

## PUZZLES

### **From Germany**

Thank you for making PUZZLES available! This is terrible horrendous hate crime. Even here in Hamburg, during pride month – people are so insecure and are likely to turn (even more) racist. I'm afraid we have a real surge of the racist right wing – even many LGBT folks are suspicious of “Muslims” now. Studies confirm the surge, and elections. They don't have an analysis of oppression. The right wing is instrumentalizing this – it's “cool” to be “not against gays”, now that gives them an argument to be racist. The left needs to sharpen language.

### **Clinical Social Worker – New York City**

What's striking to me about watching Puzzles is how it helped me process an array of emotions after the murderous attack at Pulse in Orlando - my shock and anger had turned to despair and depression - viewing this compelling documentary about another anti-gay hate crime, from 10 years ago - another act of terrifying violence at people perceived as different, who were dehumanized by Jacob Robida and his passion for neo-Nazism. This unimaginable loss of life is a heart-wrenching reminder of the escalating levels of violence gay, lesbian, queer and transgender people face throughout the United States.

### **Therapist – New Jersey**

I was very impressed with PUZZLES but saddened that it was one of many along with Orlando - and unfortunately probably more. I was struck by how everyone in the documentary seemed to be victims. The gay patrons victim to societal bigotry, prejudice, and physical violence but the attacker and his group were also victims - of poverty, family problems, lack of jobs and resources - and they then scapegoat the gay population to deal with their dysfunction.

### **Professor Film Studies - Philadelphia**

These hate crimes have become all too familiar in the United States and globally. When will we learn to tolerate our diverse beliefs, preferences, lifestyles? The documentary PUZZLES powerfully shines a light on those complicit in perpetuating hateful and intolerant rhetoric. This necessary documentary opens windows for dialogue and the sharing of perspectives - critically important in achieving greater understanding and tolerance.

A stunning film - an intimate picture, with warm and caring close-ups of complex personalities in the working class, old whaling town of New Bedford, MA. The documentary moves at a compelling pace and in just 50 minutes, delivers like a focused mystery, an in-depth detailed story ending with a surprising, but hopeful message.

Atlanta

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### **Community Organizer/Nurse**

Watching PUZZLES was the antidote to the sense of despair I felt after the horrific murders in Orlando. The action the filmmakers have taken in making the film widely accessible through free streaming on VIMEO is an important way to contribute to the dialogue that needs to happen around hate crimes and meaningful action to prevent them. PUZZLES asks hard questions and provides a window into the way that the alienated rage of a group of young people in New Bedford--frustrated by lack of jobs, opportunity and a sense of the value of their lives--was greatly amplified by attachment to an ideology of Nazism and white supremacy that ultimately led to a hate crime against the gay community. These young people defined their "family" by exclusion, hate and racism. By contrast, the gay community of New Bedford found strength in inclusion, acceptance and activism that ultimately led to a program of advocacy and education. I hope PUZZLES is viewed widely and sparks the kind of discussion we need to be having, as we look for ways to combat the rise of Trumpism and ideology based on hate.

### **Educator**

PUZZLES is a powerful film about the connection between hate crimes and extremist ideologies. It opens a window on angry teens who connect to hate and white supremacy. It also depicts the vibrant lives of working class gay men and their close-knit families in the a struggling Massachusetts community. This is truly a must see.