

CULTURE



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REPUBLICAN
For Management

WAR

The Board of Trustees could never get





A small Liberal Arts College in Sarasota, FL finds itself in a **culture war** against the government of Florida for the basic right of **educational freedom**. Now, the community must learn how to find **resistance** in the midst of a reality they didn't sign up for.

On January 6th, 2024, Governor Ron DeSantis wages a war against "wokeness" and appoints six new members to New College of Florida's Board of Trustees, marking a shift in leadership at the small, progressive public school and flipping its world upside down for the college's community.

The consequences of the appointment are immediate, with the firing of the now former president, Patricia Okker, the abolishment of the diversity and inclusion office, the end of the gender studies major, the recruitment of student athletes, and the diaspora of dozens of faculty members.

This case has gotten national and international attention. Governor DeSantis, at the time in the race to be the Republican representative in the next presidential election, has made himself directly attached to the events happening at this small liberal arts institution.

New College's situation represents the endless opportunities for government control of public educational institutions and the many impacts on the local community.

OVERVIEW

GENRE

DOCUMENTARY

PROJECT TYPE

SHORT, STUDENT

RUNTIME

27 MINUTES

COMPLETION DATE

JULY 2024

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

UNITED STATES

LANGUAGE

ENGLISH

SUBTITLES

ENGLISH

SHOOTING FORMAT

DIGITAL, SUPER 8

ASPECT RATIO

2.39:1

WRITER & DIRECTOR

CELI MITIDIERI

PRODUCER

CELI MITIDIERI

PRODUCER

MILENA MONTERO

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

ALEJANDRA CINTRÓN RIVERA

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

CARLY JONES

EDITOR

MATTHEW PETERSON

SOUND DESIGNER

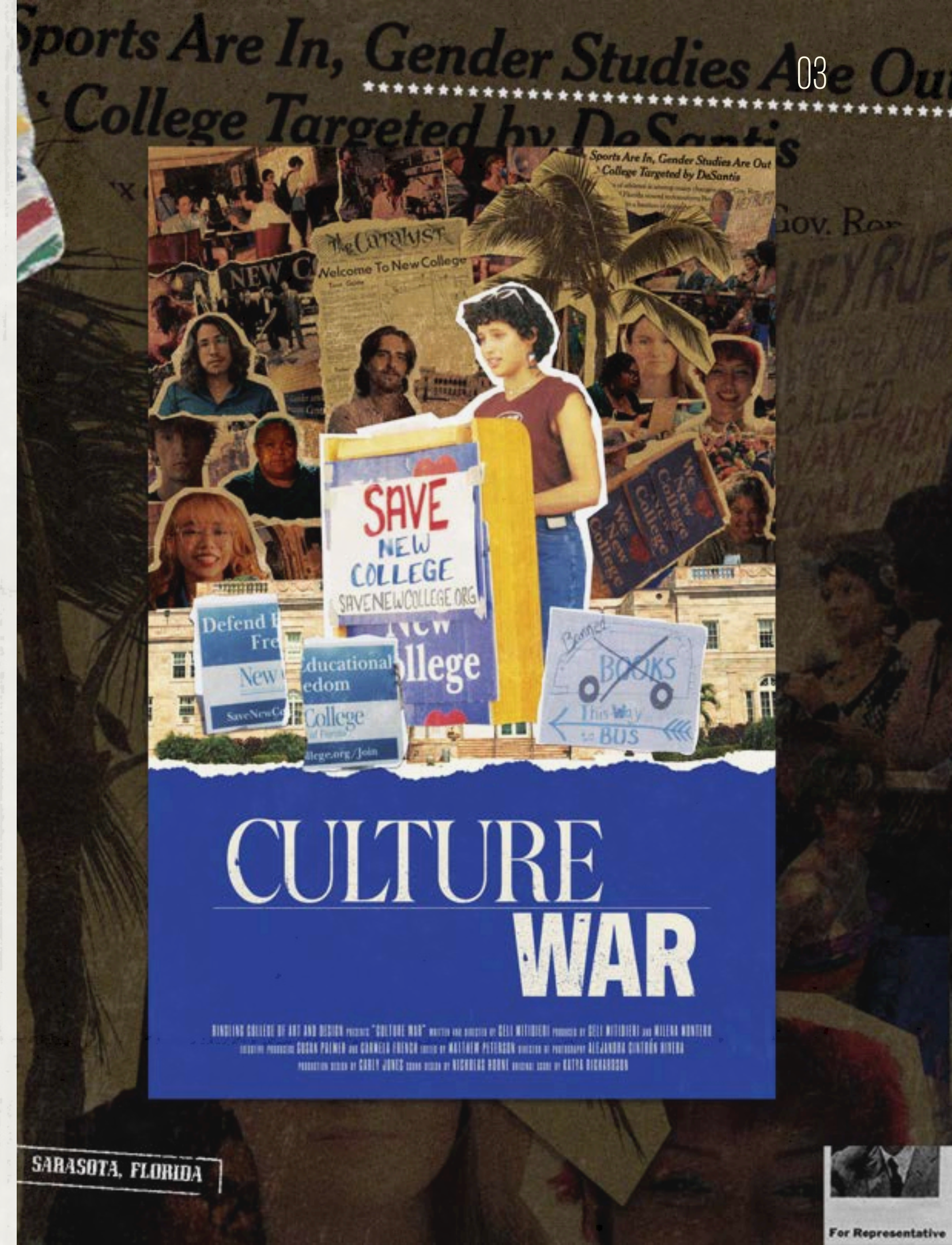
NICHOLAS HORNE

COMPOSER

KATYA RICHARDSON

SOCIALS

[LINKTR.EE/CULTUREWARFILM](https://linktr.ee/culturewarfilm)



MILENA

[WEBSITE](#) | [INSTAGRAM](#) | [LINKEDIN](#)

Argentine film producer and cinematographer. I recently graduated from Ringling College of Art and Design with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Film. With a diverse background in commercials, narrative films, and documentaries, I'm passionate about creating content at the intersection of art and activism.

Growing up in Buenos Aires, attending school in China, and completing my education in the United States, my global perspective shapes my creative approach. I believe that telling the story of New College of Florida is important to raise awareness, provoke thought, and hopefully inspire change.



Milena Montero
Producer

Celi Mitidieri
Director & Producer

CELI

[WEBSITE](#) | [INSTAGRAM](#) | [LINKEDIN](#)

I'm a Brazilian filmmaker and photographer. My work uses the power of documentary to help solve the world's tough problems through a community-oriented approach, looking through the gorgeous and the ugly to create art that inspires reflection and dialogue. As a student leader at Ringling College who also takes classes at New College of Florida, I am eager to share more of the student and community experiences at NCF amid a very unstable time.

The project began on January 6th, 2024, as an inevitable response to Governor Ron DeSantis' appointment of six conservative leaders to NCF's Board of Trustees, marking a shift in leadership at the small, progressive public school.

As a student at Ringling College of Art and Design, a partner college nearby, I have been connected with the NCF community since my first year. The schools' partnership allows students to take classes on both campuses without additional cost, fostering cooperation and collaboration.

Upon hearing the news of the appointments, I was horrified and immediately began documenting the situation through photography. As events escalated, the project evolved into my Senior thesis, a short documentary focusing on the students' perspectives. My personal relationships with many students, coupled with my status as a registered student at NCF during my last semester, allowed me to be present on campus and build friendships based on mutual trust and respect. This approach offers the audience an intimate and passionate view of the significant changes affecting their lives in such a short period.

Since the new trustees took over, the College has seen its president fired, the diversity and inclusion center abolished, the gender studies program dissolved, and student activists prosecuted. This film explores these struggles, crafting a portrait of today's political climate and its direct impact on students in higher education.

After wrapping production in Sarasota, I traveled to Massachusetts to meet Libby Harrity, one of the student activists forced to leave NCF. This experience provided deeper insights into the challenges faced by those who felt they had no choice but to leave Florida.

Culture War aims to raise awareness about the fight for educational freedom in Florida and across the United States. Please reach out if you would like to join our fight!

Thank you for taking the time to learn about our film,

celi*mitidieri



GABY

Gaby Batista is a Senior in Anthropology, the editor in chief of NewCollege's student run newspaper, the Catalyst, and a community organizer.

They have taken several leadership roles, with experiences that range from student ambassador to speaker at Save NewCollege rallies.





LIBBY

Libby Harrity, former Senate President at NCF, was forced to leave NewCollege after being the target of several accusations of “student conduct violations” for their activist efforts in protests against the new policies and the Board of Trustees.

Now Libby lives in Massachusetts at the Hampshire College campus, where over 60 students - 10% of the non-graduating student body of NCF in 2023 - have relocated to continue pursuing their education.





GRACE

Grace Keenan represents her community as the President of the NewCollege Student Alliance, the student governing body at NCF.

Chosen as the student commencement speaker for the 2024 graduating class, Grace has an incredible track record of holding a diplomatic posture while leading with a firm voice and strong opinions.





AMY

Faculty Representative on the Board of Trustees,
Director of the Gender Studies Program



CHLOE

4th Year Student,
Student Journalist



CHAI

4th Year Student,
Student activist



JONO

President of NCF Freedom
Alumn & Former Professor



ISAAC

Alumn,
Former Editor in Chief of the student newspaper



YOLEIDY

Former Chief Diversity Officer,
Fired by current administration

STILLS



POSTER



BEHIND-THE-SCENES & AWARDS



CREDITS

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

Celi Mitidieri

PRODUCED BY

Celi Mitideri

Milena Montero

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Susan Palmer

Carmela French

Patrick Alexander

Vivian Owen

EDITOR

Matthew Peterson

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Alejandra Cintrón Rivera

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Carly Jones

SOUND DESIGN

Nicholas Horne

ORIGINAL SCORE BY

Katya Richardson

FEATURING

(In order of appearance)

Libby Harrity

Gaby Batista

Kyla Baldonado

Alexander (Fish) Sauer

Isaac Tellechea

Jono Miller

Grace Keenan

Chai Leffler

Steven Walker

Sophia Brown

Chloe Rousek

Colin Jefferis

Yoleidy Rosario-Hernandez

Amy Reid

Jackson Dawson

Steven Davis

Amanda Gilliland

Beau Delaune

CREW

Additional Cinematography - Celi Mitidieri

Camera Operator - Nadia Grasso

Camera Operator - Almendra Kovač Akel

Camera Operator - Beau Agrawal

Camera Operator - Alex Wilson

Camera Operator - Xiang Li

Gaffer - Almendra Kovač Akel

Gaffer - Beau Agrawal

Sound Mixer - Violet DiCara

Sound Mixer - Nicholas Horne

Boom Operator - Violet DiCara

Colorist - CJ Julian

Post Services by Away Team

Co-Editor - Celi Mitidieri

Assistant Editor - Alex Wilson

CREW

Archive Researcher - Claire Simmons

Archive Researcher - Juan Alvarez-Fernandez

Motion Designer - Gergo Varga

Graphic Designer - Sandra Lee

Production Assistant - Alex Wilson

Production Assistant - Nadia Grasso

Production Assistant - Yazmin Jarrin

Production Assistant - Alex Alfaro

Production Assistant - Ella Satterfield

FACULTY & STAFF ADVISORS

Patrick Alexander

Matt Gissing

Nick Palladino

Troy Logan

Mark Parry

Sheryl Haler

Bradley Battersby

Sena Kwasi Amengor

Kaylene Taylor

Damon Maulucci

ADDITIONAL IMAGES & FOOTAGE

The New College Experiment

Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (HBO)

Fox Business

Christopher F. Rufo

MSNBC

Fox News Channel

ABC Action News

Anthony J. Lenzo

ADD Filmmakers

Herald Tribune

Thomas Bender – USA TODAY NETWORK

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Friends & Family

THANK YOU!

CONTACT

celimitidieri@gmail.com
milenamonterofilm@gmail.com

SOCIAL MEDIA



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