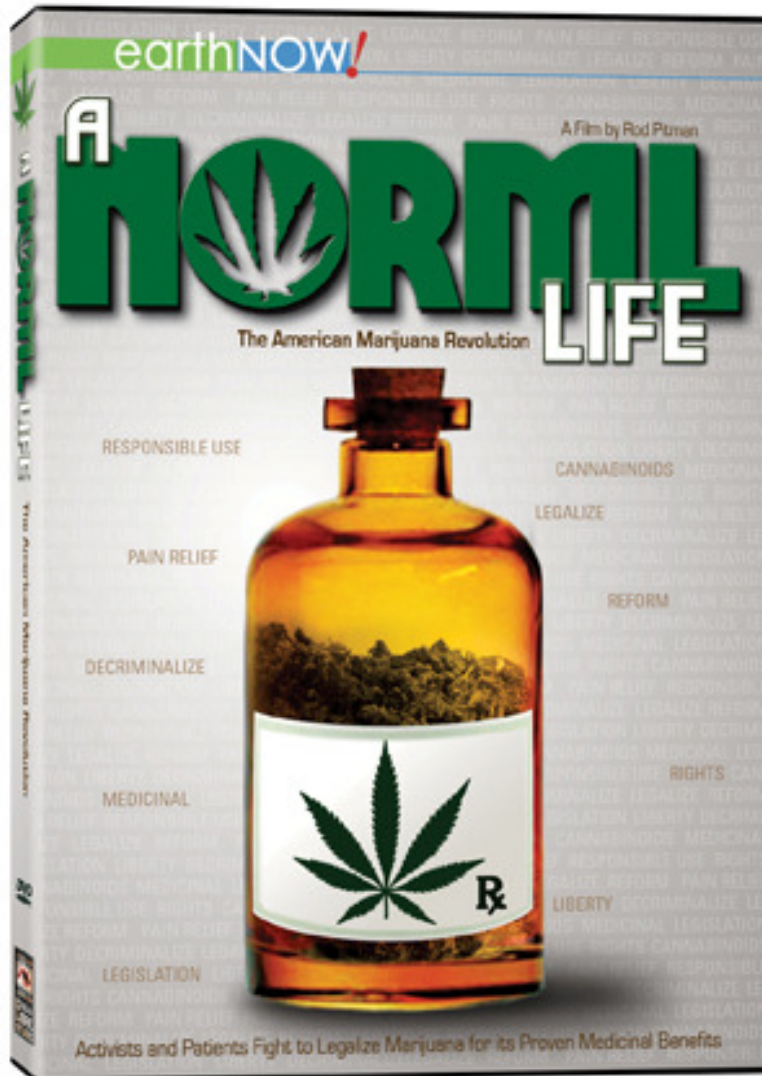




Presents



SRP: \$19.95 | TRT: 60 minutes

Street Date: 8/16/11 | UPC: 881394113329

Catalog: CLS 1133 | Genre: Documentary/Medical

### PRESS INQUIRIES

**Beth Portello**

Cinema Libre Studio  
8328 De Soto Avenue  
Canoga Park, CA 91304  
T: 818-349-8822  
F: 818-349-9922

[bportello@cinemalibrestudio.com](mailto:bportello@cinemalibrestudio.com)

**Cassie Brewer**

Cinema Libre Studio  
8328 De Soto Avenue  
Canoga Park, CA 91304  
T: 818-349-8822  
F: 818-349-9922

[cbrewer@cinemalibrestudio.com](mailto:cbrewer@cinemalibrestudio.com)

Please visit: [www.anormlifthemovie.com](http://www.anormlifthemovie.com)

*"Penalties against drug use should not be more damaging to an individual than the use of the drug itself. Nowhere is this more clear than in the laws against the possession of marijuana in private for personal use."*

**- President Jimmy Carter**

### **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

A documentary on the current state of medical marijuana in America. Personal stories from patients, doctors and caregivers verify its medical effectiveness while leading activist rally support to end prohibition.

### **DIGITAL ASSETS**

**TRAILER:** <http://vimeo.com/26021315>

**CLIPS:** <http://vimeo.com/album/1647676>

**HIGH RES ART:** [http://www.cinemalibrestudio.com/clscatalog/2011/NormlLife\\_3D\\_HR.jpg](http://www.cinemalibrestudio.com/clscatalog/2011/NormlLife_3D_HR.jpg)

**LOW RES ART:** [http://www.cinemalibrestudio.com/clscatalog/2011/NormlLife\\_3D\\_LR.jpg](http://www.cinemalibrestudio.com/clscatalog/2011/NormlLife_3D_LR.jpg)

### **LONG SYNOPSIS**

"a NORML life" chronicles the state of medical marijuana in America through interviews with patients, caregivers, activists and doctors. The filmmakers visit locations such as California, Oregon, Washington and Washington, D.C. where cannabis medicine is being regulated for patients. Many interviews were made at Seattle's Hempfest 2010 and at recent NORML (National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws) conferences.

NORML has advocated the decriminalization of cannabis for over 40 years. Its founder, current leaders and nationwide chapter representatives describe the patchwork of state and municipal laws that allow medical marijuana, while the federal government still regards cannabis as a dangerous narcotic. Voters in the US are increasingly recognizing the positive aspects of accepting and controlling medical marijuana in their communities for its medicinal benefits, as well as for its potential to generate needed tax revenue.

Interviews with doctors who treat and patients who suffer from physical and debilitating conditions explain that pharmaceutical medicines are often ineffective and produce dangerous side effects to their conditions. Most turn to cannabis in desperation only to discover pain and psychological relief, physical improvement and often a reversal of pathology. U.S. and international clinical studies contain overwhelming positive evidence that the numerous cannabanoid compounds found in marijuana have constructive properties and may be the key to the future of the plant as a medicine.



### NORML LIFE CONCEPTION

“The Making of ‘a NORML life’”

By Doug Ross

The first time I heard about this project was from my friend Rod Pitman, whom I’ve known for nearly 50 years. When he said he had shot some footage concerning hemp and medical marijuana I thought, “OK, this is going to be interesting.” I had just left NASA-TV and was looking for projects that were both challenging and had a timely subject matter. The journey began after we reviewed hours of footage and realized there was no story - just bits and pieces of facts that did not form a complete narrative. So, we decided to keep shooting principal photography until we “found” the story. Despite the size of the task, we knew the story about medical marijuana was timely, important, and not being addressed seriously by the media.

I soon began compiling the elements needed to make a documentary that contained compelling interviews, locations, facts, history and key figures to tell the story. Rod had already produced a documentary, “Hempsters” that had many of the same characters sympathetic to the medical marijuana community. I wanted to see an explanation from patients who have successfully and legally obtained the medicine to treat their maladies. I was interested in the science of how and why the cannaboid compounds in the medicine effects specific parts of the body and brain. Doctor’s testimonies were vital to provide data and proof. Dispensaries and growers would give us the business and practical side of how each community deals with the legalities of distributing pot to patients.

Our next series of interviews were with the NORML executives here in Washington, D.C. who provided a historical and contemporary view of the state of medical marijuana in the United States. Keith Stroup, Allen St. Pierre and Sabrina Fendrick were wonderfully helpful by providing interview time, contacts and ideas for our production. One valuable contact was Wayne Turner, a D.C. attorney who nearly single handedly introduced, organized and pushed the medical marijuana bill through the D.C. Council.

After these initial interviews, a long road trip was planned that would begin in Venice Beach and Santa Monica, CA. It was a home coming for us as Rod and I had lived in Venice in the 1980s. Once there, I realized how everything had both changed and stayed the same. My old home and neighborhood was renovated with prices probably out of reach. But, the real shocker was the numerous marijuana dispensaries located near the beach and the easy access for patients to obtain medicine. We interviewed a doctor and patient along with a dispensary businessman, and we shot B-roll of the dispensaries and local color of the towns. Everything was going well and a road trip up the West Coast was a welcome sight ahead.

We drove from LA to the San Francisco Bay Area where Rod and I lived as teenagers in San Mateo just south of the City. We interviewed another doctor in Berkeley with B-roll at the Golden Gate Bridge and Oakland. Pushing toward Northern California to Arcata, we met and interviewed a dispensary owner who gave insight into living in the so-called "Emerald Triangle." We stayed briefly in Portland knowing we would return after our time at the international Hemp Fest held in Seattle, WA. Here, we found the main group of interviews with patients, activists and well-connected people of the medical marijuana community. We crammed interview after interview in three days along with B-roll of as much as I could shoot without going blind. Our last stop in Portland, OR provided another patient who had compelling personal stories about the benefits of marijuana.

The one message we repeatedly heard was that patients who had been in horrible pain and desperate health conditions had tried all conventional Western medicines without success. Practically all of them turned to marijuana as a last ditch effort to free themselves from chronic conditions. The science from the doctors, dispensaries and activists proved without doubt how this cannabis plant has benefited so many and corroborated antidotal testimonies.

Once back in the DC area, Rod and I began to review thousands of hours of interviews, B-roll, photos, music, documents, and elements needed to build a feature documentary. After three months of editing and re-editing, a story emerged about the truthful benefits of just how medical marijuana has become a vital medicine for so many and a proven tax revenue for financially strapped communities. The documentary is the definitive work on the subject of medical marijuana, though it is only a snapshot of its current and future place within our society.

## CAST BIOS

### **R. Keith Stroup, Esq.:**

Keith Stroup is a public-interest lawyer who first smoked marijuana in 1965, when he was a freshman at Georgetown Law School, and has been a regular smoker even since. He founded NORML in 1970 as the marijuana smoker's lobby in America, and served as executive director of the organization for the first decade, and again from 1994 through 2005. He currently serves as legal counsel, and according to Wikipedia, Stroup remains the most recognizable figure in marijuana policy.

### **Stephen W. Dillon, Esq.:**

Stephen Dillon graduated from Purdue University with honors in 1972 and Graduated from Iowa Law School JD. 1975. Actively involved in federal and state court criminal defense work since 1975. Practice primarily focused on drug defense. Has done more marijuana cases in Indiana than anyone else. Has run for office ten times as a Libertarian, including governor. Ballot status for libertarian party for secretary of state in 1994. Helped start the FIJA informed jury amendment in Indiana in early 80's. Been state director or on the board of Indiana Norml since inception 1974. Been on National Norml board for 20 years. Has been Chairman of the Board for Norml for 11 years. One of the original members of the Norml legal committee, which has grown from 6 to over 600 members.

### **Jodie Emery:**

Jodie Emery is the wife of the world-famous "Prince of Pot" Marc Emery, a Canadian political prisoner in the USA for selling seeds and funding marijuana activism. Jodie is the director of Marc Emery's Cannabis Culture Headquarters store, Cannabis Culture Magazine, Pot TV, and the BC Marijuana Party vapour lounge. She is also the BC Green Party policing and crime critic, and a candidate in the next provincial election.

### **Sabrina Fendrick:**

Sabrina Fendrick is the National Coordinator for the NORML Women's Alliance. She has been working at the National office in Washington DC for three years, taking on various roles and responsibilities throughout her tenure. She has been interviewed and featured by several national and international media outlets, including the London Times, BBC Brazil, Salon.com, and the Associated Press.

### **Gatewood Galbraith:**

Gatewood Galbraith is a criminal defense attorney in Kentucky who began writing about the economic impact of returning to cannabis as a cash crop in 1976. He has run for office on several occasions and is an Independent candidate for Governor of Kentucky in November 2011. His autobiography, *The Last Free Man in America: Meets the Synthetic Subversion* has been called by one ex-Governor, "The best statement of America and Freedom I have ever read."

### **Allen St. Pierre:**

Allen St. Pierre has worked at NORML and NORML Foundation since 1991 and 1997 respectively and now serves as executive director of both organizations. St. Pierre is a frequent commentator in the media about all things cannabis-related. He also lectures, writes and edits extensively on the subject matter.

**Ray Manzarek:**

Best known as the keyboardist for The Doors from 1965 through 1973, Manzarek was elected to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1993. Considered one of the most influential keyboard players in rock and roll, Manzarek has stood up for the legalization of marijuana and has spoken at past NORML events. He has even detailed how he and Jim Morrison used cannabis to come up with "Moonlight Drive".

**PRODUCTION CREDITS****Directed by:**

Rod Pitman

**Writers:**

Rod Pitman

Doug Ross

**Producers:**

Chris Burry ... *associate producer*

Peter Darling ... *associate producer*

Rod Pitman ... *executive producer*

Doug Ross ... *producer*

**Cast**

Ray Manzarek

Todd McCormick

Tonya Davis

Dominic Corva

Gatewood Galbraith

Linda Witzel

Ed Rosenthal

Barnes Mike

Larry Schimdt

Caren Woodson

Keith Stroup

Tim Pate

Jodie Emery

Stephen W. Dillon

Allan St. Pierre

William G. Panzer

Dennis Turner

Russ Belville

George Rohrbacher

Vivian McPeak

Sabrina Fendrick

Douglas Hiatt

Elvy Mussikka

Christine Paoletti

Frank H. Lucido

**Cinematographer:**

Doug Ross

**Editor:**

Doug Ross

**Sound Department:**

Darcel Walker ... *field sound*

**Camera and Electrical Department:**

Cory Clay ... *second camera*

**Music Department:**

Tim Pate ... *music supervisor*

**Miscellaneous Crew:**

Stephen Chaffin ... *production staff*

Marvic Paulo ... *production assistant*

**Production Company:**

7thScreen

**Distributor:**

Cinema Libre Studio (2011) (USA) (all Media)

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

### **ROD PITMAN (DIRECTOR, WRITER)**



Rod Pitman is an American Film writer, producer and director known for the films *Mortified Man*, *Green*, *Hempsters - Plant The Seed* and *Obscura*, a short film based on the only surviving directorial film work of Jim Morrison, lead singer of The Doors called *First Love*. An alumnus of the prestigious British Film Institute London Film Festival and the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, Pitman has executive produced over sixty television shows as well as music videos, entertainment products for Warner Bros. Records, and segments for Warner Bros. television. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

### **DOUG ROSS (PRODUCER, CAMERA, EDITOR)**



Doug Ross is a recognized video professional with proven leadership and extensive experience in the conception, production, and completion of innovative, compelling television programs. He is the founder of Honolulu Municipal Television. His work includes the following: Global View series on History Channel International; China: Engineering an Empire on History Channel; Hubble Space Telescope - NASA-TV; Storm Stories - Chicago Museum of Science & Technology; Hawaii's Chinatown - PBS Hawaii. Ross is also a member of the Producers Council with Producer Guild of America.

## ABOUT MARIJUANA

The information listed below is pulled directly from NORML's official website. NORML has created a comprehensive source of information about marijuana including its history, legal developments, scientific findings, and health benefits. Please visit [http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group\\_ID=7305](http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=7305) to learn more about why marijuana prohibition must come to an end.

- According to government surveys, some 25 million Americans have smoked marijuana in the past year, and more than 14 million do so regularly despite harsh laws against its use.
- Around 50,000 people die each year from alcohol poisoning. Similarly, more than 400,000 deaths each year are attributed to tobacco smoking. By comparison, marijuana is nontoxic and cannot cause death by overdose.
- Enforcing marijuana prohibition costs taxpayers an estimated \$10 billion annually and results in the arrest of more than 858,000 individuals per year -- far more than the total number of arrestees for all violent crimes combined, including murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault.
- Cannabis remained in the United States pharmacopoeia until 1941, removed only after Congress passed the Marihuana Tax Act which severely hampered physicians from prescribing it. The American Medical Association (AMA) was one of the most vocal organizations to testify against the ban, arguing that it would deprive patients of a past, present and future medicine.
- Modern research suggests that cannabis is a valuable aid in the treatment of a wide range of clinical applications. These include pain relief -- particularly of neuropathic pain (pain from nerve damage) -- nausea, spasticity, glaucoma, and movement disorders.
- Marijuana is also a powerful appetite stimulant, specifically for patients suffering from HIV, the AIDS wasting syndrome, or dementia. Emerging research suggests that marijuana's medicinal properties may protect the body against some types of malignant tumors and are neuroprotective.
- Virtually every government-appointed commission to investigate marijuana's medical potential has issued favorable findings. These include the U.S. Institute of Medicine in 1982 the Australian National Task Force on Cannabis in 1994 and the U.S. National Institutes of Health Workshop on Medical Marijuana in 1997.
- Currently, more than 60 U.S. and international health organizations support granting patient's immediate legal access to medicinal marijuana under a physician's supervision.