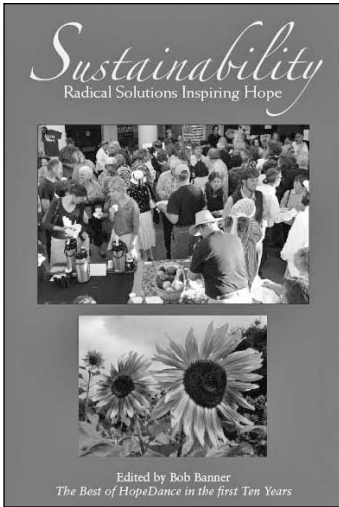
One film you didn’t include is Robert Greenwald’s film, “Wal-Mart.” It will blow you away. We screened that film in four cities to 700 people, all in a week’s time. We were even instrumental in having a city council decide against changing their laws which would have accommodated another Wal-Mart store to come into town, even though there was already a Wal-mart store in their town.

Thank you, The Ecologist, for putting these films together and for publishing the blurbs. We have 80% of your initial 25 films, plus 400 more in our Film Library that we rent out to people in the US. They are not only catalogued on-line but are shelved at a cool local bookstore where people can “rent” them and awoken to some powerful realities out there that get violently swept under the veils by corporate America. Check out our website at <http://www.hopedance.org/new/videos.html> to learn of the films and their summaries and check out what films we are going to be showing in our central coast cities.

It is not enough to simply be “privately” awakened by any of these films. To sit there being awakened without changing anything or doing anything is impotent. What we do is SCREEN the films publicly, talk about it right afterwards, and encourage people to go to their favorite cafe and keep the discussion going, meet up with other people with similar projects and strengthen the progressive

element in small cities throughout the country, and the world.

Bob Banner is publisher of HopeDance, washes windows, screens films, owns a Film Library in San Luis Obispo where more than 400 films are stored for rental purposes. He is overseeing film gatherings in Ojai, Ventura, Oxnard, Santa Barbara, Los Olivos, Templeton, Cambria and San Luis Obispo. He can be reached at HopeDance, POB 15609, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 USA... www.hopedance.org; 805 544 9663, info@hopedance.org. He lives in San Luis Obispo, CA with his 2 cats and 4 chickens, and is continually updating this ebook / booklet. Pamphlets sold separately cost \$10 via as an ebook or \$12 to be printed and mailed.



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www.hopedance.org / 805.544.9663.

Yes! I want to support independent media in both print, online and in the world-changing films that HopeDance is bringing to our Tri-Counties... and beyond!

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- Becoming the Media* ebook (\$12ppd). The ebook / booklet is now INSIDE the "Sustainability" book (pps. 415-437).
- Send info about Advertising in HopeDance
- \$25 (or 2 for \$45) for the "Sustainability" book (\$3 shipping)

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