



P.O.V.

Season

19

Discussion Guide

My Country, My Country

A Film by Laura Poitras



POV



www.pbs.org/pov



Letter from the Filmmaker

September 6, 2006

New York City

Dear Viewers,

This film was motivated by a sense of despair about the contradictions of the U.S. occupation of Iraq and its goal to implement democracy in the Middle East through military force.

I spent eight months in Iraq, from June 2004 to February 2005. I worked alone, operating camera and sound. I met Dr. Riyadh, a medical doctor and Sunni political candidate, at Abu Ghraib prison while he was conducting an inspection. The inspection took place two months after graphic photographs showing prisoners being abused by U.S. soldiers were made public. I knew immediately that this man's story would capture something larger about the meaning and implications of this war.

Although **My Country, My Country** focuses on the January 2005 elections, it is a broader story about U.S. foreign policy post-9/11. The use of preemptive military force and the goal to implement democracy in the Middle East mark a radical shift in U.S. policy and world politics. I was compelled to document this shift and its repercussions. These elections were the first held following the U.S. invasion, and thus are the testing ground of this new era.

I took great personal risks in telling this story because I believed it was a story that wasn't being told and wouldn't be told. We read daily accounts of suicide bombings, U.S. military strikes, etc., and yet these stories remain abstract events that don't connect to human beings. The U.S. media covers the death of each U.S. citizen, yet there are no accurate reports on Iraqi civilian deaths. The left and right of the political spectrum debate the war, and yet the debate rarely takes into account the lives of Iraqis or the U.S. soldiers whose lives are on the line. I believe that a story about a man fighting for democracy while living under U.S. occupation will contribute something new to my country's understanding of this war.

Laura Poitras

Filmmaker, **My Country, My Country**



Laura Poitras, Director of "My Country, My Country."
Photo Heather Block



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Introduction



My Country, My Country, a feature-length (90-minute) documentary, is an unforgettable journey into the heart of war-ravaged Iraq in the months leading up to the January 2005 elections. The story follows Dr. Riyadh, an Iraqi medical doctor, devout Sunni Muslim and father of six.

Dr. Riyadh, who runs a free medical clinic in one of Baghdad's Sunni neighborhoods, is an outspoken critic of the U.S. occupation. He is equally passionate about the need for an Islamic democracy in Iraq, so he decides to become a candidate representing the country's largest Sunni political organization, the Iraqi Islamic Party.

When U.S. forces attack the Sunni city of Fallujah just three months prior to the election, many Sunnis see the assault as a deliberate attempt to lower the number of Sunnis who might vote. In protest, the Iraqi Islamic Party withdraws its candidates from the elections. That leaves Dr. Riyadh with a dilemma:

An Iraqi woman casts her ballot.
Photo courtesy of "My Country, My Country"

should he follow the instructions of his party and boycott the elections, or disobey the party and follow what he sees as a sacred obligation to serve his country?

Dramatically interwoven into the personal journey of Dr. Riyadh and his family are the violence and unpredictability of daily life amidst the U.S. military, private contractors, and U.N. officials who orchestrate the elections. This complex and intimate portrait provides an excellent starting place for viewers interested in examining the U.S. occupation of Iraq and its goal of spreading democracy in the Middle East. As an outreach tool, **My Country, My Country** can help viewers consider the impact of U.S. policy as well as the intricacies of supporting democracy in the U.S. and around the world.



Potential Partners

My Country, My Country is well suited for use in a variety of settings and is especially recommended for use with:

- Your local PBS station
- Groups that have discussed previous PBS and P.O.V. films relating to war, civic engagement or the Middle East, including *Regret to Inform*, *Bill's Run*, or *War Feels Like War*.
- Groups focused on any of the issues listed to the right
- Legislators
- Arab-American organizations
- Iraqi or Iraqi-American communities in the U.S.
- U.S. armed forces
- High school students
- Faith-based organizations and institutions
- Academic departments and student groups at colleges, universities, community colleges and high schools
- Community organizations with a mission to promote education and learning, such as P.O.V.'s national partners Elderhostel Learning in Retirement Centers, members of the Listen Up! Youth Media Network, or your local library.

Key Issues

My Country, My Country is an excellent tool for outreach because it goes beyond theory or rhetoric to show the intersections between politics and personal life. The film will be of special interest to people interested in the issues below:

- Anti-war/peace groups
- Civic engagement
- Democracy
- Economics
- Elections
- Ethnic studies
- Foreign policy
- Iraq
- Islam
- Media
- Middle East
- Military studies
- Peace studies
- Political science
- Propaganda / public image
- Public policy
- Religious studies

Event Ideas

Use a screening of **My Country, My Country** to:

- Kick off a series of town meetings about U.S. policy in Iraq.
- Convene a study group to look at the meaning of democracy, whether a uniform concept of democracy can be effectively exported to all parts of the world, and the pros and cons of using military force to establish or preserve a democracy.



Using this Guide

This guide is designed to help you use *My Country, My Country* as the centerpiece of a community event. It contains suggestions for organizing an event as well as ideas for how to help participants think more deeply about the issues in the film. The discussion questions are designed for a very wide range of audiences. Rather than attempt to address them all, choose one or two that best meet the needs and interests of your group.

Planning an Event

In addition to showcasing documentary film as an art form, screenings of P.O.V. films can be used to present information, get people interested in taking action on an issue, provide opportunities for people from different groups or perspectives to exchange views, and create space for reflection. Using the questions below as a planning checklist will help ensure a high-quality, high-impact event.

- **Have you defined your goals?** Set realistic goals with your partners. Will you host a single event or engage in an ongoing project? Being clear about your goals will make it easier to structure the event, target publicity and evaluate results.
- **Does the way you are planning to structure the event fit your goals?** Do you need an outside facilitator, translator or sign language interpreter? If your goal is to share information, are there local experts on the topic who should be present? How large an audience do you want? (Large groups are appropriate for information exchanges. Small groups allow for more intensive dialogue.)
- **Have you arranged to involve all stakeholders?** It is especially important that people be allowed to speak for themselves. If your group is planning to take action that affects people other than those present, how will you give voice to those not in the room?
- **Is the event being held in a space where all participants will feel equally comfortable?** Is it wheelchair accessible? Is it in a part of town that's easy to reach by various kinds of transportation? If you are bringing together different constituencies, is it neutral territory? Does the physical configuration allow for the kind of discussion you hope to have?
- **Will the set-up of the room help you meet your goals?** Is it comfortable? If you intend to have a discussion, can people see one another? Are there spaces to use for small breakout groups? Can everyone easily see and hear the film?
- **Have you scheduled time to plan for action?** Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even if the discussion has been difficult. Action steps are especially important for people who already have a good deal of experience talking about the issues on the table. For those who are new to the issues, just engaging in public discussion serves as an action step.



Using this Guide

Facilitating a Discussion

Controversial topics often make for excellent discussions. By their nature, those same topics can also give rise to deep emotions and strongly held beliefs. As a facilitator, you can create an atmosphere where people feel safe, encouraged and respected, making it more likely that they will be willing to share their ideas openly and honestly. Here's how:

Preparing Yourself

Identify your own hot-button issues. View the film before your event and give yourself time to reflect so you aren't dealing with raw emotions at the same time that you are trying to facilitate a discussion.

Be knowledgeable. You don't need to be an expert on Iraq or conflict in the Middle East to lead an event, but knowing the basics can help you keep a discussion on track and gently correct misstatements of fact. In addition to the Background Information section below, you may want to take a look at the suggested Web sites and books in the Resources section on p. 16.

Be clear about your role. You may find yourself taking on several roles for an event, such as host, organizer or even projectionist. If you are also planning to serve as facilitator, be sure that you can focus on that responsibility and avoid distractions during the discussion. Keep in mind that being a facilitator is not the same as being a teacher. A teacher's job is to convey specific information. In contrast, a facilitator remains neutral, helping move the discussion along without imposing his or her views on the dialogue.

Know your group. Issues can play out very differently for different groups of people. Is your group new to the issue or have they dealt with it before? Factors like geography, age, race, religion and socioeconomic class can all have an impact on comfort levels, speaking styles and prior knowledge. Take care not to assume that all members of a particular group share the same point of view. If you are bringing together different segments of your community, we strongly recommend hiring an experienced facilitator.

Who Should Facilitate?

You may or may not be the best person to facilitate, especially if you have multiple responsibilities for your event. If you are particularly invested in a topic, it might be wise to ask someone more neutral to guide the dialogue.

If you need to find someone else to facilitate, some university professors, human-resource professionals, clergy and youth leaders may be specially trained in facilitation skills. In addition to these local resources, groups such as the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) and the National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM) may be able to provide or help you locate skilled facilitators. Be sure that your facilitator receives a copy of this guide well in advance of your event.



Using this Guide

Preparing the Group

Consider how well group members know one another. If you are bringing together people who have never met, you may want to devote some time at the beginning of the event for introductions.

Agree to ground rules around language. Involve the group in establishing some basic rules to ensure respect and aid clarity. Typically such rules include prohibiting yelling and the use of slurs and asking people to speak in the first person (“I think....”) rather than generalizing for others (“Everyone knows that...”).

Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard. Be clear about how people will take turns or indicate that they want to speak. Plan a strategy for preventing one or two people from dominating the discussion. If the group is large, are there plans to break into small groups or partners, or should attendance be limited?

Talk about the difference between dialogue and debate. In a debate, participants try to convince others that they are right. In a dialogue, participants try to understand one other and expand their thinking by sharing their viewpoints and listening actively. Remind people that they are engaged in a dialogue. This will be especially important in preventing a discussion from dissolving into a repetitive, rhetorical, political or religious debate.

Encourage active listening. Ask the group to think of the event as being about listening as well as discussing. Participants can be encouraged to listen for things that challenge as well as reinforce their own ideas. You may also consider asking people to practice formal “active listening,” where participants listen without interrupting the speaker, then re-phrase what was said to be sure they heard it correctly.

Remind participants that everyone sees through the lens of his or her own experience. Who we are influences how we interpret what we see. Everyone in the group may have a different view about the content and meaning of the film they have just seen, and each of them may be accurate. It can help people to understand one another’s perspectives if speakers identify the evidence on which they base their opinions as well as share their views.

Take care of yourself and group members. If the intensity level rises, pause to let everyone take a deep breath. You might also consider providing a safe space to “vent,” perhaps with a partner or in a small group of familiar faces. If you anticipate that your topic may upset people, be prepared to refer them to local support agencies or have local professionals present. Think carefully about what you ask people to share publicly, and explain things like confidentiality and whether or not press will be present.

Background Information



In the spring of 2003, when U.S. military forces removed Saddam Hussein's government from power in Iraq, most Iraqis belonged to one of three main groups:

SUNNI MUSLIMS*

Worldwide, the majority of Muslims are Sunnis (about 80%), but in Iraq, they were a minority (approximately 20% of the population). Under Saddam Hussein, Sunnis controlled Iraq's government, but this political dominance ended with the U.S. invasion in 2003. Many Sunnis boycotted the January 2005 elections, which elected the officials who drafted the constitution that now governs Iraq.

SHIITE (OR SHIA) MUSLIMS*

Though only 20% of Muslims worldwide, Shia form the majority in Iraq (approximately 60% of the population). Shias lacked political power and were often persecuted during Saddam Hussein's rule, and most are pleased to see Hussein out of power.

KURDS

Approximately 15% of Iraqis identify as Kurdish. The Kurds are primarily Sunni Muslims, but they speak Kurdish, not Arabic, and constitute a distinctive ethnic group. When

national borders were drawn following World War I, the Kurdish population was split among Iraq and several contiguous states, including Turkey, Syria, Iran and Armenia. A minority in all these states, Kurds have experienced significant discrimination. As a result, many support the creation of an independent Kurdistan. Persecuted under Saddam Hussein's rule, most Kurds supported the U.S. war to oust the Iraqi leader.

** The initial split between Sunni and Shiite Muslims occurred after the death of Muhammad, when followers disagreed about who should succeed the Prophet. Sunnis believe that the Prophet's best friend, Abu Bakr, was selected as successor by consensus of the majority. Shiites believe that Ali, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law, was designated as his successor. Over time, additional theological, ritual, ethnic and geographic differences have emerged.*

[Source: "Shiite Fighters Clash With G.I.'s and Iraqi Forces," Jeffrey Gettleman, *The New York Times*, March 27, 2006; "Ancient Rift Brings Fear on Streets of Baghdad," Jeffrey Gettleman, *The New York Times*, March 26, 2006; CIA World Factbook; BBC website, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/4192189.stm, 25 Nov. 2005]

Background Information



Capt. Scarcliff at a wall of election posters.

Photo Josh Williams

Election Results

Approximately 8.5 million Iraqis (58% of eligible voters) participated in the January 30, 2005 election, which included more than 100 political parties. Shia parties won almost half the votes (48%), Kurds took just over a quarter (26%), the alliance led by Iyad Allawi (the interim Prime Minister who favored a secular state) garnered about 14%, and 12% were split among other parties. In Sunni strongholds, only about 2% of the population voted, a result of ongoing violence as well as calls for Sunnis to boycott the elections.

[Source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4261035.stm]



Background Information

Selected People Featured in *My Country, My Country*



Dr. Riyadh was born in the Adhamiya district of Baghdad in 1954. He studied medicine in Egypt and Baghdad, specializing in rheumatology. A devout Sunni who believes in the role of religion in government, he joined the Muslim Brotherhood in 1973. Working as a doctor during the Iran-Iraq War, Dr. Riyadh was imprisoned for one year by Saddam Hussein for his religious beliefs. Although Sunni, Dr. Riyadh was not a member of Saddam's secular Baath Party. In 1993, Dr. Riyadh co founded the Adhamiya Charity Clinic, a free medical clinic.

Following the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the Iraq Islamic Party emerged as the leading religious Sunni party, and Dr. Riyadh joined. Dr. Riyadh lives in Adhamiya with his wife, Samera, and their six children: Enas, Aseel, Mohammed, Abdul-Rahman, Esra and Ala Ala.



Carlos Valenzuela, Carlos Valenzuela was the leader of the United Nations Team organizing the Iraqi National Elections. He has worked with the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division on over 14 elections including elections in East Timor, Liberia, Cambodia and Palestine. Valenzuela's friend and mentor, Sergio de Mello, was killed in Baghdad on August 19, 2003, when the United Nations headquarters was bombed.

Photos courtesy of "My Country, My Country"



General Discussion Questions

Immediately after the film, you may want to give people a few quiet moments to reflect on what they have seen. If the mood seems tense, you may want to pose a general question and give people some time to themselves to jot down or think about their answers before opening the discussion.

Unless you think participants are so uncomfortable that they can't engage until they have had a break, don't encourage people to leave the room between the film and the discussion. If you save your break for an appropriate moment during the discussion, you won't lose the feeling of the film as you begin your dialogue.

One way to get a discussion going is to pose a general question such as:

- If you could ask anyone in the film a single question, who would you ask and what would you ask them?
- Did anything in this film surprise you? If so, what? Why was it surprising?
- Describe a part of the film that provided new insight or disturbed or moved you. Why do you think you reacted so strongly to that particular moment or scene?
- What did you learn from this film?



Dr. Riyadh at Abu Ghraib prison.
Photo Paul Cobaugh



Discussion Prompts

Establishing Democracy

- What do you believe are some of the key components to a democracy?
- What programs do you see in the film that are likely to strengthen a nascent democracy? What do you see that are obstacles to democracy?
- When his political party decided to boycott elections, Dr. Riyadh had to choose whether or not to continue his candidacy and whether or not to vote. If you were in his shoes, what decision would you make and why? What if you were his wife or one of his children? Would you vote? Why or why not?
- Dr. Riyadh and his family do not have reliable utility services or basic security. In your view, how might this shape their thinking about establishing democracy in Iraq? Based on what you see in the film, how do locals and civilians see the war? How does the international community see the war? What might account for any differences in opinion?
- What might Americans learn from the experiences of Dr. Riyadh and his family?
- What does the right to vote represent to Dr. Riyadh and his family? What does the right to vote mean to Americans? How important is voting in a democracy?
- Would you consider Dr. Riyadh a hero? Why or why not?
- Why did U.S. soldiers take care to ensure that the elections “look as Iraqi as possible.” How would you characterize this strategy? What might an Iraqi civilian think of the military’s efforts to keep their distance?

- In this film, Dr. Riyadh says, “Secularism won’t give us our rights. America is secular, but its democracy hasn’t achieved justice.” What is your reaction to this comment? Do you think the doctor is correct when he argues that “all religions preach justice”? Is a government based on religion more likely to be just than a secular government? What are the implications for the American idea that democracy is best served by a separation of church and state?



Writing down the codes for each political party.
Photo courtesy of “My Country, My Country”

Discussion Prompts



The Conflict in Iraq

- How are the stories of daily life that the people in the film tell different from or similar to images and stories that you have seen of Iraq? In your view, what accounts for those similarities or differences?
- Why does the U.S. use the label “insurgents” to talk about people who Dr. Riyadh identifies as the “resistance”? What is the significance of the difference in terms?
- In the film, an Iraqi objects to the U.S. administration’s argument that Americans should support the war “over there” to prevent it happening “over here” (i.e., on U.S. soil), saying, “So whether there is chaos [in Iraq] or not, they don’t care. As long as the main goal has been achieved, which is moving the battlefield to the enemy’s land.” What is your response to this point of view?

Captain Scarcliff and U.S. military patrol Baghdad before elections.

Photo Josh Williams

- What is your reaction to Dr. Riyadh’s visit to Abu Ghraib prison? In your view, what are the sources of his anger? How might Iraqis reconcile the imprisonment of children with U.S. declarations of support for Iraqi democracy?
- In your view, who is responsible for the continuing violence in Iraq? How do your views compare to those expressed by Dr. Riyadh and his friends and family?
- From what you see in the film, can you guess the motives of the people who kidnapped Dr. Riyadh’s nephew?
- On which “side” of the conflict would you identify Dr. Riyadh? As you viewed the film, how many different “sides” (or political positions) could you identify and what are they?



Taking Action



People in line to vote.

Photo courtesy of "My Country, My Country"

- Examine U.S. media coverage of Iraq and determine whether or not voices like Dr. Riyadh's are adequately represented. Publish lists of which media outlets have and have not included such voices so that others will know where to look if they want to hear more stories about Iraqis like Dr. Riyadh.
- Invite your political representatives to a screening of **My Country, My Country** and engage them in a dialogue about U.S. policy in Iraq. Ask them to articulate their vision for what should happen, and be prepared to share your specific recommendations.
- Use one of the education-based online sites that arrange pen pals to begin a correspondence with a person in Iraq.
- Sponsor a voter-registration day that also educates your community about the electoral process and debriefs them on key political issues in your neighborhood.



Resources

WEBSITES

The film

P.O.V.'s *My Country, My Country* Web site
www.pbs.org/pov/pov2006/mycountry

The *My Country, My Country* companion Web site offers a streaming video trailer for the film; interviews with filmmaker Laura Poitras (video, podcast and text); a list of related Web sites, organizations and books; a downloadable discussion guide and classroom activity; and the following special features:

IN STUDIO

A CONVERSATION WITH GEORGE PACKER

George Packer, author of *The Assassin's Gate*, joined filmmaker Laura Poitras and Maria Hinojosa from PBS' NOW for a special conversation on the war in Iraq.

ADDITIONAL SCENES

FIRST PERSON: DR. RIYADH

Watch this extended video of Dr. Riyadh's visit to evaluate the health of the prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison and the press conference he held in July 2004, three months after the Abu Ghraib photos were made public.

PRODUCTION JOURNAL

FILMMAKER'S DIARY

Laura Poitras invites viewers to go behind the scenes and learn more about the circumstances that led her to capture some of the more captivating moments from *My Country, My Country*, including her first meeting with Dr. Riyadh at Abu Ghraib prison, meeting the Australian mercenaries, the arms deal that took place in her hotel room, her access in the Green Zone, what it was like to travel around Baghdad without an escort and her recent experiences traveling after being added to the "threat list" by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

What's Your P.O.V.?

*P.O.V.'s online Talking Back Tapestry is a colorful, interactive representation of your feelings about **My Country, My Country**.*

Listen to other P.O.V. viewers talk about the film and add your thoughts by calling 1-800-688-4768. www.pbs.org/pov/talkingback.html

Iraq

THE CENTER FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

http://menic.utexas.edu/menic/Countries_and_Regions/Iraq

The center maintains a country-by-country listing of information for the Middle East and Central Asia. The link to "Iraq" is an excellent "one-stop shop" for encyclopedia-style information about the country, including links to several related sites.

FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

www.friendsofdemocracy.info/

A blog by Iraqis focused on the development of democracy in Iraq.

CHRENKOFF

<http://chrenkoff.blogspot.com/2005/01/whos-who-of-iraqi-political-parties.html>

A quick list of the political parties involved in Iraq's election. Chrenkoff also provides links to other bloggers focused on Iraqi elections.

THE FOUNDATION FOR THE DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACIES

www.defenddemocracy.org/

Collects articles and other resources from a U.S. conservative political perspective. For an alternative point of view from a progressive political perspective, go to www.alternet.org.



Resources

Islam

PBS' FRONTLINE: MUSLIMS

www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/muslims/

The Web site for this 2004 Frontline special on Muslims contains lots of helpful resources for people seeking basic information about Islam, including a teacher's guide with an excellent glossary.

THE COUNCIL ON ISLAMIC EDUCATION

www.cie.org

Provides a wide variety of resources for educators who want to teach about Islam or Muslims.

Media Coverage

CYBERJOURNALIST.NET

www.cyberjournalist.net/great_iraq_conflict_coverage/

Journalist Jonathan Dube has assembled a very helpful collection of links to a wide variety of online resources related to Iraq, including Web sites, blogs, news articles, photos and more.

ABYZ NEWS LINKS

www.abyznewslinks.com/

This site provides country-by-country links to media outlets, including newspapers, TV, radio and more.

THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS' PROJECT FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

www.journalism.org/resources/tools/ethics/wartime/

Offers a wide variety of resources on its Web site, including guidelines for journalistic ethics, war-coverage issues and analysis of media coverage of Iraq.

For a list of suggested books, videos and websites go to www.pbs.org/pov/mycountry/ to download our Delve Deeper into *My Country, My Country* produced in collaboration with the American Library Association.

The music in *My Country, My Country* was written and performed by world renown Iraqi singer/composer Kadhum Al-Sahir. Below are the lyrics of "Oh My Country":

"Oh My Country"

by Kadhum Al Sahir

Oh my country, may you have a happy morning.
Reunite everyone; heal your wounds.
I yearn to see you smile some day,
When will sadness set you free? ¹

Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds,
Take them all under your wings.
You are their father; you are their mother,
Stay firm, no matter how your winds gust.

Jesus and Prophet Muhammad said,
Their unity is your weapon.
Love, peace, intellect and construction,
May God in the heavens bless your success, my country.

Oh my beloved Iraq; oh Iraq,
Oh my beloved, oh my beloved, oh my beloved Iraq.



How to Buy the Film

For inquiries about sales or rentals of *My Country, My Country*, contact:

Zeitgeist Films

Phone: (212) 274-1989 • Fax (212) 274-1644

Web: www.zeitgeistfilms.com



Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and entering its 19th season on PBS, the award-

winning P.O.V. series is the longest-running series on television to feature the work of America's best contemporary-issue independent filmmakers. Airing Tuesdays at 10 p.m., June through October, with primetime specials during the year, P.O.V. has brought over 250 award-winning documentaries to millions nationwide, and now has a Webby Award-winning online series, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. Since 1988, P.O.V. has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. More information about P.O.V. is available online at www.pbs.org/pov.

P.O.V. Community Engagement and Education

P.O.V. provides Discussion Guides for all films as well as curriculum-based P.O.V. Lesson Plans for select films to promote the use of independent media among varied constituencies. Available free online, these originally produced materials ensure the ongoing use of P.O.V.'s documentaries with educators, community workers, opinion leaders and general audiences nationally. P.O.V. also works closely with local public-television stations to partner with local museums, libraries, schools and community-based organizations to raise awareness of the issues in P.O.V.'s films.

Cover photo:

Voters wait in line under heavy security in "My Country, My Country."

Photo Jesus Roldan

P.O.V. Interactive

www.pbs.org/pov

P.O.V.'s award-winning Web department produces our Web-only showcase for interactive storytelling, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. It also produces a Web site for every P.O.V. presentation, extending the life of P.O.V. films through community-based and educational applications, focusing on involving viewers in activities, information and feedback on the issues. In addition, www.pbs.org/pov houses our unique Talking Back feature, filmmaker interviews and viewer resources, and information on the P.O.V. archives as well as myriad special sites for previous P.O.V. broadcasts.

P.O.V. is a project of American Documentary, Inc. Major funding for P.O.V. is provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Ford Foundation, PBS and public television viewers. Funding for P.O.V.'s Community Engagement activities and the Diverse Voices Project is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. P.O.V. is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KCET/Los Angeles, WGBH/Boston and WNET/New York. Cara Mertes is executive director of American Documentary | P.O.V.

American Documentary, Inc.

www.americandocumentary.org

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, on-line and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.



**A Great Nation
Deserves Great Art**

