

demonstration. Combining rare archival film footage and photographs with interviews of civil rights icons Rep. John Lewis and the late Julian Bond, this documentary offers an insightful and invigorating portrait of a little-known early incident in the historical struggle for equality in the United States. Highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (P. Hall)

Congo: The Doctor Who Saves Women

★★★★1/2

(2014) 52 min. DVD: \$348. Icarus Films. PPR.

Senegalese filmmaker Angèle Diabang's powerful and deeply disturbing documentary serves up a portrait of a contemporary medical hero working in one of the world's most hostile war zones. Dr. Denis Mukwege is a gynecologist in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the founder of Panzi, a hospital dedicated to helping women who were raped during the country's seemingly never-ending civil war. The wide prevalence of rape perpetrated by Congolese soldiers and insurgent militias has created a reign of terror that has no equivalent elsewhere in the world—conservative estimates place the number of victims well into the tens of thousands. Mukwege and his hospital staff—consisting of specially trained doctors, nurses, and psychologists—provide the only genuine sanctuary for war-damaged women, a place where staff labor to heal the physical and emotional scars left by brutal assaults. Several Panzi patients have been rejected by both their families and communities after being raped, but Mukwege works to create a new social enclave among the patients by assigning seemingly quotidian tasks that

actually serve as tools for reestablishing normal and active lives. The Congolese war and its horrendous impact on civilians have been mostly ignored by the U.S. mainstream media, but *Congo* joins the growing list of urgent documentaries addressing this heart-breaking situation. Highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (P. Hall)

In Country ★★1/2

(2015) 80 min. DVD: \$19.95 (\$295 w/PPR).

Bond/360 (avail. from www.incountryfilm.com).

Although Civil War and even WWII re-enactor events are relatively familiar, filmmakers Mike Attie and Meghan O'Hara's *In Country* centers on a more unusual living-history troupe in Oregon who are bringing back to life a crusade that was not crowned in glory. The young men of Delta 2/5(R) venture into the woods wearing the uniforms and carrying the weapons of the 1960s American military, staging skirmishes and patrols from the Vietnam War. Coordinator Joel Kinney gives recruits (whose knowledge of the subject derives largely from movies like *Platoon* and *Full Metal Jacket*) classes in the unpopular conflict's field slang and cultural backdrop, and he respectfully hosts visits from vets who inspect the squad for authenticity. Throughout, news clips of actual Johnson/Nixon-era American soldiers, both gung-ho macho and dispirited, are edited into the film and sometimes the effect is eerily seamless (although some of the longer sequences feel gimmicky). Much of the drama here lies in the Oregonians' real lives: some are thrill-seekers wanting to play soldier, while one is a Gulf War vet in a teetering marriage,

re-enlisting for the healthcare benefits. The troupe even has as its prize member a Vietnamese-American immigrant who served in the South Vietnamese Army. Reliving the doomed campaign, he explains, recalls a time when he felt stronger. That no lasting or useful lessons from Vietnam have been learned seems to be the message here. Extras include interviews with the filmmakers, behind-the-scenes footage with the re-enactors, and outtakes. An uneven documentary that should nevertheless appeal to military history buffs, this is a strong optional purchase. Aud: C, P. (C. Cassidy)

Meeting ISIS ★★1/2

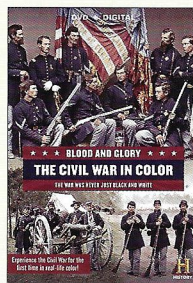
(2014) 56 min. DVD: \$19.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).

ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) has increasingly dominated world headlines, especially in the wake of the November 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris. ISIS, which intends to create a new caliphate in the Middle East, has achieved considerable success in accumulating territory in Iraq and Syria—using the most brutal methods, including mass executions and publicly broadcast beheadings. *Meeting ISIS* is a very relevant documentary that, unfortunately, is compromised by a lack of documentation on the source material. Some locations and interviewees are identified, but many sequences appear to have been staged, and the voice of the interviewer is continuously distorted (plus, no production credits are listed). On the other hand, it does take the viewer behind the lines in Syria and briefly sketches the origin and growth of the terrorist group while also showing the divisions between ISIS and other factions such as the al-Nusra Front—making it clear that virtually all of them are well-funded and have supplanted the government in providing services to the general populace in areas under their control. Featuring grainy explicit footage of atrocities (always preceded by a viewer warning), this is an intriguing and disturbing film, but also one that suffers from lack of references and documentation. Still, given the huge current interest in ISIS, this should be considered a strong optional purchase. Aud: C, P. (F. Swietek)

Blood and Glory: The Civil War in Color ★★★

(2015) 2 discs. 168 min. DVD: \$26.98, Blu-ray: \$29.99. Lionsgate Entertainment (avail. from most distributors).

The major selling point of the History channel's latest Civil War miniseries is its inclusion of colorized versions of around 500 black-and-white photographs from the period, including stills of key figures such as Lincoln and Lee, as well as shots of buildings and battlefields. Although the process has vastly improved since it was employed years ago to colorize older films, the outcome is still somewhat based on speculation, and one could argue that the results lack the haunting quality of the originals, especially when bloodied corpses are involved. But these images actually represent only a fraction of the content of this two-part series, which basically offers a straightforward chronological account of the War Between the States from its origins through its aftermath during Reconstruction. Also included are archival materials such as handwritten documents and artwork, as well as numerous modern re-enactments, sober narration, and excerpts from talking-head interviews with writers, academicians, and other commentators, including retired U.S. generals Colin Powell and David Petraeus, comedian-commentator Ben Stein, and Richard Dreyfuss, who is here identified as "actor and historian." The result is a solid series that offers nothing new in terms of interpretation but provides a competent account of the conflict that tore the United States apart and still continues to affect the national psyche. And while not quite as revelatory as the promotional materials suggest, the enhanced photos do provide some intriguing glimpses of the time. Extras include bonus featurettes. Recommended. Aud: P. (F. Swietek)



Obama at War ★★★

(2015) 60 min. DVD: \$24.99 (\$54.99 w/PPR). PBS Video. SDH captioned. ISBN: 978-1-62789-412-8.

Barack Obama was elected on a pledge to end America's involvement in wars, not begin them. Unfortunately, world events and tangled alliances and commitments have conspired to defeat the best laid plans. Hosted by Martin Smith, this PBS-aided *Frontline* report examines the highs and lows of Obama's foreign policy work, particularly during the president's second term. The "Arab Spring" of 2011 led many Americans to hope that democratic change was coming to the Middle East. The U.S. wound up supporting the overthrow