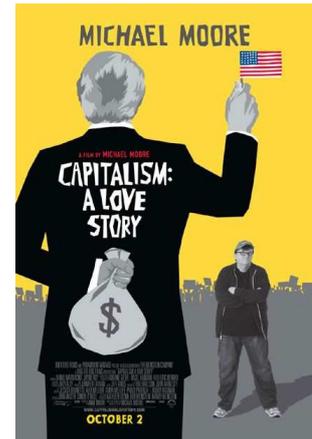


Capitalism: A Love Story

Director: Michael Moore
2009 (120')



Michael Moore, the US film-maker of such films as Sicko, Bowling at Columbine and Fahrenheit 9/11, turns his attention to the great ideology of modern American history - capitalism. And what he presents is not the success story claimed by the select few who have grown fat and rich on the system. Moore tells the story of ordinary American folk forced to pay the terrible price for the greed of others, ordinary folk told they must get out of their homes, ordinary folk told they must leave their jobs, ordinary folk told they 'don't count for nothing'. But Moore also shows that people can fight back and that they need to fight back.

In the dark days of 'The Economic Crisis' Moore states his case that the light will come when people reject capitalism and fight back against the banks, the corporations and the governments who exploit and abuse them.

Watch the film and see if you agree with Moore. He may be right. But then again, he may be wrong.

Vocabulary and expressions:

Eviction: The forceful removal of someone from their home.

Foreclosed homes: Homes whose previous owners have been evicted from and are now the property of the bank.

A bottom feeder: An animal that feeds off the bottom of the sea, lake etc. In the film, it refers to a company which buys foreclosed homes at very low prices from the banks and then sells them at much higher prices, therefore making a big profit.

The housing crash: A description for the recent housing crisis in the US

To pull something off: To successfully do something that is very difficult or unlikely to happen. In the film Moore talks of corporate America's plan to change the country in order to help themselves to even more riches and that

to pull it off would require a spokesmodel for President. The spokesmodel was Ronald Reagan.

To enact: To make into law

He could enact tax cuts that the rich wanted.

To run something, e.g. a business: To manage a business

The country would now be run like a corporation

To preside over something: To be in charge of

To dismantle: To take apart something; the opposite of assemble
Reagan presided over the wholesale dismantling of our industrial infrastructure.

Household debt: The money owed to the banks or other lenders by a family unit

GDP (Gross Domestic Product): The total value of goods and services produced in a country within a year

To go bankrupt: Not have enough money to pay one's debts

Bankruptcy: The state of being bankrupt

There has been an explosion of bankruptcies

To lock up somebody: To put somebody into prison

We found it necessary to lock up our citizens

Government welfare: The money given to the unemployed, poor or ill by the government (US term)

Shut down the plant: Close the factory

Food stamps: A ticket or coupon given to low-income people by the state to enable these people to buy food

To not bat an eyelid: Expression used when someone stays calm or unmoved when something surprising or unexpected happens

She didn't bat an eyelid, but I knew she didn't believe me.

To get by: To survive

Trade Union: Organisation of workers or employees designed to work for the interests of those workers or employees

To get away with something: To not be caught or punished after doing something wrong

How are these companies able to get away with this?

The breadwinner (of the family): The person in the family who provides most money for that family

Deregulation: The removal of rules or regulations controlling business activities

A scam: An illegal trick designed to get money from people

To swindle: To deceive people in order to get something valuable from them.

The scam to swindle people out of the homes they already owned was masterful.

Mortgage: The money borrowed from a bank to buy a house and which is paid back at monthly intervals

To refinance; refinancing: If you refinance your mortgage, for example, you may take out another loan in order to help you pay for that mortgage

Subprime: A high risk loan or mortgage

Bribery: The illegal act of giving money to or doing favours for a public official in order to influence their actions and decisions

White-collar crime: A term used to describe a crime committed by "respectable" professional people involving, for example, tax evasion, fraud etc.

CEO (Chief Executive Officer): The person responsible for running or managing a company; the top manager

Hedge Fund: An investment fund

Housing Derivatives: Complicated investments based on speculations of people's abilities to pay for their mortgages

A gigantic calamity: A great disaster

A financial coup d'état: The forced, and not democratic, seizure of financial power in the state.

A citizen's arrest: You make a citizen's arrest when you, as a citizen, arrest a known criminal or someone who has just committed a crime

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