THE LOVING STORY

A film by Nancy Buirski
An Icarus Films Release

U.S.A. / 77 minutes / Color, Black and White / 2011

WINNER, 2013 GEORGY FOSTER PEABODY AWARD
WINNER, BEST USE OF FOOTAGE IN A FACTUAL PRODUCTION,
2012 FOCAL INTERNATIONAL AWARDS
WINNER, 2012 JOHN E. O’CONNOR FILM AWARD, AMERICAN HISTORY ASSOC.

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FILM SYNOPSIS

A racially-charged criminal trial and a heart-rending love story converge in this definitive documentary about Mildred and Richard Loving. The marriage of Mildred (who was part-black and part-Native American) and Richard (who was white) was declared illegal in 1958 by their home state of Virginia. They refused to leave one another and, with the help of the ACLU, relentlessly pursued their right to happiness. Their case made it all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court where, in 1967, it struck down laws against interracial marriage in this country once and for all.

With luminous, newly discovered 16mm footage of the Lovings and their lawyers, first-person testimony and rare documentary photographs, this film takes us behind the scenes of the legal challenges and the emotional turmoil of the landmark case. The Loving Story recreates a seminal moment in history and reflects a timely message of marriage equality in a personal, human love story.

The Loving Story is a journey into the heart of race relations in America. This landmark documentary, with its contemporary parallels, will live on as record of monumental change, not just in civil rights, but in the human right to pursue happiness regardless of color, gender or creed.

SELECTED FILM FESTIVALS & AWARDS

Winner, 2013 George Foster Peabody Award
Winner, Best Use of Footage in a Factual Production, 2012 Focal International Awards
2013 Bermuda Docs Film Festival
2012 Sundance Film Forward
2012 United Nations Association Film Festival
2012 Mixed Roots Film Festival
Centerpiece Selection, 2011 Full Frame Documentary Film Festival
Official Selection, 2011 Tribeca Film Festival
Winner, WGA Screenplay Award, 2011 Silverdocs Documentary Festival
Official Selection, 2011 Hamptons International Film Festival
Official Selection, 2011 Traverse City Film Festival
Official Selection, 2011 Heartland Film Festival
Official Selection, 2011 Saint Louis International Film Festival
Official Selection, 2011 Virginia Film Festival
DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

The Loving Story is an unusual telling of a civil rights story. Though often overlooked among the pantheon of civil rights struggles, Mildred and Richard Lovings’ quest to live together as husband and wife in the state of Virginia was a pivotal one. A white man and a part-black, part-Rappahannock woman were in love and did not understand why their marriage was a criminal offense in the eyes of state. Their effort to make this right – to not live in shame or in exile – is universal, metaphorically reminding us of oppressed and exiled people everywhere. The Lovings were banished from their home for their commitment to each other, and they fought long and hard to return to it, to love each other within the bosom of their family.

We were fortunate to unearth authentic footage, photographs and interviews from the period, which have been woven into the tales recounted by those who were there at the time or were close to the Lovings. The film takes viewers into the actual time and place as their story unfolds through their own voices and that of others present. Never-before-seen footage and photographs of this very private couple reveal who the Lovings really were, and what it was actually like to marry as a mixed-race couple in the Jim Crow South.

White supremacy groups are growing in the U.S. – in the very communities that perpetuated and maintained anti-miscegenation laws up to the 1967 Supreme Court ruling. While we’ve elected the first mixed-race president, we also recently witnessed a Louisiana Justice of the Peace refusing to marry a mixed-race couple. Anti-miscegenation sentiments are at the heart of racial segregation and apparently still alive today. The struggle for same-sex marriage has important civil rights parallels – both address basic human rights. We believe this nuanced character study, this story of courage and strength, will ignite interest in the tale’s morality and create a safe place for people of all beliefs to gather and explore the timeless issues within the film.

– Nancy Buirski
Nancy Buriski is the director, co-producer and co-writer of The Loving Story. Prior to this, her debut film, she was the founder and was the director the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival for ten years. She produced five collections of Full Frame shorts with Docurama and a library collection of feature-length documentaries, The Katrina Experience. She was executive producer of TED’s Pangea Day Film Content. Buirski is a producer of Time Piece, the innovative cross-cultural anthology of Turkish and American shorts (directors, Albert Maysles, Alex Gibney, Nathanial Khan, Edet Belzberg and Sam Pollard, among others), Harlem Woodstock (director, Alex Gibney) and Althea (director, Rex Miller). She is next directing the documentary Tanaquil Le Clercq: Afternoon of a Faun and is producing a fiction version of the Lovings’ story. Prior to her work in film, she was a documentary photographer, writing and photographing “Earth Angels: Migrant Children in America,” and the foreign picture editor at The New York Times.

Elisabeth Haviland James is the co-producer and editor of The Loving Story. She is based in Durham, NC. She is currently directing and producing Lucy: A Portrait, an experimental documentary about writer and psychologist Lucy Daniels. She is also adapting Pulitzer Prize winner Doug Marlette’s novel "Magic Time" for the screen. James is a consulting producer to the narrative feature Oka! Amerikee, which premiered at the Telluride Film Festival. Her other recent credits include producer of The Good Fight and co-producer of The Lord God Bird, both directed by George Butler. She served as director of photography and editor on Brothers in Arms, featuring Senator John Kerry, during the 2004 election. Ms. James has worked as a director, producer, cinematographer, photographer and editor with a number of media clients, including White Mountain Films, Roland Films, National Geographic, PBS and MTV. She is a graduate of the M.A. Program in Documentary Film and Video at Stanford University, where she produced and directed four award-winning short documentaries. Her thesis film, Net Loss, was awarded the Nicholas Roosevelt Award for Environmental Journalism. Her other short films include Flaunt, Worms at Work, and Precipice, a national finalist for the 2002 Academy Award in the Student Documentary category.
LAWYER BIOGRAPHIES
THE ‘LOVING V. VIRGINIA’ COURT CASE

Bernard S. Cohen was born in Brooklyn in 1934 and attended City College of New York for his undergraduate degree before completing his law degree at Georgetown University in 1960. He was referred to the Loving case by the ACLU and was lead counsel with the help of the ACLU and the NAACP Legal Defense & Education Fund. After the success of the case, Cohen continued his career and taught law at the George Washington University, School of Law. He also served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1980 to 1995, representing the 46th district.

Philip J. Hirschkop is a constitutional rights attorney who has won numerous landmark cases in the areas of civil rights, women’s rights, teachers’ rights, prisoners’ rights and animal rights, including the case of Loving versus Virginia. He is a founder of the ACLU of Virginia, the Law Students Civil Rights Research Council and the ACLU National Prison Project, served on the ACLU National Board for 20 years, and has been chief counsel for PETA since it began. He is an ex-Green Beret paratrooper and the father of three.
FILM CREDITS

Director          Nancy Buirski
Producers        Nancy Buirski, Elisabeth Haviland James
Writers          Nancy Buirski, Susie Ruth Powell
Executive Producers  Scott Berrie, Marshall Sonenshine
Co-Producer      Patricia Romeu
Supervising Producer  Neda Armian
Development Producer  Anna Sang Park
Consulting Producers  Ric Burns, Sam Pollard
Associate Producer      David Baldwin
Cinematographers     Rex Miller, Steve Milligan
Editor             Elisabeth Haviland James
Featuring          Mildred Jeter Loving
                          Richard Perry Loving
                          Bernard S. Cohen
                          Philip J. Hirschkop
                          Peggy Loving
                          Sydney Jeter
                          Donald Loving
                          Garnet Jeter
                          Lola Loving
                          Kenneth Edwards
                          Lewis Jeter
                          Robert Pratt
                          Edward Ayers
                          Raymond Green
                          Ruthie Holilday
                          Robert Pierpoint
                          Hope Ryden
                          Abbott Mills
                          Caitlin Congdon
Documentary photographer  Grey Villet, 1965
Archival footage producer
Hope Ryden, 1965

Archival cinematographer
Abbot Mills, 1965

Original Music
David Majzlin

Music Supervisor
Susan Jacobs

Music Consultant
Mike Taylor

Location Sound
Mark Barosso

Project Advisor
Martin Scorsese

Creative Advisors
Ken Friedlein, Revere Lanoue

Advisors
Walter Dellinger, Marie Wilson, William Zabel

Archival Researchers
Lewanne Jones, Polly Pettit

Additional Research
Tessa Haviland, Patricia Romeu

Assistant Editors
Claire L. Chandler, Jennifer Cromling

Editorial Suite
Thornapple Films, Durham, NC

Titles, Graphics, Animation
Joshua Steadman

Online Preparation
Bradley Kimbrough

Additional Sound Recording
Michael Boyle

Production Associate
Jennifer Cromling

Production Assistant
Shang Gao

Production Intern
Tessa Haviland

Publicity Intern
Erica rosen

Colorist/Online Editor
Rick Broat

Post-Production Facilities
Frame:Runner NYC

Sound Editors
Marlena Grzaslewicz, Ira Spiegel, 701 Sound

Assistant Sound Editor
Daniel Diego Fulton
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<tr>
<td>Re-Recording Mixer</td>
<td>Martin Czembor</td>
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<td>Consultants</td>
<td>Judith Cohen, Nancy Galdy, Beth Hubbard, Phyl Newbeck, Steven Silver, Jenny Warburg</td>
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<td>Scholarly Advisors</td>
<td>Edward Ayers, Ira Berlin, Ariel Dorfman, Noah Feldman, William Ferris, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Grace Elizabeth Hale, Martha Hodes, John L. Jackson, Tammy L. Kernodle, George La Noue, Toril Moi, David L. Paletz</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOR SuperVision</td>
<td>Mackenzie Reif, Jackie Mulhearn</td>
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<td>Consulting Editor, HBO</td>
<td>Geof Bartz</td>
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<td>Supervising Producer, HBO</td>
<td>Nancy Abraham</td>
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<td>Executive Producer, HBO</td>
<td>Sheila Nevins</td>
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<td>ABC News Videosource, Caroline County Home Movies from the Collection of Robert Doswell, CBS News Archives/Thought Equity Motion, Collection of the Supreme Court of the United States, F.I.L.M. Archives, Grey Villet Archive, HBO Archives, Hope Ryden, National Archives, Prelinger Archives, Showtime Networks, Inc., WNET, UCLA Film &amp; Television Archive</td>
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<td>Mildred Loving Interview</td>
<td>Showtime Networks, Inc.</td>
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<td>Interviewer</td>
<td>Chris Ward, 1993</td>
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