

ONE BRIGHT SHINING MOMENT

The Forgotten Summer of George McGovern

A Documentary Film by
Stephen Vittoria

125 Minutes, 2004
Video



FIRST RUN FEATURES

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The film retraces George McGovern's bold and grassroots presidential campaign of 1972 – a campaign that fought to the bitter end for peace and justice... a campaign that positioned ideas and people first... and, for a myriad of reasons, it was a campaign crushed in workmanlike fashion by the Butcher from Whittier, Richard Nixon.

The tragedy of the '72 campaign is this: George McGovern might have been the only candidate to run for President in the 20th Century who truly understood what an incredible monument America could be to the human race.

The film poses this central thought:

The ultimate political defeat of the American Century may also be its high watermark. And if so, what does that say about the electoral process, the American government, and more importantly, what does it say about the forces at work on the American people – then and now?

The cast is a patchwork quilt of historians, activists, as well as firsthand POVs – from the candidate himself to foot soldiers in the McGovern Army. Among others, the cast includes:

George McGovern, Gore Vidal, Gloria Steinem, Warren Beatty,
Dick Gregory, Gary Hart, Frank Mankiewicz, Howard Zinn, Jim Bouton,
Sen. Jim Abourezk, Rev. Malcolm Boyd, and Ron Kovic

The film's off-screen narrator is Amy Goodman – host of DemocracyNow! and author of the current bestseller "The Exception To The Rulers."

In addition to an original music score and traditional folk ballads, the story incorporates songs from Leon Russell, Bob Dylan, Robbie Robertson, Donovan, and Elvis Costello.

CAST

Narrated by Amy Goodman

George McGovern

Gore Vidal, Gloria Steinem, Warren Beatty, Howard Zinn, Dick Gregory, Gary Hart, Frank Mankiewicz, Jim Bouton, Sen. Jim Abourezk, Rev. Malcolm Boyd, Ron Kovic, Thomas Knock, Harvey Kornberg, Chip Berlet, Rick Stearns, and JC Svec.

Songs from Leon Russell, Bob Dylan, Robbie Robertson, Donovan, and Elvis Costello

CREDITS

Produced, Written, and Directed by Stephen Vittoria

Executive Producer – Michael C. Donaldson

Producer – Frank Fischer

Lighting Cameramen – Patrick Kelly, Gilbert Yousefian

Original Music – Robert Guillory

Editor – Jeff Sterling

Sound Design – Robb Wenner

A Street Legal Cinema Production

Stephen Vittoria

Producer, Writer, Director

“ONE BRIGHT SHINING MOMENT – *The Forgotten Summer of George McGovern*” is Stephen Vittoria’s fourth feature film. The film world premiered at the Hamptons International Film Festival in 2004 and recently won top honors at the 2005 Sarasota Film Festival as “Best Documentary Feature.” In 1987, Vittoria wrote, directed, and edited the dramatic feature “*Black & White*,” starring Kim Delgado and Frank Vincent – a story about racism tearing apart the lives of two urban kids set against the backdrop of post-World War II America. In 1995, Vittoria produced, wrote, and directed “*Hollywood Boulevard*,” starring John C. McGinley, Jon Tenney, and Julianne Phillips – a dark and satirical look at the film business.

In 1998, Vittoria wrote, directed, and edited the six-hour health documentary “*Save Your Life – The Life and Holistic Times of Dr. Richard Schulze*,” and last year he completed work writing, directing, and editing the documentary feature “*Keeper of the Flame*” with Linda Ellerbee, Wilford Brimley, and Professor Stephen Pyne – a film that deals with the environmental history of wildfire on the planet as well as the current ecological crisis facing American forests.

Short films include the drama “*Easter*,” starring Vincent Gardenia, and the documentary short “*Marcel Dionne: Stuck Inside of LA With Those Hockey Blues Again*.” Vittoria is the founder and creative director two Southern California production companies — Deep Image & Street Legal Cinema. One day, Steve hopes to play centerfield for the New York Yankees. He lives in Los Angeles (under protest) with his wife Ellen and his daughter Shannon.

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The Forgotten Summer of George McGovern

From Kim Snyder, *Variety* ³/₄ for the Hamptons Int'l Film Festival

"What might have happened had McGovern defeated Nixon in the 1972 Presidential election?

ONE BRIGHT SHINING MOMENT retraces the political campaign of George McGovern, the soft-spoken Senator from rural South Dakota and most ardent opponent of the Vietnam War. Against all odds, McGovern's Army, a grassroots movement born in living rooms across the country, gave way to the unlikely defeat of his Democratic opponents and to his nomination for President.

Memorable footage of the Vietnam era takes us back to the assassination of Martin Luther King and Kent State, when passions ran high in the struggle for Civil Rights and to end the bitter war in Vietnam. A series of thoughtful interviews with an array of insiders (including Dick Gregory, Gloria Steinem, Warren Beatty, and Gary Hart) reflect back on the man who ran on a platform of fairness and compassion. In sober retrospect, these individuals recount the tragic downfall of McGovern's campaign and Nixon's landslide victory to the Presidency.

Despite his political defeat, McGovern's legacy lives on through those who so passionately participated in his campaign with the hope that politics could be honorable and that change was indeed possible. **Of the many political documentaries that have recently emerged, ONE BRIGHT SHINING MOMENT resounds perhaps more strongly than any other.** Regardless of political orientation, one cannot help but draw parallels to the war we now face in Iraq, the culture wars and struggle to integrate diversity, and the frustration with dishonorable partisan politics. And to what might happen in the days ahead."