

Friday, September 19, 2008 - Page updated at 12:00 AM

Movie Review

"Stealing America": Regardless of viewers' politics, assertions of vote fraud are disturbing

"Stealing America: Vote By Vote": Regardless of your politics, it's hard to dismiss the disturbing assertions of this cheaply made but powerful documentary, which investigates an abundance of evidence regarding the inaccuracy and vulnerability of our current election procedures.

By **Jeff Shannon**
Special to *The Seattle Times*

"Stealing America: Vote By Vote" is the scariest horror film of the decade. Regardless of your politics, it's hard to dismiss the disturbing assertions of this cheaply made but powerful documentary, which investigates evidence regarding the inaccuracy and vulnerability of our current election procedures.

Working with rudimentary production values, director Dorothy Fadiman doesn't pretend to offer a balanced perspective. As an award-winning liberal filmmaker and Florida poll volunteer in 2004, Fadiman personally witnessed electronic vote-switching that favored George W. Bush, so she's made an unabashedly left-leaning film with a title that's meant to be taken literally: Fadiman is convinced that Republicans literally stole the election in 2004, and she ends with an impassioned plea to "take our country back" in the name of democracy. Right-leaning voters are likely to chafe at the film's tone, if not its content.



DIRECT CINEMA LIMITED

Ohio residents react to the 2004 presidential vote in "Stealing America."

Movie review ★★☆☆

"Stealing America: Vote By Vote," a documentary narrated by Peter Coyote. Directed by Dorothy Fadiman. 90 minutes. Not rated; suitable for general audiences. Varsity.

The horror of "Stealing America" arises from the evidence supporting Fadiman's suggestion that the '04 election was rigged. Through a combination of first-person accounts (including Democratic Sen. Bob Hagan of Ohio, who also witnessed vote-switching firsthand), extensive research and revealing clips from multiple TV news sources, Fadiman investigates the many "glitches" in voting procedures that result in literally millions of votes being potentially "lost, miscounted or even deleted."

After acknowledging that all political parties have a long, mutual history of stuffed ballot boxes and voter suppression (including suspicious polling irregularities in Chicago that tipped Illinois in favor of John F. Kennedy in the 1960 election), Fadiman focuses on "vote switching" in Ohio and Florida during the '04 election. Fadiman further investigates the misleading "adjustment" of exit polls, a phony "security lockout" that restricted reporters from the Florida vote count, and the appalling number of votes (mostly by African Americans and the disabled) that remained uncouncted as the major news networks claimed victory for Bush.

As security experts demonstrate the ease of tampering with electronic voting machines, Fadiman targets the American press for timidly ignoring problems that were widely reported in other countries. The obvious question is, why?

"Stealing America" should terrify anyone who's concerned about the validity of their vote. With two months remaining in the '08 race for the White House, there's far too much at stake to dismiss this film as paranoid.

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