



Student Filmmakers Challenged to Establish a Freethought Niche in Film

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TAMPA— The purpose of the **Freethought Film Festival Foundation** is to promote critical thinking, reason and freedom of inquiry through the medium of film. FFFF encourages student filmmakers who consider themselves a champion of reason and freedom of inquiry, to take on freethought subject matter and present them to the world through their art. In November 2010, the **Freethought Film Festival Foundation** will screen selected film submissions, which best reflect its purpose, at an annual Freethought Film Festival.

From Philosophy class, and Critical Thinking 101; to The History of World Religions and Physics courses; as you entered college, you were introduced to concepts that may have eluded you prior to your commitment to higher education. As a result of the exposure to new ideas, your views of the world around you may have undergone a transformation. Such a shift in thinking is typically the rule upon entering college—not the exception.

New interests and previous ideals may have collided; with confusion as a frequent side effect. Questions are raised as to how to reconcile new information with what may now seem like blatant *misinforma-*

tion. A conclusion may have ultimately been reached that some ideas simply *cannot* be reconciled. In this deduction a freethinker emerges.

The word freethinker always shows up as a misspelled word in any spell check. When first introduced to the word “freethought”, many people hear it as two separate words rather than fused. If they hear “free thinker”, they usually conclude that any one thought must be considered as equally valid in comparison to any other thought. From this understanding “free thinking” encompasses all who agree that people are free to believe anything they want. *Of course* people have the freedom to think and believe whatever they want!

“Freethought” merged, is a term that encompasses a broad range of ideas that generally reflect the notion that everything is subject to scrutiny. The critical examination of truth-claims is a theme that freethinkers embrace. From examining the benefit claims of acupuncture, to questioning the existence of Zeus, a freethinker demands evidentiary proof before she or he accepts a claim as valid. Facts are held above anecdotes; and science over superstition. If evidence is presented that dispels a previously accepted claim, a free-

thinker is malleable enough to accept that new information and change her or his perspective accordingly.

With 16% of the population describing themselves as “non-religious”, a trend is taking place among freethinkers, who previously felt inhibited to speak their mind, to become more vocal. Amidst scientific illiteracy and superstitious imposition on public policies, freethinkers are beginning to stand up for reason. This portion of the population, now more than ever, is receptive to challenging cinema. The success of movies like “**Religulous**” reflects this well. It is time for freethinking filmmakers to propel freethought as a new niche in film. The Freethought Film Festival Foundation encourages this propulsion.

Whether you are a writer, a director, producer or an actor, you can make an impact on the future of reason through your talent of filmmaking. Consider reflecting freethought concepts through your art, and make a film submission to the **Freethought Film Festival Foundation**. FFFF challenges you to create challenging cinema by championing reason.

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