

Chicano) gets her job back with threats of affirmative action lawsuits, and in so doing earns the respect and admiration of her husband's grandmother.

In the selections in *The Day the Cisco Kid Shot John Wayne*, Nash Candelaria has sketched some real and complex people who are struggling to find their places within their own families, with their religion, and most of all, to find their place in the contemporary multi-cultural society of the United States. Some are funny, some are irreverent, and some are serious; all are a pleasure to read, as Candelaria proves here that he is as adept in his handling of short fiction as he is in the novel.

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Sheila Chamovitz. *Skokie: Rights or Wrong*. New Day Films, 22 Riverview Drive, Wayne, NJ 07470. 16mm film and VHS, 25 minutes. 1987. Rental \$50.00; purchase price \$450.00. film; \$250.00, video. (201) 633-0212.

Skokie is an Illinois suburb in which about 7,000 Jewish survivors of the European Holocaust live. In 1978, The National Socialist Party of American (NSPA) (known until 1970 as the American Nazi Party) wanted to demonstrate in Skokie, to publically speak about the NSPA's ultimate purpose, which is to "create an all-white [non-Jewish] America in our lifetime," via legal methods "hopefully." The NSPA's immediate goal in marching in Skokie was "to dramatize the fact that there is no free speech for National Socialists. . . a pressure move in order to force the system, the courts. . . to give [the NSPA] back [their] right to free speech." Frank Colin, the NSPA leader and spokesperson, parallels NSPA public assembly with demonstrations by blacks in "the heart of dixie" during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. Blacks were "Dramatiz[ing] their cause in an area where those concepts were most opposed," Colin says, just as his group was attempting to do. In other words, the intent of both groups was to demonstrate their constitutional right to free speech. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) picked up Colin's NSPA case when Skokie went to great lengths to keep the NSPA from their community. As news of the planned march spread, community leaders began to receive telephone threats; the Nazis' ultimate plan seemed already to be working.

Sheila Chamovitz does not try to tell us how to feel about this issue, or try to move us toward particular horror, anger, or disgust at Nazism in her twenty-five minute documentary *Skokie: Rights or Wrong*. In this film released in 1987, there are no clips of concentration camps or Holocaust data interjected by a commentator. Each group tells its own

story. A Jewish person tells what he or she went through in Europe at the hands of the Nazis, so Chamovitz films their silence. Frank Colin, NSPA leader, has plenty to say, and Chamovitz lets him rattle on ad nauseum, films him laughing about the Nazis' "final solution," extermination of Jews, blacks, and other non-whites in his ideal (and, he contends, still democratic) all-white America. ACLU lawyers on the case and the ACLU leader commenting on the case are all rational, intelligent men interested in justice, who believe in the dynamic checks and balances of democratic freedom of speech.

Chamovitz's intention is to show us how America is designed to work, how freedom of speech for *every* American guarantees freedom for all via the balance of forces struck in a true democracy. If all speech is heard, "ridiculous speech, hateful speech will be put down." Chamovitz thinks we in American can make intelligent choices--and perhaps she is asking if we can continue to do so in the face of a new American Nazism that proclaims much the same goals as Hitler's European movement in the 1930s and 40s which claimed the lives of millions of Jewish and non-Jewish people. Chamovitz seems to think good will continue to win out in America, but acknowledges, through the commentary of Holocaust survivors, that evil--here, Nazism--has taken root in the past and choked out democracy and anything we might call freedom.

By posing questions about free speech and the connection between morality and law, by allowing us to come to our own conclusions instead of arguing pointedly for a position, Chamovitz is calling us all to think, if not to act. What happens if those who believe in freedom for only a few are the only ones to take active advantage of American freedom, and in doing so, quash true freedom for all of us? (And would we not be more comfortable allowing these people to speak, letting us know what they are thinking and doing, rather than doing it underground, behind our backs?) Will a band of "misfits" do in the latter part of the 20th century what a band of "thugs" did in the 1940s?

By the end of the film we are as perplexed by this irony as Chamovitz must have been when she decided to make this film. We are left questioning: Do we compromise our ideal of democracy for all Americans by quashing the Nazis' right to freedom? As an ACLU commentator says, "We pay some cost in order to be free."

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