

FIRESIDE STUDY #5

“There is hope... that we, like birds, can be freed from the net and go to heaven”

Film: **Hope**

Introduction:

An exploration of hope, using visual poetry. Here filmmaker Sean Rodrigo expands on the ideas of Martin Luther King’s famous speech “I have a dream” to build his own 21st century picture of world peace. Take time now to investigate the ‘Rodrigo manifesto.’



Key issues:

A speech for world peace

I have a dream

*That one day I will live in a world
Where life is held in higher regard than money;
Where I will not be judged by the ethics in which I live
But the content of my character.*

I have a dream

*That one day the love and peace for thy neighbour
Is so strong that our religion, race, gender,
class, sexuality, and beliefs, are disregarded
When the treatment of humanity is questioned.*

I have a dream

*That every human being will have inherent right to live
And no person would be arbitrarily deprived of life
In the name of patriotism, religion, or morality.*

It may be a dream

*But if we hold these truths to be self-evident:
That all men are created equal,
That we are endowed with these rights which allow us
to pursue happiness
In an environment of freedom,
Then there is hope.*

Hope.

*Hope that we, like birds, can be freed from the net and
go to heaven.*

(Boy)

*I pledge allegiance to the human race
And the universal needs in which we stand;
One species, under many gods, indivisible
With liberty and freedom for all*

Impressions

While the *words* spoken are central to the message, we are dealing here with the medium of short film, not the written word. The film projects an impression of unity. Images of protesters, city streets, and nature, inter-cut with the many ‘speech-makers’ build a sense that despite the many different opinions and forces at work in the world, there is hope. And the hope is this – that as thinking human beings we *can* live together peaceably.

Suggested questions:

- Is the *Hope* the film puts forward naïve and impossible or realistic and possible?
- Is the filmmaker’s speech reflective of any particular world-religion? Does it matter?
- Consider your own basis of hope for a moment. If it is based on a particular philosophy or religion, how much does it support or conflict with that presented here?
- Discuss practical ways in which some of the ‘**dreams**’ put forward might become a reality:
 - *Life more important than money*
 - *Universal love regardless of social divisions*
 - *No deaths based on religion, patriotism or morality*
 - *True equality for all*
- The final ‘pledge’ of the film made by the boy calls for an allegiance to the human race. Do you have faith in humanity as an ultimate force for good – our ultimate hope?