

Through the microcosm of her often hilarious interactions with her mom, Kara Herold’s *Bachelorette, 34* examines the pressure society puts on women to find “Mr. Right.”

Duration: 30 min | Subtitled for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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For more information and to download press materials, visit <http://www.karaheroldmedia.com/press>

Distribution: New Day Films

<http://www.newday.com/films/Bachelorette34.html> TOLL FREE: 888-367-9154



**Critical Acclaim:**

This **innovative**, funny film deals with a serious subject - the pressure that family and friends exert on single women in their thirties to couple, cohabit and marry. **See it, recommend it** to friends, show it in your classes. All will lead to a broader range of options for a satisfying adult life.

-E. Kay Trimberger, author of *The New Single Woman,*

and Professor Emerita of Women's & Gender Studies, Sonoma State University

Part persona, part universal truth serum. And always humoureque: part Harold Lloyd, part Joan Rivers morphed with Woody Allen on a good day. But definitely, all parts Kara Herold, a director with a **voicevision to look out for.**"

-Peter Wintonick, *POV (Point of View*) Magazine, Canada

What it means to be single or married or to live a full and happy life has changed dramatically over the past decades. In this **funny** and **poignant** film, Kara Herold,21st century singleton, points her lens through the keyhole of her relationship with her very married mother, and lets her viewers in on a sweeping vista of social change.

-Bella DePaulo, author of *Singled Out: How Singles Are Stereotyped, Stigmatized, and Ignored, and Still Live Happily Ever After*

 "Gay? Married? Even being Republican is a small matter when a mom sets out to find Mr. Right for her "aging" daughter. **Told with wit**, and a basketful of zany clips, Kara Herold's own story affirms a lifestyle choice where meeting in the chapel is definitely on the back burner.

-Bill Nichols, author of *Introduction to Documentary and other books*

More a **work of art** than a straight-up documentary, the film explores the relationship between Herold and her mother, and the anxiety the differences in their lifestyles creates, using telephone messages, home movies and footage from '50s and '60s dating films. The **audience howled with laughter**, as an animation showed the beloved artists' hot spot being knocked down and replaced with a Starbucks. Because, really, that scenario is a Mission dweller's worst nightmare.

-Lisa Hix, *San Francisco Chronicle*

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# Short Synopsis:

Mother: *Kara, I just remembered, I met the perfect man for you. He’s 30, you’re 30, it’s perfect!. The only problem is that he’s Catholic and Republican but that’s nothing that can’t be changed. You might even get him interested in the feminist movement. CALL ME!!!*

Kara's mother is obsessed with getting her daughter married. Kara, a single artist and filmmaker in San

Francisco, has her doubts. Through the microcosm of her often hilarious interactions with her mom, Kara Herold's *Bachelorette, 34* examines the pressure society puts on women to find "Mr. Right."

# Long Synopsis:

Few things in life are more public than the decision to marry, traditionally followed by a ceremony in full view of the bride and groom’s family and community. Conversely, few things are more private than the circumstances behind remaining single. While society rejoices in marriage as the first in a series of happy milestones, it speaks of single people “of a certain age” – especially women – in the hushed tones of pity, worry and regret.

Yet more American women today than ever before are, for whatever reason, remaining single. According to Time magazine, in 1963, 83% of women 25 to 55 were married, but by 1997, that figure had plummeted to 65%. The New York Times in 2007 reports that "probably the first time, more American women are living without a husband than with one." In her book Bachelor Girl, Betsy Israel claims that 42% of the adult American female population is single today.

The topic of marital status as single women approach their middle years is often prickly. Bachelorette, 34, uses off-beat humor to navigate a conversation between those who are not married and the loved ones who are desperate that they should be.

# The film:

*Bachelorette, 34* is a 30 min. film about a relationship between a single, 34-year-old filmmaker and her mother’s obsession that her daughter be married before time runs out. While the mother is *certain* that the daughter’s life will be a safer, happier and better one if she gets married, the daughter is a study in nearly existential *uncertainty*. As the story unfolds, the daughter investigates her mother’s anxieties – and her own – that she’s 34, unmarried, and might have “missed a step in life.”

The mother proposes potential mates (“Well, Mike has got this pretty blond hair and with Kara’s red hair, they would make beautiful children”), suggests methods for self-improvement (“Wear your foot-odor pads!”), and raises the specter of spinsterhood (“Where do you see yourself in 10 years, *when you are 44*?”). The daughter, in her role as filmmaker, responds by editing archival educational-dating footage and home movies to simultaneously illustrate, comment upon, and poke fun of her mother’s well-intentioned advice.

*Bachelorette, 34* is one woman’s examination of the ubiquitous belief that marriage equals happiness, laced with poignant irony as the mother yearns for her daughter’s comfort and security at all costs, and the daughter runs the risk of inadvertently falling off the course carved by tradition.

# Approach

*Bachelorette, 34* tells its story entirely through excerpts from “how-to” dating films from the 1950s and 1960s, home movies, audio recordings (conversations with the mother, messages left on the daughter’s answering machine), and a judicious use of text to represent – at arm’s length – a diary of the daughter’s inner thoughts about her mother’s notion of matrimonial bliss. None of the principals appear on-screen as contemporary characters, although Super-8 home-movies show the mother as a bride and young parent. All of the main characters – the parents, daughter, family members and friends, and prospective mates – are variously represented by “stand-ins” from period found footage.

The use of vintage footage contrasts the apparent confidence and cheery resolve of an earlier generation, and the filmmaker’s painfully modern ambiguity. Consistent with their original intent, the archival segments are peppy, optimistic and condescendingly instructional, creating a sense of an educational filmstrip and vague wistfulness for the simplicity of an earlier era. While the content about properly guiding a woman towards marriage remains unchanged, the overlay of the personal story both illuminates and subverts it. For example, the original platitudinous voice-over of the “expert” is replaced by the mother, with her quirky and sometimes over-the-top advice. The prospective boyfriends, recast as subjects from an educational film and labeled as if they were unwitting participants of a televised dating game, appear eccentric when viewed through modern eyes. In short, the “how-to” convention is turned back on itself in an ongoing dialogue between a daughter and a mother who is becoming increasingly imaginative and desperate.





**Kara Herold Bio**



Kara Herold’s films employ wit, thought-provoking storytelling, and dynamic visual assemblages to comment upon the uneasy intersections between feminist perspectives and dominant cultural expectations and institutions.  She has written, directed, and produced a broad variety of films, from short animations to award-winning documentaries. Bachelorette, 34, a humorous take on society’s obsession with marriage expressed through a mother-daughter relationship, premiered at the International Documentary Festival in Amsterdam and played at the Documentary Fortnight at MoMA in New York in 2009.  Bachelorette, 34 is distributed by New Day Films.  Grrlyshow, about the girl ‘zine explosion in the ‘90s, premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2001, screened at many additional festivals, and is distributed by Women Make Movies.  Kara Herold is currently in post-production on her feature comedy *39 ½.*

Kara has been a BAN6 Artist at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, and has won many additional awards and grants, including support from the San Francisco Arts Commission, Pacific Pioneer Fund, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Film Arts Foundation, and the Djerassi Resident Artists Program.

career and sets it to a dazzling montage of exploitation footage from days gone by. The film recently won first place at the 23rd annual Cine-Poetry Film Festival sponsored by the National Poetry Association.



# Awards, Festivals and Screenings Awards:

* William and Flora Hewlett Foundation Honorary Fellowship
* Pacific Pioneer Grant
* Djerassi Artist Residency
* Featured media maker for the Bay Area Video Coalition
* Individual Artist Commission Grant by the city of San Francisco
* Film Arts Foundation Grant
* Creative Capital Professional Development Workshop, selected participant
* Digital Directions award from the Bay Area Video Coalition
* Featured Artist at the Bay Area Video Coalition

# Festivals:

* Documentary Fortnight Museum of Modern Art, NYC
* International Documentary Film Festival of Amsterdam
* Mill Valley Film Festival
* International Women's Film Festival in Seoul
* Women Make Waves in Taiwan
* Mendocino Film Festival
* Dallas Video Festival
* Other Cinema

# Community Screenings:

* San Francisco State University, Bay Area Filmmakers Survey Course, San Francisco
* UC Berkeley Women's Studies Class
* San Francisco Art Institute
* Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Board Meeting
* City College of San Francisco Filmmaking Class
* San Francisco State Filmmaking Class
* Grace Cathedral
* UCSC Film and Autobiography class

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# Credits:

Kara Herold Director/Producer

Kara Herold and Monica Nolan Editors

Illustrator Andi Zeisler

Additional Illustrations Mary Scott

Additional Editor Shirley Thompson

Sound Editor Paul James Zahnley

Sound Mix Gibbs Chapman

Camera Gibbs Chapman

Christian Bruno Kara Herold

# Funding and Support:

Pacific Pioneer Grant

San Francisco Art Commission

Film Arts Foundation Grant

**Bachelorette, 34** is produced by Kara Herold, who is solely responsible for its content.

For more information contact karaherold@gmail.com karaheroldmedia.com

# Distribution:

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