

Unseen Dr King Footage in 'Dare Not Walk Alone'

Written by Robert ID2379

Thursday, 02 March 2006 10:54 -

In the film "Dare Not Walk Alone", the same ideas and struggles that led to the passage of the first civil rights bill on July 2, 1964 and the enduring war 40 years later are addressed.

"Dare Not Walk Alone" uncovers the untold story of the "war of ideas" set in St. Augustine, Fla. during the summer of 1964. This film, part of the Cinequest Film Festival in San Jose, Calif., speaks to a national issue that in the post Hurricane Katrina days has brought awareness to a continuing challenge that has affected Americans of all walks of life.

In "Dare Not Walk Alone," the beaches, streets, and businesses of St. Augustine are the battlefields for this epic struggle. However, the swimming pool of one small motel at the center of town proved to be the tuning point in the conflict. The battle over whom this motel would serve became the primary objective for both sides of the racial divide. In the face of repeated integration attempts, the policies of segregationists represented the South's unwillingness to give any ground on racial equality.

The motel was owned by James Brock. Throughout the summer of 1964, Brock found himself in a one-on-one showdown with Dr. Martin Luther King. The drama was a daily skirmish on the steps of his motel. The film includes never before seen, raw footage of Dr. King and Brock in several confrontations, resulting in the violent arrest of many, including Dr. King.

But the defining moment was when James Brock poured acid into the motel's swimming pool that was filled with young black and white demonstrators. Photographs taken of this horrific incident made front-page news around the world and helped break the filibuster in the U.S. Senate, leading to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Known as the Open Accommodations Act, it was the first piece of civil rights legislation.

"Dare Not Walk Alone" is a film that highlights St. Augustine, Florida's role in the civil rights movement and its pivotal part in helping get the Civil Rights Act of 1964 pushed through Congress, but also shows that 40 years later there are 1,000,000 African Americans in the criminal justice system nationally, and one-third of St. Augustine's African Americans live below the poverty line.

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"So was the war of ideas won? Have we arrived? At a time when most Americans feel like issues of race and equality were solved in the 1960's, "Dare Not Walk Alone" reminds us that the war of poverty, education and justice, is still ours to win. In this post Katrina world in which we now live this film says: We are not there yet but there is hope," says writer-director Jeremy Dean.

The goal of the event is to connect young people who are not from the civil rights generation to those monumental times, while still being a contemporary voice for the concerns of our generation to come.

"This is not your grandmother's civil rights film. This film will challenge Black and White America, as well as Hispanic, Asian, and Muslim citizens equally," says Dean.

The film includes never seen before footage of Dr. Martin Luther King, and a first and only interview with, then motel owner, James Brock.

Location: Cinequest Film Festival, San Jose, Calif.

Web: <http://www.cinequest.org> for ticket info.

Date and Time:

Saturday, March 4, 2 p.m.

Sunday, March 5, 12 noon