



P.O.V.

Season 18

Discussion Guide

# Big Enough

A Film by Jan Krawitz



[www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov)



## Letter from the Filmmaker

### Dear Viewer,

In 1981, I co-directed *Little People*, an 88-minute documentary that was released in 1982. The idea was catalyzed by a “filler” article I read in the newspaper about “The Mini-Gators,” a group of dwarfs in Florida who got together periodically to share experiences. Research led us to the Short Stature Symposium at Johns Hopkins Hospital and eventually to Little People of America, a national organization that today has 5,000 members. *Little People* depicted the change in attitude that was occurring among dwarfs as they struggled toward equal opportunity and enhanced self-esteem. It premiered at the New York Film Festival, played at festivals here and abroad, and was broadcast nationally on PBS in 1984. *Little People* was nominated for a national Emmy Award for “Outstanding Individual Documentary.”

As a documentary filmmaker for thirty years, I have never been tempted to return to the subject matter of a previous film. Documentary affords the luxury of becoming a temporary expert in one area; I can immerse myself in a subject for several years before moving on to a new topic. Although I maintained occasional contact with several dwarfs who I met through *Little People*, I had not thought about how societal changes had affected them. Five years ago, I began to consider the possibility of reconnecting with some of the individuals who appeared in *Little People* to see how their lives had changed over the interim twenty years. Did eleven-year-old Mark retain his confidence and optimism as an adult? Did sixteen-year-old Karla marry a little person, as she had hoped? Did the “second-generation” dwarf children of Ron and Sharon (a newly married childless couple in *Little People*) have an easier time growing up because of the experience of having dwarf parents? I joined a dwarfism Listserv and quickly became aware of the current concerns of the “little people” who participated in the online dialogue.

In this new film, I was interested in finding out whether the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) or the gene mapping for achondroplasia (the most common type of dwarfism) had made an impact on individual lives. I was also curious to see whether the “second-generation” children who were growing up with dwarf parents had an easier time of it than did their parents, all of whom were born into average-sized families. Was life easier for little people in our current society, with its professed accommodation of diversity?

I contacted five individuals who had appeared in *Little People* to float the possibility of a second film. They all readily agreed (although Len Sawisch informed me that he had “retired” from being a dwarf seven years earlier) and production began in 2000. For the past five years, I have again become a part of a community of dwarfs whose generosity in sharing their feelings and beliefs has enabled me to create ***Big Enough***. My involvement with this group of people over the past twenty-five years has been the most significant experience of my filmmaking career.

***Big Enough*** is a record of a particular moment in time in the lives of those who appear in the documentary. Tragically, Anu Trombino, whose indomitable spirit pervades the film, died in late May. It is some comfort that ***Big Enough*** will endure as a legacy to her magnetic presence and enable so many people to meet this truly remarkable woman.

Sincerely,

**Jan Krawitz**

Director, ***Big Enough***



Filmmaker Jan Krawitz



## Table of Contents

<b>4</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Background Information</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>General Information</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Glossary of Terms</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Statistics</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Key People Featured in the Film</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Using This Guide</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Planning an Event</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Facilitating a Discussion</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Finding a Facilitator</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Preparing Yourself</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Preparing the Group</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>General Discussion Questions</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Discussion Prompts</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Taking Action</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>How to Buy the Film</b>

## Credits, Acknowledgements

### **Writer**

Suzanne Guthrie  
*Producer, LAB @ Thirteen*

### **Guide Producers**

Cara Mertes  
*Executive Director, P.O.V.*

Eliza Licht  
*Community Engagement Manager, P.O.V.*

Shabnam Ahamed  
*Community Engagement Assistant, P.O.V.*

Design: Rafael Jiménez

Copy Editor: Anne Hellman

### **Thanks to those who reviewed this guide:**

Dan Kennedy  
*Author, "Little People: Learning to See the World Through My Daughter's Eyes"*

Jan Krawitz

Faith Michel  
*Director of Outreach, Maryland Public Television*



## Introduction

Created by Jan Krawitz, *Big Enough* is a film about self-discovery, self-acceptance, and the culture and community of dwarfism. By revisiting five individuals Jan Krawitz met in her 1982 film, *Little People*, and hearing about their everyday lives, dating, marriage, family, school, as well as some of the difficulties they face as people of small stature, including physical and emotional issues, we are given an opportunity to understand what it is like to live in an average-size world as a person of small stature.

Through each interview we observe how views change as individuals grow, and how sometimes the idealistic views we have as teenagers are challenged, along with our self-esteem.

*Big Enough* also exposes viewers to the issue of accessibility and introduces the question, "What is accessibility, and how does society reach out to communities that are different from the perceived average?" By following individuals through their daily lives we are given an opportunity to observe persons of small stature completing daily tasks, tasks that as an average-size person you would have little or no difficulty completing, such as getting money from an ATM, buying clothing, cooking dinner, or doing laundry.

*Big Enough* introduces viewers to a strong and diverse community of individuals who struggle with being different from the average-size person but who also face the same challenges we all do in transitioning from our teenage years and early twenties into the world of adulthood and family.

The film delves into the issue of cultural exclusion and genetic testing. What is "normal" and who determines what is normal? What bearing will those decisions have on society and on the dwarf community?

As an outreach tool, *Big Enough* can help communities think about acceptance, difference, self-identity, and community and

how being perceived as different from the "average" can affect your self-esteem and the health of a society. It can also help people move beyond the cultural stereotypes that have been accepted and develop a better understanding of what it means to be a member of the dwarf community and society as a whole.

*Airing June 28, 2005, at 10 P.M.*



*Teenage Karla driving her car*  
Courtesy of "Big Enough"



## Potential Partners

## Key Issues

**Big Enough** is well suited for use in a variety of settings and is especially recommended for use with:

- **Chapters of Little People of America ([www.lpaonline.org/lpa\\_districts.html](http://www.lpaonline.org/lpa_districts.html)), Human Growth Foundation, Little People's Research Fund, Inc.**
- **Groups focused on any of the issues listed to the right**
- **Government agencies (specific types that deal with issues at hand)**
- **Faith-based organizations**
- **Family organizations**
- **Youth organizations**
- **Academic departments and student groups at colleges, universities, community colleges, and high schools**
- **Community organizations with a mission to promote education and learning such as P.O.V.'s national partners Elderhostel Learning in Retirement Centers, members of the Listen Up! Network, or your local library.**

**Big Enough** is an excellent tool for dialogue because it challenges many of the stereotypes and views that most average-size people have regarding dwarfism. It also challenges common views on community, culture, and personal-identity issues. It will be of special interest to people who are interested in exploring or working on the issues below:

- **Dwarfism**
- **Accessibility**
- **Tolerance education**
- **Health care and accessibility to health care**
- **Identity and self-esteem**
- **Diversity issues**
- **Discrimination**
- **Disability laws (content and implementation of the laws and rights)**
- **Genetics counseling**
- **Parent advocacy**
- **Public policy**
- **Social justice**
- **Social responsibility**
- **Stereotypes**



## Background Information

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Little People of America (LPA), a nonprofit organization that provides support and information to people of short stature and their families, defines dwarfism as a medical or genetic condition that usually results in an adult height of 4'10" or shorter, among both men and women, although in some cases a person with a dwarfing condition may be slightly taller than that.

By far the most frequently diagnosed cause of short stature is achondroplasia, a genetic condition that results in disproportionately short arms and legs. (The term "disproportionate" is meant only as a point of comparison with people who do not have achondroplasia or any other type of skeletal dysplasia. The arms and legs of a person with achondroplasia are perfectly appropriate for someone with that genetic condition.) The average height of adults with achondroplasia is 4'0".

Although achondroplasia accounts for perhaps 70 percent of all cases of dwarfism, there are approximately two hundred diagnosed types, and some individuals with dwarfism never receive a definitive diagnosis. Other genetic conditions that result in short stature include spondyloepiphyseal dysplasia congenita (SED), diastrophic dysplasia, pseudoachondroplasia, hypochondroplasia, and osteogenesis imperfecta (OI). As one might expect from their names, pseudoachondroplasia and hypochondroplasia are conditions that are frequently confused with achondroplasia; diastrophic dysplasia occasionally is, too.

These conditions are essentially untreatable, although some people with achondroplasia and hypochondroplasia have undergone painful (and controversial) limb-lengthening surgery.



*Young Mark Trombino at bat  
Courtesy of "Big Enough"*

Proportionate dwarfism—that is, a short-stature condition that results in the arms, legs, trunk, and head being the same size in relation to each other as would be expected with an average-size person—is often the result of a hormonal deficiency, and may be treated medically. This condition is commonly referred to as growth-hormone deficiency.

Dwarfs or other people of short stature (either proportionate or disproportionate) come from all walks of life and ethnic backgrounds. Most people with dwarfism are born to average-size parents with no history of dwarfism in the family. (For more information, visit [www.lpaonline.org](http://www.lpaonline.org).)



## Background Information

### Below is a glossary of these terms:

#### **Achondroplasia**

Of the estimated two hundred types of dwarfism, achondroplasia is by far the most common. Achondroplastic dwarfism is characterized by an average-size trunk, short arms and legs, and a slightly enlarged head and prominent forehead. Most achondroplastic dwarfs are born to average-size parents, and account for somewhere between one in 26,000 and one in 40,000 births. Adults, on average, are four feet tall. Young children, especially, should be examined for such potential problems as central apnea, obstructive apnea, and hydrocephalus.

#### **Diastrophic dysplasia**

A relatively common form of dwarfism (about one in 100,000 births) first differentiated in 1960; before that, diastrophic dysplasia had been thought to be a different form of achondroplasia. The condition is often characterized by short-limbed dwarfism and, in some cases, cleft palate, clubfeet, "hitchhiker's thumb," and ears with a cauliflower appearance. Respiratory problems are sometimes present in infancy, but lifespan is normal. Serious orthopedic problems often require numerous surgical procedures.

#### **Growth-hormone deficiency**

Children with growth-hormone deficiency often grow normally until they are two or three years old, then fall behind their peers. Growth-hormone deficiency affects an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 people in the United States. Difficult to diagnose, it can be treated with regular injections of human growth hormone. Unlike skeletal dysplasias such as achondroplasia, diastrophic dysplasia, and SED, growth-hormone deficiency causes a short-stature condition in which a person's head, trunk, and limbs are in the same proportion as an average-size person's. A person with this appearance used to be known as a midget, although that term is now considered offensive.

#### **Osteogenesis imperfecta (OI)**

Between 20,000 and 50,000 Americans live with this genetic condition, which is characterized by brittle bones. There are four types of OI. Type III is a dwarfism condition, with adults generally reaching a height of three feet, although profound short stature is often associated with the other three types as well. Hearing loss is common among adults.

#### **Pseudoachondroplasia**

As the name implies, pseudoachondroplasia, like hypochondroplasia, was once thought to be closely related to achondroplasia. However, geneticists have since learned otherwise. In appearance, pseudoachondroplastic dwarfs share the same height as those with achondroplasia, but their head size is the same as that of average-size people, and they lack the facial features characteristic of achondroplasia. Children often are not diagnosed until they are two to three years old. Pseudoachondroplasia is associated with osteoarthritis and other orthopedic problems.

#### **Spondyloepiphyseal dysplasia congenita**

More commonly known as SEDc, or simply as SED, this genetic condition results in short stature, with adult height usually varying from slightly under three feet to slightly over four feet, although some adults are much taller. Other characteristics can include clubfeet, a cleft palate, and a barrel-chested appearance. SED is associated with a variety of medical problems, mainly orthopedic. SED occurs approximately once in every 100,000 births, making it, along with achondroplasia and diastrophic dysplasia, one of the most common forms of dwarfism.



## Background Information

### Other related terms:

#### Double-dominant syndrome

A person with achondroplasia has one dwarfism gene and one "average-size" gene. If both parents have achondroplasia, there is a 25 percent chance that their child will inherit the non-dwarfism gene from each parent and thus be average-size. There is a 50 percent chance the child will inherit one dwarfism gene and one non-dwarfism gene and thus have achondroplasia, just like her or his parents. And there is a 25 percent chance the child will inherit both dwarfism genes, a condition known as a double-dominant syndrome, and which invariably ends in death at birth or shortly thereafter.

#### Midget

In some circles, a "midget" is the term used for a proportionate dwarf. However, the term has fallen into disfavor and is considered offensive by most people of short stature. The term dates back to the 1860s, the height of the "freak show" era, and was generally applied only to short-statured persons who were displayed for public amusement, which is why it is considered so unacceptable today.

Such terms as "dwarf," "little person," "LP," and "person of short stature" are all acceptable, but most people would rather be referred to by their name than by a label.



*Anu and Mark Trombino pumping gas*

#### Statistics

According to information compiled by the Greenberg Center at Johns Hopkins Medical Center and by the late Lee Kitchens, a past president of Little People of America, the frequency of occurrence of the most common types of dwarfism is as follows:

- **Achondroplasia:** one per 26,000 to 40,000 births
- **Spondyloepiphyseal dysplasia congenital (SED):** one per 95,000 births
- **Diastrophic dysplasia:** one per 110,000 births

The information above was excerpted from the Little People of America website (<http://www.lpaonline.org>) with their permission. Copyright © 2005 by Little People of America, Inc. All rights reserved.





## Background Information

### Key People Featured in *Big Enough*



**Mark and Anu Trombino** – Married couple. They met at a Little People of America convention and have been married for four years. They now have a one-and-a-half-year-old daughter, Priya, who has the same type of dwarfism they have. Anu died on May 25, 2005 of injuries suffered in a car accident.



**Karla and John Lizzo** – When we first meet Karla as a teen she speaks of wanting to marry a little person, but when we see her twenty years later she is married to John, an average-size man. They are now living and working in southern New Jersey. They have decided not to have children.



**Len and Lenette Sawisch** – Married couple. Len was an activist for dwarfism issues when he was younger but he is now “retired from being a dwarf.” They have two children: Brandon, who is average-size, and Joelle, a dwarf. The family is living and working in Lansing, Michigan. Joelle is the president of the Disability Awareness and Education student group at Ferris State University. Because of his daughter’s “discovery” of the disability movement and his own participation in *Big Enough*, Len is “flirting with coming out of retirement for another decade or so of advocacy work.”



**Ron and Sharon Roskamp (now Sharon Ostendorf)** – They have two children with dwarfism: Alisha, who has just had surgery on her legs to straighten them, and Andrew, whose doctors at first thought he would be average-size. They divorced shortly after filming was completed. They both continue to live and work in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Their daughter, Alisha, is in high school and their son, Andrew, recently graduated from the University of Michigan.



## Using This Guide

**This guide is designed to help you use *Big Enough* as the centerpiece of a community event. It contains suggestions for convening an event as well as ideas for how to help participants think more deeply about the issues in the film. The discussion questions are designed for a very wide range of audiences. Rather than attempt to address them all, choose one or two that best meet the needs and interests of your group.**

### Planning an Event

In addition to showcasing documentary films as an art form, screenings of P.O.V. films can be used to present information, get people interested in taking action on an issue, provide opportunities for people from different groups or perspectives to exchange views, and/or create space for reflection. Using the questions below as a planning checklist will help ensure a high-quality/high-impact event.

- **Have you defined your goals?** With your partner(s), set realistic goals. Will you host a single event or engage in an ongoing project? Being clear about your goals will make it much easier to structure the event, target publicity, and evaluate results.
- **Does the way you are planning to structure the event fit your goals?** Do you need an outside facilitator, translator, or sign language interpreter? If your goal is to share information, are there local experts on the topic who should be present? How large an audience do you want? (Large groups are appropriate for information exchanges. Small groups allow for more intensive dialogue.)
- **Have you arranged to involve all stakeholders?** It is especially important that people be allowed to speak for themselves. If your group is planning to take action that affects people other than those present, how will you give voice to those not in the room?
- **Is the event being held in a space where all participants will feel equally comfortable?** Is it wheelchair accessible? Is it in a part of town that is easy to reach by various kinds of transportation? If you are bringing together different constituencies, is it neutral territory? Does the physical configuration allow for the kind of discussion you hope to have?
- **Will the room setup help you meet your goals?** Is it accessible? Is it comfortable? If you intend to have a discussion, can people see one another? Are there spaces to use for small break-out groups? Can everyone easily see the screen and hear the film?
- **Have you scheduled time to plan for action?** Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even if the discussion has been difficult. Action steps are especially important for people who already have a good deal of experience talking about the issue(s) on the table. For those who are new to the issue(s), just engaging in public discussion serves as an action step.



## Using This Guide

### Facilitating a Discussion

**Controversial or unusual topics often make for excellent discussions. By their nature, those same topics also give rise to deep emotions and strongly held beliefs. As a facilitator, you can create an atmosphere where people feel safe, encouraged, and respected, making it more likely that they will be willing to share openly and honestly. Here's how:**

### Finding a Facilitator

Some university professors, human resource professionals, clergy, and youth leaders may be specially trained in facilitation skills. In addition to these local resources, groups such as Little People of America or the Disability Rights Commission may also have strong discussion facilitators.

### Preparing Yourself

**Identify your own hot-button issues.** View the film before your event and give yourself time to reflect so you aren't dealing with raw emotions at the same time that you are trying to facilitate a discussion.

**Be knowledgeable.** You don't need to be an expert on water privatization to facilitate a discussion, but knowing the basics can help you keep a discussion on track and gently correct misstatements of fact. In addition to the Background section above, you may want to take a look at the suggested websites in the Resource section on page 18.

**Be clear about your role.** You may find yourself taking on several roles for an event, e.g., host, organizer, projectionist. If you are also planning to serve as facilitator, be sure that you can focus on that responsibility and avoid distractions during the discussion. Keep in mind that being a facilitator is not the same as being a teacher. A teacher's job is to convey specific information. In contrast, a facilitator remains neutral, helping move along the discussion without imposing their views on the dialogue.

**Know your group.** Issues can play out very differently for different groups of people. Is your group new to the issue or have they dealt with it before? Factors like geography, age, race, religion, and socioeconomic class, can all have an impact on comfort levels, speaking styles, and prior knowledge. If you are bringing together different segments of your community, we strongly recommend hiring an experienced facilitator.



## Using This Guide

### Preparing the Group

**Consider how well group members know one another.** If you are bringing together people who have never met, you may want to devote some time at the beginning of the event for introductions.

**Agree to ground rules around language.** Involve the group in establishing some basic rules to ensure respect and aid clarity. Typically such rules include no yelling or use of slurs and asking people to speak in the first person (“I think . . .”) rather than generalizing for others (“Everyone knows that . . .”).

**Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard.** Be clear about how people will take turns or indicate that they want to speak. Plan a strategy for preventing one or two people from dominating the discussion. If the group is large, are there plans to break into small groups or partners, or should attendance be limited?

**Talk about the difference between dialogue and debate.** In a debate, participants try to convince others that they are right. In a dialogue, participants try to understand each other and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening to each other actively. Remind people that they are engaged in a dialogue.

**Encourage active listening.** Ask the group to think of the event as being about listening, as well as discussing. Participants can be encouraged to listen for things that challenge as well as reinforce their own ideas. You may also consider asking people to practice formal “active listening,” where participants listen without interrupting the speaker, then rephrase to see if they have heard correctly.

**Remind participants that everyone sees through the lens of his or her own experience.** Who we are influences how we interpret what we see. So everyone in the group may have a different view about the content and meaning of film they have just seen, and all of them may be accurate. It can help people to understand one another’s perspectives if people identify the evidence on which they base their opinion as well as share their views.

**Take care of yourself and group members.** If the intensity level rises, pause to let everyone take a deep breath. You might also consider providing a safe space to “vent,” perhaps with a partner or in a small group of familiar faces. If you anticipate that people may be upset, be prepared to refer them to local support agencies and/or have local professionals present. Be sure to make it clear whether or not members of the press are present and whether comments are “on the record” or there is a reasonable expectation that requests for confidentiality will be honored.



## General Discussion Questions

When people begin to think about difficult or complex issues, reactions can be intense. You don't want to suppress passion, but you do want participants to be thoughtful as well as emotional, to reflect and not just react. So, immediately after the film, you may want to give people a few quiet moments to reflect on what they have seen or pose a general question and give people some time to themselves to jot down or think about their answer before opening the discussion.

Unless you think participants are so uncomfortable that they can't engage until they have had a break, don't encourage people to leave the room between the film and the discussion. If you save your break for an appropriate moment during the discussion, you won't lose the feeling of the film as you begin your dialogue.

- **If you could ask anyone in the film a single question, who would you ask and what would you ask them?**
- **What insights or new knowledge did you gain from this film?**
- **If you were going to tell a friend what this film was about, what would you say?**
- **Two months from now, what do you think you will remember from this film and why?**
- **Did anything in this film surprise you? If so, what? Why was it surprising?**



*Mark Trombino with his mother and two sisters  
Courtesy of "Big Enough"*

## Discussion Prompts



*Anu Trombino reaching into the freezer.*

### Personal Perceptions and Expectations

There are a number of different ways that people refer to people of short stature—the film primarily uses the terms “dwarf” and “short statured.” Do these words mean the same thing to you? How does the use of terms when describing someone change the way someone is perceived? What words do your community use? Why do you think people in your community use particular terms or choose to use particular terms?

Do you consider dwarfism to be a disability? Why or why not?

What words or images do you think of when you hear the word “disabled”? “dwarf”? “little person”? “midget”? How do the terms differ in the images they evoke?

Both Anu and Karla refer to being a little person and how it helped them to understand other people. “...I feel like I chose to be born a little person to see how do people treat you, how can you deal with it.” (Anu) “This experience of being a little person, I think it’s helped me mainly in understanding other people and being more tolerant of them.” (Karla) How do you think being a dwarf could help you understand others? What helps you to understand other people and their differences?

People of short stature are often identified exclusively by their height. Are there physical attributes that identify you or that you consider part of your identity? Do you think being short statured can be an advantage? As a child, Mark shares what the advantages are of being a little person: “It’s easier to hide when you’re playing hide and seek.” Do you think his opinion changed as he moved into adulthood? How?

Len speaks a lot about being active in the dwarf community. “...And I remember going home and thinking about it, saying, ‘If I’m going to be a dwarf, then I’m going to be the best dwarf I can be.’ Well, then the question is, what are other dwarfs like? I had to learn that. I had to immerse myself in the dwarf community to see myself in the context of other little people.” What makes a group of people a community?

Len then goes on to compare the dwarf community to other minority communities and activist movements. “They originally felt there was something wrong with them. Blacks used skin



## Discussion Prompts

lighteners and hair straighteners. It's the same kind of thing. That they felt there was something wrong, and yet now there's that concept of black pride. Now they didn't biologically change, but their attitude changed. And that's what began happening with me. If it changed for them, why shouldn't it change for me?" Do you feel that



*Brandon and Joelle Sawisch (left); Brandon Sawisch doing the dishes (right)*  
Courtesy of "Big Enough"

the dwarf community is the same as other minority communities? What makes it the same or what makes it different from other communities? How could Len's activism help his self-perception and self-esteem?

Anu says, "A couple of times a weekend you are reminded that you are different . . . someone takes a picture or insists they know how old you are . . ." How do you treat people who are different from you? How would you deal with being constantly reminded that you are different?

When Karla was interviewed as a teen she said she wanted to marry a little person. "You know, I plan on hoping to marry a little person because it's more difficult with average-size people. They're a little bit more apprehensive to ask you out." Karla ends up marrying an average-size man. How do you think her opinion has changed regarding being in a relationship with an average-size person?

Is parenting different for a little person? Are there issues that Len and Lenette face with their average-size son Brandon that are different from issues they face with their daughter Joelle who is a dwarf? Len mentioned that sometimes he felt that they had cheated Brandon because he was not a dwarf. What do you think Len meant?

Lenette speaks about Brandon's experience in public school. "When Brandon was in second grade it became obvious that the kids were teasing him about his parents. I sighed, and I said, 'I guess we have to go and make ourselves visible.' So we grabbed our poor cat and took our cat into the class for show and tell. And really, we were show and tell. He was just an excuse. There's always some children who can't let it go." What role does public education play in dispelling common myths and misconceptions regarding dwarfism?



## Discussion Prompts

What are some of the disadvantages faced by the little people we met in the film? How did they overcome some of these disadvantages?

### Genetics and Society

Sharon and Ron talk about having children and Sharon in particular discusses the idea of "selfishness." Sharon said that some people in the dwarf community believe "that you are being selfish if you do not have children . . . and some people say you are being selfish if you do have children." Who do you feel should make this decision? Should society play any part in a person's decision to have children? Who determines what is "normal?" Do medical issues play a role in the decision to have a child?

What impact will genetic identification have on how society views dwarfism?

What impact will genetic identification have on how the health needs and personal needs of little people are met?

What is the social and ethical implication of genetic identification in reference to dwarfism?

How does society "disable" people of short stature?



*Andrew Roskamp by his car*  
Courtesy of "Big Enough"





## Taking Action

Partner with a local organization, such as the regional chapter of Little People of America, to host an event in your community, including little people and their families. Screen segments of the film and have an open dialogue where issues raised in the film, such as acceptance, accessibility, and community, can be explored.



*Young Mark Trombino in PE class  
Courtesy of "Big Enough"*

Organize a day of education on issues of accessibility. Invite public policy makers, civic agencies, the business community, and the general public. Use this as an opportunity to explore ways in which your community can become more accessible to people of short stature.

Gather a group of young people together (Boys and Girls Clubs, Girl Scouts of the USA, Boy Scouts of America, and the YMCA) and explore your local community. Look for areas that could be a problem or obstacle for little people, such as ATM machines, Laundromats, or restaurant counters. Brainstorm ways in which the obstacles could be changed so as to make them accessible to everyone.

Create a resource guide for people of short stature and their families. Include in the guide medical care, accessibility rights groups, family support groups, and other service providers such as social workers, teachers, and clergy. Distribute the resource guide to local organizations, schools, and medical facilities in your community.

Contact other area organizations and service groups that would have an interest in the issues raised in **Big Enough** and encourage them to hold a local community screening event using the film.

Work with local educators to hold seminars in local schools about acceptance and diversity issues raised in the film. Encourage schools to invite a little person to speak to a group of students about his or her experience in school. Encourage the students to think of ways they can educate other students in their local community about issues of acceptance, diversity, and self-esteem.

Create a plan of action for your organization in which you address issues of accessibility for people of short stature. What can you change in your office, museum, school, or public space that could make a person of short stature feel more welcomed, safe, and included?



*Len Sawisch with his fishing buddies  
Courtesy of "Big Enough"*



## Resources

### Websites

### The film

#### **P.O.V.'s *Big Enough* Website**

[www.pbs.org/pov/pov2005/bigenough](http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2005/bigenough)

The *Big Enough* companion website offers exclusive streaming video clips from the film and a wealth of additional resources, including a Q&A with filmmaker Jan Krawitz, ample opportunities for viewers to 'talk back' and talk to each other about the film, and the following special features:

#### **What Is Dwarfism?**

Learn more about dwarfism, the medical conditions that cause short stature, and how to avoid upsetting a dwarf — don't call him a midget. And: Author Dan Kennedy writes about the etymology of dwarfism and his first impressions of the dwarf community after his short statured daughter was born in the early 90s.

#### **What Is Normal?**

Difference or defect? Diversity or pathology? Journalist and father Dan Kennedy asks, "What is normal?" and discusses the importance of distinguishing between genetic differences and genetic defects.

### What's Your P.O.V.?

*P.O.V.'s online Talking Back Tapestry is a colorful, interactive representation of your feelings about **Big Enough**.*

*Listen to other P.O.V. viewers talk about the film and add your thoughts by calling 1-800-688-4768. [www.pbs.org/pov/talkingback.html](http://www.pbs.org/pov/talkingback.html)*

#### **What Would You Do?**

Step into the shoes of a modern-day geneticist and wrestle with the ethical dilemmas they deal with on a daily basis. Imagine that a dwarf couple tells you that they want their fetus tested for dwarfism and that they will abort the fetus if the child is average-size. What should you do? Compare your answers with others—and the ethicists—to consider this question. When does genetic screening cross the line and become eugenics?

#### **The Height Gap**

What about the rest of us "average-sized" folks? According to a recent study, tall people earn an average of \$789 more per inch than shorter people. And yet while Europeans grow taller, Americans are getting shorter. Take a closer look at the history of height and find out what lies behind stature.



## Resources

### **LITTLE PEOPLE OF AMERICA**

**[www.lpaonline.org](http://www.lpaonline.org)**

Little People of America, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that provides support and information to people of short stature and their families.

### **HUMAN GROWTH FOUNDATION**

**[www.hgfound.org](http://www.hgfound.org)**

The Human Growth Foundation helps children and adults with disorders related to growth or growth hormones through research, education, support, and advocacy.

### **LITTLE PEOPLE'S RESEARCH FUND**

**[www.lprf.org](http://www.lprf.org)**

Little People's Research Fund is the only health organization in the world supporting the research for the special medical needs of Little People—people affected with skeletal dysplasia.

### **DISABILITY RIGHTS EDUCATION AND DEFENSE FUND, INC.**

**[www.dredf.org](http://www.dredf.org)**

Founded in 1979 by people with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities, the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, Inc. (DREDF) is a national law and policy center dedicated to protecting and advancing the civil rights of people with disabilities through legislation, litigation, advocacy, technical assistance, and education and training of attorneys, advocates, persons with disabilities, and parents of children with disabilities.

### **INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY ALLIANCE**

**[www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org)**

The International Disability Alliance (IDA) represents more than 600 million people in the world with a disability. The alliance is composed of the following eight international organizations of and for people with disabilities: Inclusion International, International Federation of Hard of Hearing People, World Blind Union, Disabled Peoples' International, Rehabilitation International, World Federation of the Deaf, World Federation of the Deafblind, World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry.



*Anu Trombino doing laundry  
Courtesy of "Big Enough"*



## How to Buy the Film

To buy or rent *Big Enough* please contact Fanlight Productions at [info@fanlight.com](mailto:info@fanlight.com) or 1-800-937-4113, or at [www.fanlight.com](http://www.fanlight.com).



Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and entering its 18th season on PBS, the award-

winning P.O.V. series is the longest-running series on television to feature the work of America's best contemporary-issue independent filmmakers. Airing Tuesdays at 10 p.m., June through September, with primetime specials during the year, P.O.V. has brought over 220 award-winning documentaries to millions nationwide, and now has a Webby Award-winning online series, P.O.V.'s Borders. Since 1988, P.O.V. has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. More information about P.O.V. is available online at [www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov).

Major funding for P.O.V. is provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Educational Foundation of America, the Ford Foundation, PBS, and public-television viewers. Support for P.O.V. is provided by Starbucks Coffee Company. P.O.V. is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KCET/Los Angeles, WGBH/Boston, and WNET/New York. Cara Mertes is executive director of P.O.V., a production of American Documentary, Inc.

### P.O.V. Community Engagement and Education

P.O.V. provides Discussion Guides for all films as well as curriculum-based P.O.V. Lesson Plans for select films to promote the use of independent media among varied constituencies. Available free online, these originally produced materials ensure the ongoing use of P.O.V.'s documentaries with educators, community workers, opinion leaders and general audiences nationally. P.O.V. also works closely with local public television stations to partner with local museums, libraries, schools, and community-based organizations to raise awareness of the issues in P.O.V.'s films.

### P.O.V. Interactive [www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov)

P.O.V.'s award-winning Web department produces our Web-only showcase for interactive storytelling, P.O.V.'s Borders. It also produces a Web site for every P.O.V. presentation, extending the life of P.O.V. films through community-based and educational applications, focusing on involving viewers in activities, information, and feedback on the issues. In addition, [www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov) houses our unique Talking Back feature, filmmaker interviews, and viewer resources, and information on the P.O.V. archives as well as myriad special sites for previous P.O.V. broadcasts.

### American Documentary, Inc. [www.americandocumentary.org](http://www.americandocumentary.org)

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying, and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic- engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, on-line, and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.



**A Great Nation  
Deserves Great Art**

All photos are courtesy of Ferne Pearlstein, except where noted.

Front cover photo: *Anu and Mark Trombino under pear tree*

The See it On PBS logo is a trademark of the Public Broadcasting Service and is used with permission.

All rights reserved.