Planet of the Humans - Documentary Review

The new Michael Moore documentary has sparked quite a bit of media outrage over the past week. People are outraged that the film seemingly pointed towards population control as the solution to climate change. Additionally, people have pointed out that the documentary uses outdated methods of renewable energy to falsely claim that renewable energy will not fix the climate problem. I find that whenever content strikes this much controversy and makes this many people angry, they probably have some interesting points. More often than not, the content that enrages people the most is the content that forces us to examine hard truths that we were not ready to face.

Upon listening to media coverage about the documentary I was under the impression that the documentary was about climate change and the fact that renewable energies are not going to save us. I believe this is a pessimistic media narrative painted by neo-liberals who are outraged over the idea that to make real change happen, we may have to change our lifestyles.

In order to truly save the planet, as pointed out in the film, we need to radically consume less on a global scale. This is perfectly displayed early on in the film when General Motors releases a new line of electric vehicles. But what charges the vehicles? How green is it? The source of power is from a Lansing power plant that uses 95% coal. Many people do not want to make radical changes in their lifestyle. They want to feel as though they’re making a difference, earning a pat on the back, while they continue to maintain the same lifestyle.

In reality, the film is about the harsh truth that like many things in life, corporate greed has taken over our mission for

renewable energy for their own personal profits. The film touches on the fact that our mission for renewable energy is a hopeless attempt to save our lifestyles, not our Earth.

While watching the film, I learned more about how deep the corporate greed runs. Often times these solar and wind plants are being funded by the same companies responsible for the fossil fuel industry. It was another reminder that billionaires will follow the money, and that morality plays no part in their decisions. Even the Koch brothers have their own line of solar products, profiting from supposedly making the world a better place.

> *How can men destroy what is left of nature to enrich themselves? Well, that's why they're billionaires and you're not.*
>
> *– Planet of the Humans*

In 2011, forests were destroyed to make room for "green" wind turbines. In this one instance, 134 acres of forest were destroyed, and then, in 10 to 20 years when the wind turbines stopped working, they're sent to landfills. This is just one of the examples highlighted that shows how renewable energy is not as green as we think it is, especially when the motive is money.

Who am I to judge you for being outraged? Maybe you're a white upper-middle-class citizen trying your best to stay in touch while not really being able to relate to struggles of the marginalized community. Your options are to either move out of your comfort zone to try and actually make a difference or maintain the status quo while making marginal changes that don't really have a lasting impact but make you feel very good inside. I would imagine that if you're comfortable with your life, economically and socially speaking, it would be extremely disconcerting for someone to tell you that the only way to continue to survive is to completely change the way we

consume, the way we live.

It is for this reason, I believe, that so many are outraged by this documentary. Not because the film mentions population control, not because the film points out the problems with renewable energy, but because the film forces you to confront the cold reality that the only option is a comprehensive change to everyone’s lifestyle on a global scale.

I highly recommend watching the full documentary if you have the time. You can watch the full documentary here: *Planet of the Humans*

All facts can be fact-checked on Planet of the Humans website.