

## Guatemala Reading List

1. ***Tree Girl***. Ben Mickaelsen, HarperCollins Publishing, NY, 2004. From the top of a tree, 14-year-old Gabriela (known as Tree Girl) witnesses the destruction of her Mayan village.
2. ***I, Rigoberta Menchú (An Indian Woman in Guatemala)***. Rigoberta Menchú, ed Burgos Debray, Thetford Press Ltd, 1984. Autobiography of 1992 Nobel Peace Laureate.
3. ***Love in a Fearful Land: A Guatemalan Story***. Henri J.M. Nouwen, Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, IN, 1985. True story of the martyrdom of Father Stanley Rother.
4. ***Silence on the Mountain: Stories of Terror, Betrayal, and Forgetting in Guatemala***. Daniel Wilkinson, Moughton Mifflin Co, Boston/NY, 2002. A look at Guatemala's 36-year civil war as seen from the events that transpired on one coffee plantation.
5. ***The Art of Political Murder: Who Killed the Bishop?*** Franciso Goldman, Grove Press, NY, 2007. Tries to solve the murder of Bishop Juan Gerardi, a Roman Catholic human rights advocate, 2 days after the publication of a key HR document.
6. ***What Prize Awaits Us***. Bernice Kita, Orbis Press, 1988. Letters from an American nun who lived in an isolated Indian Village from 1977-1983, some of the worst years of Guatemala's civil war.
7. ***Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story of the American Coup in Guatemala***. Stephen Kinzer & Stephen Schlesinger, Doubleday, 1982. Details the 1954 coup in Guatemala which involved the CIA and the United Fruit Company. Very helpful for understanding current reality.
8. ***Gift of the Devil: A History of Guatemala***. Jim Handy, South End Press, 1984. Very readable history.
9. ***Enrique's Journey: The Story of a Boy's Dangerous Odyssey to Reunite with his Mother***. Sonia Nazario, Random House, 2007. A riveting account of a boy's travel through Mexico that puts a human face on the immigration issue.
10. ***Through a Glass Darkley: The US Holocaust in Central America***. Thomas R. Melville, Xlibris Corporation, 2005. The story of Father Ron Hennessey and US policy in the region.
11. ***Guatemala: A Guide to the People, Politics, and Culture***. Trish O'Kane, Interlink Books, 2005. A look at how a multicultural country is trying to meet the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
12. ***The Certainty of Spring***. Julia Esquivel, EPICA, Washington, DC, 1993. Poetry.
13. ***Paradise in Ashes: A Guatemalan Journey of Courage, Terror & Hope***. Beatriz Manz, University of CA Press, Berkeley, 2004.
14. ***Unfinished Conquest: The Guatemalan Tragedy***. Victor Pereira, UC Press, Berkeley, 1993.

## Guatemala Video List

(synopses taken from movie guides)

- A. *El Norte* -- When the army ransacks their Guatemalan village, impoverished teenage siblings Enrique (David Villalpando) and Rosa (Zaide Silvia Gutiérrez) travel north through Mexico, hoping for a better life in America as undocumented immigrants in this Oscar-nominated drama. Kind souls aid their trek northward, but criminals and a persistent fear of deportation also dog their every move. While any number of films have been made about plucky immigrants who come to the United States, few possess the plain-spoken honesty and simple emotional power of Gregory Nava's *El Norte*, at once a moving testimony to the thirst for freedom and a sobering look at the tragic consequences that the search for a better life can sometimes bring. Director Nava tells this story with few frills, but a remarkable emotional impact. Blending humor, drama, suspense, and eventually tragedy, there are few films that say more about what America truly means than *El Norte*, which shows (for good and ill) how important this country is to those who left the land of their birth to live in this nation of immigrants. R
- B. *La Misma Luna (Under the Same Moon)* -- Even across thousands of miles, the special bond between a mother and son can never be broken. It gives hope to Carlitos, a scrappy nine-year-old boy whose mother, Rosario, has gone to America to build a better life for both of them. While Rosario struggles for a brighter future, fate forces Carlitos hand and he embarks on an extraordinary journey to find her. Critics and audiences alike have praised this inspirational and heartwarming tale of a mother's devotion, a son's courage and a love that knows no borders. PG-13.
- C. *Sin Nombre* -- On the run from his murderous gang pals, a Mexican teen (Edgar Flores) jumps a northbound freight train packed with folk hoping for a new start in the U.S. Paulina Gaitán is the girl who befriends him. Plays like an action movie with heart and soul. R (language, violence)
- D. *The Milagro Beanfield War* -- Based on John Nichol's book set in a tiny New Mexican town, Robert Redford's comedy-drama pits the little guys against big development. When a local resort owner wants to expand, farmer Joe (Chick Vennera) takes a stand. The eccentric locals divide on the issue, but organized action mixed with a little magic unites them to fight for their rights. John Heard, Christopher Walken, Sonia Braga, Ruben Blades, Daniel Stern and Melanie Griffith costar. R

-- list prepared by Rachel Lausch