

Documentary Film Proposal:

Women of '69, Unboxed



Liz Roman Gallese
Executive Producer

+++

A PROJECT OF

Jane Startz
Consulting Producer

+++

Peter Barton
Producer/Director

+++

GROUNDSWELL, INC.

A NOT-FOR-PROFIT, PUBLIC INTEREST MEDIA GROUP

peterbarton@groundswellmedia.org

liz@lizromangallese.com

Women of '69, Unboxed

By Liz Roman Gallese
Executive Producer

From Pleated Skirts and Circle Pins
To Rebellion and Transformation:
How the Unbound/Unboxed Generation
Changed Themselves and the World

Overview

We have begun to shoot an extraordinary, hour-long documentary about a seminal generation of women.

By examining one college class that graduated in 1969, at the peak of the wave of transformations sweeping the country, we believe we will gain:

- a unique, personalized perspective on the seismic shifts of the 1960s, and
- an insightful retrospective on the momentous changes in American culture, values, and family dynamics that have occurred since the 1960s.

Guiding our movie will be two members of that class, Executive Producer Liz Roman Gallese, an accomplished journalist and author, and Consulting Producer Jane Startz, an award-winning film and TV producer.

For the movie, our dramatic trigger, fittingly, will be a film camera's shutter, circa 1969; the movie's revelatory event, a series of striking, innovative photographs taken of this class of trailblazers-and-troublemakers-to-be as they approached graduation.

The stories these women will tell, of grit and determination, fear and naiveté, romance and heartbreak, growth and hard-won progress, may emerge as a kind of war diary, a journal of struggle and surprise, and a time-capsule legacy for their daughters and granddaughters, who might be inclined to take their own current options and opportunities for granted.

Picture Us: A Class Steps Out of the Box

In the fall of 1968, the editors of Skidmore College's yearbook invited a 23-year-old professional to come to Saratoga Springs, New York, to serve as class photographer for

the 373 members of the Class of 1969. This was a departure for the elite women's college, as in previous years, a student had been asked to take the pictures. The appointment was unusual in another respect: the young photographer, Sedat Pakay, was male; an MFA fresh from an assignment for *Holiday* magazine; and, in an era when U.S. professional echelons were overwhelming Anglo-Saxon, a Muslim and immigrant from Turkey.

Skidmore, at the time, was a traditional women's college. When the young women arrived for their freshman year in 1965, they found a college still treating students as it had their mothers a generation earlier. Decorum reigned. Weeknight dinners were sit-down and family-style, skirts required. There were curfews every night of the week. The annual father/daughter weekend, "Happy Pappy," was a social highlight. As for other male visitors, they were permitted no farther than the reception rooms of the Victorian mansions that served as the women's dormitories.

Less than four years later, when the Class of 1969 graduated, the world and Skidmore College had completely changed. Gone were the sit-down dinners and curfews. Men were allowed in women's dorm rooms. A new ethos of freedom prevailed, albeit in uneasy coexistence with the restrictive vestiges of the past. "We knew nothing like this had ever happened before," proclaimed a then soon-to-be Skidmore graduate. Skidmore's Dean of Students, Claire M. Olds, put it more bluntly: "All hell had broken loose."

Unboxed as Metaphor

The Skidmore yearbook of the Class of 1969, entitled "Out of the Box," literally and figuratively provides a snapshot of an entire generation and a society in a state of unprecedented change. It is no ordinary yearbook. Indeed, it was the inspiration of another campus anomaly, a young art professor who was, at the time, the school's only African-American faculty member, and his hand-picked student Editor-in-Chief.

Together, they determined that the yearbook would be presented in an entirely new format. It would be a portfolio, consisting of unbound, oversized pages in a box, with pictures that were actually posters and that included a two-page spread of the photographer himself—the artist's signature, if you will—laid out in the style of a *Playboy* centerfold.

The women's portraits would also be unusual. The photographer's approach was to evoke the spirit of the times, celebrating creativity, free choice, and collaboration. He would shoot 36 images of each student, who could then choose the portrait that best represented her.

The result is a stunning collection of playful, expressive, and sometimes rebellious portraits. Three examples are featured on our title page: a pair of nuns in high heels hitchhiking on the Interstate; a woman astride a massive motorcycle that she nonetheless dominates; and an ethereal young woman seeming to materialize dream-like out of a lake.

Yet another image has a row of five young women standing gleefully in barrels deep in the woods.

Nearly 50 years later, members of the Class of 1969 are assessing the decisions they made decades ago against a vastly altered domestic and global landscape. Most of the societal alterations that have taken place over the past half century are the result of the unprecedented opportunities they fought for and achieved.

Fifty years on, therefore, it is imperative to take another close look, this time at what followed for those young women who were coming of age and “Out of the Box” during the aftermath of that period of profound social upheaval. To do so, we propose to produce a one-hour documentary, to be entitled *Women of '69, Unboxed*. Included will be not only the women, but the people surrounding and influencing them: friends, boyfriends, lovers, faculty, administrators, parents, and increasingly, public figures. Serving as the movie’s inspiration, and as its central visual and thematic component, will be the 1969 yearbook.

In our film, the women will be portrayed against a backdrop of campus unrest and the emergence of the second wave of the feminist movement, signaled by Simone de Beauvoir’s idea of women as “the other” and the surprising support for Betty Friedan’s seminal book, *The Feminine Mystique*. In this light, the yearbook photographs will evoke the bevy of changes that were simmering beneath the surface in our subjects’ lives on three broad fronts: war, work, and women’s bodies.

In Vietnam, half a world away from bucolic Saratoga Springs, an increasingly unpopular war was raging. Underway domestically was an equally tumultuous struggle to assure constitutional rights for African-Americans. On the Skidmore campus, a chapter of the left-leaning Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) had formed, while students campaigned in New Hampshire for an alternative candidate for U.S. President, Eugene McCarthy (D-MN), and traveled en masse to New York City to march for civil rights.

The portraits in the 1969 yearbook present, in their entirety, as highly sexualized. The spreading use of the Pill and mounting demands for reproductive choice (which would culminate, in 1973, in the Supreme Court’s landmark *Roe v. Wade* decision) were expanding women’s sexual landscape.

Nationally, an increasingly vibrant feminist movement was taking hold, espousing careers and not just jobs for women. Likewise, at Skidmore, “the personal became political,” to borrow the movement’s signature phrase. The collapse of parietals ushered in not only physical freedom, but also a rethinking of the mantra that women were in college to earn a “ring by spring”—that is, to be engaged by graduation.

On a chilly, late fall morning in 1968, I recall traveling with three Skidmore classmates to nearby Albany, New York, to sit for the law boards (Law School Admission Test, or LSAT). I remember us being titillated, as well as enthralled, by the possibility of entering graduate and professional schools where women comprised no more than five percent of

enrollments. In such settings, the promise of a “man’s” career in law, medicine, or executive management, appeared as a beacon, albeit in a distant and uncharted future.

Goals

In sum, my classmates and I, whose individual portraits and collective experience of college life would be forever immortalized in an oversized cardboard box, had ourselves become “unboxed”—unbound from the conventions that had governed the lives of our mothers and grandmothers. Ours was one of the last all-women’s classes, as single-sex education was evaporating almost everywhere. We were exhilarated by change but also storm-tossed; sometimes leading the charge but also battered and confused in its wake.

Through the lens of this single class at an elite women’s college, the documentary film, *Women of ’69, Unboxed*, will examine, with affection and insight, what it meant for a generation to be “unboxed.” Following the struggles of these 373 women, it will give audiences a window into the turbulent tides of the last 50 years. Their stories will help us understand our story as a people.

Skidmore’s Class of 1969, in particular, offers a compelling visual study of this generation of women in transition. In 1965, Saratoga Springs was a resort town gone slightly to seed and replete with bourgeois Victorian architecture, a perfect metaphor for the world of conventional feminine values from whose constraints the women’s movement was fighting to be free.

Three years later, student uprisings across the nation would make for gripping headlines and images so arresting that they would become generational icons. One magazine photograph, in particular, shows an unkempt young man seated defiantly in the office, and in the very chair, of Columbia University’s President Grayson L. Kirk.

Such images are likely to be recycled in numerous retrospectives as the 50th anniversary of the Columbia uprisings approaches. *Women of ’69, Unboxed*, by contrast, will turn the story on its heels and provide a refreshing twist, by showcasing the woman’s perspective and putting women at the center. It will anchor the tale in the alluring metaphor of the box—“brown paper packages done up in string,” presents “neath the tree,” Pandora’s...—that is at once delightful and menacing, playful and profound.

Picture Us Now: Teasers

The volatile currents of the 1960s continue to affect the consciousness of the 1960s generation today. The culture wars that its members ignited rage on. We may not be, to use Tom Brokaw’s phrase, the “Greatest Generation,” but we are arguably the loudest—the most rebellious, most raunchy, and most colorful. The film will argue that we are among the most influential as well.

When did we get that way and how? *Women of '69, Unboxed* dares to suggest answers. It dares to probe into these women's lives, then and now, and ask who among us followed the traditional wife/mother route, who among us pursued alternate lifestyles—or a “man's” career—and who among us also worked for social change. It dares to suggest that the choices we made might contain lessons for today's X-ers and millennials.

A recent newspaper article features a photograph of a member of our class, now a tenured professor at MIT, surrounded at a laboratory table by her millennial-aged students. The byline on a book jacket is that of a class member who had been a star reporter for *The New York Times*.

Another of our classmates continues to publish in scholarly journals. I had considered her the bluestocking, but updated for our generation—in that she got the Dartmouth guy as well as the A's (and thus the academic job). In a studio in Boston, a painter hovers over her canvas. I recall her fretting in college about the “ring by spring.” Now her art anchors a satisfying life that has included neither husband nor children.

Not all of the stories are pretty. A woman approaches the dinner table on crutches at a recent reunion. She had been stunning in 1969 when she was young, and a dashing young history professor had divorced his wife and married her. Now he has died, and she is suffering a debilitating disease. Another classmate had left school in the bitterly cold January of 1968 to give birth. Unmarried, she had put her infant daughter up for adoption. Four decades later, a middle-aged woman approaches our class for answers: who among us is her birth mother?

Members of our class tread lightly these days as we approach that proverbial walk through the valley of the shadow. Sixteen are deceased. No more than a few dozen have attained positions in the upper echelons of a “man's” career, although a significant number are distinguished in the arts, in the leadership ranks of nursing, and as owners of small businesses.

More than 300 identify by a name they acquired through marriage. Of the nearly 80 who use their maiden names, many, if not most, are or have been married. Those who have remained single comprise a small but intriguing minority. Those who are gay haven't, for the most part, made it a point to come out.

Yet it would be a mistake to label us traditional. In a holiday card, a woman who dropped out during our junior year is pictured with her four children, five grandchildren, and husband of 44 years. (“Will you still love me, will you still need me...when I'm 64,” went the old Beatles song). She eventually completed her undergraduate work, holds an advanced degree, runs a business, and manages the care of her aged parents. Another, a savvy nurse, announces plans for a “retirement” in the Peace Corps. Well into their seventh decade, a significant number continue to work full time.

Indeed, our generation not only changed the course of U.S. history but also is shaping it today. The Reagan Revolution, the Christian Coalition, and the Tea Party stand as part of

a broad fundamentalist backlash to the changes that we felt and fed. Progressive movements that heated up in that era—civil rights, Black Power, sexual equality, gender bending, anti-war, anti-capitalist—continue to rock the new millennium. Obama’s miraculous election, the Arab spring, and Occupy Wall Street have roots that might be found going all the way back to the Class of 1969.

Our documentary, though, will do more than provide historical insights. At its core, it will probe the shifting relationships between a group of energetic and ambitious women as their dreams and realities respond to the winds of change sweeping through America.

It will also be a portrait of a special place and time, a safe harbor lost, an elite college in a traditional setting that promised refuge from turbulence but delivered dramatic transformations as sheltered children of privilege became assertive young women with high hopes and powerful intellects who continue to make waves in today’s world.

Credentials

Women of '69, Unboxed will be co-produced by Liz Roman Gallese and Peter Barton, a documentary filmmaker with three Emmy nominations to his credit. Jane Startz will serve as Consulting Producer. Full biographies of Gallese, Barton, and Startz are below. A budget is also included.

In addition, Kristine Ford Herrick, the Editor-in-Chief of the 1969 yearbook, will serve as Outreach Coordinator. Herrick is currently Professor Emerita, Graphic Design, at the College of St. Rose in Albany, New York.

Robert J. Reed, the faculty advisor to the 1969 yearbook and now Professor of Art at Yale University, has pledged support.

Sedat Pakay, the 1969 yearbook photographer, will be interviewed and included in the film.

LIZ ROMAN GALLESE



Skidmore '69

Present Day

Liz Roman Gallese is an award-winning Internet publisher, author, and journalist. Recently, she served as Vice President & Publisher of Catalyst, a global nonprofit committed to women's advancement in management and the professions, where she oversaw the dissemination of the organization's knowledge and led its efforts to utilize the Internet to convene discussion and inspire change.

Ms. Gallese has worked as a Staff Reporter and Special Writer for *The Wall Street Journal* and as a U.S. Correspondent for *Bloomberg News*. Among the first in her profession to recognize the impact of the Internet on print journalism, she created the *Entrepreneur's Byline* feature for EntreWorld, a website sponsored by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. She later served as Vice President, News and Information, for Individual.com, an online business-and-financial-news company, where she pioneered its signature *PageCast*TM anchored news reports.

At Catalyst, Ms. Gallese led the design and development of the organization's new website, launched in 2008, of subsequent major enhancements. These include the My Catalyst feature enabling customized access to information; and the Timeline, an online documentary of the organization's 50-year history in photographs, documents, text, and audio and video clips. In 2010, *ForbesWoman* named the site to its roster of the Top 100 Websites for Women, among the "most dynamic, inspiring and helpful" for its "compelling" content and "outstanding design."

Ms. Gallese has written for leading business and consumer magazines, among them *The Business World* (Part II of *The New York Times Magazine*), *Forbes*, and *Fortune*. She is the author of *Women Like Us*, a look at the women of the Harvard Business School's Class of 1975, the first to be 10 percent female. She has held adjunct appointments at Harvard University Extension and Emmanuel College.

Ms. Gallese received a B.A. in English from Skidmore College and an M.S. in Journalism from Boston University. She is a member of The American Society of Authors and Journalists (ASJA) and The Authors Guild.

JANE STARTZ



Skidmore '69

Present Day

Independent film and television producer Jane Startz's feature film credits include *Ella Enchanted*, *Tuck Everlasting*, *The Mighty*, *The Indian in the Cupboard*, *The Baby-Sitters' Club*, and *The Beniker Gang*. Ms. Startz's television credits include the multi-Emmy Award winning series *The Magic School Bus*; the long-running comedy series *Charles In Charge*; *The Lawrenceville Trilogy* for PBS's American Playhouse; The Cable Ace Award-winning *The Truth About Alex*; Emmy award winner *The Great Love Experiment*; and numerous other television movies and series based on book adaptations for PBS, HBO, CBS, and ABC.

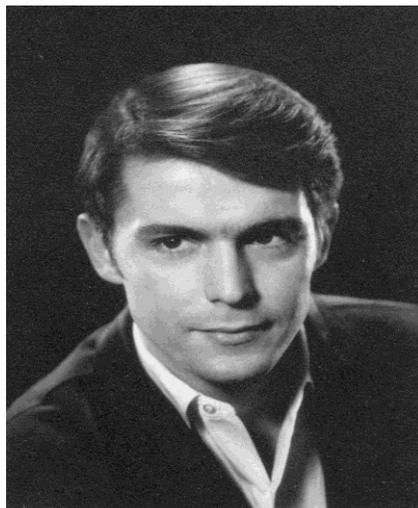
Building on her reputation as one of the industry's most prominent and well-respected producers of family entertainment, Ms. Startz founded Jane Startz Productions Inc., her New York-based independent production company, in 1997.

Prior to that, Ms. Startz was the co-founder, Executive Vice President, and Creative Head of Scholastic Productions, the film and television subsidiary of international publishing giant Scholastic Inc. Under Ms. Startz' aegis, Scholastic Productions grew to be one of the leading producers of media for young people in the world.

Jane Startz Productions is currently producing several high-profile, literary-based film and television projects, including the adaptation of several renowned authors' works. Ms. Startz is also the creator of the recently launched Disney Press/Hyperion book series, *Amigas*, and is partnered with Jennifer Lopez and her company, Nuyorican Productions, on a series adaptation for MTV based on Ms. Startz's underlying materials.

Ms. Startz has produced over 30 feature and television films and series. She is the recipient of over 50 major awards including three Golden Globe nominations, six Emmy Awards as well as 10 Emmy nominations, two Ace Awards, Parents Choice Awards, and an Action for Children's Television Award. She is a member of The Academy of Motion Pictures and The Producer's Guild. Ms. Startz earned her B.A. in English from Skidmore College, graduating with college and departmental honors.

PETER BARTON



Dartmouth '63



Present Day

Peter Barton is a veteran documentary filmmaker with three Emmy nominations and three CINE Golden Eagle awards to his credit. He received the Edward R. Murrow Award for *Names Can Really Hurt Us*, a CBS-TV special that continues to be used in the classroom to combat prejudice. His improvisational feature, *The Suicide Auditions*, was named best fiction film at the Georgetown Film Festival.

Barton was politically active in the late 1960s, making radical films with Newsreel. He collaborated on *Janie's Janie*, a landmark movie of the women's liberation movement that was shown at the first Women's Film Festival in 1971. This film was recently honored with a screening at Lincoln Center; along with another of Barton's films, *Eddie*, it is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art.

Dial Press published Barton's nonfiction book, *Staying Power*, a collection of portraits of actors, musicians, and dancers who are neither rich nor famous. Illustrated with Barton's photographs, the book aims to show aspiring performers that they can find a life on stage without being celebrities. Barton's poetry has been published in *Saturday Review* and *The New York Times*. His work has also appeared on HBO and Showtime. His WNET public service spots, *Hatebusters*, in which young people rap, rhyme, and speak out against prejudice, were syndicated nationally.

He has taught film production and screenwriting for 10 years at New York University, Bennington College, Columbia University, and Brooklyn College. At NYU, he taught with Martin Scorsese; Oliver Stone was a student. He is a graduate of Dartmouth College, holds an M.F.A. in playwriting and directing from Yale School of Drama, and served in the Peace Corps.

His nonprofit, Groundswell, Inc., was formed in 1978 "to amplify the voices of the disadvantaged using cutting-edge media." Board members include George Stoney, dean of American documentarians and a pioneer in public access TV, and Academy Award-winner Jeffrey Brown.

Groundswell, Inc., at 440 Riverside Drive, #122, New York, NY 10027, will be the not-for-profit 501(c)3 conduit for tax-deductible contributions to *Women of '69, Unboxed*.

BUDGET

SHOOT:

Pre-production 3 weeks x 2 producers x \$2500	15,000
Videographer/producer/director 7 weeks x \$2875	17,250
Executive producer 7 weeks x \$2875	17,250
Associate producer/production manager 6 weeks x \$2000	12,000
Researcher/production coordinator 8 weeks x \$1750	14,000
Alumnae consultants, including consulting producer Jane Startz, Skidmore class of '69: 22 consulting days x \$550	12,100
Gaffer/sound person 6 weeks x 2250	13,500
Camera, mics, lights, boom, 6 weeks x \$1250	7,500
Tape, expendables	375
Transportation, meals, lodging prep and shoot 8 weeks x \$2450	19,600
Legal fees	16,500
Production insurance	<u>11500</u>
Sub-total	144,585
Contingency 10%	<u>14,458.50</u>
SHOOT TOTAL:	<u>\$159,043.50</u>

EDIT:

Editing facility 11 weeks x \$600	6,600
Editor/producer/director 11 weeks x 2875	31,625
Executive producer 11 weeks x 2875	31,625
Assistant editor, includes capturing, logging, archiving 12 weeks x 2200	26,400
Scan, digitize yearbook photos and personal souvenirs, pix	7,500
Music, underscoring	6,800
ProTools sound mix	5,500
Additional sound re-recording, graphics	1,800
Consulting fee to PR expert or firm to set up website, develop marketing/distribution plan	6,800
Transfer to DVD with 30 copies & 2 masters	<u>1,200</u>
Sub-total	125,850
Contingency 10%	<u>12,585</u>
POST-PRODUCTION TOTAL:	<u>\$138,435</u>

GRAND TOTAL: \$297,478.50

###