

Fahrenheit 9 11 and propaganda

Literature



Fahrenheit 9/11 and Propaganda

Fahrenheit 9/11 and Propaganda Propaganda is used to influence masses toward a person or group's point of view. Political propaganda has been used successfully from Josef Gobbels, of the Nazi party, to Milosevic, the former Serbian president. Propaganda does not have to be political; many groups from Evangelic Christians to hate groups use propaganda. Normally propaganda does not cross into the mass entertainment documentary arena, but Michael Moore's films are an exception. Fahrenheit 9/11 is propaganda from the first reel to the closing. Three aspects of propaganda in this film will be discussed in this paper.

Propaganda is the use of images, speeches, and sounds to enflame the public. The first use of propaganda in Fahrenheit 9/11 is images. Images are splashed throughout this movie. Iraqi footage sticks out prominently. Before the 2003 invasion, Iraqis are shown happy, attending a wedding, and living a utopian life. After the invasion, dead bodies, civilian and soldiers are shown. Not shown are Saddam Hussein's victims. The images of mass graves, chemical weapons, poverty of the Iraqi civilians, and the luxuriant palaces and lifestyles of Hussein and his family are also absent from this film. The film's images are definitely biased, if not lies by omission.

The speeches used in this film are also propaganda laden. Michael Moore's speech about Flint's recruitment centers is slanted. Not once does Michael Moore mention that the American Armed Forces only enlist volunteers. Buzz words like " low income" and " minority" to suggest that recruits have no choice in the matter are used. In America, military duty is an option, not a requirement. The same buzz words Michael Moore used could justify the

reasons people apply for college. Poverty does limit peoples options, but if Michael Moore was so interested in the poor, why not donate money and time? Instead he uses his film to enrich himself.

Michael Moore also went to US Senator's offices asking for their children to enlist. Yet, he did not go to Senator McCain's office. Senator McCain served in Vietnam as a Navy pilot and a POW for six years. His father and grandfather served in the Navy. Not only that, but Senator McCain's son, Jack, enrolled in the Navy academy, plus another son James enrolled in the Marines this year. If Michael Moore was making a balanced documentary, he would have shown that even though some Senator's sons and daughters are serving in the armed forces. Only one of the senator's children was in Iraq at the time, but he did not accost this senator. This shows his speeches are of a propaganda nature.

Sounds are also used as propaganda in this movie. The two planes crashing into the trade center are not shown, but the sound is played on a black screen. Later, people crying and staring up are shown. It was a propaganda technique allowing only the sound to be heard. If Michael Moore had shown the two planes crashing into the World Trade Center, he would have enflamed the wrong emotion. People would have hated the terrorists, not George W. Bush.

Propaganda always has a motive. Fahrenheit 9/11's motive was to discredit George W. Bush, enough to lose the 2004 election. To accomplish this, the images, speeches, and sounds were used to portray Bush in a bad light.

Michael Moore wanted to sway people away from the Republican Party. The release date, June 2004, speaks volumes. He wanted a Democratic president to be elected in November 2004. Unfortunately, that did not happen. Michael
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Moore might have swayed some voters, the majority wanted Bush for another term.

Bush has enough flaws. If Michael Moore had made his documentary a little different, more balanced, he could have swayed even more votes. Yet this is what makes Michael Moore an entertainer, not a serious reporter. He would not have made half the money if he spoke the truth. Fiction sells more than reality. That is why propaganda works.

Reference

Fahrenheit 9/11. Dir. Michael Moore. Perf. Michael Moore and George W. Bush. Sony Home Pictures Entertainment, 2004.