

“Beyond Belief,” Beth Murphy’s documentary On struggle of Afghan Women



Patti Quigley, Beth Murphy, Susan Retik

“Beyond Belief,” Beth Murphy’s award winning remarkable documentary that premiered at the 2007 Tribeca Film Festival, chronicles the women’s journey as they struggled to work through their rage and grief by transforming personal devastation into action. Upon learning that half a million widows reside in Afghanistan, Retik and Quigley established Beyond the 11th, a nonprofit organization, with the purpose of providing aid to widows in Kabul. The charitable effort, according to Quigley, was conceived to provide “a purpose beyond running away from reality.”

She and Retik were grateful for the enormous outpouring of encouragement they had received. Recognizing it as a blessing unavailable to Afghan widows, they hoped to channel support to Kabul. These brave women took on a huge challenge. They are definitely an inspiration to all.

“Beyond Belief” includes vital statistics about the literacy rate among Afghan women (eight percent) and the average monthly earnings for a female-led household (\$16) versus its male-led counterpart (\$46). In Afghanistan, footage captures the day-to-day life in Kabul, featuring interviews with the widows and aid workers as well as footage of the interaction with the American widows. The single mothers—and unsung heroes—persevere in the face of massive obstacles.

“Three of my children died from starvation,” says one of the Afghan widows to Retik and Quigley. “I want to thank my sisters very much.”

Valuable and uplifting, “Beyond Belief” is the kind of film with the power to change lives. In the face of apathy and bad news saturation, Murphy was inspired to film this story because it exemplifies the ways in which we are all inextricably connected and responsible for one another. The world may have become smaller, but every turn offers room for greater perspective.

This inspirational movie was shown as a part of Business leadership forum programme on Friday the April 13th, 2012 by American Corner, Bangalore and was well attended.