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For downloadable images, visit pbs.org/pressroom

For the program companion website, visit pbs.org/independentlens/sunshine

***SUNSHINE PREMIERES ON THE PBS SERIES INDEPENDENT LENS
ON TUESDAY, MAY 4 AT 10 PM***

***The Changing Face of Families:
From 'Unwed Mother' to 'Single Mom'
Through One Woman's Personal Story***

(San Francisco, CA) — Does history repeat itself? Karen Skloss found herself asking that question when she unexpectedly became pregnant — her own birth was the result of her mother's unplanned pregnancy 23 years earlier. How had “unwed motherhood” changed from 1975, when her mother had to go away to give birth in secret, to today, when single moms are more prevalent, but the rules are still being written?

In *Sunshine*, Skloss explores the meaning of family through her personal journey to understand the legacy of her own birth and the nontraditional family she has created by co-parenting with her ex-boyfriend. An uplifting and empowering self-portrait of an adopted woman searching for answers through reconnection with her biological mother, *Sunshine* will premiere on the PBS series *Independent Lens*, hosted by Maggie Gyllenhaal, on Tuesday, May 4 at 10 PM (check local listings).

Young, pregnant, single, and unprepared, Skloss wrestles with the incredible ironies of her life's circumstances — that, yes, perhaps history does repeat itself, and that the most strenuous efforts to protect the idea of family can actually do the most to pull families apart. She struggles to raise her own daughter and begins to understand the plight of her biological mother, a small town Texas mayor's daughter and prom queen who gave birth in secret, in a home for unwed mothers. Even as so much in the world has changed, mother and daughter face tough questions and raw emotions over a fading social landscape that continues to haunt them.



Scenes from Sunshine, coming to Independent Lens May 2010.



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Woven together from over ten years of Super 8 films, home videos, intimate family interviews, shimmering dance sequences, and stylized reenactments, *Sunshine* offers a refreshingly rare glimpse of the transformations taking place within our most sacred of institutions: the family.

To learn more about the film and the issues it presents, visit the *Sunshine* companion site at pbs.org/independentlens/sunshine. Get detailed information about the film, watch video clips, read an interview with the filmmakers, and find related links and resources to explore the subject in depth. The site also features a Talkback section for audiences to share their ideas and opinions.

Participants

Karen Skloss is a single mom, filmmaker, and artist who tells the intimate story of two generations of unwed mothers, and our changing times in the feature documentary *Sunshine*.

Jasmine Skloss Harrison is Karen's beautiful 10-year-old daughter, a straight A student, and aspiring artist and musician.

Mary Tinsley is a Montessori schoolteacher, and mother of five (including Karen), who resides in Victoria, Texas. She gave birth to Karen in Austin at the Home of the Holy Infancy.

Patricia and Jerry Skloss are Karen's adoptive parents.

Jeremy Harrison is Jasmine's father, a single dad and shared custody co-parent.

Kemper Williams Jr. is Mary's father; he was the mayor of Victoria, Texas for 10 years.

About the Filmmaker

Karen Skloss works as a filmmaker and visual artist. Her award-winning narrative films and video installations have been shown in festivals internationally including The International Festival Rotterdam and the Cannes market. Her short film, *Smitten* (2001), is distributed through Hart Sharp Video. She has edited a number of feature documentaries, including *Atomic Ed & the Black Hole* (2002) and *Be Here To Love Me: A Film About Townes Van Zandt* (2005). *Sunshine* is her first feature film as director.

About Independent Lens

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10 PM on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries, and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of their independent producers. *Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about a unique individual, community, or moment in history. Presented by the Independent Television Service (ITVS), the series is supported by interactive companion websites, as well as national publicity and community engagement campaigns. Further information about the series is available at www.pbs.org/independentlens. *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS, and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen.

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