

When Billy Broke His Head and Other Tales of Wonder

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Video Link: <http://www.brainline.org/content/multimedia.php?id=1782>

Video Description

“This ain’t your basic inspirational cripple story.” So says Billy Golfus, narrator and writer of this pithy and moving documentary. Winner of the Sundance Festival’s Freedom of Expression Award in 1995, *When Billy Broke His Head* is irreverent, funny, and at times shocking and raw; it was made to challenge the public’s perception of the disabled. Billy, who sustained a TBI in a motor scooter crash, is someone you will not soon forget.

Distributed by Fanlight Productions. To get a copy of the complete documentary for educational use, please go to: http://www.fanlight.com/catalog/films/136_wbbhh.php

If you are an individual with a disability, please contact Billy Golfus at: <http://www.wbbhh.com/buy.html>

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Billy Golfus: It feels just incredible to be on the road again. I've been pretty isolated for eight years since this car crunched me. Too busy just trying to survive. I went from being so brain damaged I couldn't count change to finishing a master's degree. But this ain't exactly your inspirational cripple story. Part of the fun of being brain damaged is you're constantly having to argue there is in fact something wrong. People see the limp, but they don't see the loss of memory, the judgment problems, the going to the bathroom 37 times a night, the difficulty swallowing, the abandonment and isolation. Here I'm going to Chicago for this gathering of disabled people. There are 43 million of us in this country, but we are as invisible as Casper, the Ghost. I'd only known a few other disabled people in Minnesota, so nothing prepared me for what I was about to walk into.

[People chanting]

Billy Golfus: Like everybody else, I thought disabled folks were supposed to act tragic, but brave or else cute and inspirational, but these folks weren't sticking to the script. The people watching were shocked that these kids were so angry, but that was how I come I knew we were in the same club.

[People chanting]

Billy Golfus: Chicago was the first time I knew I wasn't alone.

[Music]

Billy Golfus: I stopped my scooter at a stop sign and the car behind me didn't. It threw me 67 feet. It's a good thing I had a helmet in the trunk in case I needed it.

[Music]

Audience Member 1: We want you feel what's happening here tonight Billy. It's for you. We love you.

Billy Golfus: So, I'm lying in the hospital unconscious when I decided to have this big benefit for me. It was a sellout.

Audience Member 2: We love you.

Audience Member 3: We miss you. Get well soon.

Billy Golfus: I've been on the radio with the rock and roll show that walks and kills. I've been to the scene for years. So, the benefit is jammed with 1500 people all telling me I'm their best friend.

Audience Member 4: It's me, wake up, will you?

Audience Member 5: I feel like I'm the only person in Minneapolis who hasn't met you yet.

[Music]

Billy Golfus: You'd think all I got to do is wake up from the coma and everything is cool, right -- wrong!

[Pause]

Billy Golfus: When I came home from the hospital my body and spirit were broken. I was brain damaged and I've lost partial use of my left arm and leg. The doctors were talking to Mamma about a nursing home for the rest of my life. I went from gallons of people around me to nobody there in a couple of months. The best job I could think of was selling pencils at the bus station. Things did not look good for the home team.

[Music]