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OPINION



OPINION | Dallas Has A Minnesota Story It Doesn't Know It Has

Cyrena Nolan | Jul 12, 2026

Promotional poster for Minnesota Mao, screening Sunday, July 12, at the Angelika Film Center in Dallas.

Before they were the Dallas Stars, they were the Minnesota North Stars. Along I-35, people, businesses, and ideas have migrated south for decades. A new documentary, Minnesota Mao, explores how a state once known for “Minnesota Nice” became a testing ground for ideas about culture, power, and the future of America.

Minnesota. The very name once conjured images of America’s heartland.

It is where the mighty Mississippi begins its journey to the Gulf. It gave us Charles Schulz and the gentle wisdom of *Peanuts*. Garrison Keillor’s fictional Lake Wobegon, “where all the women are strong, all the men are good-looking, and all the children are above average.” It was “Minnesota Nice.”

And for an entire generation, it was Mary Tyler Moore joyfully tossing her hat into the Minneapolis sky as the theme song declared, **“Love is all around.”**

That was the Minnesota America thought it knew.

A generation later, in that very same city, Minneapolis became associated with a very different kind of “love.” The **“Summer of Love”** came to evoke not smiles and optimism, but burning buildings, looted businesses, a police precinct overtaken, and neighborhoods left asking how quickly a city can change.

What happened? . . . **click here to read more**