

Present



# ALL THE QUEEN'S HORSES

Directed and produced by Kelly Pope Richmond

*How did one woman steal \$53 million without anyone noticing?*



Winner: Best Documentary, Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival 2017

**Distributor:** Kartemquin Films  
**Run Time:** 70 minutes  
**Language:** English  
[www.allthequeenshorsesfilm.com](http://www.allthequeenshorsesfilm.com)  
[Facebook.com/queenshorses](https://www.facebook.com/queenshorses)  
[@queens\\_horses](https://www.instagram.com/queens_horses)

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[Press Images](#) / [Trailer](#)

### Short synopsis

How could one woman steal \$53 million without anyone noticing? *ALL THE QUEEN'S HORSES* tells the story of Rita Crundwell, the perpetrator of the largest case of municipal fraud in American history. As city comptroller of Dixon, IL (population 15,838), Crundwell stole \$53 million dollars of public funds across 20 years. She used the funds to build one of the nation's leading quarter horse breeding empires, all while forcing staff cuts, police budget slashing, and neglect of public infrastructure. *ALL THE QUEEN'S HORSES* investigates her crime, her lavish lifestyle and the small town she left in her wake.

### Long synopsis

Rita Crundwell stole more than \$53 million of public funds across two decades in office as the City Comptroller and Treasurer for Dixon, Illinois, a town with a population of just 16,000. She used the funds to build one of the nation's leading quarter horse breeding empires, and threw lavish parties for community leaders at her home, all while the town endured cuts to public staff, emergency services budgets, and work on maintaining public infrastructure. In 2012 after a close colleague turned whistleblower finally uncovered her scheme and alerted the Mayor, the FBI arrested Crundwell as the largest municipal fraud perpetrator in American history.

How did Rita Crundwell steal over \$37,000 each day from a town with an annual budget of around \$6 million? How could such embezzlement go undetected in annual audits by two independent accounting firms and in annual audit reviews by state regulators? How did local residents not become suspicious of Crundwell's extravagant wealth and frivolous spending?

*ALL THE QUEEN'S HORSES* is the riveting story of how a pillar of the community could so callously execute a scam of such magnitude. This film reveals the procedures behind how she did it and got away with it for so long, how she was caught, how the city is attempting to rebuild and recover, and how if it happened in Dixon, it could happen anywhere.

### The Filmmaker

The film is the debut feature of director Kelly Richmond Pope, Ph.D., CPA, an associate professor in the School of Accountancy and MIS at DePaul University and founder of Helios Digital Learning. Pope's work and research across her academic and professional careers has centered around fraud, and her first educational documentary, *Crossing the Line: Ordinary People Committing Extraordinary Crimes*, has won numerous national education innovation awards and is used in colleges, universities, and corporations throughout the country.

Pope developed the film through the inaugural Diverse Voices in Docs fellowship, a professional development and mentorship program for documentary makers of color, organized by Kartemquin Films and the Community Film Workshop of Chicago, and funded in part by The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. *ALL THE QUEEN'S HORSES* participated in the 2016 TFI Network Market at the Tribeca Film Festival, 2016 Hot Docs Deal Makers and 2013 Tribeca Hacks with the Tribeca Film Institute.



*ALL THE QUEEN'S HORSES* was directed and produced by Kelly Richmond Pope, and co-produced and edited by Lesley Kubistal. The film was shot by Bing Liu, Keith Walker, and Margaret Byrne, and is executive produced by Ivy Walker, Justine Nagan, Gordon Quinn, Betsy Steinberg, Justin Dearborn, and Nicholas Gialamas.

## Director's Statement

"I wanted to make this film because as shocking as Crundwell's crime is, fraud schemes like these happen all over the world every day. Recent global research shows that the world loses more than \$3.5 trillion annually due to fraud. Most, if not all, of the media coverage on Crundwell's case focused heavily on how she spent the \$53 million. Yet little, if any, media have focused on the crux of the issues that allowed the fraud to happen—the lack of accountability shown by the Dixon City Council and Dixon residents and the inability for the Dixon city auditors to detect the fraud.



No public story has used this case to explore the issue of the pervasiveness of fraud and ALL THE QUEEN'S HORSES fills that void.

Viewers will learn how easy it truly is for fraud to happen. If the largest municipal fraud in U.S. history can happen in the small midwestern with 16,000 population, we know that fraud is happening everywhere." – Kelly Richmond Pope

## The Dixon fraud timeline:

- 1983: The city of Dixon, Ill., names Rita Crundwell comptroller and treasurer.
- 1990: Crundwell opens a secret bank account in the name of the city of Dixon.
- 1991: Crundwell steals \$181,000 from the city of Dixon. She spends \$18,728 in July to buy a 28-foot Suncruiser Pontoon boat with a deluxe buggy top, wet bar, propane grill, and playpen cover. She also spends more than \$3,000 on diamond stud earrings and other jewelry.
- 1992: Crundwell steals \$121,367.
- 1993: Crundwell steals \$225,287. The city of Dixon reports a deficit of nearly \$415,000 and makes budget cuts totaling \$195,000.
- 1994: Crundwell steals \$117,281. Dixon cuts more than \$150,000 from budget.
- 1995: Crundwell steals \$103,664. Dixon reports a deficit of \$322,214 and slashes the budget by more than \$185,000.
- 1996: Data not available.
- 1997: Crundwell steals \$328,622 and uses stolen funds to pay for a custom saddle, enclosed golf cart, and a horse named Two Thumbs Up. The city reports deficits as high as \$232,600 and makes more than \$100,000 in budget cuts.
- 1998: Crundwell steals \$767,487 and uses stolen funds to buy a motor home for \$100,000, a deck boat for \$50,000, and a 1998 Chevy pickup truck for \$28,000.
- 1999: Crundwell steals nearly \$1.1 million and buys a horse named Can't Fool Patty for \$125,000.
- 2000: Crundwell steals \$1.9 million and spends \$450,000 to remodel and expand her home in Dixon. The city reports a deficit of \$370,674 before making tens of thousands in budget cuts.
- 2001: Crundwell steals \$2.6 million and buys three horses for a combined \$525,000. The city reports a deficit of \$730,576 before another round of budget cuts.
- 2002: Crundwell steals a shade under \$3 million and uses stolen funds to buy a motor home for \$400,000, purchase a horse for \$200,000, and buy her boyfriend a 1967 Chevy Corvette for \$56,000. The city of Dixon institutes a hiring freeze due to budget deficits.
- 2003: Crundwell steals slightly more than \$3 million. The city reports a deficit of nearly \$1.3 million blamed in large part on state funding cuts.
- 2004: Crundwell steals almost \$3.5 million and buys a new motor home costing \$1.7 million. Dixon reports a deficit of \$1.6 million before additional budget cuts are made.

- 2005: Crundwell steals \$4.6 million and builds a horse ranch facility in Dixon, writing checks to construction companies totaling about \$650,000. She also trades in the motor home she bought 11 months earlier and pays a \$235,000 balance to buy a new motor home for \$1.82 million.
- 2006: Crundwell steals \$4.4 million. The city reports a deficit of \$1.7 million and announces a budget freeze plus \$700,000 in cuts from the capital equipment budget.
- 2007: Crundwell steals \$4.75 million. She trades in the motor home she bought in 2005 and pays a balance of \$545,000 to buy a new motor home costing \$1.96 million. The city reports a deficit of more than \$1.1 million.
- 2008: Crundwell steals \$5.8 million. She spends \$425,000 and trades in the motor home she bought the previous year to purchase a new motor home costing \$2.1 million.
- 2009: Crundwell steals \$5.6 million. She spends \$335,000 to buy a pair of horses and \$260,000 to buy a new horse trailer. She also wires \$105,097 for the purchase of a home in Englewood, Fla.
- 2011: A Dixon city clerk opens the mail while Crundwell is on vacation, discovers the RSCDA account and immediately alerts the mayor, who then contacts the FBI.
- 2012: Crundwell is arrested and pleads guilty to fraud charges.
- 2013: A judge sentences Crundwell to 19 years, 7 months in prison.

Source: U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Illinois.

## KEY PRESS

*'IT'S GOOD TO BE QUEEN,' DISGRACED COMPTROLLER WHO STOLE \$54 MILLION BOASTED*

– By Kim Janssen, [The Chicago Tribune](#)

*CHICAGO PROFESSOR TURNS FILMMAKER IN QUEST TO UNRAVEL DIXON EMBEZZLEMENT'*

– By Nina Metz, [The Chicago Tribune](#)

*'ALL THE QUEEN'S HORSES' PLAINLY EXPLAINS HOW DIXON GOT PLUNDERED*

– By Richard Roeper, [The Chicago Sun-Times](#)

*DIRECTOR OF 'ALL THE QUEEN'S HORSES' STOPS BY ABC 7*

– [ABC 7](#)

*INTERVIEW WITH KELLY RICHMOND POPE*

– *The John Williams Show*, [WGN Radio](#)

## Key Crew

### **LESLEY KUBISTAL - Editor, co-producer**

Lesley is an Emmy-nominated television and documentary film editor with over fifteen years of experience in narrative-driven projects, which range from reality docu-dramas to feature-length documentaries. Some of her television work includes the Emmy-nominated series *Inside 9/11* for The National Geographic Channel, award-winning segments and series for *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, and the Emmy Award-winning series *Super Soul Sunday* for the OWN network. She has also worked on the award-winning documentary *SelectED*, the PBS special *American Pharaoh*, which followed the Egyptian Men's National Soccer team and their bid to qualify for the World Cup in 2014, and many others.

### **KRISTYN AVALOS - Associate producer**

Kristyn Avalos is the Associate Producer on *All the Queen's Horses*. She specializes in multimedia content development projects used in educational and corporate environments. Kristyn is currently the Digital Content Manager at Helios Digital Learning. She also worked as a post-production assistant on the Helios produced documentary, *Crossing the Line: Ordinary People Committing Extraordinary Crimes*.

**KEITH WALKER - Cinematographer**

Keith, co-owner and director of photography for Media Process Group, has shot hundreds of broadcast segments for shows like *60-minutes*, *Oprah's Next Chapter*, *Dateline*, and *HBO Real Sports*, as well as numerous award-winning documentaries for PBS, NBC and CBS. He also shot many corporate marketing and educational projects for clients like the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Gates Foundation, Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago and Starbucks.

**BING LIU - Cinematographer**

Bing received a B.A. in English Literature from University of Illinois at Chicago in May of 2011. Since July 2011, Bing has been a member of the International Cinematographer's Guild, working on projects including *Shameless*, *Empire*, and *Chiraq* to fund his documentaries. In 2015, his short film about two Vietnamese immigrants, *Nuoc*, won Best Directed Documentary at the Collected Voices Film Festival. Since September 2015, Bing has been a Story Director and DP for the upcoming documentary series *America To Me* directed by Steve James. He has taken his directorial feature, *Minding the Gap*, through Kartemquin's Diverse Voices in Docs program, Tribeca All Access, Firelight Media's Producer Lab and Chicago Media Project's DOC10 pitch session.

**MARGARET BYRNE - Cinematographer**

Margaret Byrne received her BFA in film at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2000. Margaret was a Creative Director at Universal Music and directed live concerts and music videos for artists such as Jay-Z and Mary J Blige. She produced and edited the television series that launched MTV across Africa in 2005 and directed a host of music videos for emerging African artists. She was a cinematographer and an editor for *American Promise* (2013), a thirteen-year feature film following the education of two African American boys from New York City. The film won the 2013 Sundance Special Jury Prize and 2013 Full Frame Documentary Jury Award. Margaret is director and producer of feature documentary *Raising Bertie*. Margaret is founder of Beti Films ([betifilms.com](http://betifilms.com)) and Creative Vision Films ([creativevisionfilms.com](http://creativevisionfilms.com)). She's also a Motion Picture Television Professor at the College of DuPage.

**JUSTINE NAGAN - Executive producer**

Justine Nagan is the Executive Director of American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) and the Executive Producer of Point of View (POV). Prior, Justine was the Executive Director and Executive Producer at Kartemquin Films. She was responsible, in concert with the Board of Directors, for creating and implementing the strategic vision for Kartemquin. Justine successfully transitioned to the ED role in a historic founder-led organization, and has made major strides in building a foundation for long-term sustainability.

**GORDON QUINN - Executive Producer**

Artistic Director and founding member of Kartemquin Films, Gordon Quinn has been making documentaries for over 50 years. Roger Ebert, of the Chicago Sun Times, called his first film *Home for Life* (1966) "an extraordinarily moving documentary." With *Home for Life* Gordon established the direction he would take for the next four decades, making cinema verite films that investigate and critique society by documenting the unfolding lives of real people. He was the recipient of the 2015 Career Achievement Award from the International Documentary Association.

**BETSY STEINBERG - Executive Producer**

Executive Director Betsy Steinberg joined Kartemquin in December 2015 and oversees daily operations, development, and serves as Executive Producer on Kartemquin projects. Prior to Kartemquin she spent eight years as Managing Director of the Illinois Film Office where she spearheaded Illinois' transformation into a world class film destination. During her tenure the state broke all local film industry revenues in 2007, 2010, 2012 and 2013 and the Illinois Film Office was recognized by the Illinois Arts Alliance with an Arts Advocate Award and Cinema Chicago's Golden Hugo. She also served on the Governor's Roundtable on the Creative Arts and the boards of Free Spirit Media, Chicago Media Project and the Midwest Independent Film Festival.



**IVY WALKER - Executive Producer**

Ivy Walker is Co-founder & CEO of Helios Digital Learning, Inc. a creator of innovative digital content used by corporations, government entities and academic institutions as a tool to help business professionals and students improve their ethical decision making. She holds an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and a B.S. in Community Health from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She was awarded Kellogg's Alumni Entrepreneur Supporter of the Year Award and the Anti-Defamation League's Rising Star Award.

**JUSTIN DEARBORN - Executive Producer**

Justin Dearborn is the Chief Executive Officer of Tribune Publishing (NYSE:TPUB). Dearborn was appointed as CEO and Director in February 2016. Prior to Tribune Publishing, Dearborn served as Chief Executive Officer and a Director of Merge Healthcare. During his tenure, Dearborn led the company through a period of transformation and sustainable growth.

**NICHOLAS GIALAMAS - Executive Producer**

Nicholas Gialamas is Area President for Hub International and CEO of Forest Capital Management in Chicago, IL. Prior to holding these positions, Nick served as CEO to Forest Financial Group for 18 years before selling the business to Hub International in December 2015. He is a recognized leader within the insurance industry, having over 20 years of benefits consulting experience. Nick is a Board member of the Retirement and Savings Foundation in Washington, D.C. as well as of the International Screenwriters Association.

**Credits**

**Kartemquin Films** presents

**ALL THE QUEEN'S HORSES**

**Director / Producer**

Kelly Richmond Pope

**Editor / Co-producer**

Lesley Kubistal

**Director of Photography**

Margaret Byrne

**Cinematographers**

Keith Walker

Bing Liu

**Additional Camera**

Brian Bartels

Morrie Bowie

Camille DeBose

Ian Kibbe

Rick Salisbury

Tanner Smith

Todd Tue

Tony Williams

**Photography**

Katrina Wittkamp

**Assistant Editors**

Nora Gully

Hillary Bachelder  
Nancy McDonald  
Carlos Cova

**Story Consultant**

Gordon Quinn

**Associate Producer**

Kristyn Avalos

**Consulting Producers**

Margaret Byrne  
Keith Walker

**Executive Producers**

Justine Nagan  
Gordon Quinn  
Betsy Steinberg  
Ivy Walker  
Justin Dearborn  
Nicholas Gialamas

**Graphics and Animation**

Ezra Thormodsgaard  
Peter DiCamillo

**Dixon Courtroom Drawings**

Dawn Massey

**Additional Artwork**

L.D. Chukman

**Whiteboard Artist**

Steve Worthington

**Post Production Supervisor**

Ryan Gleeson

**Digital Colorist**

Elliot Rudmann

**Audio Mixing**

Tim Reisig

**Transcription**

Kristyn Avalos  
Mike Epifani  
Darartu Mohamed

**Production Assistants**

Max Asaf  
Mike Epifani  
Blake Griffin  
Charlie Kessler  
Sarayah Wright

**Production Interns**

Faith Dearborn  
Hannah Gialamas

**Hair & Make-Up**

Chassidy Mickale  
Stephanie Tyrrell

**Key Contributors**

Gene Biggerstaff  
Michael Svak  
Kathe Swanson  
Jim Burke  
Gila Bronner  
Kim Nelson  
Tavia Rowan  
Bonnie Kime  
Nancy Anderson  
Darryl McPherson  
Jason Wojdylo  
Tom Golden  
George Aune  
Richard Rutherford  
Stan Wolzen  
Fred Rangel  
Ken Novak  
Patrick McPherson  
Carol Fisher  
James Baker  
Bryan Smith  
Joseph Pedersen  
Pat Breeding  
June Wolzen  
David Suarez  
Devon Bruce  
Paula Meyer  
Mike Venier  
Liandro Arellano Jr.  
Todd Carroll

**Kartemquin Films**

Suzanne Niemoth  
Beckie Stochetti  
Jim Morrissette  
Sarah Schwartz  
Leslie Simmer  
Tim Horsburgh  
Emily Strong  
Marriah Kern  
Pedro Urgiles  
Justin Williams

**Composer**

Eric Kuhn