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## Birds without Feathers

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### **Abstract**

This is a film review of *Birds without Feathers* (2018) directed by Wendy McColm.

### **Author Notes**

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is also the editor of the Continuum Companion to Religion and Film (2009).



**Birds without Feathers (2018), dir. Wendy McCole**

This film asks the question: “Who are we without feathers?” The question is answered as we watch six young people try to answer the question for themselves. We discover that this is a crucial question for us to answer in order to lead meaningful lives. We discover that the question is remarkably complex. We discover that learning about ourselves requires that we interact with others. And maybe, just maybe, this is a question that we will have to answer again and again.

Religion often provides an answer to the question, “Who are we without feathers?” Whether we are one of the chosen people or created in the image of God, or at one with the entire universe. But, religion, gives us the answer, and *Birds without Feathers* suggests that each of us must answer the question for ourselves. The film tells us that living well is answering the question for ourselves and not simply accepting the answer that someone else gives us. If we adopt the answer someone else gives us, then we are nothing more than “birds with feathers,” or “people with masks.”