

STUDENT LIFE

Flynt reveals 'The Naked Truth'

Review by Chris Hvizdak
contributing writer

As any viewer of "The People Vs. Larry Flynt" may conclude, Flynt's generous contributions to the integrity of our cherished American freedoms arguably out shine his prowess as a publisher and can be considered his most outstanding achievements. Although his civic discourse is voluminously extensive, among Flynt's most sweeping accomplishments are the establishment of a Supreme Court precedent in 1988, which has tested and strengthened the first amendment (as a result of being sued for printing an editorial cartoon regarding the Reverend Jerry Falwell) and the counteraction of attacks on President Clinton by offering millions for evidence of other politicians engaging in extramarital affairs. Bearing these facts in mind, the reader can consider Flynt's "Sex, Lies & Politics: The Naked Truth" not to be just another "Bush bashing" complaint book from a no-name pundit but rather an intimate dialogue with a man who has shaped government.

Flynt's book, written in plain and simple conversational language, begins by discussing his humble upbringing and his entrance into publishing as well as the endless legal quagmire in which he was quickly consumed. Although important, the account of these events is but a brief preamble to the meat of "The Naked Truth", namely Flynt's perception of the whole of contemporary politics. Through his direct and to the point attitude Flynt defines what he calls "The Big Hustle" as the ultra-right neo-conservative wing of the Republican Party fool poor people into voting against their own financial best interest by pandering to fanatical religiosity or as Flynt says "The followers get "family values" and flag decals while the fat cats get tax cuts."

Flynt addresses the concept of American sexual confusion and how it relates to the phenomenon of political polarization throughout the book, indicating, "In general, people who have a nice, healthy connection to their crotch have a better connection between their head and their heart. In their politics, they don't find so much to be mad-dog angry about.

Setting the tone for "The Naked Truth", Flynt offers early on his stark views on Middle Eastern hatred of America by saying, "If they hate us, it's

not because they hate freedom ... it's because we have everything and they having nothing and we're always pushing them around. They hate us because they feel humiliated and because we always seem to be on the side that's making it worse for them."

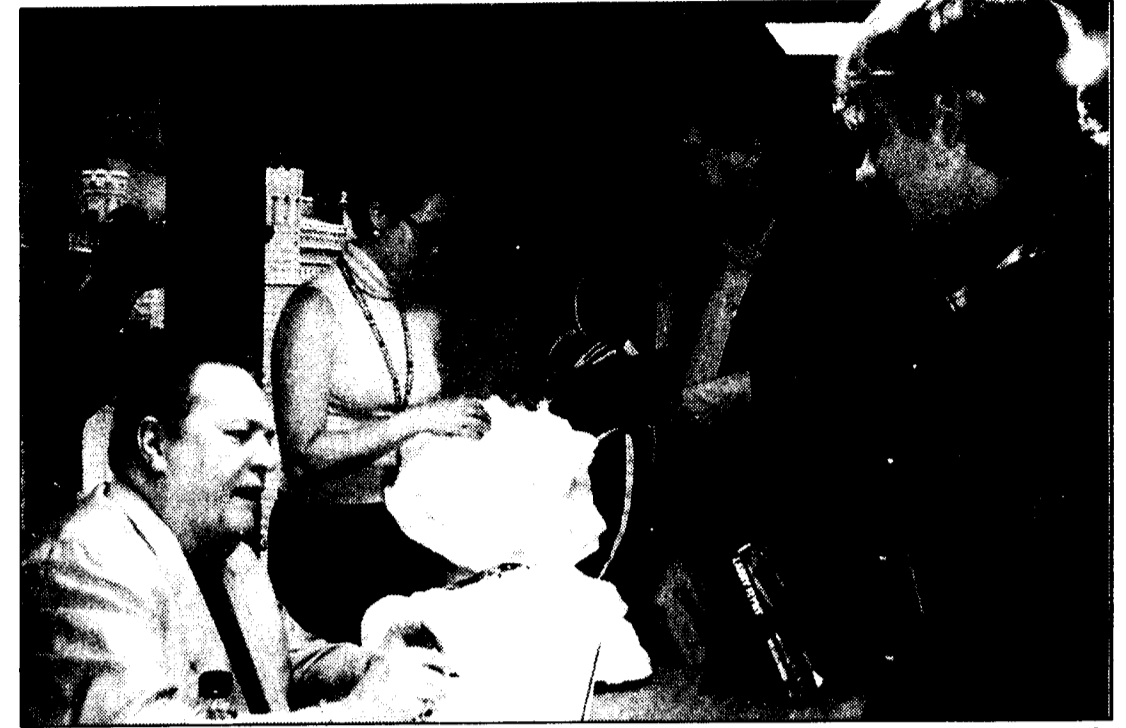
On a similar note, in regard to the war in Iraq, Flynt says, "Even with all our money and military might, we can't fight a never ending guerilla war against 90 million people who have nothing to live for and don't mind dying."

Flynt continues to flesh out "The Big Hustle" by characterizing Bush as ignorant and incompetent through a myriad of examples, most of which are well documented elsewhere and presented in "The Naked Truth" quite concisely, however there is one powerful account which is unique to this book. Flynt presents evidence gathered during the 2000 campaign which alleges that in 1970 George W. Bush paid for his then pregnant girlfriend to have an abortion. What is perhaps even more intriguing than Bush's possible hypocrisy is that Flynt's attempts to disseminate the information he gathered were censored from transcripts of television and radio shows on which he had appeared and discussed the situation.

Flynt's indictments are not limited to Bush and include jabs at Cheney, Rumsfeld and Ashcroft as well as right wingers outside the Bush administration he cites as largely responsible for Bush's support among evangelical Christians. Flynt attacks the repressive so called "American values" as a gimmick of "The Big Hustle" and cites the intriguing conflict statistically evidenced in much of the American voting population who support candidates that favor abstinence education and policies that deny birth control to women in the third world while at the same time spending \$10 billion a year on pornography. At length, Flynt describes the most vocal proponents of these "values" as being few in number; prominent only due to the marketable sensationalism of their extremity.

"Their inability to be honest and open about sex has twisted conservatives' priorities and warped their minds. The right-wing of the Republican Party is not so much a political agenda as it is a plea for help. I just wish we could get these people some therapy so they'd leave the rest of us alone."

"The Big Hustle" is also helped along by the news



Chris Hvizdak COMBA 09 meets with Larry Flynt at Borders in preparation for a night on the town.

media as Flynt says, "While there was once a profession called journalism, which used to serve as a sort of bulls**t detector in opposition to power, it has been replaced in all but a few places by what is known as "the media." Flynt continues by evidencing that the media is generally infatuated with sensationalism over pertinent content but also that we the public (including Flynt himself) are partially to blame due to our willingness to consume this relatively new form of "entertainment news."

"The Naked Truth" concludes with Flynt's reminder of the "true nature" of the Constitution, saying "WE THE PEOPLE want to be left alone ... WE THE PEOPLE love sex ... want honest leadership ... cherish our privacy" and that "WE THE PEOPLE of the United States, contrary to what the media would like us to believe, are *not* for the most part conservative."

This is a fun, worthwhile read with a lot of passages that stand out so strongly you can almost consider them apart from the whole as "witty one-liners." I can recommend the book on their merit

alone, apart from its political relevance. A line close to my heart, here out of context but in the book relating to the issue of community obscenity standards reads "From my perspective, however, I've never seen a woman's crotch that I didn't think was a work of art. Then again, I prefer my porn without any serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value, so I guess what truly interests me will always be considered obscene." Amen.

Over the past four years I have read a great deal of anti-Bush material and of all the books, websites, print articles and pamphlets, I have found the "The Naked Truth" to be the most honest and well informed account of America under the rule of George W. Bush. I stress that this is a highly accessible book, written in plain and simple language, and a valuable read for both liberals searching for a voice in their corner and for conservatives who wish to gain a better understanding of their opposition by which they are vastly outnumbered.

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'The Grudge' remake lost original storyline



COLUMBIA PICTURES

Sara Michelle Gellar stars in 'Takashi Shimizu's The Grudge,' a remake of 'Ju-On.'

Review by Aaron J. Amendola
Staff Writer

You know the old line "if it ain't broke, don't fix it?"

It rings all too true with Takashi Shimizu's remake of his previous work, "Ju-On," in this year's obligatory Halloween horror flick "The Grudge." Shimizu was asked to helm the Americanized remake of his own film he directed in Japan in hopes of maintaining the intensity and overall creepiness that his original film was teeming with.

The film has a simple enough storyline: a cursed house, a few doomed people, creepy ghosts, and just the right amount of gore with plenty of suspense to keep you on edge. I don't normally get scared at horror movies but I'm willing to admit to jumping once or twice at certain parts. Still, it's nothing we haven't encountered before. A curse placed upon a house that links itself to its inhabitants and associates who then begin to systematically get hideously murdered in cryptic ways. I could rattle off a handful in 30 seconds. What separates "The Grudge" from horror movies with the same premise is that here Shimizu goes to great lengths to make the scenery a part of the storyline.

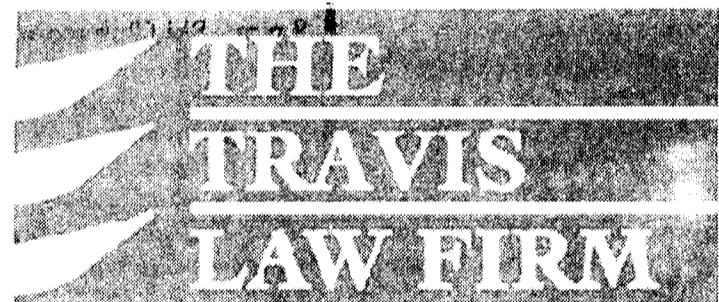
Though the film stars Sarah Michelle Gellar, Bill Pullman, and Ted Raimi, the house in question garners a ton of attention from the camera. At times it feels like instead of the actor interacting with the setting, the setting is interacting with the actors. Don't let that fool you, though; Gellar, Pullman, and Raimi all put in respectable performances. Gellar still doesn't have much more than a confused little girl look on her face the whole time

(not that she needs much else in a horror flick) but Pullman saves the picture with a small, yet powerful performance. Ted Raimi makes the most of his role and continues to prove that he is a formidable actor in any role, big or small.

Now that I've seen both the original and the remake, I have no idea why it was done. Shimizu seems to have kept the tone and voice that made "Ju-On" such a great white knuckle horror movie, but some changes were made that hinder the American version in small, yet staggering ways. Several portions of some plotlines were cut out, leaving gaping holes in the rhythm, and forcing the audience to draw their own conclusions about what really happened.

If I had never seen the original, I'm sure I would not have any problem with the flick. I don't think the film suffers horribly in any case, but I have a bad taste left in my mouth just knowing the American audience won't get the vision that Shimizu had in the first place, the better vision in my humble opinion. The same cuts kept the American version of "The Ring" from reaching its full potential. Maybe it's just my fault for importing the original versions of movies before seeing what was intended for our shores, or perhaps I just have an unfair bias, but still "The Grudge" succeeds on many levels.

The film *is* scary, don't let me fool you. It's chock full of very unexpected scares and surprises that will keep you awake at night. It's one of the only horror films to come along recently that has substance, style and provides a good amount of scares. The version in theatres now just pales when compared to the original, but don't let that stop you from seeing it. A sequel is already on the way, so it looks as if we'll be seeing more of the haunted house whether it be a remake or not.



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