

About the Filmmakers

Producer/Director: Antonio Franceschi

Antonio Franceschi began his career in various production capacities on independent films and television productions. His extensive twenty five year career in television led him to produce several broadcast shows including *Siempre Caliente* and *Latinos on the Move* for various networks including Telemundo. He has won several awards for his outstanding work including a CAN Fest Award in 1990 for his cutting edge public service announcements. He has written and directed several indie films including his most recent work, "*Urban Poet*," which debuted at the 19th Annual Chicago Latino Film Festival and was praised as "a film to watch" by Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, Roger Ebert. He has traveled extensively throughout the country lecturing at numerous universities on the topic of independent filmmaking and Latinos in film. Antonio is the producer and director of *Chicago's Puerto Rican Story*.



Producer/Writer: Gloricelly Franceschi

Gloricelly Franceschi is an independent filmmaker and educator. She studied writing at the University of Illinois at Chicago and received her graduate degree in adult education from National-Louis University. As a former professor, she has lectured on Latino issues at various colleges and universities across the continental United States. In 2002, she produced and directed a short film entitled, "*Nam: Memories still in ambush*." She has since co produced several projects including, "*Urban Poet*," an independent film, "*Latinos on the Move*," a television pilot intended for PBS and the *PR Oral History Project*, a project dedicated to documenting and preserving the oral history of Chicago's early Puerto Rican migrants. She produced and wrote the script for *Chicago's Puerto Rican Story* with her husband and film collaborator, Antonio Franceschi. Gloricelly also narrates the documentary.



Chicago's Puerto Rican Story is a production of New Film Productions. For more information visit:

www.chicagospuertoricanstory.com

EDUCATIONAL DISCUSSION GUIDE



Chicago's Puerto Rican Story

AS TOLD BY THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED IT.

www.chicagospuertoricanstory.com

WRITTEN, PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY ANTONIO & GLORICELLY FRANCESCHI MUSIC & SCORE BY TINO "ARCHIE" OJEDA ART DESIGN BY MARITZA LOPEZ

Chicago's Puerto Rican Story

As told by the people who lived it.



Chicago's Puerto Rican Story paints an inspiring portrait of the Puerto Rican experience in Chicago. It probes the early years of migration, settlement, and struggle. It recollects the events and influences that shaped the political awareness and activism of the community. And it highlights the many contributions made by generations of Puerto Ricans who called Chicago home.

Through the use of vintage photographs and film footage--plus interviews with early migrants, community leaders, and noted historians--*Chicago's Puerto Rican Story* explores the wide range of social themes that include family, work, housing, and education. Here, are the results of integration as seen in the employment of Puerto Ricans by local police and fire departments, as well as the election of Puerto Ricans to local, state and federal offices. Here, too, are the accomplishments of political activism: social successes such as community organizations, educational reforms, health centers and clinics, and the creation of a vigorous cultural-commercial business district known as "Paseo Boricua."

The film is written and narrated by independent filmmaker-educator Gloricelly Franceschi.

Written, Produced and Directed by Antonio & Gloricelly Franceschi

For more information about Chicago's Puerto Rican Story, visit:
www.chicagopuertoricanstory.com

New Film Productions. Copyright 2008 . All Rights Reserved.

List of Interviewees

The Honorable Luis V. Gutierrez, Member of Congress, 4th District, Illinois

Miguel Del Valle, Chicago City Clerk

Iris A. Martinez, Illinois State Senator

Billy Ocasio, Alderman, 26th Ward

Rey Colon, Alderman, 35th Ward

Jose Lopez, Executive Director, Puerto Rican Cultural Center

Dr. Samuel Betances, Professor Emeritus, Northeastern Illinois University

Dr. Nilda Flores-Gonzalez, Associate Professor, University of Illinois at Chicago

Dr. Marisa Alicea, Dean, DePaul University

Dr. Antonio Curet, Assistant Curator, Field Museum

Dr. Wilfredo Cruz, Associate Professor, Columbia College

Dr. Maura Toro-Morn, Professor, Illinois State University

Rev. Donald J. Headley, Resident, Saint Mary of the Woods Faith Community

Enrique Salgado, Executive Director, Division Street Business Development Association

Carlos Flores, Photographer & Activist

Gamaliel Ramirez, Artist

Jose "Cha Cha" Jimenez, Former Leader of Young Lord Organization

Rick H. Varela, Entrepreneur

Elba I. Vazquez, Former Humboldt Park Resident

Rita Rivera, Puerto Rican Cultural Center

Martha Ramos, Chief of Staff, Alderman Rey Colon

Leoncio Vazquez, President, Spanish Action Committee of Chicago

Mervin Mendez, Historian

Daniel Ramos, Former President, Casa Puertorriqueña

Retirees

John Garcia, Humboldt Park Resident

Rory Guerra, Humboldt Park Resident

Rosa Carrau, Humboldt Park Resident

Ignacio De La Rosa, Humboldt Park Resident

Why did the community consider the construction of Roberto Clemente High School a monumental success?

23) Housing pressures mounted in 1975 when a wave of arson depleted nearly 30% of available housing. According to community residents who was responsible for the arson?



Aerial shot of Chicago in the 1980's.

24) What events led up to the 1977 Humboldt Park riots?

25) Since their arrival, no Puerto Rican occupied a top city position until 1981 when Mayor Jane Byrne appointed Jose Martinez Alderman of the 31st Ward. How did the Puerto Rican community react to the appointment? Why?

26) Under Mayor Harold Washington, Puerto Ricans began to gain political knowledge and experience? What year was the Mayor elected?

27) In the late 1990's a new wave of redevelopment was initiated by the City of Chicago to attract affluent professionals back to the inner city. As a result, the boundaries of the Puerto Rican community moved further west. The onset of gentrification in Humboldt Park propelled Puerto Rican leaders at every level of government to launch an initiative to preserve the community. In 1996 local political leaders and community activist established the Humboldt Park Empowerment Zone Strategic Plan. What did this economic initiative propose to do?

28) A key component of this plan was the creation of Paseo Boricua, a mile long stretch of Division Street between Western and Mozart Ave. Why was it important for Puerto Ricans to preserve their community?

29) In 1996, what gift was presented to the Puerto Rican community?

30) Why was the gift of the Puerto Rican flags so important to the community?

31) Why is it important to carry on the tradition of celebrating cultural festivals?

32) What have the Paseo Boricua flags come to symbolize?



A view of the Paseo Boricua flags at dusk.

Puerto Rico was populated by native peoples, called Tainos, before the Spanish crown claimed the island in 1493 as part of Columbus's second voyage to the Americas. During Spanish colonial rule, the native population was nearly exterminated and African slave labor was introduced to work in the cultivation of sugar plantations scattered throughout the island. In 1898, Puerto Rico was ceded to the United States as a result of Spain losing the Spanish American War. (Assignment: Allow students to conduct their own research on Puerto Rico's early history and the Spanish American War.)



Off shore on the island of Puerto Rico.

1) Professor Maura Toro-morn discussed the changes in Puerto Rican government that resulted from United States possession of the island. What is the Foraker Act of 1900? What rights did the Jones Act of 1917 give to Puerto Ricans?

2) In the beginning of the documentary, viewers learn that "Puerto Rico served as three-fold interest to the U.S." Puerto Rico served as a strategic military position in the Caribbean for the U.S.; it served as a recruiting ground for the American military; and lent itself to business interests. Discuss each interest and how each affected Puerto Ricans living on the island.

3) What was Operation Bootstrap? What were the pros and cons to this self-help economic program? What political and industrial changes resulted from Operation Bootstrap?



Typical island home in the 1940's.

4) What were the primary reasons for Puerto Ricans leaving the island?

5) How were Puerto Ricans susceptible to exploitation and discrimination in the U.S.?

6) Dr. Antonio Curet says that the mechanization of certain industries adversely affected Puerto Ricans. How so?

7) Because of the increase in poverty and rising unemployment rates, many Puerto Ricans left the island in search of employment. Jose Lopez mentions that many families were separated as a result of one or both parents migrating to the U.S. in search of employment. Consider how difficult the decision was on a parent who left children behind? Discuss the effects migration had on the family structure?

8) Professor Toro-Morn mentions that Castle, Barton and Associates recruited Puerto Ricans during the 1940's and 1950's to travel to various cities. What cities were mentioned? (*Assignment: Allow students to conduct group research on the kinds of employment opportunities available for unskilled laborers during this time in Chicago, Connecticut, Philadelphia, New York, and New Jersey? Assign each group a city or state and have each group report its findings to the class.*)



Puerto Rican arrival to the mainland.

9) During which decades did the largest airborne migration of Puerto Ricans take place? (*Assignment: Create a historical timeline of these two periods. Have students include national and global events.*)

10) The documentary mentions the similarities between Puerto Ricans and other immigrant groups. What did they have in common? How did they differ?

11) Discuss the reasons why people of different nationalities migrate to the U.S. Allow time for personal discussions of students' family stories. (*Assignment: Have student's research their families roots and then write a paper on their research. Students' can interview relatives and can exercise creativity by using various medias, i.e., audio recordings, filming, or writing.*)

12) Puerto Ricans encountered a different and harsh environment when they arrived in the U. S. Geographically the cold, frigid weather and barren landscape during the winter months was a complete change from what they were used to. Discuss other changes and adjustments Puerto Ricans had to make in the U.S. Consider and discuss personal, physical, and cultural changes. (*Assignment: Have students research Puerto Rican culture and lifestyle. Have them create a three column table. In the first column write the following topics: Physical environment, cultural differences (i.e., music, language, food), spiritual customs, personal/family traditions, etc. In the second column students fill in their findings of how Puerto Ricans lived in their native island. In the third column students fill in the lifestyle modifications made by Puerto Ricans who migrated to the U.S.)*

13) Professor Toro-Morn mentions that Americans knew very little about Puerto Ricans. The film footage gave the audience a glimpse of the ignorance that permeated American society in the 1950's and 1960's. Discuss how ignorance leads to discrimination and bigotry.

14) Changes in the employment market forced many Puerto Ricans to look for work in the Chicago restaurant and hotel industry, or in assembly lines in factories. What did these changes mean for Puerto Ricans?

15) How did the changes in the employment market impact families? How did their being locked into certain low-paying jobs hinder their progress. Consider wages, probability of promotions, and their ability to move into better neighborhoods.



Puerto Rican children. Photo by C. Flores.

16) Discuss the importance of bilingual education. Allow for open discussion of the following questions: How were Puerto Rican children affected because of a lack of bilingual education? How does a lack of education affect a community? City? State? Nation?

17) The 1966 Division Street Riots, one of many urban disturbances across the nation in the 1960's, drew attention to poverty and strained relations between Puerto Ricans and the Chicago Police Department. Based on the personal testimonies that were given what led up to the riots? (*Assignment: Allow students to research national and global events of the 1960's and 1970's.*)

18) What civil right changes resulted from the 1966 riots?

19) In the late 1960's the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J. Edgar Hoover ordered a government crack down on all militant organizations. Throughout the early 1960's and 1970's the FBI targeted political organizations under the Cointelpro Program, a counterintelligence operation targeting radical political organizations, individuals and college groups. What high profile individuals or groups were subjected to such scrutiny? Was the Cointelpro Program justified?

20) After the Division Street riots, the City of Chicago also formed its own counterintelligence group known as the Red Squad, a group that consisted of Chicago Police officers and former CIA and FBI operatives who infiltrated political organizations in Chicago. Name the tactics used by the Red Squad.



Tuley High School in 1973.

21) Despite the numerous obstacles it faced, the Puerto Rican community pressed forward. One area the community continued to fight for was for better education. In 1973, students rallied and shut down Tuley High School. What changes did the student demand?

22) The Tuley High School demonstration led to an even larger movement that requested a newer high school be built in the community. Consider the emotions of both students and parents when they opened the doors to the brand-new Roberto Clemente High School.