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In 1949, photographer Don Normark visited Chavez Ravine, a close-knit Mexican American village on a hill overlooking downtown Los Angeles. Enchanted, he stayed for a year and took hundreds of photographs documenting community life. But little did Normark know that he was capturing the last images of a place that was about to disappear—within a few short years, the entire neighborhood would be gone. **CHAVEZ RAVINE: A Los Angeles Story** tells the story of how this Mexican American community was destroyed by greed, political hypocrisy and good intentions gone awry.

During the early 1950s, the city of Los Angeles forcefully evicted the 300 families of Chavez Ravine to make way for a low-income public housing project. The land was cleared and the homes, schools and the church were razed. But instead of building the promised housing, the city—in a move rife with political controversy—sold the land to Brooklyn Dodgers baseball owner Walter O'Malley, who built Dodger Stadium on the site. The residents of Chavez Ravine, who had been promised first pick of the apartments in the proposed housing project, were given no reimbursement for their destroyed property and forced to scramble for housing elsewhere.

Fifty years later, filmmaker Jordan Mechner explores what happened, interviewing many of the former residents of Chavez Ravine as well as some of the officials who oversaw the destruction of the community. Narrated by Cheech Marin and scored by Ry Cooder and Lalo Guerrero, **CHAVEZ RAVINE** combines contemporary interviews with archival footage and Normark's haunting black-and-white photographs to reclaim and celebrate a beloved community of the past.



Photographer Don Normark in an early self-portrait.

[Learn more about the history of Chavez Ravine >>](#)

[View an album of Don Normark's photographs >>](#)

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