



Unfriendly Fire
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The closeted halls of power

New doc explores closeted, outed politicians, movers and shakers

by Lawrence Ferber . Contributing Writer

Washington, D.C., house contractors must be used to building closets large and deep, judging from the controversial new documentary, "Outrage." A scathing indictment of closeted gay politicians who vote against or demonize the LGBT community (Sen. Larry Craig, RNC field director Dan Gury, Florida Gov. Charlie Crist), thoughtful investigation of the whys behind this closet culture and the mainstream media's complicity in it, profile of the activists and outers (Michelangelo Signorile, Michael Rogers and Larry Kramer) and a look at the good that ultimately comes from being, or coming, out in politics (New Jersey's Jim McGreevey, Massachusetts Congressman Barney Frank and Wisconsin Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin), "Outrage" is directed by Academy Award nominated, gay-friendly filmmaker Kirby Dick ("This Film Is Not Yet Rated," "Twist of Faith").

A day before "Outrage" premiered to rave reviews at New York's Tribeca Film Festival (contrary to online reports, McGreevey did not storm out of the screening — he even stayed through its Q&A, although whether he enjoyed the film remains unknown), I sat down with Dick at Magnolia Pictures' Manhattan office for a one-on-one conversation.

What was the genesis of this project?

I was in Washington, D.C., during August 2006, promoting "This Film Is Not Yet Rated," and I thought, the only reason I knew about this story of the ratings board was because I'm in the film industry — there are probably a number of great stories for documentaries in D.C. that people only know inside the beltway. I started asking around and very quickly this story came forward that these politicians are gay yet voting anti-gay. The first thing was [a rumor] that

Karl Rove was gay. There's no substantiation for that, it's just a rumor.

I sincerely hope he's not gay. I'll take a baker's dozen of J. Edgar Hoovers over one Rove.

Right. Although his stepfather was gay, and actually he refers to his stepfather as his father. He's the man who raised him.

Yes, there were. Rumors about a lot of other people, some of them very powerful, but there wasn't substantiation.

Can you share those names now?

I'd rather not. I'm sure you've probably heard them all.

Were you surprised to learn about Crist?

For years I had been following [the outing of politicians]. Not real closely, but I had been following it and I guess I had been in favor of outing in situations where there was very clear hypocrisy.

Did any of the people who out politicians, like Michael Rogers of blogactive.com, express a fear of

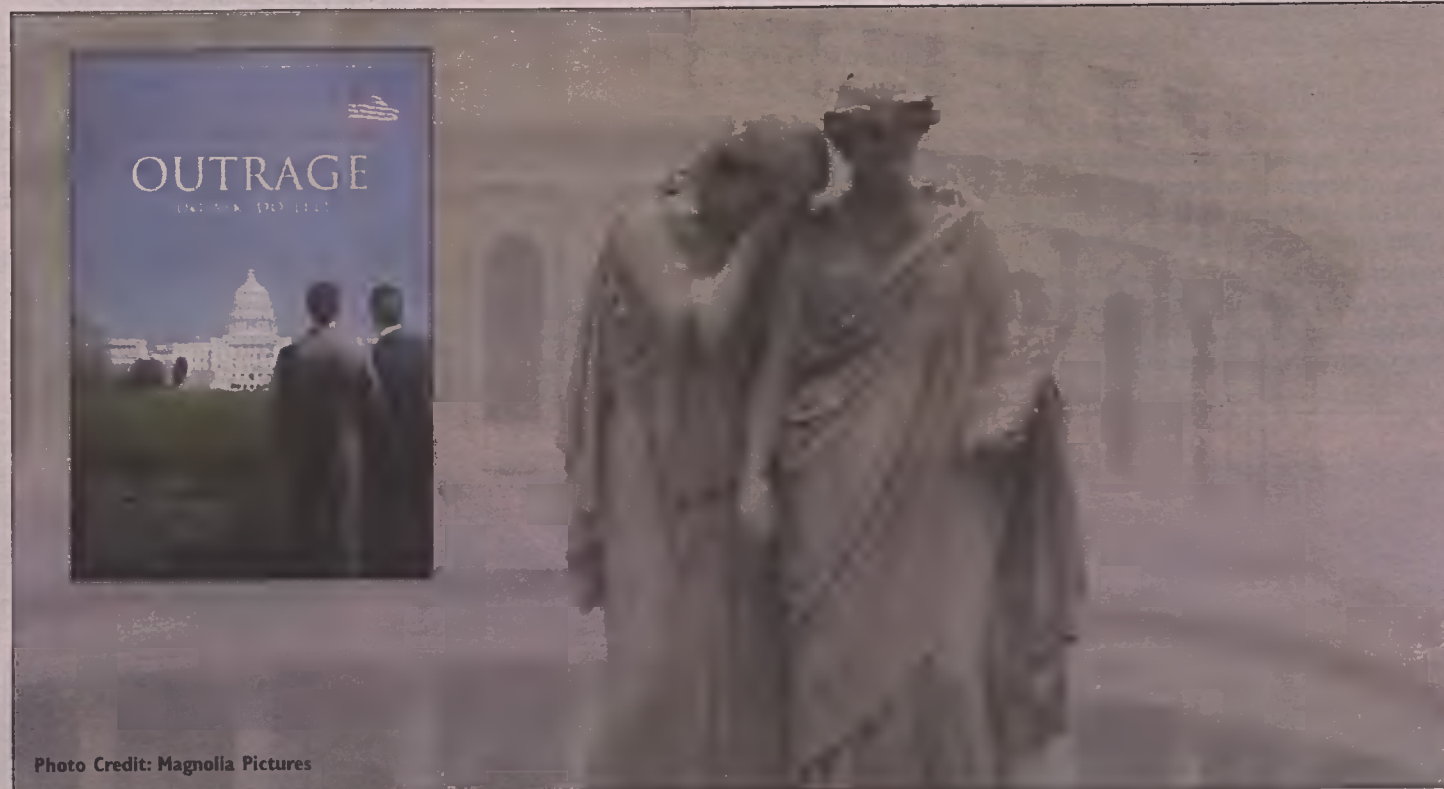


Photo Credit: Magnolia Pictures

Bizarre. And, Rove's still out there. He's still out there on FOX news.

Did many other closeted politicians come up during research that you didn't include because there wasn't enough evidence or testimony?

I learned about that very early on in the process. Well before I started shooting. As soon as you go online there are these rumors.

What were your thoughts on "outing" before this?

meeting with an "accident," a la Karen Silkwood or Tom Wilkinson's character in "Michael Clayton?"

Mike Rogers did. [But] I think most of

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