Review: Guns and Weed: The Road to ...

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Review: Guns and Weed: The Road to Freedom

By admin

Sometimes genius surfaces in strange places, and there is certainly an element of genius in the new movie *Guns and Weed: The Road to Freedom*. The film is not perfect and it's certainly not the slickest production, but it's one hell of a smart, informative and entertaining film.

It starts from a brilliant idea: looking at gun rights and the legalization of marijuana as two linked issues which between them expose many of the problems with our government and in our society from a libertarian perspective. By looking at one right which is constantly under threat and another which has been taken away arbitrarily, the film explores the broader issue of the ongoing diminishment of our civil liberties by intrusive government.

The film is basically a documentary composed mostly of interviews and discussion, but what makes it unique is that it comes with a sly sense of humor and a sense of fun which is much more appealing than the preachiness you'd expect on such a serious subject.

The film was made by Michael W. Dean and Neema Vedadi. Dean is the writer and director. Vedadi is a featured performer and producer. Dean describes himself as a punk rock libertarian and is the former Chairman of the Republican Liberty Caucus of Wyoming. Vedadi is a weekend news anchor on ABC affiliate KEPR in Wyoming. Dean mainly appears playing backing guitar for Vedadi in some hilarious rap numbers. Iranian-American punk-rap is a musical genre I never really expected to see. Vedadi also plays a variety of roles in small skits and dramatizations in the film and he's damned funny. Another asset to the film is a very pretty girl who fires a lot of guns while wearing a nice sun dress and does some excellent narration, credited as J-Tizzle. Also very effective were some of the medical marijuana users, especially a young couple afflicted with Krohn's Disease and Multiple Sclerosis who use marijuana to ease the pain and discomfort of their conditions. I also found some of the detailed insights into the mechanics of the medical marijuana business very interesting.

The most familiar of the interviewees is Sheriff Richard Mack who is very highly regarded in civil libertarian circles, but the less prominent participants, many of them local gun owners, marijuana entrepreneurs and civil libertarians from Wyoming and Colorado are articulate and make lots of good points. They give personal and substantive perspectives on issues like the medical value of marijuana, prisons overflowing with non-violent offenders, the whole milk ban, problems with the justice system, free speech, the Mexican drug cartels, abuse of government power, the failures of democracy and a web of other issues which all link surprisingly logically to the two core subjects.

There are a lot of libertarian films out there and most take themselves way too seriously and are no fun at all. Quite a few shade over into areas of fringe politics and radical rhetoric which make them threatening to a mainstream audience. One of the great accomplishments of *Guns and Weed* is that it doesn't take that route. It's approachable and relatively non-threatening and doesn't get preachy. It manages to soften its very serious message with humor, music and engaging performances. It's informative but it's also enjoyable.

Perhaps best of all, the whole of *Guns and Weed* is on YouTube in a series of linked segments and you can watch it in an hour and a half. I recommend it to everyone, especially those who still think the War on Drugs is a good idea. It might be just the thing for some of my Republican friends who understand the right to bear arms but haven't yet realized how interconnected all of our civil liberties are. Go watch

2/2/2011

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it and help it go viral!

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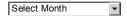
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