



The Colors of the Mountain



Carlos Cesar Arbelaez
2010
Education Outreach
90 min.
Colombia
Spanish with English subtitles

Nine-year old Manuel receives a much desired soccer ball from his father for his birthday. An accident involving a runaway pig leaves his beloved ball in a minefield. Undeterred, Manuel enlists the help of Julian and Poca Luz to retrieve the ball.

Set against the breathtaking landscape of a remote mountainous area in Colombia, *The Colors of the Mountain* explores the lives of people caught between the fighting of the guerilla and the army. Manuel's father tries to remain neutral, but he is caught in an impossible situation where families are not permitted to live in peace.

This remarkable debut by Carlos Cesar Arbelaez recounts a poignant coming of age story against the backdrop of Colombia's armed conflict. As the pressure on the villagers increases, the only way out is to leave their land and way of life behind in search of an uncertain future in the cities, becoming part of the increasing tide of the country's displaced.



BASIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How do you think a rural village would be affected when caught between warring political factions?
- What do you think the purpose of minefields is?
- How might the villagers have removed the minefield, or would they not have been able to at all?
- What do you think the film was trying to say?

DEEPER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Do you think that there are viable alternatives to political change that do not include violence?
- Do you think that a developing country or state (second or third world) has to handle change differently than a developed (first world) one?
- What do you think the effects of war and violence are on children and how they develop into adults?

FURTHER RESEARCH FOR DISCUSSION

The idea of a “normal” childhood while being surrounded by war and its weapons is complex. Using different research tools, find facts and statistics to support your answers to the following questions:

- Do you believe there is such a thing as a normal childhood when the child lives in a war zone?
- What are the effects of war on a child, physically, mentally and socially?
- What is being done, and what might be done, to better assist children of war?

ACTIVITIES

Creative Art/Design:

- Design a visual piece of art that reflects what you thought about this film
- Design a visual piece of art that reflects what you think about growing up in a war-torn country.

Creative Writing:

- What was your favorite part of the film? Pick one of the people you saw in the film and write a story about him/her and how their lives might be in five years. How did their lives change because of the actions in the film? Your story can be a fantasy or it can be realistic.



Suggested resources:

http://www.redcross.int/EN/mag/magazine2003_3/4-9.html

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2080482/>

<http://www.warchild.org/>

<http://www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR15/fmr15.5.pdf>

<http://maic.jmu.edu/journal/8.2/focus/filipino.htm>

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