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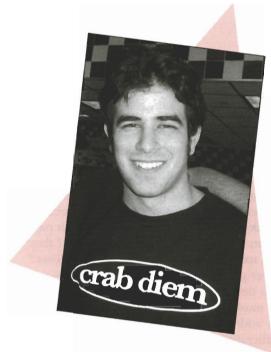
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The Youth Reach for Moore

By Joseph Galbo



ecently a story of great politimportance revealed to the world. It should be considered one of the most dangerous stories ever written. Its ideas and theme stand against everything that America and Western Civilization symbolize. Its plot is as engaging as Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities. Its characters are as human as Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov in Crime and Punishment, and its theme is as deep as Tolstoy's The Death of Ivan Llych. And yet this story will never be read in any college classroom. It will never be seen on anyone's required reading list. In fact it will stay as it is, a

book read only by the comparatively small community in my generation which appreciates this art form. Considering the general open-mindedness of the academic world, this isolationism is fairly tragic.

One of the most important political writings of the last 30 years is a comic book.

In 1982 a British writer, Alan Moore, sat down to pen a political commentary on Margaret Thatcher's Great Britain. Critical of the conservative trend his country was moving towards, he decided it was necessary to send a warning to his countrymen. His medium of choice was comic books; and, with the help of a talented artist David Lloyd, he created one of the most thought-provoking comic series ever written. The title of the book to come would be *V for Vendetta*.

The story follows a young woman named Evy Hammond, who by chance is saved from being raped by an unusual vaudevillian introducing himself only as "V." He's an anarchist and a terrorist; and, as the story progresses, we cannot help but believe in his cause — the destruction of England's authoritarian government.

In 2006 the book was released as a major motion picture. Written by the Wachowski brothers, who are famous for their *Matrix* trilogy. The movie starred Hugo Weaving and Natalie Portman and was an Americanized version of the original story.

As in the book, "V" employs terrorism as a legitimate means of combat. He destroys buildings and murders people — all in the name of freedom. Much more so than in the book, which was really about England, the film version speaks directly about the political direction that America has taken. The portrayal of neoconservative leadership and the sacrificing of freedoms for the sake of security are just two obvious examples. References to the Patriot Act are planted all throughout the movie. Even listening to the police dialogue about the terrorist will ring familiar:

"He's a terrorist. You can't expect him to think like you or me." In spite of all this, the movie came and went with little fan fare, no protests and not even negative media attention.

Surprisingly enough it seems as though everyone in the media ignored how controversial this film should have been. An entire six minute scene showed a high ranking Catholic Bishop sexually assaulting a young woman. Yet there wasn't a word of disapproval from the Catholic media.

The truth is that it was ignored simply because no one over 30 understood what it was.

The mass media seem never to have heard of Alan Moore or his masterpiece V for Vendetta. When the movie came out they treated it as another pre-summer action adventure story. In actuality it is so much more. The heart and soul of V for Vendetta is that it is a movie supporting revolution and terrorism made for a young audience. Older generations, the ones currently making the decisions that affect the world of today, need to be careful not to disregard this story as something juvenile. It is serious and it truly speaks to people. On the film's opening night young men, dressed as the main character in a black cape and mask, handed out flyers explaining the benefits of anarchy at theaters all over the country. Even this didn't make the news.

Whether it is that people older than 30 don't know about the story or they just choose to ignore it, there is a great danger in not doing one's best to explore all mediums of expression. An increase in comic book reading on the part of students will dig an even deeper trench between professors and their students. They are certainly a medium that should be paid more respect by both the mainstream media and academia alike.

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