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## Crowdfunded documentary on late Internet activist Aaron Swartz to premiere at Sundance Film Festival

Posted by Matt Rocheleau December 5, 2013 03:51 PM

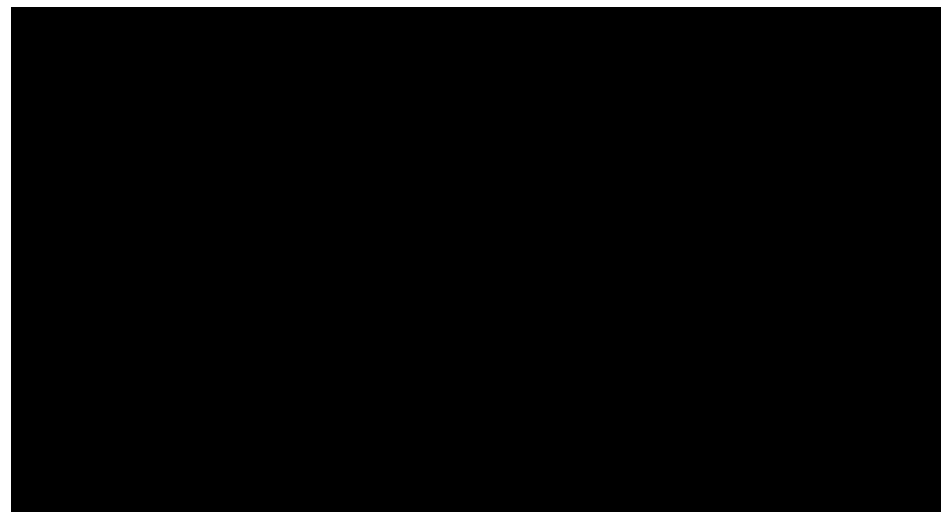
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(Brian Knappenberger / YouTube)

By Matt Rocheleau, Boston.com Staff

A crowdfunded documentary about the late Internet activist Aaron Swartz will premiere at the Sundance Film Festival next month.

“[The Internet’s Own Boy](#)” follows Swartz “from his teenage emergence on the Internet scene and involvement in RSS and Reddit, to his growing interest in political advocacy and the controversial actions he allegedly took in downloading nearly four million academic articles from the online service JSTOR,” according a statement from the film’s creator, Brian Knappenberger.

“The film explores Aaron’s arrest, the prosecution’s tactics in bringing the case to trial through the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, the CFAA, and the impact a seemingly small hacking gesture had on Aaron’s life and the possible future of information access on the Internet,” the statement added.

The movie is [backed](#) by nearly \$94,000 raised through more than 1,500 donations made through the crowdfunding website [Kickstarter.com](#).

The Sundance Film Festival, one of the country’s largest independent film festivals, will

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be held in Park City, Utah from Jan. 16 through 26. For its 30th anniversary, the festival [announced this week](#) it has selected 118 feature-length films.

[Swartz](#), 26, hanged himself in January, as he faced years in prison for federal felony computer charges. Those charges were filed about two years before his death, when MIT police arrested him – he was a fellow at Harvard at the time – for breaking into a closet at the school where he used a laptop to download millions of academic journal articles.

His death shocked and saddened many Internet activists, while some blamed his death on MIT and prosecutors. Numerous memorials, rallies and hackathons have been held in Swartz honor, including [protests](#) calling for more humane prosecution of federal computer laws.

*Matt Rocheleau can be reached at [matthew.rocheleau@globe.com](mailto:matthew.rocheleau@globe.com). Looking for more coverage of area colleges and universities? Go to our [Your Campus pages](#).*

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