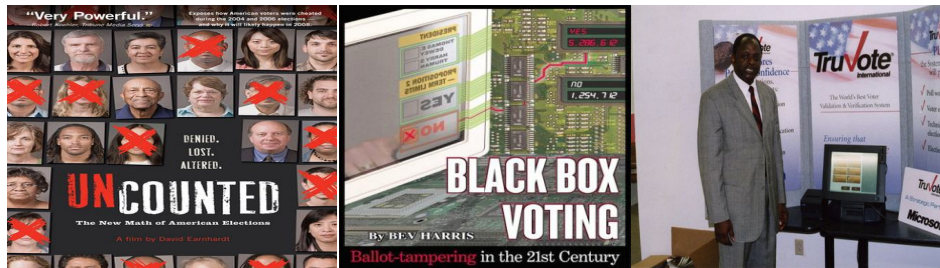


Uncounted American Elections



*“Uncounted: The New Math of American Elections” “Uncounted American Elections”
Approx. 81 minutes*

The Case

*The 2000 presidential Election will always be remembered for the debacle in Florida, the infamous hanging chad, the mandated recount, the eventual decision by the Supreme Court, and the undeniable fact that former Vice President Al Gore won the popular election but lost the electoral vote count, thus ushering in the first of two terms for Texas Gov. George W. Bush. Many believed that after such a sham, the United States would never have to go through another arduous political process. Oddly enough, four years later, it all happened again. This time it was Ohio, pro-John Kerry exit polls, questions of access and minority disenfranchisement, and the stunning flip-flop predictions made by the media. Again, the light of day saw Bush retain the White House, though many believe the commander-in-chief had stolen yet another stay in office. A new documentary entitled *Uncounted: The New Math of American Elections* wants to argue that, indeed, the results of 2000 and 2004 are flawed in favor of the Republicans. Sadly, they state the same case that others have made more successfully before without offering anything new—or a possible solution for the future? In this case, what makes us any different or better than other countries of a falsified democracy?*

*Let's begin this review with an unqualified given: Any country which makes the ability to vote a constitutional mandate and yet cannot guarantee that every citizen wishing to execute said right will be able to do so is inherently flawed. There should never be an excuse like existed during the days of Jim Crow or as explained in *Uncounted*. The right to vote is sacred and fundamental. Being unable to express it because there are not enough machines, limits on the number of votes that said device can count, an unexpected surge in registrations, or any number of red tape-rendered bullcrap is totally unacceptable. Again, it bears repeating: Nothing should encumber your right to vote. It should be one of the primary executable duties of the government to ensure said standard. Yet as we see in this otherwise ordinary documentary, people from Pennsylvania to the Keys were kept from using their power, prevented by things that smack of criminality at the worst, the appearance of massive impropriety at best. Nothing can excuse it. Nothing in a representative democracy can defend it.*

*That being said, *Uncounted* sounds suspiciously like conspiracy theory given a glorified digital warrant. The 2000 election will always remain a sticking point in people's minds, mostly because of the flaws found in the elected Bush Administration's approach to policy. Arguably, if a wonderful leader with a stunning set of international and domestic victories were the subject of the suspicion, very few of these talking heads would be present and accounted for. Most of the pundits have to acknowledge that W's lack of leadership drives most of these reservations.*

*Toss in the nepotism evidenced in the Sunshine State (brother as governor, Campaign co-chairman as state attorney) and the questions grow even more concerning. But **Uncounted**, like so many other cinematic arguments before and to come, never deals with the bigger picture issue: How did **we, the people**, allow this sort of situation to occur? Have we forgotten the fundamental element of governmental power: It's a grant from the citizenry, not something ephemeral and indicative of a ruling body inherently? Clearly if we cared, we'd have solved the problem already—or at the very least, demanded it be done.*

*The 2004 facet of the film is even more concerning. How can any state, let alone Ohio, justify turning away voters from polling stations? As one voice in the narrative states it, had this happened in a developing country where the United States had an interest, we'd be barking about vote fraud and election tampering. Yet here we are, the last remaining superpower, and members of minority groups in several Ohio districts waited for hours in line, only to be turned away without being allowed to exercise their right. More serious than a miscast ballot or an inexplicable percentage of undervotes (instances where no pick for president was registered), telling the people that they cannot have access to the process is morally and socially unacceptable. As **Uncounted** goes for the throat, it never gets to the meat of the issue: Why? A far better look at this situation exists in Ian Inaba's **American Blackout**, focusing on Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney and her grassroots campaign to uncover fraud in both 2000 and 2004. While the former House member was a firebrand of controversy, Inaba does a much better job of covering the main arguments in the material. This is not to say that **Uncounted** and the individuals we see onscreen aren't worth a look, but apparently the subject of voting's inalienability is too complex to be covered by one single film.*

*As for the tech specs offered by The Disinformation Company, the audio and visual elements present are first-rate. The 1.78:1 anamorphic widescreen image is clean, crisp, and expertly handled, especially when you consider the amount of video and stock footage that had to be incorporated into the newer elements. On the sound side, the Dolby Digital Stereo 2.0 provides excellent aural reproduction. All the interview subjects are captured professionally, and the sparing use of music underlines the movie's more serious allegations. As for added content, an additional 60 minutes of material really helps flesh out some of **Uncounted** flaws. These extended Q&As, as well as selected deleted scenes, provide further explanations as to why Florida and Ohio failed, as well as how independent organizations and auditors are striving to see that it never happens again. Of course, this countermands conventional wisdom that says the party in power will always play with the rules to maintain that majority. Here's hoping that, come November 2008, the makers of **Uncounted** will find nothing that requires a sequel.*

Commentary: *The only thing that's saved our otherwise unappreciative asses from a total meltdown from our dishonest political leaders is the power and authority of our **Constitution** itself; It keeps in check and inhibits our governmental leaders, particularly our president and his selective VP into a total restraint from their own power of authority over it, if it were not so, there wouldn't be a **(We the People)** to be concerned with as a free nation. This is why our country is so great, because of our forefathers resolute inauguration of our **Declaration of Independence** established **July 4th 1776** for **we, the people's** best interest. Our countries **Declaration of Independence** has been the example and cornerstone of what a true democracy is all about in a land of the free for the whole world to see since its inception. Its meaning and purpose can't be changed, but can and has been desecrated in a bad way as in this "Uncounted American Elections" essay reports.*

*The democracy that I defend is a democracy based on the **Integrity of Principles, Values, Morals, Ethics, and Standards** that should not broken, but to be sincerely respected for the evolution of its true meaning and purpose. Freedom of speech is one of freedom of choice to be able to trust in the **Integrity** of our voting system, a democracy that is true too and with the **Integrity** of its fullest.*

*With this said, please realize and keep in mind that I love the true meaning of my country's **4th of July**, but I distrust the hypocrisy of our governmental leaders involved. The facts don't lie, but power and greed does!*

Don L. Johnson