

Reviews

CONSIDERING DEMOCRACY

8 Things to Ask Your Representative

Sedona Film Festival, August 2008 - Best of Fest Weekly Summer Screening
Big Muddy Film Festival, February 2008 - Winner John Michaels Award

Film Reviews

Wake-up call, September 2008, Columbia Daily Tribune

Providing ample fuel for some much-needed debates, "Considering Democracy: 8 Things to Ask Your Representative" takes a thoughtful look at the United States through the eyes of others. By the end of the film, one truth becomes evident: Our perception of the world — and ourselves - is quite different than how we are perceived by the world.

This is the debut documentary from Keya Lea Horiuchi, a former educator on the Navajo Indian Reservation in New Mexico. For the film, four years in the making, Horiuchi ventured to 10 countries - Australia, Bangladesh, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Indonesia, India, Japan, Nepal and Thailand - to conduct candid interviews with average citizens about their perception of America.

Topics broached include health care, values, political finance and much more. Each segment ends with nonpartisan, point-blank questions Horiuchi urges viewers to ask their elected officials. Perhaps a sequel will reveal their answers.

Some subjects garner predictable responses, like Canadians or Australians who are aghast that Americans are charged so much for health care, or even worse, turned away from hospitals for lack of insurance. There also are some jarring revelations about the transparency of many foreign governments - in terms of policy decisions, corporate influence and where tax dollars are spent - that will make you question whether we truly live in a free society.

Throughout it all, Horiuchi supplements her findings with charts, graphs and statistical data, and does a good job keeping the material from becoming too dry or sluggish. Despite its meager budget, the film boasts unusually high production values, filled with crisp photography, professional editing and above-average sound quality.

"Considering Democracy" does a great job of exposing many truths and misconceptions about the United States, from the outside looking in, as well as our own culturally influenced observations. It's all food for thought and a call to action that shouldn't be missed. - Scott A. May

A timely film in this election season, CONSIDERING DEMOCRACY journeys from the Beltway corridors of power to ten countries around the globe to see how the United States stacks up and to ask why things aren't better here. Filmmaker Horiuchi avoids a dry civics-lesson approach through her own lively onscreen presence, her skillful integration of face-in-the-crowd interviews, and her ability to bring key issues to life in a vivid and comprehensible manner. This is a film designed to stimulate discussion, and Horiuchi will be on hand to host the post-screening Q&A. Mini-DV video. (MR)
Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago, Writeup October 2008

During the first presidential debate, Barack Obama noted that the US is "less respected now than we were eight years ago" and promised to "restore America's standing." However, while polling data indicates that anti-American sentiment has blossomed during the Bush Administration, America's standing in the world has been less than stellar for decades. A new documentary, Considering Democracy: 8 Things to Ask Your Representative, details just what the rest of the globe thinks about us. A fast-paced jaunt through the realm of public opinion, the informative film features ordinary citizens from ten countries discussing how the US measures up on eight issues, including the revolving-door phenomenon, work and vacation time, and health care.

Suzanne Niemoth, Flavorpill - Chicago, October 2008

For more information visit: <http://consideringdemocracy.com> / email consideringdemocracy@gmail.com