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2018 Sundance Docs in Focus: THE DEVIL WE KNOW



Courtesy of Sundance Institute

THE DEVIL WE KNOW

Stephanie Soechtig and co-director Jeremy Seifert uncover a corporation's widespread use of dangerous chemicals, despite their known impact on human health.

Festival Section:
US Documentary Competition

Special Program:
The New Climate

Sundance Program Description:

In 1945, DuPont introduced Teflon to the marketplace and changed millions of American households. Today, a biopersistent chemical used in the creation of those products is in the bloodstream of 99 percent of all Americans.

A compelling and ultimately terrifying watch that will make you question everything in your kitchen, *THE DEVIL WE KNOW* comprehensively lays out the history of the DuPont corporation's use of the chemical C8, examines its environmental and health impact (and the company's awareness of that impact), and celebrates the everyday whistleblowers and fact finders who helped bring this crisis to the public's attention. Director Stephanie Soechtig (a Sundance Film Festival alum with [FED UP](#) and [UNDER THE GUN](#)) and co-director Jeremy Seifert create an investigative documentary with stakes at once both personal and looming as they weave together the first-hand stories of those personally affected by DuPont's Parkersburg, West Virginia, plant with an alarming portrait of the potential consequences of corporations' unchecked use of chemicals that go on to permeate the living world.

Some Background:

Director/Screenwriter/Producer:

- **Stephanie Soechtig**
Past Sundance docs:
[UNDER THE GUN](#) (2016)
[FED UP](#) (2014)

Soechtig's fourth feature on health and public policy issues is her third at Sundance. She most recently produced the Tribeca-debuting *THE LAST ANIMALS*. Soechtig developed her investigative approach as a television producer, working on *20/20*, *Primetime Live*, *Good Morning America*, and *The O'Reilly Factor*.

Co-Director:

- **Jeremy Seifert**

This marks Seifert's first project at Sundance. He is best known as the director of *GMO OMG*, which debuted at Berlin.

Producers:

- **Atlas Films' Kristin Lazure and Carly Palmour**
Past Sundance docs:
[UNDER THE GUN](#)
[FED UP](#)

Lazure also previously worked with Soechtig as a senior producer on *The O'Reilly Factor*, part of nearly a decade at Fox News before she moved into documentary features. Palmour most recently associate produced [DR FEELGOOD: DEALER OR HEALER?](#), which premiered at the Los Angeles Film Festival.

- **Joshua Kunau**
Past Sundance docs:
[UNDER THE GUN](#)

Attorney Kunau also previously produced two of Seifert's previous docs, including *GMO OMG*.

Co-Producer:

- **Jill Latiano Howerton**

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Latiano Howerton is an actress and the wife of IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA's Glenn Howerton. This is her first Sundance credit. She previously executive produced GMO OMG.

Executive Producers:

- *Michael Walrath and Michelle Walrath*

Past Sundance docs:
UNDER THE GUN
FED UP

Soechtig's founding partners at Atlas Films, philanthropists and entrepreneurs Michelle and Michael Walrath of the Walrath Family Foundation, also served in the same roles for the director's debut, TAPPED, as well as for THE LAST ANIMALS.

- *Andrea van Beuren*

Past Sundance docs:
[CHASING CORAL](#) (2017, Audience Award winner)
[ALIVE INSIDE](#) (2014, Audience Award winner)

van Beuren also executive produced fellow 2018 US Doc Competition title [INVENTING TOMORROW](#) and Doc Premieres title [WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?](#) She is also a founder and artistic director of newportFILM.

Co-Executive Producers:

- *Alison Carlson*

This is the first Sundance credit for the founder and chair of Forsythia Foundation, which focuses on the intersection of health, the environment, and the reduction of harmful chemicals. She previously co-produced [THE HUMAN EXPERIMENT](#), tackling similar terrain.

- *Bill Hayward*

This marks the Hayward Healthy Home CEO and environmentalist's first producing credit.

- *Patty Quillin*

Past Sundance docs:
[BENDING THE ARC](#) (2017)

Philanthropist Quillin is also an executive producer of fellow 2018 US Doc Competition title [INVENTING TOMORROW](#), World Doc Competition title [THIS IS HOME](#), and Next narrative [NIGHT COMES ON](#). She has been a past Creative Advisor to Sundance's Catalyst Forum and also supported the 2017 Sundance VR project [THE SKY IS A GAP](#). Quillin is the wife of Netflix CEO Reed Hastings.

- *Nancy Stephens Rosenthal*

Past Sundance docs:
BENDING THE ARC

The actress-turned-producer, known for her role as Nurse Chambers in the HALLOWEEN franchise, is also an executive producer of 2018 Sundance Documentary Premieres title [WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?](#)

- *Peter Sullivan*

This marks the first Sundance credit for the Clear Light Ventures founder.

- *John Boccardo and Derek Esplin*

This and [WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?](#) are the first Sundance credits for the Palm Springs-based arts patrons and art collectors. Boccardo, an architect, also is an associate producer of [NIGHT COMES ON](#), and most recently produced Jeffrey Schwarz's documentary [THE FABULOUS ALLAN CARR](#).

- *Jared Ruga*

Ruga is also co-director/producer/executive producer of 2018 Doc Premieres title [QUIET HEROES](#).

Writer:

- *Mark Monroe*

Recent past Sundance docs:
[ICARUS](#) (2017, co-producer/writer)
[HOOLIGAN SPARROW](#) (2016)
UNDER THE GUN
[RACING EXTINCTION](#) (2015)
[DRUNK STONED BRILLIANT DEAD: THE STORY OF THE NATIONAL LAMPOON](#) (2015)
FED UP

Monroe also takes a screenwriting credit for 2018 Doc Premieres title [THE GAME CHANGERS](#).

Editors:

- *James Leche*

Past Sundance docs:
[HOLY HELL](#) (2016, assistant editor)
UNDER THE GUN (additional editor)

- *Dan Reed*

Past Sundance docs:
UNDER THE GUN (additional editor)

- *Brian Lazarte*

Past Sundance docs:
UNDER THE GUN (editor/screenwriter)
HOLY HELL (senior consulting editor)
FED UP
[UNDER THE ELECTRIC SKY](#) (2014, additional editor)
[ALIVE INSIDE](#) (consulting editor)

Lazarte is also an editor for fellow 2018 US Doc Competition title [KAILASH](#).

Why You Should Watch:

Soechtig and Seifert balance their engaging investigative reporting with appealing human stories as they expose the disturbing consequences of rampant corporate greed on both the environment and, ultimately, all of us. The film is part of Sundance's environmentally-themed programming strand, **The New Climate**.

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