

Moore Hypocrisy and Hype

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In his latest celluloid uppercut to the upper crust, documentary filmmaker Michael Moore examines the Home of the Brave to find it has been repossessed and its occupants turfed heartlessly out onto squalid Main Street USA.

Capitalism: A Love Story looks at America's affair with capitalism and suggests that the global financial crisis should be the catalyst to end this relationship once and for all. Moore even concludes the film with the defining statement: Capitalism is evil! (In case there was any doubt, Moore's family priest makes the same hellfire and brimstone pronouncement earlier in the film. How impartial!)

While Capitalism makes some good points about the inconsistency and incompatibility of free market philosophy with government bailouts of industry, and the need for greater transparency and accountability of the financial industry, it offers an unashamedly biased and inaccurate view of capitalism.

For example, it raises but fails to properly address the issue of greed. Moore chooses easy targets to focus on: fat cats in power with little concern or empathy for Joe Average. Exposed are mercenaries such as the Condo Vulture who profit from home foreclosures, and the judge who receives kickbacks from a privately run youth detention centre for reaching inmate quotas. These real-life snapshots of wicked, caricature capitalists are indeed obscene, but they are not examples of true capitalism. Corporatism and abuse of power are not consistent with the principles of free and fair trade. [Moore was recently challenged and flummoxed on this very point by a libertarian college student.](#)

What Moore does not acknowledge is the individual greed that is endemic in Western society – the greed that caused countless sub-primers to buy McMansions they couldn't afford – the greed that has driven a credit-backed spending spree on status consumer goods. Moore chooses to skirt the issue of personal responsibility and the film is the poorer for it.

While railing against capitalist 'brainwashing,' Moore has the hypocrisy to cheer for socialism in an extremely blinkered fashion, effectively turning his film into an instrument of socialist propaganda.

However, the most alarming aspect of the film is a throwaway line – hidden in emotive words about the right to universal health care, education and housing – about the state's right to seize control of property and the means of production. This from a filmmaker supposedly championing democracy.

Perhaps Moore's next film should be set behind the Iron Curtain – Socialism: A Love Story Gone Wrong.

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