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**SOCIETY AND ETHICS RESEARCH FILMS FIND NEW FESTIVAL-GOING AUDIENCES**

15th November 2016 -

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## **SOCIETY AND ETHICS RESEARCH FILMS FIND NEW FESTIVAL-GOING AUDIENCES**

Shorts films from the 'Socialising the Genome (<https://genetube.org/>)' and 'Your DNA, Your Say (<http://www.yourdnayoursay.org/>)' projects, produced by Wellcome Genome Campus Society and Ethics Research, are being shown in festivals in Europe and the USA:

- **RAW Science Film Festival 2016** (<http://www.rawscience.tv/raw-science-film-festival-2016-submit-films-buy-tickets/>) (USA) – *Socialising the Genome* is now a finalist in consideration for an award!
- **Awareness Festival 2016** (<https://www.awarenessfestival.org/>) (Los Angeles, USA)
- **Viten Film Festival 2016** (<http://www.vitenfilmfestival.no/program/>) (Norway)
- **New Filmmakers New York 2017** (<http://www.newfilmmakers.com/>).
- **International Filmmaker Festival of World Cinema 2017** (<http://filmfestinternational.com/london/>).

'Socialising the Genome (<https://genetube.org/>)' and 'Your DNA, Your Say (<http://www.yourdnayoursay.org/>)' are two ambitious projects using short films as their primary medium to inspire people across the world to engage with the perhaps intimidating science of genomics. They aim to help spark discussion and thought about the implications and knock-on issues of being able to access such personal information as one's genetic make-up, as well as understand people's needs when it comes to digesting and understanding this unfamiliar subject.

**LAUREN FARLEY FROM THE SOCIETY AND ETHICS RESEARCH TEAM ACCOMPANIED YOUR DNA, YOUR SAY TO VITEN FILM FESTIVAL, NORWAY:**

I joined the Wellcome Genome Campus, a place teaming with the brightest science thinkers in the world, with a very scant science background. I come instead from a film background and, luckily for me, I joined the newly formed Society and Ethics Research team, headed by Dr Anna Middleton. I quickly came to realise why coming on board from the view point of communications, not genomics, could be an asset.

As a part of the Anna's research into public attitudes to various ethical issues cropping up in the fast-expanding field of genomics, she produces videos to give some background on the topic before asking people to answer a web-based survey. It is imperative that the videos be short, snappy, visually engaging and speak in a tone that can be understood by people with no prior knowledge on the subject (people like me!)

When I joined the team and saw the videos that had already been circulated from two of the studies, I thought they would be prime candidates to enter into festivals. *Film* festivals.

*Socialising the Genome* strove to understand what people know about genomics: what sorts of imagery, memes, or catch phrases could make it easier for families to discuss the topic? It used Gnomes for Genomes, 'glitch' to describe irregularities, and a series of bright cartoons with an adult-humoured voice over.

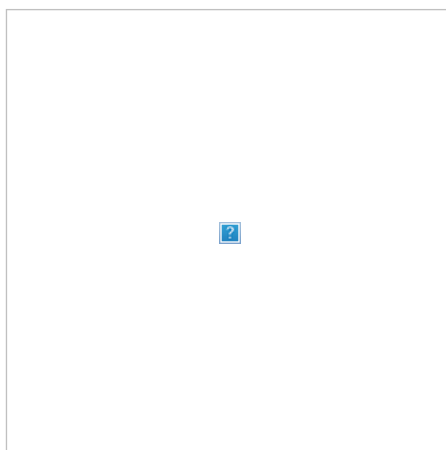
*Your DNA, Your Say* gathers attitudes on donating DNA and medical data to online research repositories – DNA and Big Data, but gives an overview to the topic by featuring a child in the role of a doctor and researcher, storing DNA on shelves in his playroom.

My instinct that they may find an audience outside the scope of the science they're supporting was correct, and both have been selected for film festivals around the world.

I was lucky enough to travel to Norway for the screening there, in mid-November 2016.

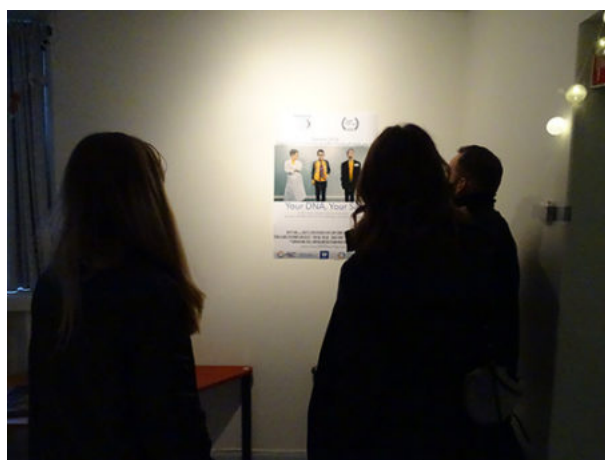
Viten sounded like a great fit when I first read about its mission statement – *Through film, we hope to inspire people with science, and inspire people to keep being curious about the world we live in.*

We were very excited to learn from the festival organisers that *Your DNA, Your Say*, starring 9-year-old Charlie Gadney, was selected to be included in the children's program. The venue was stunning – a room in the city's Natural History Museum with taxidermy animals from the Sahara poised around the edge of the room.



The film played alongside some incredible stop motion animated shorts, the program was as engaging for the parents and adults in the room as for the kids who scrambled around on the floor, watching the films in between bouts of playing.

Hopefully the parents took note of *Your DNA, Your Say's* call to action at the end, the study is just launched and the hope is to gather attitudes from as many people as possible from around the world. It's been translated into several languages already, with numerous more planned for the future. Perhaps we should add Norwegian to the list!



Only in its first year, the Norwegian Film Institute backed Viten Film Festival has a promising future and one I hope we can continue to be a part of with videos from future studies.

Read article about [Socialising the Genome \(/what-we-do/society-and-ethics-research/socialising-genome-sparking-discussions-genomics-everyday-life/\)](https://connectingscience.wellcomegenomecampus.org/what-we-do/society-and-ethics-research/socialising-genome-sparking-discussions-genomics-everyday-life/)

Read article about [Your DNA, Your Say \(/what-we-do/society-and-ethics-research/your-dna-your-say-global-survey/\)](https://connectingscience.wellcomegenomecampus.org/what-we-do/society-and-ethics-research/your-dna-your-say-global-survey/)

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