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# TrustMovies

Movie criticism (mostly foreign films, documentaries and independents: big Hollywood product hardly needs more marketing), very occasional interviews and ideas from James van Maanen, who began his late-career movie reviewing for GreenCine, then took the big blog step around a decade ago. He covers new movies, video releases, and occasional streaming choices. You can reach him at [JamesvanMaanen@gmail.com](mailto:JamesvanMaanen@gmail.com)

sunday, july 3, 2016

## July's Sunday Corner With Lee Liberman -- PUZZLES: When Hate Came to Town

*A puzzle ends in a rainbow*

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Some kind of throwback to an earlier, more charming and generous age when teens could populate a movie without being slashed to death, B...



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Sure, it's a soap opera. Yes, it's a tele-novela. But there are times in one's life that sinking



When economic pain is widely felt, hate crimes result -- 250,000 annually. The 53 minute documentary, **PUZZLES**, by [Tami Gold](#) and [David Pavlovsky](#) of Hunter College, NYC, is a small engrossing tale of the collision between poverty and homophobia in the charming coastal town of New Bedford, MA, a once-upon-a-time rich whaling and industrial hub. In February of 2006, the mixed gay and straight bar Puzzles suffered a hatchet and gun attack by a troubled youth on 3 bar patrons, shaking the community from top to bottom. (The perpetrator fled the attack scene and died by his own hand 3 days later in Missouri, having killed two others.)

You can smell the salt and the sea, tread the cobblestones, and witness the faded industrial past of this now blue-collar, rough-hewn, but engaging small city that has fallen from its heyday but remains close-knit and resilient. The filmmakers take you there.

The voices of a middle-age victim of Jacob Robida, the hatchet-wielding 18-year-old perpetrator, members of his teen gang, the Juggalos, and both gay and straight patrons of the bar Puzzles immerse you intimately into the ugliness of the attack and its ripple effect on the community.

into a sleek, sure-footed p...



[Dan Eberle's back -- with another tight-lipped, slow-burning crime tale, SOLE](#)

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This will be the third film by writer/ director/star Dan Eberle (shown at left) that TrustMovies has covered over the past decade, b...



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[with the talented writer/director](#)

An intelligent, anti-religion tract brought to thrilling, pulsating life, THE LEDGE may not be a great film but it is a very, very good...



[Giallo time again--with the Blu-ray release of Duccio Tessari/THE BLOODSTAINED BUTTERFLY](#)

Giallo lovers can, if not rejoice, get at least a little excited by the new Blu-ray release of a would-be giallo with the alliterative...



[August's Sunday Corner with Lee Liberman -- PEAKY BLINDERS 3: The Double Triple Cross](#)

This not so under-the-radar cult series -- now available for streaming via Netflix -- is a bouquet to British screenwriter Steven Knight...

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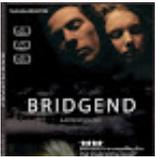


It may seem that the film will focus only on the personal stories of the traumatized attack victims, bar patrons, and bereaved teens shocked by the violent act of their friend, Jacob, but the filmmakers spend the right amount of time on the reparative work done in New Bedford -- the fight back via



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What was she doing and why was she doing it are two of the questions provoked by the new quasi-documentary, quasi-narrative, quasi-intel...



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How do the decisions we make about right and wrong, friends and family, and whom to help when the chips are down -- as well as those m...



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Around halfway through, and having just finished yet another first-rate episode (yes, they all are) of the newly-released-to-D...

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followers

words and community action. Special efforts by political leaders, police, schools, and the advent of Gay Pride events (above and below) have begun to heal wounds and improve harmony in the city. One bar patron explains that the event helped make things right for gay people in town who began to stop hiding. It is thought that 75% of gay residents were closeted at the time. Bob Perry, one of the 3 victims, had come out only a month before the attack at age 47.



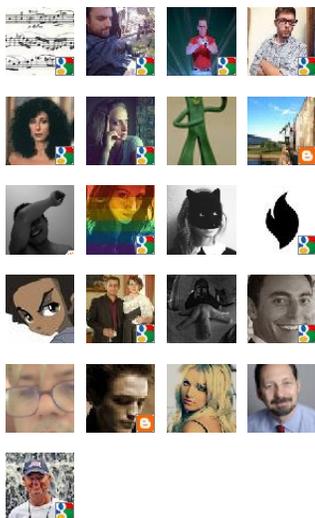
The bar, Puzzles, and its successor, Rainbow's End, have since closed, but ten years later New Bedford has a different social climate. Bev Baccelli, a gay activist in the film from nearby Mattapoisett, commented to SouthCoastToday on the 10th anniversary of the attack: "Out of a tragedy like Puzzles, as horrifying as it was, comes change.....Gay people and straight people started talking to each other. Is it a perfect place?...No, but it's a lot better than...10 years ago."

PUZZLES is about as complete, poignant, and meaningful a story of hate and its consequences as 53 minutes allow, but it's worth referencing here to former openly gay House of Representatives members, Barney Frank and Gary Studds, (the latter deceased in 2006), both of whom represented New Bedford in Congress at different times; Frank and Studds add to the picture of a community not innately homophobic but subject to the pressures of poverty and hate propaganda.

Following the recent attack on gay bar Pulse in Orlando and to mark the 2016 anniversary of the Puzzles event, filmmaker and Hunter College faculty member Tami Gold has made available a free link to the documentary through July. So you can stream this film with no charge through the end of July, simply by clicking [here](#).

*The above post was written by*

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*our monthly correspondent, Lee Liberman*

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