

DOLORES



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DOLORES

Directed by Peter Bratt

2017 | USA | 95 min

TEACHER'S GUIDE

This guide has been designed to help teachers and students enrich their experience of *Dolores* by providing support in the form of questions and activities. There are a range of questions that will help teachers frame discussions with their class, activities for before, during and after viewing the film, and some weblinks that provide starting points for further research or discussion.

The Film

In the copious volumes written about Cesar Chavez and how he formed the first farm workers' union in America, there's little mention of Dolores Huerta, although she was his equal partner and co-founder of the union. In the first film of its kind, *Dolores* sheds light on this enigmatic, intensely private woman who is among the most important activists in American history. With unprecedented access to both Dolores and her children, the film reveals the raw, personal stories behind the public figure. It portrays a woman both heroic and flawed, working tirelessly for social change even as her 11 children longed to have her at home. The film follows Dolores Huerta's fascinating life, from the fearless young woman confronting teamsters on violent picket lines to the activist grandmother nearly beaten to death by a San Francisco police squad. Overshadowed by the legacy of Cesar Chavez and forced from the ranks of the all-male union leadership after his death, Dolores learns the painful truth—that her gender is the greatest obstacle of all. But she turns her defeat into inspiration, setting the course for a lifetime pursuit of equality for all. While tracing her trajectory through the most radical social and cultural movements of the past 50 years, from brown power and feminism to LGBTQ rights and environmental justice, *Dolores* provides an unflinching look at the barriers faced by women and people of colour within the very communities they're fighting for. Featuring interviews with Angela Davis, Gloria Steinem, Hillary Clinton and Luis Valdez, the film reveals her ever-expanding wave of influence through decades of activism, and leading many to ask why her contributions have been erased from American history.

Source: <https://www.doloresthemovie.com>

The Filmmaker

Peter Bratt is an award-winning screenwriter and independent filmmaker whose first feature *Follow Me Home* premiered in competition at the 1996 Sundance Film Festival and won the Best Feature Film Audience Award that same year at the San Francisco International Film Festival. In 2009, he and his brother Benjamin produced *La Mission*, a feature film shot on location in their hometown of San Francisco. *La Mission*, which Peter wrote and directed, premiered at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival and was the opening night film at the 2009 San Francisco International Film Festival, the 2009 New York International Latino Film Festival, and the 2009 Outfest Film Festival in Los Angeles. For his work on *La Mission*, Peter received the prestigious Norman Lear Writer's award and was one of 10 American independent filmmakers selected by Sundance and the President's Committee on Arts and Humanities to launch Sundance Film Forward, a program that uses film and conversation to excite and introduce a new generation to the power of story. Peter is currently the co-writer and director of *Dolores*, a feature documentary about the life of controversial activist, Dolores Huerta—a film he is co-producing with Brian Benson and Grammy Award-winning musician, Carlos Santana. Peter is also a San Francisco Film Commissioner and a long-time consultant for the Friendship House Association of American Indians, a local non-profit serving the Bay Area's Native population.

Source: <https://www.doloresthemovie.com>

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VIEWING THE FILM WITH STUDENTS

The following three subsections are intended to provide you with a range of Pre-Viewing, Viewing and Post-Viewing activities. They are followed by a set of questions based upon the film's larger thematic domains, some follow-up questions and quotations, sample curricular outcomes and a page of weblinks for further investigation.

Pre-Viewing Activities

As a class, familiarize yourselves with the term "social justice." What is a social justice movement? What are some of the most important social justice movements of the past?

As a class, familiarize yourselves with the concept of non-violent resistance. Where did this philosophy originate? In what kinds of social struggles has it been used? Are there modern examples of non-violent resistance?

Have a class discussion about labour unions. Ask students what they know about unions and explore their opinions about them. Why do workers lobby for unions? What do unions do? Are unions good or bad?

Viewing Activities

Have students complete the PBS viewing guide on documentaries (<http://www.pbs.org/pov/docs/Copies%20of%20Viewing%20Guide.pdf>). Students can revisit their completed documents as a Post-Viewing Activity.

Have students jot down three to five ideas for discussion, or questions that the film raises in their minds. As an Extension and/or Post-Viewing Activity, students can enter their questions into an online response or polling system and can vote on the questions or issues they would like to explore in further detail. Encourage students to use multiple levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.

As they watch, have students paraphrase one quotation from the film that they feel is especially interesting or inspiring. After the film, students can share the quotation they documented and why this quotation stood out to them.

Have students make a list of all the non-violent tactics used in the film to help advocate for the rights of American farm workers.

Post-Viewing Activities

Have students make a list of all of the characteristics Dolores Huerta possesses that make her a successful organizer and activist. Discuss the challenges to advocating for social change and how the particular qualities possessed by Huerta could help combat these challenges.

Return to the discussion about labour unions held prior to viewing the film to explore whether student opinions have changed. How did the activists featured in the film believe that unions would help the farm workers? Could there have been ways other than unionization to achieve these goals? How do students feel now about unionization?

Use the Mural Conservancy of Los Angeles website to look at Yreina Cervantes's mural "La Ofrenda" (<http://www.muralconservancy.org/> Type "La Ofrenda" into the search function of the website), which features Dolores Huerta as its central figure. Have students explore the images included in the mural and discuss how they represent the struggle of Latino/a farmworkers in the United States. What aspects of the struggle do certain images in the mural speak to?

After looking at Yreina Cervantes's mural "La Ofrenda," have students either independently or collaboratively create their own artwork celebrating Dolores Huerta's life work (<http://www.muralconservancy.org/> Type "La Ofrenda" into the search function of the website).

Discuss with students their initial reactions to the film and the labour struggle addressed. Discuss whether students were surprised by anything they saw in the film and whether the film has achieved its goal to highlight the importance of Dolores Huerta as a seminal figure in the American labour rights movement.

Have students conduct research to explore the conditions of farm workers today in the United States and in Canada. How have the conditions of work changed since the 1960s? Are there still social justice issues to be addressed in this area?

Do a Google search for images of United Farm Workers protests. Choose an appropriate image and use it as the inspiration for a free-writing exercise. Use the following free-writing prompt: Look at the image closely. What do you see? How does the image make you feel? What makes this image special? Use these questions as starting points and write whatever comes to mind. Rules for Free-Writing: write for a set amount of time (two to five minutes); do not stop writing; do not rush but also do not go too slowly; do not cross anything out or fix your writing; ignore grammar and spelling rules and just allow your ideas to flow freely; if you do not know what to write, write "I don't know what to write" until another idea comes to mind.

Have students participate in a Socratic discussion on the film. Guidelines for Socratic discussions can be found here: <http://www.authenticeducation.org/documents/WhatSeminar04.pdf>

Have students write a journal entry about one historical clip from the film that had an impact on them. Students could compare notes to see which clips stood out for the class.

Eliseo Medina, the executive vice president of the Service Employees International Union, says, "[The employers] used to say that they wanted to hire Mexicans because we were built closer to the ground. And that, in my opinion, was the worst part, the humiliation of knowing that people held you in contempt." Have a class discussion about other stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes that are exhibited in the film against Latino/a people. Do any of these perceptions continue to exist in the present day?

Have students complete an exit note. The note should contain one idea that demonstrates what they learned from the film, as well as one question that they still have about the topic.

Have students choose any challenging or happy moment in Dolores Huerta's life that is represented in the film and then write a journal entry from her perspective describing this moment and what they know to be or imagine to be her feelings about it.

The film discusses how Dolores Huerta's role as an important figure in American history has been intentionally omitted from school textbooks in certain states. Have students write a brief entry that they would opt to include in a school textbook to document Huerta's contributions to the social justice movement.

WEBSITES AND ONLINE RESOURCES

About the Film

<https://www.doloresthemovie.com>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/dolores_movie

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/doloresthemovie>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/doloresthemovie>

Additional Resources

Biography.com: Students can learn more about Angela Davis and Gloria Steinem, two well-known activists who are featured in the film, women who, like Dolores Huerta, have been incredibly dedicated to equality and social justice movements in the United States of America.

<http://www.biography.com/> Type either woman's name into the search function of the website.

Canadian Labour Congress: Students can familiarize themselves with the history of the labour movement in Canada to learn about labour issues particular to Canada and the fight for labour rights in this country.

<http://canadianlabour.ca/> Type "History of Labour in Canada" into the search function of the website.

Dolores Huerta Foundation: Students can explore the aims and work of the Dolores Huerta Foundation mentioned in the documentary, a foundation started by Huerta after she left the board of the United Farm Workers.

<http://doloreshuerta.org/dolores-huerta>

History.com: Students can read about the broader labour movement and explore a number of related audio clips and videos, helping to contextualize the farm workers labour movement.

<http://www.history.com/topics/labor>

National Public Radio (NPR): Students can discover more about Cesar Chavez's role in the farm labour rights movement through the chronological history presented in "Cesar Chavez: The Life Behind a Legacy of Farm Labor Rights."

<http://www.npr.org/> Type the title of the article into the search function of the website.

PBS: Delve further into the history of the Latino population in the United States of America through PBS's documentary series on the topic. The related website also contains a

detailed timeline, as well as other educational resources including lesson plans and activities.

<http://www.pbs.org/latino-americans/en/>

Pesticide Action Network (PAN): In "The DDT Story," students can learn more information about the use of DDT in the agricultural industry, one of the issues United Farm Workers activists and labour organizers were drawing attention to in the 1960s.

<http://www.panna.org/> Type "DDT" into the search function of the website.

TIME: The article "A Lesson from Asia's Unsung Female Activists," by Anne-Marie Slaughter and Libby Liu, can help students make global connections to other female leaders in social justice movements.

<http://time.com/> Type the title of the article into the search function of the website.

TIME: The photo essay "Top 10 Nonviolent Protests" introduces students to some pivotal historical acts of non-violent resistance from around the globe.

<http://time.com/> Type the title of the photo essay into the search function of the website.

United Farm Workers (UFW): Students can learn more about the current activities of the United Farm Workers cofounded by Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez.

<http://www.ufw.org>

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Questions for Pre-Viewing or Post-Viewing Activities

Before viewing the film: Do you believe that non-violent resistance is an effective tactic for bringing about social change? Do you feel that unions are necessary for guaranteeing fair labour conditions for workers? After viewing the film: Has your opinion changed about the effectiveness of non-violent resistance or unionization in bringing about more equitable working conditions?

According to the film, what are the reasons that Dolores Huerta is not featured in history books as an important social justice activist? Can you think of other example of historical figures whose role in history has been underrepresented? Are there commonalities between these figures?

At one point early in the film, a *CBS This Morning* announcer says, "While her name is rarely mentioned in the history books, [Dolores Huerta] may just be the most vocal activist you've never heard of." What reasons does the film suggest are the cause for the lack of prominence of Dolores Huerta as a public figure?

The documentary uses a lot of historical footage of demonstrations, social movements of the day, everyday life, political speeches and television interviews. How does it feel to see all of this footage? What do you observe through these clips about the society of the day? Do you notice differences between these historical media documents and today's media coverage?

What sacrifices does the film suggest activists of the period had to make? Would you be willing to make similar sacrifices to fight for a cause in which you believe?

What are the particular challenges that Dolores Huerta experienced as a female activist?

Many of Dolores Huerta's children featured in the documentary speak emotionally about how Dolores's work as an activist conflicted with her ability to spend time with and raise her children, yet many of them ultimately understand why she put her activist work first. How do you feel about the representation of Dolores as a parent in the film?

Are there different expectations for men and women who are both parents and activists?

Despite being born in America, at one point in the film, Dolores Huerta says, "I found out that no matter what I did I could never be an American, never." What does she mean by this statement?

The film mentions that no one was ever brought to justice for any of the violent actions taken against peaceful protesters, including when Dolores was beaten by police in 1988 at the age of 58. How do you feel about the representation of law enforcement officials, employers and politicians in the film?

What is the role that sexism has played in Dolores Huerta's legacy in American history?

Speaking about Robert Kennedy's support of the farm workers' unionization efforts, Curtis Acosta, who teaches ethnic studies, says, "You can't imagine a political figure of that station these days going after corporations with that vigour." Do you agree? Why might this be the case?

Does Dolores Huerta's story inspire confidence in you to be able to bring about social change? From what parts of her story do you draw inspiration?

Activist and scholar Angela Davis, who is featured in the documentary, states, "Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez felt it was possible to organize farm workers when no one believed that was possible. It was because many of us during that period were totally convinced that we could change the world. We were persuaded that revolutionary change was possible." Do you believe that people today, particularly young people, share the same attitude that "revolutionary change [is] possible"? Why or why not?

QUOTATIONS FROM THE FILM TO EXPLORE

1. *"One of the really tragic contradictions about the United States of America is that it has presented itself before the world as a beacon of independence and liberty and human rights. Of course, the real stain on this mythology is slavery and with it the potential for the enslavement of others. This was a very real threat for all Mexicans living in California after 1848. It was a continuing threat for all of the immigrants that came from China, Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam. Racism has been endemic to American history. The feudal wage slavery of agribusiness is really just an extension of the attitude that persisted in the country."* Luis Valdez, playwright and filmmaker
2. *"Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez felt it was possible to organize farm workers when no one believed that was possible. It was because many of us during that period were totally convinced that we could change the world. We were persuaded that revolutionary change was possible."* Angela Davis, activist and scholar
3. *"Hatred and racism are extensions of violence, and if we become that which we're trying to end, then we are becoming like the oppressor."* Dolores Huerta
4. *"The environmental justice movement said that certain environmental hazards are disproportionately impacted on people of colour. That would never be allowed if these people were white middle-class. So it wasn't simply stopping DDT, but it was also making the larger point: you're only allowing this because of who the workers are and their race and class background."* Randy Shaw, author and organizer
5. *"I can remember seeing those marches. And it was kind of amazing for a brown boy to see a bunch of brown people in the United States marching in simultaneity about something. As a Latino kid, the pressure to assimilate was great. Seeing women like Dolores Huerta out there gave me an example as a young brown kid to be able to engage in a way that's not white, that was actually particular to us as brown people in this country."* Roberto Lovato, writer and research associate
6. *"Revolution starts with self-love, in the sense that if you are a member of an oppressed people, an oppressed class, you have to develop self-respect, and that starts by developing some affection for who you are."* Luis Valdez, playwright and filmmaker
7. *"You can't make change if you are not willing to give something up. You've got to give up some comfort. You've got to give up some time. And then we can see the changes come."* Dolores Huerta
8. *"I also feel very, very strongly that [Dolores] felt she was giving [her children] so much more than what she was asking them to sacrifice. She was giving them meaningful lives, which is something that is very, very rare in this society."* Wendy Greenfield, United Farm Workers (UFW) volunteer
9. *"It is absolutely important to recognize the extent to which Dolores was viewed as a subsidiary figure, and Cesar Chavez—I have all of the respect and reverence in the world for him, but the assumption was he was the leader and Dolores was the housekeeper of the movement."* Angela Davis, activist and scholar
10. *"We've really got to set the record straight... Women cannot be written out of history."* Juana Chavez, Dolores's daughter
11. *"All that a person has is his or her stories—who they are, what they've gone through, what their families have gone through. This is their story. And when you are trying to deny them their story, you're taking away their power."* Dolores Huerta
12. *"Her legacy to me is one of sustainability; you can do this work and not burn out. None of us have an excuse to tap out."* Curtis Acosta, ethnic studies teacher

CULMINATING ACTIVITY: WOMEN WHO SHAPE SOCIAL CHANGE

In the documentary *Dolores*, one of Dolores Huerta's daughters, Juana Chavez, states, "We've really got to set the record straight... Women cannot be written out of history." This statement was made in response to the way that her mother's legacy in the labour rights movement has been largely unacknowledged, downplayed and officially erased from school history books. Dolores Huerta is not the only women in history to be subject to this kind of treatment.

Conduct online research or research within your school and/or community library to find female figures (past or present) who have made or who are making a significant impact in bringing about social change but who may be unknown to you or your classmates.

Based on your research, create a presentation to share your selected female figure and the impact she has made with the class. The presentation may address some or all of the following questions, as applicable:

1. How is this woman advocating for social change?
2. For what actions, beliefs or changes should this woman be known?
3. Why is this woman a great role model?
4. What motivated this woman to fight for social justice?
5. What makes this woman innovative, inspiring or uplifting?
6. What connections can you draw between this woman and Dolores Huerta?

Presentation format: Students can use PowerPoint, Prezi (<http://prezi.com>), a Glog (<http://edu.glogster.com>) or another teacher-approved presentation tool to present their findings.

ACTIVITY RUBRIC: WOMEN WHO SHAPE SOCIAL CHANGE

Knowledge/Understanding

	2.5 2.9	3.0 3.4	3.5 3.9	4.0 5.0	
Understanding social justice movements and important female contributors	Student demonstrates limited understanding of social justice movements and characteristics that make for an exceptional activist who is deserving of historical recognition	Student demonstrates some understanding of social justice movements and characteristics that make for an exceptional activist who is deserving of historical recognition	Student demonstrates a good understanding of social justice movements and characteristics that make for an exceptional activist who is deserving of historical recognition	Student demonstrates exceptional understanding of social justice movements and characteristics that make for an exceptional activist who is deserving of historical recognition	/5

Thinking/Inquiry

	2.5 2.9	3.0 3.4	3.5 3.9	4.0 5.0	
Ability to research, synthesize and make connections	Student demonstrates a moderate ability to research, synthesize and make connections between different resources on a shared topic	Student demonstrates a moderate ability to research, synthesize and make connections between different resources on a shared topic	Student demonstrates a considerable ability to research, synthesize and make connections between different resources on a shared topic	Student demonstrates an outstanding ability to research, synthesize and make connections between different resources on a shared topic	/5

Application

	2.5 2.9	3.0 3.4	3.5 3.9	4.0 5.0	
Applying the research process	Student shows a novice ability to apply research skills to find information on a given topic	Student shows a satisfactory ability to apply research skills to find information on a given topic	Student shows a considerable ability to apply research skills to find information on a given topic	Student shows an advanced ability to apply research skills to find information on a given topic	/5

Communication

	2.5 2.9	3.0 3.4	3.5 3.9	4.0 5.0	
Use of effective presentation strategies including visual aid	The student has considerable difficulty presenting information orally and engaging his/her audience; the student makes limited use of a visual aid	The student has some challenges presenting information orally and engaging his/her audience; the student makes satisfactory use of a visual aid	The student presents information orally in a clear and engaging manner; the student makes good use of a visual aid	The student presents information orally in an exceptionally clear and engaging manner; the student makes expert use of a visual aid	/5 /5

Comments:

Total: ____/25

EXAMPLES OF CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

COURSE	OVERALL EXPECTATIONS
Grade 7 & 8 Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes. use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes. demonstrate an understanding of a variety of media texts. identify some media forms and explain how the conventions and techniques associated with them are used to create meaning.
Grade 9–12 English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes. use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes. demonstrate an understanding of a variety of media texts. identify some media forms and explain how the conventions and techniques associated with them are used to create meaning.
Grade 11 Media Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate understanding of a variety of media texts. deconstruct a variety of types of media texts, identifying the codes, conventions and techniques used and explaining how they create meaning. analyze and critique media representations of people, issues, values and behaviours.
Grade 12 World Geography: Human Patterns and Interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyze various types of regional economies to determine the causes of regional economic disparities. assess the effectiveness of measures to alleviate regional economic disparities and resolve conflicts related to them.
Grade 11 American History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyze the interactions among major groups and communities in the United States throughout its history. analyze the historical process of change in the context of events that have transformed the United States. analyze the forces that have influenced American economic development.
Grade 11 World History Since 1900	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe the nature and impact of significant change since 1900. analyze the relationship between the individual and those in authority in various societies since 1900. describe major features of economic life since 1900.
Grade 11 Gender Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore topics related to gender studies, and formulate questions to guide their research. analyze sexism and the dynamics of power relations with respect to sex and gender in a variety of contexts. demonstrate an understanding of changes in occupations and the workplace with respect to gender issues, and of the reasons for continuing occupational segregation. describe strategies, initiatives and accomplishments of individuals and organizations, including both Canadian and international organizations, with respect to gender equity.
Grade 11 Equity, Diversity and Social Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore topics related to equity, diversity and/or social justice, and formulate questions to guide their research. demonstrate an understanding of the dynamics of power relations in various social contexts. demonstrate an understanding of the impact individual action can have on equity, social justice and environmental issues, and of how the media can create awareness of these issues. demonstrate an understanding of how social activism can be used to support equity and social justice objectives.

Grade 12 Equity and Social Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of a range of perspectives on and approaches to equity and social justice issues, and of factors that affect inequity and social injustice. • analyze, in historical and contemporary contexts, the dynamics of power relations and privilege as well as various factors that contribute to power or marginalization. • analyze a range of historical and contemporary equity and social justice issues and the impact of economic and environmental factors on these issues. • evaluate the contributions of individuals and groups and/or movements identified with specific aspects of the struggle for equity and social justice.
Grade 12 Challenge and Change in Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of the causes and effects of social change. • demonstrate an understanding of how various social structures and conditions support or limit global inequalities. • analyze the impact of unfair or unjust exploitation of people or resources, locally and globally.
Grade 11 Dynamics of Human Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of the components of personal well-being, how to achieve and maintain it, and its importance throughout the life course. • explain how self-concept and self-esteem influence personal well-being. • demonstrate an understanding of the range of relationships people experience over a lifetime and of the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships. • demonstrate an understanding of various dynamics and challenges that can affect relationships.

The Overall Expectations listed above are from the *Ontario Curriculum*. Complete course descriptions, including all Overall and Specific Expectations can be found at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/curriculum.html>