

Project Type: Documentary feature film (90 minutes)

Genre: Participatory documentary

Logline: A retrospective look at the past, present and future of nutritional supplementation and chemicals usage in food production

Synopsis: The hero, a young film director, finishes his work on a feature about the dramatic consequences of chemicals usage in the food industry in America's Fifties.

He is disturbed by the question why after so many years the problem is still not solved, why people continue to make unhealthy and sometimes fatal choices.

His research and analysis on the topic only multiplying the questions.

What if this problem cannot be solved with the usual tools?

What if it's not rules that are more important to solve the problem, but the behavioral decisions of individuals?

What if the root of this problem lies deep within the subconsciousness of people?

«Mad River» is a hero's attempt to find the answers - the one hero's journey through the whole universe of environmental and human health problems and a fresh look at these issues through human psychology optics.

Story Summary:

Film starts with documentary footage. Cars spraying DDT driving through the city's streets, people drinking liquid DDT to prove it's not dangerous, children playing in smoke puffs, people painting apartment walls with DDT. Hero meets scientists working in the field of pesticides effects on humans and nature. They talk about DDT, what it is, what it was used for and how it affected the environment. Also, they discuss research proving connection between DDT and cancer morbidity rate. Hero realizes that people used DDT massively and uncontrollably because of the advertising campaign convinced people of its safety. One of the scientists who is studying pesticides told the hero about Rachel Carson. This woman published a book in 1962, which brings together all the research on pesticides and DDT. The book became a bestseller and was the beginning of the anti-DDT movement, which was soon banned.

Scientists telling hero that pesticides can be accumulated by human body and become one of the cancer development causes. Also, hero realizes through research that food additives (E-numbers) can cause cancer too, adding more risk for cancer morbidity rate growth. To understand what cancer is, the hero decides to interview people with cancer.

To prove the theory that food contains chemicals, the hero conducts his own investigation and gives food from a regular store to a laboratory for analysis. Experiment confirms that food contains a huge amount of preservatives.

Hero recalls that wild animals do not have several types of diseases that are common for humans and domestic animals. Hero interviews veterinarians about animal nutrition and its possible connection to certain types of disease. In every interview hero hears that research on a particular issue has existed for a long time, this is not new information. Hero recalls Rachel Carson's research and following DDT prohibition events and asks the question "why was DDT banned not immediately after scientists proved that it was dangerous, but after the book became famous and John Kennedy asked scientists to check facts from that book?"

Hero delves into reasoning and recalls many similar examples over the past hundred years. At the beginning of the 20th century all people considered goods containing radioactive elements not harmful, but even useful. Millions of people drank radioactive water and brushed teeth with toothpaste containing radium, used radioactive cosmetics and even medicines. In the 70s, tobacco advertisements said it was useful. Hero notes that in all these seemingly different cases, the core problem stays the same. He understands that history repeats itself over and over again.

In second part of the film hero appears as a lecturer at university auditorium. He points to a blackboard where all his theses are compiled to a mind map. Hero is discussing why history repeats itself and realizes that the reason of this cycle is the lack of critical thinking. Modern people believe they do not repeat previous mistakes, but people of the past thought the same way, fundamentally nothing has changed, problem just reshaped into another form.

The lecture continues and he talks about people who are trying to convey to society important information about the dangers of certain goods through documentaries, articles, etc. The hero interviews the creators of documentary films. He also learns about examples of the struggle of some companies and states for the health of ordinary people.

Hero asks experts why the result of such a large-scale struggle is so insignificant and comes to the conclusion that this is an imaginary struggle. The problem is not that people do not know about importance of healthy eating or harm done by smoking, but that due to errors of thinking and unconsciousness, people go in circles and make the same mistakes.

He interviews a doctor about the problem of new diseases appearing every year. In his opinion, this is a complex problem in which pesticides and additives in food playing an important role. The hero notes that it is almost impossible to find products in the store without pesticides or any other additives.

Hero begins an experiment to understand how eating foods offered by well-known brands will affect his health. He consults with doctors and takes tests before starting two weeks of unhealthy nutrition. During the experiment, the hero notices constant fatigue, mood swings and thinking cloudiness. After two weeks, the hero takes tests again and sees the deterioration of health indicators.

The hero says that he cannot change people, and 99% of all people on the planet and in this audience are not ready to be conscious, which means themselves are to blame for most personal problems, health issues and that they are deserving their social status.

The hero finishing the lecture. He returns to the mind map and goes through all of his theses again, restoring the logic of the narrative. At some point listeners starting to act as lecturers themselves. Until the end of the summary across the entire mind map, different people acting as lecturers, and the audience is gradually filled with new people, which symbolizes the transfer of knowledge from the hero to his listeners and shows how the idea is passed on to the new people. At the end, the hero asks the question "what if at least 10% of people become conscious about their lives, health, about environment and other people?". He shows adjusted statistics on cancer, diabetes and stroke mortality rates, the number of homeless people, orphans, murders, crimes and shows that the world will only get better thanks to this. When the lecture comes to an end, we see that there are no empty seats in the audience and people are listening standing there. The hero ends the lecture with the words: "Any changes are met with resistance. Women rights, the prohibition of child labor, the abolition of slavery. In all cases, rotten tomatoes flew at the activists and this did not mean that they were wrong in their ideas. This is an indicator that they were against the fact that people wanted to keep things comfortable for them and unconsciousness is one of these things. We cannot force people to wake up, it does not work, we can only point people to the right door, open it and enter - this is everyone's choice and I believe - sooner or later everyone will make the right choice."

Topic Summary: Issues of human health and healthy nutrition are the most urgent social problems today. Each year about 9 million people die from cancer, 18 million from cardiovascular diseases, and 1.5 million from diabetes.

Selected topics covered by *«Mad River»*:

1 - History of chemicals usage in the food industry:

Radioactive goods and food with radium impurities at the beginning of the 20th century. Practice of DDT usage in agriculture in the 50s of the 20th century. History of tobacco industry. Nutritional supplements.

Cancer morbidity and death rate statistics of the past and its connection to chemicals usage in food production industry.

2 - The present and future of the food industry:

Nutritional supplements, carcinogens and chemicals. Alcohol consumption. Healthy nutrition. State regulation of the food industry. Food advertising and its psychological perception. Statistics and death rates on cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases in 21st century.

3 - Conclusion

Connection to the story: The team discovered a problem that is revealed in this documentary while working on another project - a full-length feature film. We have watched other documentaries on the topic and came up with a more modern and less radical view on the issue. Unlike documentaries of past decades, our point of view is not an ultimatum, but offers to viewers the infinite freedom of choice.

In my family, the entire female line was sick with cancer. Several of our friends now have cancer, we accessed people who are fighting the cancer right now in the hospital and one of the reasons why we decided to explore this topic is that we want to understand why so many people have cancer right now. We're working with communities of people who are at risk or already suffering from cancer and we can communicate directly with them. At the same time, this topic relates to each of us, and we will tell you what to do to reduce the risk of getting cancer.

Artistic Approach: Mad River Documentary is a classical "hero's journey". The script structure reveals the dramatical change in hero's perception paradigm, shows how his path affected him and the surrounding people and closes all the conflicts emerged in the narrative process. We will liven up the story and make it interesting for the viewer by adding humorous elements during interactions with ordinary people on the street, developing conflicts that are revealed in the story, and by adding documentary archival footage that seems impossible and shocking for a modern person. When we finished the structure of the script, we made sure several times that there is a conflict in each scene and that each scene is fun and interesting.

Also, there is a parallel story in the film about a man from the 50s, who tried to save his small town from DDT by his own. He put the chemical in barrels and threw it into the swamp. He could not tell others about the dangers of DDT due to mental problems. They mocked him and called him insane because they did not understand. In the end, he tragically dies at the hands of his neighbor, who believed that it was he who poisoned the entire district, but the truth was that hero actually fought the pollution. This story has something in common with modern times - recently the burial of DDT barrels of those years was found near Los Angeles.

Journalistic Practice:

1. Accessing public records. Archival data and videos will form about 20 percent of the overall film length. We used journalistic methods of search and analysis of data in archival documents and also determined the correlations between data blocks. Our film will contain interviews with experts on the central theme of the film and related fields of science, as well as interviews with people influenced by the film's issues in private life. While making these interviews we will use journalistic principles and techniques and adhere to modern journalistic ethics.
2. Anticipated challenges:
 - a. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face meetings have become impossible. We will use Skype or other similar video call apps to protect health of our team and interviewees.
 - b. Searching for necessary archival and modern data was also difficult for us. We used only reliable sources and doubted any information until confirmed by at least three other trustworthy sources.
3. Other work related to our topic. That Sugar Film (2014), The Game Changers (2018). Our project differs from these and many other similar projects and its uniqueness are in the fact that we're

working with the core of the problem, offering solutions, and do not conducting an imaginary struggle.

Project Stages and Timeline: By April 2021 we have finished principal photography, editing and post-production of 15 minutes long live-action segment of the film. The structure of the script and the script itself for main documentary parts of the film have been completed.

April 2021 - September 2021 - Fundraising, applying for grants

April 2021 - May 2021 - Collecting footage from archives and stock footage banks

May 2021 - October 2021 - Interviews filming

November 2021 - Revision of the budget structure and adding interview footage to the rough cut

November 2021 - December 2022 - Principal photography

January 2022 - February 2022 - Editing and Sound Design

February 2022 - March 2022 - Color correction

March 2022 - Deliverables preparation

March 2022 - June 2022 - Marketing

COVID-19 Considerations: Our team is responsible for their own health and the safety of others. We're following all World Health Organization recommendations on COVID-19. We were able to adapt and completely switch to remote work for our project development phase (there is only one employee working in our Los Angeles office). Due to the COVID-19 situation, we had problems with self-financing of our project and this is the only consequence of the pandemic.

Intended Audience and Distribution Strategy: 'The Mad River Documentary' and its associated media products will be marketed to a clearly defined niche – audience concerned about issues of environment, healthcare, nutrition, chemicals usage in food production and other related topics.

Our secondary market consists of low-to-middle income groups including BIPOC communities and other groups that, for economic reasons, do not always have enough access to education. Our film content can help raise nutrition and health awareness among these groups and directly enhance their quality of life by non-economic instruments.

Overall, contents of 'Mad River Documentary' are appropriate to wide range of different audiences regardless of gender, race, nationality or social origin.

An important additional niche of our project is youth (generations Y and Z, high-school and college students and young adults) for whom 'Mad River' will serve as additional source of non-academic education and help them to navigate in matters of health awareness in the future.

We're planning to reach our audience by using marketing and distribution tools relevant for intended age range.

1. Marketing strategy concentrated on social media advertising campaigns (including viral marketing campaigns).
2. Distribution via popular VOD platforms (Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, etc.)
3. Additional advertising using free digital companion products such as mobile apps, e-books, podcasts etc.

Impact: Our goal is to convince people to pay attention to the products' composition and to choose products containing less chemicals. For example, two similar products can stand side by side on the same supermarket shelf, but to be extremely different in their composition – first can contain three ingredients while another to have more than fifty ingredients, including harmful ones.

The second goal is to convince food manufacturers to start make product labels with composition clearer for buyers so they could easily understand what they are buying and compare contents with other products (for example, to put the composition in capital letters on the product label) and reduce the amount of chemicals in products.

Key Creative Personnel:

<https://vimeo.com/538868730> – Interview with key creatives

Colin Anderson, producer, co-director.

Colin worked as a consultant on some of the previous Pavel Kildau projects, worked as location manager at early stages of Mad River production and made a part of initial investment in this project. Staying proactively concerned about environmental issues in his art projects, Colin (being African American and identified as LGBTQ+) is also an active minorities rights advocate. Founder and editor of LGBTQ+ “Risk” magazine.

Pavel Kildau, director.

Pavel Kildau was born in 1990 in Kyiv, Ukraine. He got his first experience at the age of 6, when he got a present from his grandfather from LA - a new VHS camera.

Pavel is passionate about adding a fashion touch to the films and videos he makes. He has worked with many prominent agencies: Vogue, Saatchi & Saatchi, Next Models, Letgo etc. He makes valuable contributions to the fashion industry through his fashion films with Vogue UA.

Pavel directed a numerous amount of music videos, TV commercials and a couple of short films participated in several film festivals.

Pavel did live-action section of our movie (see visual samples)

Dmitry Korikov, producer, screenwriter, actor.

Dmitry was born in Saint Petersburg, Russia in 1991. In 2015 he relocated to United States and since then, he has been working in New York as a producer and an actor on the short film «*High Line*». Film was selected for programs of Independent Days International Film Festival (Germany), Cefalu Film Festival (Italy), Sarajevo Film Festival (Bosnia and Herzegovina). After moving to Los Angeles, he founded the DK FILMS company with headquarters in Hollywood.

Dmitry traveled around North America for about a year and began filming 2 seasons of travelling-themed documentary series Landstormers. He travelled throughout all the states (including Alaska) and across all the Canada. From 2016 to 2017, the company released 4 short films. After attending Venice Film Market and Sundance Film Festival in 2017, Dmitry with DK FILMS started production of their first feature «*9 Incredible Stories*», which is fully funded by private sources.

Dmitry identifies as LGBTQ+ and he is active disability rights advocate.

Diversity and Inclusion:

Despite the fact that the main topic and point of our common interest is healthcare and environmental issues, it was important for us to assemble a team of persons with different identities, social backgrounds and points of view. Among the key personnel of Mad River Documentary are: African Americans (Colin Anderson – producer, co-director), women (Kseniya Yorsh – chief line producer and Vlada Bozhanova – web designer and SMM specialist), LGBTQ+ persons (Colin Anderson, Dmitry Korikov and Vlada Bozhanova).

We believe that diverse, unique and deeply personal views on the topic will help us to form the fresh, modern and versatile piece of art.

Who has creative control over the project? Pavel Kildau (as director), Colin Anderson (as producer and co-director), Dmitry Korikov (as producer). Initial investment for this project was done partially by Dmitry Korikov (as well as for all other DK FILMS projects) and Colin Anderson.

Fundraising Strategy: We have collected and analyzed a list of grant sources and formed the final long list of more than 150 funds and grant programs meeting the mission of our project (we examined both –

grants, focused on funding documentary films only, and grants with much more broad specialization, such as media, arts and humanities). Now we're starting to build connection with these programs' grant managers and are ready to send actual applications. Also, our team is now in negotiations about most efficient potential fiscal sponsorship program to manage future financial relationship with grantors. After finishing the film, we will launch the second fundraising round through crowdfunding to do pre-sale of the film as well as market it.

Our team is pursuing institutional and private investments and donations, corporate sponsorships and marketing partnerships as well.

We plan to significantly enhance "Mad River" project's budget by in-kind contributions (for example, to engage volunteer experts and speakers on our topics or reduce print and advertising expenses by contracting our marketing sponsors and partners).

Funding to Date: Private funding - we have used only our own money to date.

Comprehensive Line-Item Expense Budget: see attachment

Visual Samples:

1. <https://youtu.be/jpLbM8hDhMw> «TSUM 80», 2019, Pavel Kildau (Director), Colin Anderson (Producer)

A documentary film TSUM 80, in which cultural figures, historians, designers and representatives of the current team discover the secrets of their work and explain how the TSUM Kyiv became the way we know it today.

2. <https://vimeo.com/182355882> «Molotov Cocktail», 2016, Pavel Kildau (Director) pass: molotov#69#

"Molotov Cocktail" is a love story between protagonists Anna and Alexander, who turned up to opposite sides of the political game: she is an activist of the revolution, he is a captain of special forces unit. Film had won the main award in "Best World Cinema" section of 5th Delhi International Film Festival. Film contains documentary footage shot during Ukraine revolution in 2014.

Mad River Documentary is an author's reflection on a new topic, exploration of different ideas and emotions. This film does not overlap with previous works.

3. <https://vimeo.com/538547718/506590c6ca>

Main story is documentary. Sample is a small feature part of the film. It appears several times. Sample is starting with a fragment that conveys the atmosphere and overall mood of the film and partially conveys its overall idea. This live-action material has already been filmed and funded from private sources, and we're not planning to use grant money to refund this part of the film. Sample is a parallel story in the film about a man from the 50s, who tried to save his small town from DDT by his own. He put the chemical in barrels and threw it into the swamp. He could not tell others about the dangers of DDT due to mental problems. They mocked him and called him insane because they did not understand. In the end, he tragically dies at the hands of his neighbor, who believed that it was he who poisoned the entire district, but the truth was that hero actually fought the pollution. Story reveal in narration which is not recorded yet, but some subtitles attached. Sample is missing scenes in the audience, interviews and voiceovers. Sample also has a feature scene from our time with protagonist

watching our documentary. In the end of the sample there are examples of documentary footage that will be used in the film.

List of speakers:

- David Valentine (Ecology, evolution, oceanography, climate change, biotechnology, bioengineering, marine geology and geophysics, interactions of microbes and the Earth system)
He had discovered and researched a DDT dumping ground off the California coast
 - Amro Hamdoun (Biology, chemistry)
 - Eunha Hoh (Environmental pollution and its impact on human health)
 - Mark Gold (Research on drugs, tobacco and food effects on the human brain and behavior)
 - Johanna T. Dwyer (Professor of Nutrition at Tufts University School of Nutrition, Senior Scientist, Jean Mayer/USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University)
 - Aleksandra Badora (Relation of food additives and human health)
- (list will be updated)