

# ROLL RED ROLL

Directed by Nancy Schwartzman



**TRT: 80 min in English**

**WORLD PREMIERE**

**Official Selection - 2018 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL –  
SPOTLIGHT DOCUMENTARY**

## **SCREENING TIMES**

*Sun. 4/22, 8 p.m., Cinopolis Chelsea 7 - World Premiere*

*Mon. 4/23, 8:30 p.m., Cinopolis Chelsea 3*

*Tues. 4/24, 6:15 p.m., Regal Cinemas Battery Park 11-1*

*Sat. 4/28, 5:30 p.m., Regal Cinemas Battery Park 11-4*

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Cinetic Media

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## THE FILM

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Go behind the headlines of notorious high school sexual assault to witness the social media-fueled “boys will be boys” culture that let it happen. In small-town Steubenville, Ohio, at a pre-season football party, a horrible incident took place that would garner national attention and result in the sentencing of two key offenders. As amateur crime blogger Alex Goddard uncovers disturbing evidence on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter documenting the assault of a teenage girl by members of the beloved high school football team, questions linger around the collusion of teen and adult bystanders. **ROLL RED ROLL** explores the complex motivations of both perpetrators and bystanders in this story, to unearth the attitudes at the core of their behavior. The Steubenville story acts as a cautionary tale of what can happen when adults look the other way and deny that rape culture exists. With unprecedented access to police documents, exhibits and evidence, this documentary feature unflinchingly asks: “Why didn’t anyone stop it?”

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

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ROLL RED ROLL is a story that I felt compelled to tell. I went to a high school not unlike Big Red. I was a varsity athlete growing up and in college and I come from a sports family. I understand the love and passion for sports and the intense relationship between a player and a coach, and what it means to your family to succeed on the field or court. The entire town of Steubenville coming together to celebrate and stand together every Friday is a beautiful thing. But to quote journalist Rachel Dissell, "Is this football town putting its daughters at risk, by protecting its sons in a situation like this?"

In ROLL RED ROLL we see young men acting with total privilege and without accountability. This wasn't a "one-off" incident. This was a pattern of behavior that went beyond just a juvenile criminal trial, but led to a Grand Jury investigation of school officials. There should have been no question about what happened, and yet: the entire town was divided. I started this film one year after the incident, in August 2013. You couldn't walk into an establishment and not hear people talking about it - the hurt, the anger, the fatigue. The tension between respecting and keeping harmony in a small town and speaking out against gender-based violence was distressing for so many people. We documented first-hand the conflicts and the walls that went up to speaking out or going against the status quo.

The incident was planned and witnessed and an entire conversation was happening on social media about it. Prosecutors had to sift through over 400,000 text messages, hundreds and hundreds of tweets to figure out what was evidence and what was bravado. I read the text messages and the social media posts, and they chilled me. I felt like I knew these kids. They reflected some of the attitudes of my high school growing up. I wanted to explore the undercurrents of this compelling and frightful situation. The behavior wasn't unfamiliar to me, but the social media platform was new. I wanted to know what empowered boys to talk about rape so casually, and broadcast it so publicly. It was all out there. That's what made it so shocking.

Why didn't anyone stop it?

If we want to understand what is "rape culture" - then, here it is, laid bare. I just couldn't look away. I've been working to transform culture around gender-based violence for over 10 years, using film and technology in service of these goals. I've always been fascinated by technology and youth culture, and how while technology is mainly neutral, it is the way we use it - to connect, the help, to harm that is the variable. Seeing it overlap in the gender space - I was amazed at the power of social media: to incriminate, to empower and to shine a light on darkness. This entire thing was documented on social media and shared publicly. The bravado and the language used by the kids to talk about their classmates and young girls were astonishing. Anyone could see it. And the lack of empathy was chilling.

The film provides an opportunity to look at a regular American town. We are asking teenagers to "know better" but the adults in their lives aren't modeling better behavior. There were school administrators and teachers that heard rumors, and there were coaches who did nothing, or defended players without asking the tough questions. And by doing nothing, and not taking it seriously, they were enabling it - excusing and justifying it, or looking the other way. This situation underscores the need for responsibility and for us

to behave as friends, parents, family members, fellow classmates, teachers, school administrators, coaches and everyone in our communities to make sure that we believe survivors, we investigate carefully, and this behavior stops. Now we are at this incredible #metoo moment, where men and mainstream audiences are actually listening to the reality of our experiences, and it's time to shift our attention. We need to look closely at those who commit assault, so we can identify it, prevent it and ultimately transform our culture.

The bottom line is that rape is preventable. Steubenville is just like your town or school. Watching and studying the police interviews, the story shows clearly that rapists and bystanders are not "monsters", they are us – our sons our fathers, our coaches, our friends. When we turn them into "monsters" – it makes rape hard to "see" and eradicate. We as individuals and communities have to take responsibility and teach accountability to our children so that they understand this is wrong. And that speaking up and intervening is the right thing to do, even if no one else is doing it. I am hopeful that audiences take these lessons to heart and will move forward in creating safe, loving and caring communities for our future generations.

## FILMMAKER BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Nancy Schwartzman - Director/ Producer**

Nancy is a documentary film director, producer, and media strategist who uses storytelling and technology to create safer communities for women and girls. She directed *The Line*, a short documentary examining consent that was used by the White House for an impact campaign around sexuality, and PBS/POV and BBC featured *xoxosms* – a love story exploring teenagers and technology. A globally recognized human rights activist, her work focuses on creating impact around the prevention and transformation of gender-based violence. She serves on the Biden Foundation's Advisory Council for Violence Against Women. Nancy created the White House award-winning mobile app "Circle of 6," designed to reduce sexual violence used by over 350,000 people in 36 countries. She has shared her work at the White House, the United Nations, TEDxSheffield, AIDC and more.

*Roll Red Roll* is her debut feature film.

### **Steven Lake -Producer**

Steven Lake's directorial debut *Drying For Freedom* had success in the international film festival circuit, and picked up several accolades including the UK's 2012 Climate Week Award for Best Artistic Response. In early 2013 the documentary went into distribution, securing broadcast deals within the US, Asia and Europe. Steven's work to date has revolved around the aim of creating lasting social change through documentary; he is a converted environmentalist and advocate for feminism and women's rights.

### **Jessica Devaney - Producer**

Jessica produced the Sundance-supported documentary, *Speed Sisters*, about a fearless team of Palestinian women racecar drivers. She co-produced the Peabody Award winning short film *My Neighbourhood*, exploring the human impact of settlement expansion in East Jerusalem, and produced its companion web series *Home Front*, which Richard Branson deemed "films that make a difference." Jessica associate produced *Budrus*, which won thirteen international awards, including the Ridenhour Documentary Film Prize.

### **Matt Bockelman - Cinematographer**

Matt Bockelman is a New York-based cinematographer whose feature documentary credits also include *Do I Sound Gay* and *To Be Takei*. He's created short-form works for many arts and non-profit organizations, including Sesame Street, NYC Ballet and The Public Theater. He is also an adjunct professor at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

### **Christopher White - Editor**

Christopher White has been a documentary film editor, producer and director of numerous award-winning films since 1995. His most recent project (as co-producer and editor) is *Love Free or Die*, which premiered at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival, winning the Special Jury Prize. Other films include *The Killer Within* (as editor and co-director) which premiered at the 2006 Toronto Film Festival and was nominated for a 2008 Best Documentary Emmy, and *Hard Road Home*, nominated for a Best Documentary Emmy in 2009. White also edited *Waging A Living*, which followed the struggle of four working Americans trying to make ends meet, and *Critical Condition*, a verité journey through America's ailing health care system.

### **Nima Fakhara - Composer**

Iranian-born composer, ethnomusicologist, and inventor of musical instruments, Nima Fakhara is the founder of Zoo Creatives, with studios in Los Angeles and New York City. His credits include the Toronto Film Festival Official Selection, *The Girl in the Photographs* (the final film executive produced by Wes Craven), the Los Angeles Film Festival selection *Consumed* (directed by Daryl Wein), the Sundance Film Festival selection *The Signal*, *Catchaman* (directed by Toya Sato and starring Tori Matsuzaka and Ryohei Suzuki), a live action take on the anime series *Battle of the Planets*, *The Pyramid* (directed by Gregory Levveseur, produced by Alexander Aja), and *Exists* (directed by Eduardo Sanchez). His international credits include the Japanese TV show called *Tantei No Tantei*, and the SXSW selection *I am a Hero*. His video game credits include *Resident Evil: Revelations 2* and the 2016 release *1979 Revolution*.

### **Bari Pearlmanis - Co-Producer**

Bari Pearlmanis is a Peabody Award-winning documentary filmmaker whose award-winning films include *Mah-Jongg: The Tiles that Bind*, *Daughters of Wisdom* and *Nangchen Shorts*. She recently directed two episodes of *HLN Death Row Stories* and the short documentary *Autism Is for Life* for HBO *Night of Too Many Stars*. As a Producer, Bari collaborated on HBO's feature documentary *How to Dance in Ohio*, and *Smile 'Til It Hurts: The Up With People Story*. For television, she was recently Story Producer/Co-Producer of Amazon's *The New Yorker Presents* and previously produced A&E's *Fugitive Chronicles* and Court TV's *Shots in the Dark*. Bari is a member of the Producer's Guild of America and the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

### **Chachi Hauser - Associate Producer**

Chachi Hauser is a filmmaker and writer based in New Orleans. Her short film, *1227 Lesseps* which she co-wrote and directed, premiered at the 2017 New Orleans Film Festival. Her Wesleyan University thesis film, *Lolo*, won honors and screened at the 2014 Boston Wicked Queer Film Festival as well as 2014 Fringe! Queer Film & Arts Fest in London. She is currently an associate producer on two projects in development, including a documentary series focusing on young people in Southeastern Louisiana most vulnerable to climate change. Her writing has appeared in Hobart Online, Quaint Magazine, among others

### **Jessica Debruin - Impact Coordinator**

Jessica is a media professional and writer with a dedication to intersectional film and theatre. She has 4 years experience implementing fundraising and patron engagement strategies at national theatre nonprofits including Roundabout Theatre Company, and Center Theatre Group. She holds a BA in Theatre and Latin American Studies from Smith College. Her writing has been featured in online platforms for *The Advocate* and *Everyday Democracy*.

## SUBJECT BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Alexandria Goddard, aka “Prinnie” – Crime blogger**

Alexandria Goddard is a blogger and social media consultant. She has over 25 years of combined experience in legal investigations, fraud/risk management investigations and social media analysis. Her expertise includes utilizing social media to build social and personal profiles of witness, jurors and litigants while researching publicly accessible data to analyze social media presence and activities. For her role in the Steubenville case, she has appeared on Dr. Phil, 20/20, Piers Morgan, Democracy Now, Jane Velez-Mitchell and a multitude of print and web-based articles regarding her social media analysis expertise. Her work has also been used as source reference in academic research papers, as well as by advocacy agencies around the world.

### **Rachel Dissell – Investigative reporter, Plain Dealer**

Rachel Dissell has been a reporter for *The Plain Dealer* since 2002. Dissell has written investigative pieces and examined policies around Cleveland’s response to sexual assault, teen dating violence and lead poisoning. Her stories have led to changes in laws or policies and public perceptions, including a series with reporter Leila Atassi that led to the testing of nearly 14,000 rape kits and the investigations of decades old cases that followed. Since then more than 650 defendants in Cleveland have been indicted in previously unprosecuted rape cases. Most recently Dissell’s reporting with colleague Brie Zeltner uncovered Cleveland’s failure to investigate when children were poisoned by lead, which spurred local and statewide policy changes. Dissell’s nine-part narrative piece Johanna: Facing Forward won the 2008 Dart Award for coverage of trauma. The story started a conversation about teen dating abuse and has since been used as inspiration for a stage play. Dissell is an adjunct professor at Kent State, her alma mater.

### **Detective J.P. Rigaud – Lead investigator**

J.P. Rigaud is a special agent with the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation. He was formerly a police officer with the Steubenville, Ohio police department and was the lead investigator in the Steubenville case. He is the board president of A Caring Place, a child advocacy center in Steubenville, Ohio.

### **Marianne Hemmeter – Lead Special Prosecutor for the Ohio Attorney General’s Office**

Marianne Hemmeter served as a special prosecutor for Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine. While at the Ohio Attorney General’s Office she prosecuted criminal cases in twenty-three different counties throughout Ohio, including the much-covered Steubenville rape trial. Judge Hemmeter also served on the Ohio Attorney General’s Statewide Sexual Assault Response Team and was recognized as a Domestic Violence Subject Matter Expert for the Ohio Peace Officer’s Training Commission. She is now a Judge in the Delaware Municipal Court.

### **Walter Madison – Defense Attorney, Ma’lik Richmond**

Walter Madison is a defense attorney based in Akron, Ohio. He represented Ma’lik Richmond in the Steubenville case.

**Coach Reno Soccaccia – Steubenville Big Red’s football coach**

Coach Reno Soccaccia is the head football coach of Big Red’s high school football team. He has been the head coach for 25 years. Steubenville’s Big Red won the Ohio State Championship in 2017, marking their 4<sup>th</sup> state championships. They are widely recognized as one of the strongest programs in the state.

**Shawn McGhee – Steubenville high school graduate and athlete**

Shawn McGhee is a graduate of Steubenville High School and is an award-winning wrestler. He is currently based in Cincinnati, Ohio, a graduate of Campbellsville University in Kentucky, and training to be an MMA fighter.

**Jeno Atkins – Steubenville high school graduate and athlete**

Jeno Atkins is a graduate of Steubenville High School and a player for the Big Red football team. He is a graduate of Kent State.

**The Nelson Family: Mark, Gretchen, Therese & Madeliene**

The Nelson family own and operate Nelson’s Fine Art & Gifts, or “Catholic to the Max” a religious gift store in Steubenville, Ohio. Mark and Gretchen Nelson are active in community life, and have 10 children.



## TIMELINE

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August 11, 2012

Pre-season football parties are happening in Steubenville, Ohio. Over the course of the night, the crime takes place.

August 12-22, 2012

Kids tweeting and texting about the crime. Police interviews occur.

August 14, 2012

Jane Doe and her family make a report to the police.

August 17, 2012

The Attorney General of Ohio's office is requested in by the town of Steubenville to handle the investigation.

August 22, 2012

Trent Mays and Ma'lik Richmond are arrested.

August 22, 2012

Local media outlet reports on the rape.

August 26, 2012

Alexandria Goddard, local crime blogger posts the social media bragging about the rape, posts the Instagram photo of Jane Doe being carried, and creates local outrage.

When does the Attorney General's Office gets involved?

September 2, 2012

Operating on tips from locals, Cleveland-based journalist Rachel Dissell, of the Plain Dealer publishes her first story on the Steubenville story.

September 3, 2012

A 14-year-old girl from Steubenville high school reports a rape, from April 2012.

October 31, 2012

Alex Goddard gets sued by a local family for defamation in an attempt to shut down her blog. She and a friend tag the news #freespeech calls for the help of Anonymous

December 16, 2012

New York Times publishes "Rape Case Unfolds on Web and Splits City"

December 23, 2012

Anonymous hacks the high school website and releases a warning video. They also share the video of the kids laughing about the rape. This video went VIRAL ignited global outrage – made every news outlet

December 29, 2012

Anonymous and locals organize #OccupySteubenville rallies and protests in Steubenville, to demand swift justice and a fair trial. Hundreds attend and hundreds of women speak.

March 13, 2013

Trial for Trent Mays and Ma'lik Richmond begins

March 17, 2013

Trent Mays is an adjudicated delinquent ("found guilty" in the juvenile courts, sentenced to 2 years for assault and for photographing the victim). Ma'lik Richmond is an adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to 1 year.

March 17, 2013

Attorney General Mike DeWine calls for a Grand Jury investigation

November 25, 2013

5 Grand Jury Indictments handed out to school officials, including the Superintendent. Lead football coach is not indicted.

January 2, 2015

School Superintendent Mike McVey resigns, 4 other school officials resign.

## CREDITS

### FUNDERS:

Roll Red Roll was made:

#### In association with:

Ford Foundation I Just Films  
Artemis Rising Foundation  
Fork Films  
Bertha / Doc Society

#### Executive Producers:

Geralyn Dreyfous  
Barbara Dobkin  
Chandra Jessee  
Patty Quillin  
Regina K. Scully

#### Co-Executive Producers:

Abigail Disney  
Gini Reticker

#### Additional Support From:

Tribeca Film Institute  
International Documentary Association  
New York State Council of the Arts  
Chicken & Egg Pictures  
Harnisch Foundation

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A film by  
Nancy Schwartzman

PRODUCED BY  
Steven Lake

PRODUCERS  
Jennifer Fox  
Maxyne Franklin

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER  
Chachi Hauser

Field Sound Mixer	Aubrey Keith
Additional Camera	David Holm Steven Lake Isaac Mathes Kyle Wilkinson
Additional Editing	Erin Casper Sarah Devorkin

<b>Assistant Editor</b>	<b>Bryn Silverman</b>
<b>Featuring (in order of appearance)</b>	<b>J.P. Rigaud Alexandria Goddard Jeremy Jones Vinnie Fristick Michele Robinson Mark Nelson Gretchen Nelson Madeline Nelson Therese Nelson Shawn McGhee Jeno Atkins Rachel Dissell Marianne Hemmeter Walter Madison</b>
<b>Graphic Artist</b>	<b>Rob Fuller</b>
<b>Graphics Consultants</b>	<b>Thomas Cabus Gui Trang Nguyen</b>
<b>Title Design</b>	<b>Nicholas Vranizan</b>
<b>Title VFX Artist</b>	<b>Keenan Parry</b>
<b>Music Coordinator</b>	<b>Wyatt Oden</b>
<b>Archival Research</b>	<b>Sierra Pettengill Julie Begey Seureau</b>
<b>Fundraising Research and Support</b>	<b>Natalie Erazo Frances Underhill Sara Deneweth Carrie Nelson</b>
<b>Transcription</b>	<b>Victoria Negri Annie Rose Malamet</b>
<b>Equipment Rental</b>	<b>Hello World EGADS</b>
<b>Colorist</b>	<b>Ken Sirulnick</b>
<b>Online Editor</b>	<b>Mitch Jacobson</b>
<b>Finishing Assistant/Alchemist Engineer</b>	<b>Jordan Thompson-DeSon</b>

<b>Post Production Facility</b>	<b>Glue Editing &amp; Design</b>
<b>Supervising Sound Editor/ Re-Recording Mixer</b>	<b>Lewis Goldstein</b>
<b>Re-Recording Mixer</b>	<b>Thomas Ryan</b>
<b>Dialogue Editor</b>	<b>Alfred DeGrand</b>
<b>Sound Effects Editor</b>	<b>Jerrell Suelto</b>
<b>Audio Post Production Manager</b>	<b>Cate Montana</b>
<b>Sound Facility</b>	<b>Parabolic NY</b>
<b>Impact Producer</b>	<b>Erin Sorenson, Third Stage Consulting</b>
<b>Impact Coordinator</b>	<b>Jessica DeBruin</b>
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<b>Accounting Services</b>	<b>A Bookkeeping Cooperative Adelman Katz &amp; Mond LLP</b>
<b>Insurance Services</b>	<b>Reiff and Associates, LLC</b>
<b>Security Consultant</b>	<b>Jessica Robinson/Purepoint International</b>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Thank You</b></p>	