

Roger and Me are great

by Matthew Rainnie

It's difficult to classify a film like *Roger & Me*. On the one hand, it makes you laugh out loud. On the other, it exposes you to human frailty in the presence of corporate power and, in so doing, enrages you.

Both Michael Moore and General Motors grew up in Flint, Michigan. They both moved away. However, Moore came back ... GM didn't. They had moved to Mexico, where employees would be satisfied with 70 cents an hour for payment.

When GM moved away, they took approximately 30,000 jobs with them. The people of Flint were devastated by this blow. People wondered how they would survive. *Money* magazine printed an article naming Flint the worst city to live in in the United States.

This entire situation hit home with Michael Moore, whose father and grandfather had both worked for GM at one time. He

decided to make a documentary on the subject and *Roger & Me* was born.

A documentary dealing with unemployment may not immediately bring to mind the word "funny." Yet, in Moore's hands, that's exactly what this film becomes. For in the midst of the bleak pictures of Flint, we see Moore pursuing the elusive GM chair, Roger Smith. Moore's hope, in finding Smith, is to bring him to Flint to see what has happened since GM jumped ship. Moore turns up at GM headquarters but is not permitted to see the chair. He follows Smith's trail to the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club and the Detroit Athletic Club, with failed results. The cameras roll as Moore persistently demands to see Smith and they remain rolling as security guards escort Moore to the door.

Moore walks a tightrope with the skill of an acrobat. He never lets the film get too depressing or too humorous.

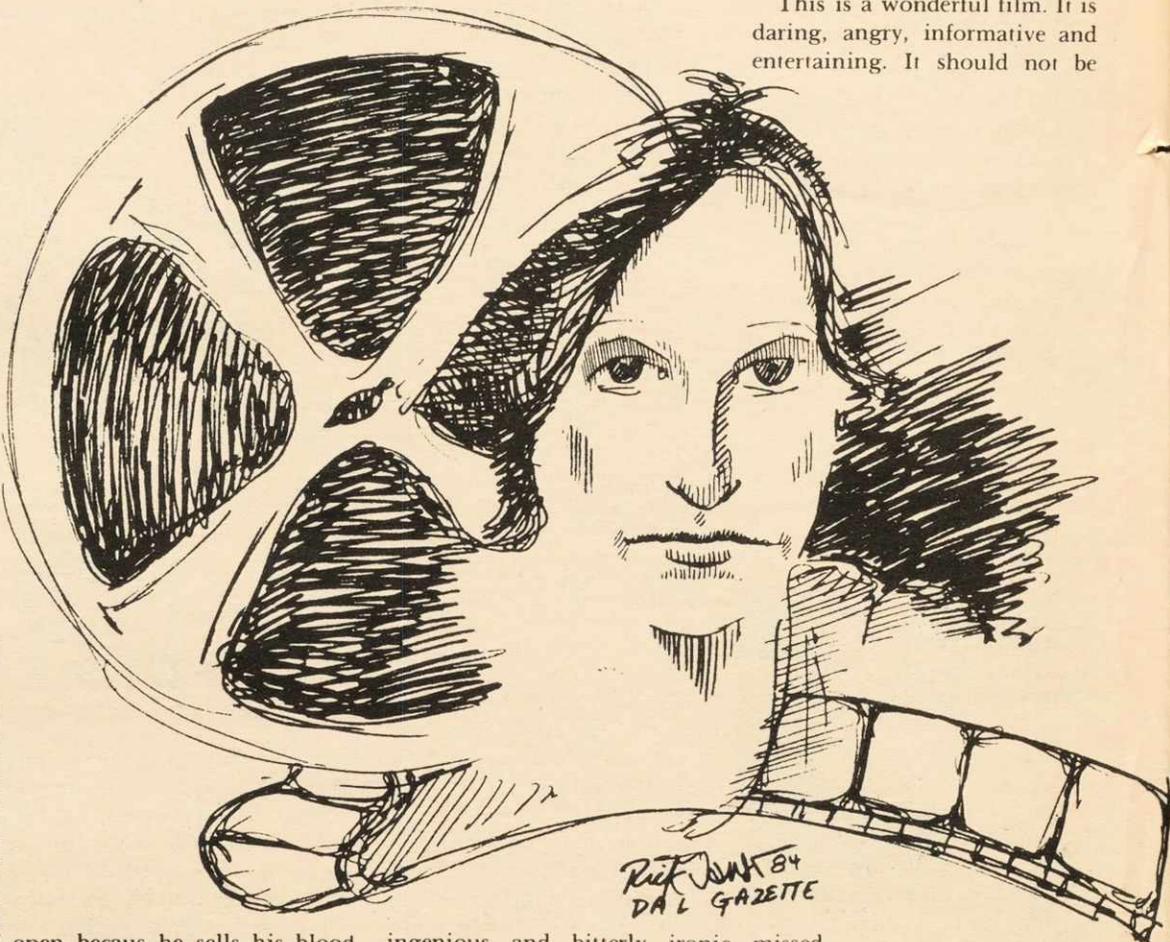
The people of Flint willingly discuss the situations to which they have been reduced. One woman has a sign outside her home which says "Rabbits for sale, for pets or meat." Another man cheerfully states the exact hours the Flint Plasma Clinic is

dollars.

Moore also follows the local sheriff, who travels around Flint evicting people from their homes. The camera looks into an innocent young child's eyes while the furniture is being moved out of the home he has lost. There is one

make for one movie. Michael Moore raised the money through flea markets and holding bingo games each Tuesday night for a year. Now, the film has been distributed by Warner Brothers and Moore has many offers for more movie deals.

This is a wonderful film. It is daring, angry, informative and entertaining. It should not be



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open because he sells his blood quite often.

"Celebrities" are also interviewed. Miss Michigan smiles as she tries to understand exactly what she is being asked. Bob Eubanks, host of *The Newlywed Game*, and a native of Flint, tells a coarse anti-semitic joke while the cameras are on him. Pat Boone and Anita Bryant, who had both worked for GM during their careers, give their views on Flint's descent as well.

The ideas cooked up by the politicians for revitalizing both Flint's economy include "inspirational" visits from a televangelist and the chance to spend a night in jail for one hundred

ingenious and bitterly ironic sequence in which Moore intersperses scenes of a family being evicted from their home on Christmas Eve with one of Roger Smith making a speech about the joys of Christmas.

Roger & Me was made on a budget of \$168,000, approximately one sixtieth of what Arnold Schwarzenegger would

missed.

Many people were surprised at the absence of *Roger & Me* when the Oscar nominations were announced. It was thought that the film would surely receive a nod for Best Documentary Feature. Perhaps Moore's next film will deal with this snub. I can see it now ... *Oscar & Me*. Hollywood wouldn't stand a chance.

Being Brown

continued from page 7
must begin a revolution

change the curriculum and erase the attitude that people occupy a certain slot, and that the purpose of education is to make them fit into that slot."

To ignore the fundamental attitude that makes education merely a tool to prepare one for a specific vocation, is to ignore the main problem. Negative attitudes towards the intelligence of black students, for example, begin at the teacher/student level, but are reinforced at every level of the education system, and society generally. If we don't work at changing this, Brown emphasized, we will be trying to turn an apple into an orange, dealing only with the symptoms and not the disease which plagues education.

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