



Gentle, Angry, Women (2025).

Production: Dir. Barbara. Santi Awen Productions

Certificate: 12A **Run time:** 63 minutes

If you liked this try: Norma Rae (1987) Dir. Martin Ritt.

BBC Witness History 17 Feb 2022

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7SBJ1V5iS_g&t=144s

Greenham, the Making of a Monument

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKoWKF3ktXI>

Born and brought up in North London with Italian parentage, the director Barbara Santi's first professional job was at the prestigious [Working Title Films](#) (1994 - 1997). She moved to West Cornwall in 1997 to pursue her independent filmmaking career while also working at BBC and Channel 4 on short-term contracts.

In 2020 she was one of 10 female entrepreneurs in the UK selected to take part in [Creative England's Female Founders Scale Up](#) programme, an eight-month dedicated and prestigious scheme for ambitious female founders of screen-based companies.

Barbara makes creative documentaries about under-represented people, films that promote ethical causes and moving image work. Her films have been shortlisted and awarded prizes at a number of film festivals and today's offering: "Gentle Angry Women", last month, won the [Celtic Media Festival](#) Torc Award for History (Screen). It tracks three young women (Poppy (16), Xanthe (17), and Evie (19), already activists, discovering the history of the Greenham Common women's peace camp, retracing the steps of the original peace march from Cardiff to RAF Greenham Common in Berkshire, and talking to women who were there.

For those who aren't old enough to remember:

The Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp hosted a series of historic protests, blockades, and human chains from 1981 to 2000. Some key dates.

In September 1981: a group of 36 Welsh women, part of the "Women for Life on Earth," marched from Cardiff to Greenham Common and chained themselves to the base gates to protest against the storage of US cruise missiles.

In March 1982: around 250 women participated in the first blockade of the base, resulting in 34 arrests. In September 1982 Women were evicted by Newbury District Council but quickly set up a new camp nearby.

In December 1982: approximately 30,000 women joined hands around in an “embrace the base” protest to mark NATO’s third anniversary of missile deployment.

Fence Dancing on Missile Bunkers on New Year’s Day 1983: a small group of women climbed the fence to dance on missile storage bunkers under construction, highlighting creative protest methods

Human Chain on 1 April 1983: about 70,000 protesters formed a 14-mile human chain from Greenham to Aldermaston and Burghfield (British Atomic Weapons Establishment), drawing international media attention

December 1983 Encircling: another large-scale encircling of the base involved 50,000 women

The camp operated continuously for 19 years, with women living outside the base in primitive conditions, often facing harsh weather, evictions, arrest and imprisonment, and attacks from opposing groups. The fences were taken down in 2000 and the land opened to the public. A peace garden, memorial to Helen Wyn Thomas, who died when accidentally hit by a police vehicle at the gates, remains. Protesters engaged in non-violent direct actions, including blockading nuclear convoys and disrupting military exercises, which contributed to the eventual removal of cruise missiles under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty ratified in 1988 by Reagan and Gorbachev. Donald Trump withdrew the USA from the treaty in August 2019, citing Russian non-compliance.

The Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp remains a powerful symbol of feminist and anti-nuclear activism; with its events remembered for their creativity, scale, and enduring influence on global peace movements.

Remembering Greenham Common: New Statesman. Kate Hudson 18 April 2013.
<https://www.newstatesman.com/world/2013/04/remembering-greenham-common>.

Greenham Women Everywhere resources: <https://greenhamwomeneverywhere.co.uk/>

Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp website: <http://www.greenhamwpc.org.uk/>

Barbara Santi’s work and company www.barbarasanti.co.uk / www.awen.org.uk

Gentle, Angry Women webpage <https://www.folklifefilms.co.uk/gentle-angry-women>