



# STIGMATIC



OUR OPIOID CRISIS



[www.stigmaticdocumentary.com](http://www.stigmaticdocumentary.com)

# FILM INFORMATION

## FILM TITLE

*STIGMATIC: OUR OPIOID CRISIS*

## TAG LINE

The real killer isn't in a needle.

## LOG LINE

An investigation of the opiate crisis following the stories of the people it has impacted in a small Michigan community.

## SOCIAL NETWORKING

[www.stigmaticdocumentary.com](http://www.stigmaticdocumentary.com)  
[www.facebook.com/stigmaticdocumentary](http://www.facebook.com/stigmaticdocumentary)  
[www.twitter.com/StigmaticDoc](http://www.twitter.com/StigmaticDoc)

## GARRET MORGAN | DIRECTOR

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## KEITH SCHNABEL | WRITER

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## SAMMI SCHENKEL | PUBLIC RELATIONS

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## TECHNICAL INFO

TRT: 57 minutes

Exhibition Format: MP4

Aspect Ratio - 16:9

Shooting Format - HD

Color, English

Native Framerate: 29.97

## SYNOPSIS

This feature-length documentary explores the crisis from its origins to its present scope. "Stigmatic: Our Opioid Crisis" is composed of interviews with those impacted by opiates, including law enforcement, medical professionals, and people in recovery. Their frank discussions highlight disagreements inside the activist community over controversial new strategies to combat the opiate epidemic. Each diverse perspective points to an undeniable obstacle at the center of the crisis: stigma.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In May of 2016, Keith Schnabel and I began work on our first feature-length film: an intimate look at the heroin epidemic in our homes, Bay and Saginaw Counties. We just didn't know it, yet. McLaren Bay Region had contracted us to create short, educational films for local schools and this project happened to involve interviewing medical professionals with first-hand experience dealing with the heroin epidemic. In the process, we realized that people we knew from the community had been hurt by this crisis. So we kept digging. With assistance from friend and fellow filmmaker Sammi Schenkel, we formally interviewed nearly twenty people, with law enforcement, press, medical professionals, educators, and numerous personal accounts of addiction. There was simply too much to tell about the crisis' impact on our community in just a few short videos. This had to be a feature.

- Garret

# PRESS RELEASE

BAY CITY, MI — Sept. 30, 2017 — *STIGMATIC: OUR OPIOID CRISIS* premiered as part of Hell's Half Mile Film and Music Festival in downtown Bay City on Saturday, Sept. 30, 2017. At the conclusion of the festival, the film won the Audience Award for "Fest Best".

[Forward from HHM] Those not directly impacted by opioid addiction often find it easy to ignore. In this documentary filmed in Saginaw and Bay City, Garret Morgan shows how deeply addiction has penetrated the heart of middle America. In interviews with recovering addicts as well as those tasked with treating them, the film suggests this scourge can affect nearly anyone, and makes a strong plea for greater attention to a growing national health crisis.

LANSING, MI — March 7, 2018 — *STIGMATIC: OUR OPIOID CRISIS* was recognized by the Michigan Association of Broadcasters and received the award for Best Documentary of 2017.

## NEWS COVERAGE

Garret and Keith were interviewed by The Delta Collegiate in late April 2017, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xo1d9Mq9\\_R4&ab\\_channel=DeltaCollegiate](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xo1d9Mq9_R4&ab_channel=DeltaCollegiate)

Garret was interviewed by Study Breaks, a nationwide online college magazine, <https://studybreaks.com/2017/06/28/opioid/>

The official trailer: <https://vimeo.com/228977600>

## AWARDS

Hell's Half Mile Film & Music Festival | Audience Awards: "Fest Best"

Michigan Student Broadcast Award | Best Documentary of 2017

FROSTBITE International Indie Fest | Finalist, Feature Film Category

*STIGMATIC: OUR OPIOID CRISIS* is a locally made documentary that features many different perspectives on the local heroin and opiate epidemic from a local level to national level. It faces the stigma head on and tries to start a conversation about this massive crisis.

# PEOPLE OF INTEREST

## Lee Howie

*McLaren Bay Region's EMT Director.*

Lee Howie fights the crisis on the ground level: his team deals with overdoses weekly. A tragedy in his past connects him personally to the opiate crisis as well - his own late brother-in-law fought opiate addiction for years.



## Dr. William Morrone

*Deputy Chief Medical Examiner, Bay County*

In his day job, William works sufferers of addiction through recovery. Then, as the creator of Project Lazarus, he has worked with state and local government to save lives on a large scale. William is no stranger to the screen, having been featured on CNN dozens of times as an expert on the opiate epidemic.



## Terry Spencer

*Sgt. of Pinconning Police*

Once, Terry thought a small town like Pinconning was out of heroin's reach. Now, he understands that the opiate epidemic reaches everywhere. He hosts the Bay County Heroin Town Halls.



## Stephen Peckham

*Pastor*

In June of 2015, Stephen lost his son to a heroin overdose. A party gone terribly wrong ended in tragedy when, afraid of going to prison for possession, no one was willing to call an ambulance after his son overdosed. Stephen has channeled his grief into his ministry, counseling at-risk young people and educating about the dangers opiate abuse.



# CONTINUED...

## **Emily Ballien**

*Person in Recovery*

Emily's story cautions how close relapse can be for a person in recovery. Following a trauma, she has struggled with opiate addiction since she was a teenager. Today, she speaks publically about that struggle.



## **Jeanette Ballien**

*Mother to Emily Ballien*

There is no easy way to learn that your child is battling addiction. Jeannette still learned the hard way: getting stolen from. She has chosen to stick by Emily through the hardest days of her journey and hopes to serve as a resource to other parents of addicts.



## **Cole Waterman**

*Bay City Times Crime Reporter*

As a crime reporter, Cole has reported on drug offenders in Bay County for years. His position lends him a unique view to the evolution of the opiate crisis. Despite working in a business that can profit from sensationalizing drug abuse, Cole sees addiction sufferers as worthy of our sympathy.



## **Jan Miner**

*Probate Judge, Bay County*

Before holding her current elected office, Jan was a Family Attorney and Public Defender. She has long advocated for those struggling with addiction. In *Stigmatic*, she discusses her conflicted feelings over how best to tackle the epidemic.



# CREDITS

**DIRECTOR**  
Garret Morgan

**WRITER**  
Keith Schnabel

**PRODUCER**  
Garret Morgan

**ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS**  
Keith Schnabel  
Sammi Schenkel

**JOURNALIST**  
Keith Schnabel

**EDITOR**  
Garret Morgan

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**  
Sammi Schenkel

**MAKE-UP EFFECTS**  
Ashley Martin

**MUSIC BY**  
Wagner Koop

**INTERVIEWEES**  
Austin Childs  
John Keuvelaar  
Barry Schmidt  
Kristy Kopec  
Charles Brunner  
Lee Howie  
Cole Waterman  
Lynn Smith  
Emily Ballien  
Ricardo Bowden  
Greg Potts  
Steve Peckham  
Jan Miner  
Tyler Lopez  
Jeanette Ballien  
Terry Spencer  
William Morrone



# BIOS



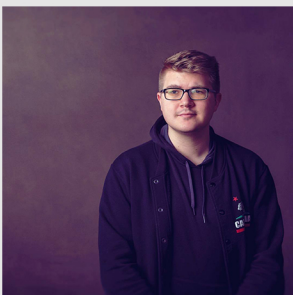
**Garret Morgan (Director, Editor, Producer)** is a detail-oriented editor, cinematographer, motion graphics artist, and journalist with 7 years experience editing and directing. His projects have been recognized by East Lansing Film Festival, Made-in-Michigan Film Festival, as well as Hell's Half Mile Film & Music Festival and been the recipient of The Democracy Commitment's Bernie Ronan Award. He is an alumni of Garber High School and Delta College. Garret has helmed a number of short films, educational media, and documentaries. *Safe Journey*, his most recent work co-created with Keith Schnabel alongside *Stigmatic* is currently in circulation throughout a handful of schools across Bay County. Garret currently resides in Big Rapids, MI, where he is attending Ferris State University for his Bachelor's in Television and Digital Media Broadcasting.



**Keith Schnabel (Writer, Associate Producer, Journalist)** is a creative in the realm of education and politics raised in Bay County, MI. He is an alumni of Garber High School and Saginaw Valley State University. Keith has been writing and producing video content professionally since high school. He is a frequent collaborator of Garret's, having worked with him on dozens of short films, documentaries, and sketches. Keith has also starred in numerous short films which screened in Michigan film festivals. He was a Field Organizer and Regional Digital Lead during the 2016 election (for the one who lost). Now, he researches, writes, and produces educational content in Chicago. He also bakes a mean vegetarian quiche.



**Sammi Schenkel (Associate Producer, Public Relations)** is a multi-faceted filmmaker who specializes in producing. Originally from Frankenmuth, she has volunteered for Hell's Half Mile since the age 15, learning the ins and outs of festival organization and making Bay City a home away from home. She and Garret met while attending Delta College, and Keith while producing *Fate*, a 2015 short film. Sammi enjoys being a part of the Tri-County roller derby community and acting in haunted houses. She has been involved in documentaries on indie bands, volunteered at improv clubs, and produced on a current event live cable access talk show *Currently Speaking*.



**Wagner Koop (Composer)** is a musician and filmmaker living in Michigan. He has been producing original music since 2010 and met the rest of the *Stigmatic* crew while attending Delta College. Since then, he has become an alumni of Delta College and Ferris State University with an educational focus on both media broadcasting and production for television and digital media. He has worked alongside Garret and Keith previously, composing and producing music for other projects. Wagner is looking forward to finding more large-scale projects to compose for, such as more documentaries, films, short-films, and video games. Alongside music composition and production, Wagner works as a post-production specialist with a focus on editing and color grading, as well as doing original animations and motion graphics work for commercial and non-profit organizations.