

Film Review: Truth Upstages Fiction Again in ‘Three Identical Strangers’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on July 6, 2018 - 10:03am

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CHICAGO – The eternal debate of what affects human development more, our nature or our nurturing, opens up again in the wild story of “Three Identical Strangers,” a new documentary about triplets who were separated at birth, only to discover each other by chance and uncover some difficult truths about that separation.



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

The structure of the film is an absorbing series of reveals by director Tim Wardle, with each new revelation so exceptional it serves to negate the story up to that point. It also has some uncomfortable examinations of identical triplets and twins who are separated, where in a sense they are the same because of DNA, but also have differences that are due to being raised in different families. There is also some sleight of hand in this part of the debate, as the filmmaker takes the us down one path, only to make us realize we never should have considered it. And while this film is well done and comprehensive overall, it still lacks some fundamental answers regarding the triplets and the whole truth behind their adoptions. Truth, unlike fiction, is always much messier.

In the State of New York in 1980, a new freshman arrives at a small upstate community college. When he gets there people already recognize him, in a type of Twilight Zone weirdness. A classmate intervenes and tells the newbie that he has an identical twin that had previously attended the school, and convinces the kid to call him. They have a reunion that is picked up in the media... David Gellman and Bobby Shafran are together again for the first time since birth.

But the story doesn't end there. Another teen, Eddy Galland, sees the news stories about the pair, and realizes that he looks identical to them. He then calls them, and they all come to the conclusion they were placed in families from the same adoption agency. They immediately become media darlings, as their similarities are celebrated, and they eventually run a restaurant together. But there other truths yet to be revealed, and leads to some darker ramifications.

“Three Identical Strangers” continues its nationwide limited release in Chicago on July 6th. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring interviews and archival footage of Eddy Galland, David Kellman and Bobby Shafran. Directed by Tim Wardle. Rated “PG-13”



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Bobby Shafran, David Gellman and Eddy Galland in ‘Three Identical Strangers’
Photo credit: Neon

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