

# Moore's 'Fahrenheit 9/11' is not propaganda

By David Maccar

Michael Moore made headlines when he won an Academy Award for his documentary, *Bowling for Columbine*. He did not make headlines only because he won, but because of his acceptance speech. He took the opportunity of having a world audience for a few seconds to voice his opposition to the 2000 presidential election as well as his distaste for America's decision to invade Iraq. This came days after the war began and was received by the audience with boos and shouts of anger. The band played Moore off the stage.

Perhaps Moore picked the wrong battle to fight that night. He made up for it by creating *Fahrenheit 9/11*, a scathing critique of George W. Bush's administration beginning at his questionable election win and extending all the way to his policies on health care.

The main focus of this documentary, released on DVD last week, is, as expected, the war in Iraq. Moore isn't very happy with it and he includes a fair amount of footage from Iraq obtained from a Swedish journalist in Samarra, as well as other sources, that has not been broadcast in the mainstream media.

I did not see the film in theaters, and yes it did make it to theaters, something rather rare for a documentary. Perhaps winning best picture at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival has something to do with it. I had heard all of the criticism from the right saying that the film was left wing propaganda with a skewed view of the facts that presented nothing more than Moore's own personal opinions,

backed up by some well-edited film and sound clips.

I did not see that when I watched *Fahrenheit*. I saw a documentary that, for the most part, presented raw facts and uncensored footage. The conclusions made from the presented material were entirely up to the viewer. Of course, anyone could decipher Moore's conclusions from his insinuations and voice-overs, but it puts no pressure for viewers to lean toward Moore's side.

No doubt, the issues that *Fahrenheit* tackles are not light matters. Moore had to get everything from an election that he believes was rigged, the events of 9/11 itself and all of the suspicious activity surrounding that day, all the way to the war currently being waged in Iraq.

Even a staunch Bush supporting republican can look at this film and the connections Moore draws about the 2000 election and see that something looks a bit suspicious.

Moore tells the viewer that the man at Fox News who initially called Bush the winner in Florida, while all of the other networks were saying Al Gore won the state, was Bush's first cousin John Ellis. He also mentions that W's brother, Jeb Bush, was the governor of the state in question.

There is a scene where W. is sitting next to Jeb on an airplane, somewhere on the campaign trail, and W says, with a chuckle and a smirk, "You know something, we are going to win Florida, mark my words. You can write it down."

There are moments when Moore goes a little over the top, but that is to be expected by anyone who is familiar with Moore's unique style.



One memorable Moore-moment was, after showing interviews with amputee soldiers and mothers of troops killed in Iraq, Moore goes around Capital Hill with a clipboard and Marine Cpl. Abdul Henderson, who said he would rather go to jail than let anyone send him back to Iraq to, "kill other poor people, especially when they pose no threat to me or my country. I won't do it."

After a segment following Marine recruiters who doggedly pursue men on the street who look to be of ripe military age, Moore goes up to any Senator he sees with his clipboard and Cpl. Henderson, and asks them if they would sign up their own children to serve in Iraq. None did, and only one Senator currently has a child in the armed services.

These are the only moments of the documentary that are questionable and purely Michael Moore's opinion. However, the bulk of the film relies on personal statements from senators, soldiers, 9/11 victims and members of the Bush administration—none of which have Moore's face or voice in them. The images and statements Moore presents cannot be denied. *Fahrenheit* is a very moving, very important film that everyone who plans to vote should see.

Bush has plenty of people telling the American people the way we should think and feel, how afraid or secure we should feel or how we should morally think of the war in Iraq. With *Fahrenheit*, Moore presents the other side.

## The next generation of politicians campaigns

By Nicole Southern

It's that time again. The time when the whole country seems to be abuzz with comments and questions about politics. But many students are uninformed on the issues. So what is it exactly that everyone is talking about?

Two political clubs, the College Democrats and the Young Republicans, have formulated in order to make students aware of the importance of voting in this year's upcoming election. Their purpose is to convey the ideas of both political parties and to give people enough information about the parties to make an educated decision.

"Who the president is affects students because college does not last forever," said Dana Lanzaro, president of the College Democrats. "The real world is right there waiting for us."

Issues like job availability, student financial aid and a potential draft that will not exclude college kids are just some of the factors that students should consider while voting. Controversial topics like abortion are also matters that can affect us, Lanzaro said.

"[It is] important to not just think about where you are right now in your life, but to plan ahead," said Lanzaro. "Are we better or worse off today than we were four years ago?"

According to Ilona Brodetsky, the vice president of the Young Republicans, the economy is one of the most important issues to think about when choosing a candidate.

"When students go and vote they should vote for the candidate who has lowered taxes and created jobs, not the one who would raise taxes and create an environment where, for example, a business major doesn't

have a place to go and get a job because their salary is going to the federal government," she said.

Another important aspect to consider is the candidate's stance on the war in Iraq.

"The most important issue is the war on terrorism," said Brodetsky. "President Bush has handled the situation with moral clarity and precise judgment. We now have Al-Qaeda on the run all over the world."

Both clubs have gone out of their way to get more students involved both on and off campus.

"To get people involved [on campus] we have been holding weekly meetings with speakers from all over the area with opportunities for getting out the vote and teaching our members what sort of things we can do here on campus," said Lanzaro.

The College Democrats are also putting up flyers and showing *Fahrenheit 9/11*, Michael Moore's documentary on the events leading up to the attack on the World Trade Center. The movie will be playing this Monday at 7 p.m. in the BLC Theater, she said.

"We will be taking a trip to Philadelphia the last weekend in October [in order] to get out the vote with a Rider alumni who is working for the Kerry campaign," said Lanzaro. "During the week some of us will work with the rush Holt campaign/Kerry campaign putting signs out and making phone calls."

The Young Republicans have also been trying to promote awareness for the upcoming election.

"[We have been] bringing in guest speakers, doing voter registration drives, and absentee ballot drives," said Brodetsky. "[We are also] volunteering for local campaigns and volunteering for President Bush."

So far, the clubs have a good amount of students involved, but both are looking to expand their numbers.

According to Lanzaro, the College Democrats has

between 25 and 30 members, but new members are always welcome. They feel they have had a positive influence on students by providing them with the satisfaction of knowing that there are a lot of others here at Rider that feel passionate about the same issues, she said.

"I think the club has made a difference because we have informed students that they can take part in the campaigning process," said Lanzaro. "Your voice will be heard."

According to Brodetsky, the Young Republicans also feel as though they have had an influence on people outside of Rider.

"We have registered over 400 voters as Republicans in the past year and a half," she said. "We have also volunteered in the Bill Spadea for Congress campaign which has made a huge difference."

The clubs have their own reasons for supporting the candidates that represent their parties. Both the College Democrats and the Young Republicans believe strongly in the abilities of the candidate they are voting for.

"Students should vote for Kerry because he will get us out of Iraq in building strong alliances with other wealthy nations so we are not in there alone," said Lanzaro. "I think we can all agree that we never want to be without health insurance. 45 million people are uninsured right now and I do not want to be one of them when I leave Rider."

The Young Republicans feel that students will benefit more from voting for Bush.

"Students who believe in limited government, strong national defense, lower taxes, personal responsibility, and free markets should vote for Bush," said Brodetsky.