

Hunter Profs' Film on RFK in South Africa Illuminates a Forgotten Moment in History



Hunter's Larry Shore with Ethel and Kerry Kennedy at the Washington, D.C. screening of "RFK in the Land of Apartheid: A Ripple of Hope"

A documentary by two Hunter film & media studies professors, Larry Shore and Tami Gold, is causing a stir in political and academic circles - and drawing rave reviews from critics.

The film, *RFK in the Land of Apartheid: A Ripple of Hope*, deals with a little-known trip that then-New York Senator Robert F. Kennedy took to South Africa in 1966. In Prof. Shore's words, "There were enormous risks for him in this trip. It took courage to barnstorm South Africa with zero security."

At the time, South Africa's black majority was subjected by the white minority to a brutal system of oppression known as apartheid. Kennedy brought blacks a message of hope that Prof. Shore, then a South African teenager, says he never forgot. After immigrating to the U.S. in the 1970s, Shore found that few American knew about the trip - there had been no U.S. coverage. Determined to document this nearly forgotten chapter of history, Shore returned to South Africa to collect archival footage, then collaborated with Professor Gold on the 55-minute film. He produced, and they co-directed.

While the documentary has yet to reach theaters, its various screenings, including one at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston, have drawn praise. *The Boston Globe's* Alex Beam wrote, "I left uplifted."

Much of the film's power derives from footage of a speech Kennedy delivered in Cape Town. One passage was so inspiring that it is now engraved on his tombstone in Arlington National Cemetery: *It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.*

[Click here to watch a CUNY TV interview with the filmmakers.](#)