

NARRATIVE SYNOPSIS

My mother is a German-Jew, born during WWII. By contrast, my father is an African-American, who was raised in the segregated south of Georgia. My three older sisters and I are a remarkable mix of our parents and were affectionately referred to as "Army Brats" growing up. Although we were raised on a number of military bases around the world, it was in Radcliff, Kentucky, a small town outside of Fort Knox, where our lives were changed forever.

Growing up I fantasized about being Chuck Connors in THE RIFLEMAN. At the age of ten I discovered my father's military rifles and accidentally shot one of my sisters in the leg. Believing she would die from her injuries, my sister revealed to my mother and later the police, that our father had sexually abused her and my other two sisters for years. I witnessed my father's arrest and the unraveling of our family. My parents divorced. My sisters and I were sent to foster homes and unwelcoming relatives, who blamed my mother for having their brother (my father) arrested. My father was found guilty of sexual assault in the 1st degree and sent to a Kentucky minimum-security prison on Valentine's Day, 1979. He was released less than one year later.

As I grew older and came to understand the full magnitude of what my father did to my sisters, I began to detest the man I once admired as a kind of "G.I. Joe" action hero. As a result, I cut off contact with my father for more than fifteen years. Surprisingly, all three of my sisters continued seeing my father immediately after he was released from prison, spending weekends and holidays at his home and even leaving their children (his grandchildren) alone with him from time-to-time. In 2002, while visiting one of my sisters in Kentucky, my father arrived at a Thanksgiving dinner and was warmly welcomed by a number of adoring family members, my sisters and friends. Although I did not know it at the time, this would be the start of my documentary FAMILY AFFAIR.

At first, this documentary ran the risk of turning into a crude indictment of my father, a figure the audience is sure to view as a "monster". While that assessment might be unavoidable, I do not want the audience to *only* view him or other pedophiles as a one-dimensional "monster-like" figure. In point of fact, in the USUAL SUSPECTS Kevin Spacey's character, Verbal Kint, a seemingly crippled con man, explains to one of the investigating officers that "Keyser Soze," an omnipotent, "monster-like" figure was, in fact -- *real*. Spacey tells the doubting detective that the greatest trick the devil ever played was convincing the world that he did not exist. Similarly, my father's health is ailing. Overweight and with the right side of his body atrophied from multiple strokes, he no longer resembles the menacing figure embedded in my childhood memories. And while he remains in denial about the *unspeakable* atrocities he committed against my sisters, I can't help but feel that the companionship my sisters share with him makes them complicit in *his* attempts to convince the world that he too is not a monster.

FAMILY AFFAIR does not attempt to mitigate the long-term dysfunctional impact of incest. Instead, this documentary reshapes the commonly held view that molesters are pushed to the margins of society, never to reconnect with their victim/survivors. In the end, the film focuses on the motives, accommodations and levels of forgiveness survivors make in order to maintain some semblance of family.

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Please visit www.c-linefilms.com to read a full synopsis and view clips of the film.