

[International Freethought Film Festival 2017 Official Selections](#)

Features:

[Blockade](#)

Directed by Arif Yousuf

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (01:25:00)

Filmed in Bangladesh

Submitted from United States



Synopsis:

Non-violent action to stop genocide during 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War. During 1971, the Pakistani dictatorship was running a genocidal campaign to suppress the Bengali liberation movement. A group of peace activists from Philadelphia and Baltimore area found out that the US was covertly shipping arms to Pakistan. They joined forces with the local Bengali students and academics who were horrified by the thoughts of their loved ones being attacked with these arms. Together they find an innovative way to protest the brutalities and expose the arms shipment to the world

[Reasons to Believe](#)

Directed by Ben Fama Jr.

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (01:02:00)

Filmed in and submitted from United States



Synopsis:

Reasons To Believe is a thought-provoking documentary by filmmaker Ben Fama Jr., that explores the psychology and science of belief and why we believe, sometimes falsely, in things that may not match up with reality. Facilitated by leaders in the fields of science, philosophy, neuroscience, moral reasoning, psychology, perception, memory formation, and indoctrination, these experts answer a variety of thought provoking questions and provide tangible structure to the definition and creation of belief in the human brain. Fama asks the question: Why do we believe?

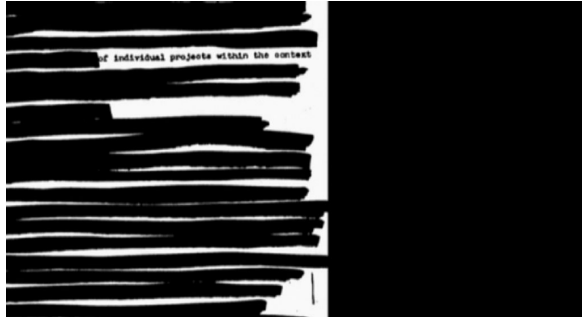
[The Searchers](#)

Directed by Randolph Benson

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (01:34:00)

Filmed in and submitted from United States



Synopsis:

Fourteen years in the making, the film uses never before seen interviews, archival footage and recently declassified documents to chronicle the past and present of these ordinary citizens and their contributions to revealing the truth about the crime of the 20th century. Suffering ridicule, and being labeled "conspiracy theorists", these individuals have challenged the institutions of power for over 50 years to, as they often proclaim, "take back our history!"

[The Demolition of Truth](#)

Directed by Charles Ewing Smith

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (01:47:00)

Filmed in and submitted from United States



Synopsis:

Psychologists examine 9/11 presents testimony from highly credentialed scientists, engineers, and military experts, including Dr. Robert Bowman, Dr. Lynn Margulis, Dr. Neils Harrit, David Chandler, and many more. This expert testimony is interwoven with analyses by social scientists who examine the psychological impact of 9/11 and the phenomena that have kept us blinded to truths too painful to acknowledge, even to ourselves. The film concludes with steps we can take, individually and collectively, toward healing. An epilogue by actor Ed Asner summarizes these analyses, emphasizing the role played by mainstream media that, lamentably, parrot their government sources rather than question them.

[Hard to Believe](#)

Directed by Ken Stone

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (00:56:00)

Filmed in Israel, United Kingdom, United States

Submitted from United States



Synopsis:

It's happened before: Governments killing their own citizens for their political or spiritual beliefs. But it's never happened like this. It's happened so often that the world doesn't always pay attention. But is economic influence the reason, that this time, it's going largely unreported? It's hard to believe that doctors would carve up innocent people so their organs could be sold. It's even harder to believe that major media are not investigating. Yet it happened tens of thousands of times, and may be happening still. Hard to Believe is a documentary that examines the issue of forced live organ harvesting from Chinese prisoners of conscience, and the response—or lack of it—around the world. Produced by Swoop Films, two-time Emmy Award-winning director/producer, Ken Stone, and Irene Silber.

[Kiss of Death](#)

Directed by Musing Derick Tenn

Genre: Drama

Runtime: (02:04:00)

Filmed in and submitted from Cameroon



Synopsis:

Intelligent, Obedient, Humble Beautiful and Peace loving she is. A bad decision from her father changes her destiny. Now Nayah has to go from dreaming of schooling and becoming a successful career Woman to being a housewife..... At a tender age - wife of her Father's friend and age mate. A deeply painful predicament as her surest future now is uncertain.....

[Exotic](#)

Directed by Amy Oden

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (01:03:00)

Filmed in US Territory of Guam

Submitted from United States



Synopsis:

Dotted with palm trees and coral reefs, Guam is United States territory where military men and Japanese tourists abound. A seemingly perfect backdrop for a strip club, the island should sound ideal to any girl coming from Portland, Atlanta, or Anchorage to work as an exotic dancer. But is it? Exotic takes us into the lives of the dancers on Guam, giving the viewer a front row seat to this fluid and secretive world.

[Jews Step Forward](#)

Directed by Marjorie Wright

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (01:52:00)

Filmed in Palestine, Israel, United States

Submitted from United States



Synopsis:

Jews Step Forward traces a path grounded in Jewish identity, which ultimately separates personal conscience from a socialized mythology loyal to Israel. Open ended policies of torture, imprisonment, and murder of indigenous Palestinians including children, contempt for international norms, and the rise of laws mirroring fascism, all poison any idea of national permanence for Israel based upon peace and regional integration. The subjects of this film speak with the same Jewish voice, which historically led the struggle for justice around the world, cutting through visceral defenses to demand an awakening and a Judaism liberated from Zionism.

[One Million Wafers](#)

Directed by David Moncasi
Genre: Documentary
Runtime: (01:01:00)
Filmed in Cuba
Submitted from Spain



Synopsis:

Thirteen cloistered nuns of a Havana convent make the wafers for all Cuba: one million wafers that travel through the entire island and offer an original point of view in the 57th year of the Cuban Revolution.

Short Films:

Fostering Connections

Genre: Documentary
Directed by Lauren Major
Runtime: (00:29:22)
Filmed in and submitted from United States



Synopsis:

Determined to break a vicious cycle of abuse, a young mother fights to create new beginnings for her biological and adopted children with the support of an innovative, multigenerational community.

Abused and neglected as a teenager, Micci Granger fights to provide her biological and adopted children the safe and nurturing home she never experienced. The work is difficult; her adopted children themselves have been victims of abuse, neglect, and the professional indifference of the foster care system. Micci's most difficult children are home-schooled, and she also operates a daycare center in her home. The work—raising and caring for so many children—is simply too much for Micci and her husband, Tim to handle on their own.

But Micci has help from an unlikely source: the 'surrogate grandparents' of Hope Meadows, an intentional, intergenerational community where senior citizens volunteer to work with adoptive families to help raise at-risk youth. Hope Meadows is a unique community, where neighbors do not just share cups of sugar; instead, they share the responsibility of raising children.

The film explores possible solutions to larger social issues - the involvement of the elderly in the care of children in the foster care system. It examines the life-altering possibilities adoptive families, at-risk youth and seniors experience when working toward a common goal.

Jewish Blind Date

Directed by Anaëlle Morf

Genre: Comedy, Satire

Runtime: (00:15:56)

Filmed in and submitted from Switzerland



Synopsis:

Unhappy in love, Mary Lou decides to reconnect with her religious roots by marrying a practicing Jew. In order to get married, she has to pass the Shidduch test, which will determine whether her life will be a success or failure.

Velvet Hour

Directed by Shireen Vasseghi

Genre: Experimental

Runtime: (00:10:15)

Filmed in and submitted from United Kingdom



Synopsis:

Velvet Hour is an experimental short film following an emotional rebirth. Ben is haunted and emotionally unstable after a disastrous event in Tokyo. Following his failures of recovery at home, he travels to a clinic in Lyon to have a controversial treatment where memories themselves do not change but emotions in memories can be altered to create desired results.

Velvet Hour is a low budget, multilingual & transnational film taking you on a journey from pain to beauty. Events in the past may not be able to be changed but feelings towards them can.

I am Palestine

Directed by Farid Kirreh

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (00:21:48)

Filmed in and submitted from State of Palestine



Synopsis:

This short film works to bridge the cultural gap between Palestine and the West where assumptions are formed through the limited view of the mass media. This is not a politically charged film, nor one that points blame at a nation. Rather, it brings us into the places of work and homes of another culture. There we receive stories, both positive and challenging, to better understand. This is the only way we can truly replace our innate desire to categorize and isolate with a desire to learn, to refer to 'them' as one of 'us'.

True Colours

Directed by David Valent

Genre: Drama

Runtime: (00:10:17)

Filmed in and submitted from Australia



Synopsis:

An increasingly desolate teenage schoolboy creates a coded language using paint colour sample cards to express his secret desires and feelings for the object of his affection.

The Farm

Directed by Matthew Harrison

Genre: Drama, Thriller

Runtime: (00:17:23)

Filmed in and submitted from United Kingdom



Synopsis:

On an isolated farm in rural England, a man seeks the truth behind his wife's mysterious disappearance.

Our Oldest City

Directed by Jimmy Evans

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (00:07:36)

Filmed in and submitted from United States



Synopsis:

A look at how St. Augustine's troubling history is remembered and reflected in the modern day.

GI Hospital

Directed by Jonny Lewis

Genre: Animation

Runtime: (00:05:44)

Filmed in and submitted from United States



Synopsis:

A group of severely wounded soldiers are cheerful about their injuries. After all, it's not like they lost their arms or legs for nothing. It was "for their country," so that makes it okay. This satirical stop-motion film is a commentary about the personal cost of war.

Gonna Be a Soldier

Directed by Jonny Lewis

Genre: Comedy, Satire

Runtime: (00:06:09)

Filmed in and submitted from United States



Synopsis:

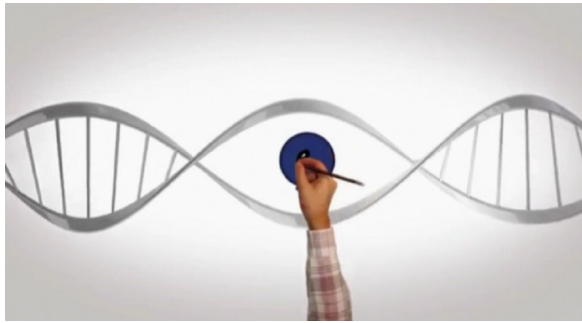
Six-year-old Joey wants to be a doctor when he grows up, but his parents explain that he has to be a soldier instead. Confused as to why he should grow up to kill people, he asks many questions. Will Joey's innocence prevail? Or will his parents' indoctrination finally wear him down?

Socializing the Genome

Directed by Julian Borra

Runtime: (00:02:42)

Filmed in and submitted from United Kingdom



Synopsis:

How easy is it to strike up a conversation about genomics? Geno-what? Does the average person on the street know enough about the issues to even care? What sort of framings – narratives, metaphors, mantras and memes – can we use to socialise an otherwise dense topic that even the specialists find difficult to navigate? 'Socialising the Genome' is a research project that aims to explore potential conversation starters around genomics. Focus groups with members of the public were conducted; the natural conversation that arose was used as a basis for a series of animations. The animations were then evaluated for likability, interest and shareability by the British public. The aim is ultimately to find an evidence-based way to communicate simple ideas around genomics. This will be relevant to all of us, as well as our biological relatives, as genomics is integrated into every health service across the world.

Your DNA, Your Say

Directed by Tim Pope

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (00:02:58)

Filmed in and submitted from United Kingdom



Synopsis:

DNA data is collected around the globe. To be truly informative, this data needs to be shared over the Internet to be accessed by researchers around the world. Policy on this process must be informed by the preferences of people to whom the data originally belonged. This has become urgent as we enter a new era of genomic medicine which generates unique ethical and moral questions, at both the personal and political levels. Our films strive to introduce people from a general audience to these emerging issues, they sit within a non-profit research survey designed to gather public attitudes towards the sharing of genetic information. The attitudes gathered will shape policy for scientists.

Scrapbook

Directed by Mike Hoolboom
Genre: Documentary
Runtime: (00:18:00)
Filmed in United States
Submitted from Canada



Synopsis:

Lensed in the sixties in Ohio's Broadview Developmental Centre, Donna Washington returns to her once and former self 50 years later.

Allegoria

Directed by Nobilis Bellator
Genre: Experimental
Runtime: (00:07:15)
Filmed in and submitted from Spain



Synopsis:

An allegorical representation of a very old historical construction that has become a monument and is given a human conscience thru the poem of Noufel Bouzeboudja with narration by Conrad Harvey.
ALLEGORIA is a call for the protection of our night skies endangered by humans that make bad use of urban lighting which wastes tremendous amount of energy and contaminates the night skies. 80 Percent of Americans Can't See the Milky Way Anymore.

Journey of a Thousand Meditations

Directed by Trish Streeten

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (00:37:00)

Filmed in Mexico

Submitted from United States



Synopsis:

Journey of a Thousand Meditations invokes the spirit of the charismatic author and visionary Edmond Szekely, a founder of today's mind-body-spirit health movement. In the early 20th century Szekely travelled through hidden valleys and forgotten manuscripts in search of ancient wisdom. Distilling the essence of Szekely's ideas, writings and visions, the film is a meditation, a poetic journey through Szekely's life and philosophy, revealing the eternal healing powers of Art and Nature.

My Identity

Directed by Yasmin Minstry

Genre: Documentary

Runtime: (00:10:55)

Filmed in and submitted from United States



Synopsis:

Ashley, a young Native-American girl, converts to Islam in hopes of finding structure in a life where it never existed.