

**INVITE BARBARA TRENT  
TO SPEAK**



**AT YOUR SCHOOL  
OR INSTITUTION**

**BARBARA TRENT**  
**Documentary Filmmaker**

Drawing on a quarter-century of filmmaking, community organizing and activism, Barbara Trent engages audiences in an exciting journey from skepticism to illumination to action. She is an Oscar award-winning filmmaker, a former welfare mother, an activist and a trailblazer for change. Whether she's dancing at the Panamanian President's inauguration, dining with Castro, exposing criminal government activities, or overcoming FBI counter-intelligence operations, her personal stories of risk, courage, and resolve are an inspiration to all, and have had as much an impact on history as they have had on her.

In her current discussions, Trent's questions about the state of the world and our potential for making a difference in the aftermath of 9/11 are more poignant than ever, particularly with the US government's commitment to decades of expanded wars, and its continued attack on civil liberties, the poor, people of color, and the environment. Her Academy-Award winning film *The Panama Deception* (Best Documentary Feature, 1992) was groundbreaking in its exposure of covert US government foreign policy and even now, with the current "war on terrorism," stands as one of the most riveting critiques of the US's history of militarization.

Although Barbara Trent's films have been critically acclaimed, and seen around the world, continued resistance here in the US makes her presentation only that more pertinent. While examining the present day obstacles for an independent and courageous media in the United States, she educates audiences to "see through" the daily news and exposes the numerous forces controlling the Media. Trent also speaks on corporate media's profound role in effectively keeping the public uninformed of the collaboration between multi-national corporations and governments of the global north. Her take on the global and domestic impact of Free Trade Agreements and Organizations (i.e. NAFTA and the WTO) and of the economy crippling IMF and World Bank is not only enlightening but moves us to action.

More than just words, Barbara Trent assists in identifying ways to access alternative perspectives, and her commitment to empowerment invariably inspires audiences to find methods that will impact the government and corporate media, and to assume more active responsibility for themselves and for their role in the world/society in which they live.

"Everyone does make a difference. Most every choice we make in our daily lives has political, social and environmental repercussions. Knowledge is power and, combined with compassion and solidarity, will ultimately determine the fate of us all. Peace is a choice we can make. And similar to every other choice, there is a price to pay."

A Sample of Achievements, Awards, Experience...

- Co-founded and co-directs the Empowerment Project (a media resource center serving hundreds of progressive videographers, filmmakers and activists).
- Appointed as an Expert Senior Training Specialist for the VISTA program under Jimmy Carter.
- Gasper Octavio Hernandez Award by Panama's Journalist's Union.
- American Humanist Association's Arts Award for her "courageous advocacy of progressive ideas."
- Featured in the books, *Women of Courage*, *The Cultures of Globalization*, *The Search for Reality - The Art of Documentary Filmmaking*, and *You Cross That Line: American Activists Talk About the Process of Change*

**Lecture Topics Listed on Back**

# Lectures

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## Choosing Peace

Drawing from over a quarter century of experience as a grassroots organizer and activist- filmmaker, Barbara Trent brings a rare approach to today's events. Her presentation is graced with the emotion of a woman who has seen the frontlines here and abroad. Ms. Trent analyzes the costs of war, globalization, and media hypocrisy by juxtaposing examples from the major media with footage from recent trips to New York City and Washington, DC, where she began documenting the resistance movement immediately after the 9-11 attacks, and has continued following the stifled calls for peace to the present. As the director of the Academy Award winning *The Panama Deception* and the critically acclaimed *Coverup: Behind the Iran-Contra Affair*, Trent's talk becomes an increasingly crucial counter-message as the drumbeat for war on terrorism, drugs, the poor, indigenous movements and dissent thumps ever louder.

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## The Search for Truth: The Responsibility of the Media, the Government, and the American Public

Barbara Trent presents her documentary, *The Panama Deception*, as a springboard for analyzing current domestic and international events as well as an illuminating case study of government deception and media disinformation. It is a poignant and alarming reflection of what is unfolding today. This presentation exposes the forces controlling our media as well as our government's covert policies. The Panama Deception reveals the untold story of the US invasion, the shocking events of the assault, and the true motivation for the invasion, explaining how and why the mainstream media collaborated with the US government to censor information and deceive the public.



## A Woman of Courage: The Evolving Role of An Activist

Barbara Trent will speak about her lifelong commitment to change, reflecting on the personal costs, successes and failures. Her story chronicles anti-war activism in the 60's and 70's; the drug culture and addressing problems of abuse; her experience as a welfare mother; training organizers under president Carter for Peace Corps and VISTA; her ongoing efforts to democratize the media culminating in her fearless journalistic work in Panama which won her an Oscar in 1993; her creativity in assisting her mother and father to a dignified death; and present efforts to respond to a future threatened by war, globalization, and the relentless attack on civil liberties in the name of anti-terrorism.

## The Government, Drugs, Your Freedom, and Your Future

The film *COVERUP: Behind the Iran Contra Affair* discloses the shadow government of assassins, arms dealers, drug smugglers, former CIA operatives, and top US military personnel who were running foreign policy unaccountable to the public. It also highlights the Reagan/Bush administration's plan to use FEMA to institute martial law and ultimately suspend the Constitution, making it a valuable exploration of the loss of civil liberties, strikingly relevant after 9-11-2001. A screening plus Q&A with director Trent sheds light on this story of war for profit and ideological fanaticism that eerily repeats itself today.



## The Economics of Censorship

Trent outlines why the news, including TV documentaries, reflects a monolithic perspective, illuminating why the "free press" of the United States presents no real threat to the present arrangement of power and wealth in this country. She walks her audience through the obstacles to a courageous and independent media with anecdotes from her own experience as a filmmaker, producing, directing, and distributing three controversial and award-winning feature documentaries, as well as coverage of the current growing resistance movement in the US.

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### Making Independent Documentaries

Trent's unique insights on how to get issue-oriented or "difficult" films funded, made, and distributed. This workshop outlines what it takes to produce a documentary, including budgeting, assembling a team, fundraising, the editing process, post production, ethical issues, and general steps for distribution. For serious filmmakers.

### Taking it to Market

A workshop on self-distribution of issue oriented film and video based on the model created by Empowerment Project for the distribution of *COVERUP: Behind the Iran Contra Affair* and the Academy Award winning *The Panama Deception*. Appropriate for serious filmmakers and includes a manual.

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### EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

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