

Bella!

THIS WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN
THE HOUSE

Nancy Pelosi • Hillary Clinton • Barbra Streisand • Shirley MacLaine • Gloria Steinem
Maxine Waters • Lily Tomlin • Marlo Thomas • Phil Donahue • Charles Rangel • Renée Taylor



A Documentary Film

From Writer & Director
Jeff L. Lieberman

RE-EMERGING
FILMS

#abzuglutely



Bella!

FEATURING



Sec. Hillary Clinton



Barbra Streisand



Shirley MacLaine



Letty Cottin Pogrebin



Mayor David Dinkins



Renée Taylor



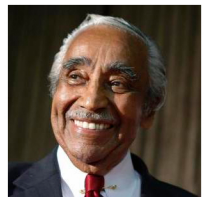
Speaker Nancy Pelosi



Marlo Thomas



Gloria Steinem



Rep. Charles Rangel



Rep. Maxine Waters



Phil Donahue



Lily Tomlin

As Kamala Harris, Nancy Pelosi and AOC lead the nation, they travel a path blazed by several women before them, notably Bella Abzug. In 1970, when the United States was ruled by men, Bella challenged the status quo, running a successful campaign from the streets of Manhattan that elevated her all the way to the halls of Congress. With her trademark hat and Bronx swagger, Bella fought for credit cards for women, equality for the LGBTQ community and trailblazed a path for leadership that reflected the broad diversity of the country. Yet as she became the most recognizable woman in politics, Bella battled mounting forces from both the right and the left, including the powers of the Nixon Administration, the CIA, even The New York Times.

Using never-before-seen home movies, audio diaries, and a vast trove of newly-discovered news footage, *Bella!* delves into a colorful and gritty era where one woman sacrificed her own political ambitions for future generations of female leadership.



The film is Written, Directed and Produced by **Jeff L. Lieberman** (*The Amazing Nina Simone*, *Re-Emerging: The Jews of Nigeria*) and produced by Jamila C. Fairley, Tamar Kaissar and Amy Wilensky. Re-Emerging Films, 2023, USA, 102 Min.



Bella!

Logline

In 1970, Bella Abzug entered Congress ready for a fight. With her trademark hat and Bronx swagger, the first elected Feminist upended the Washington patriarchy, battling for women's equality, civil rights, and LGBTQ+ protections.

Synopsis

As Kamala Harris and Nancy Pelosi lead the nation, they travel a path blazed by several women before them, notably Bella Abzug. In 1970, when the United States was ruled by men, Bella challenged the status quo, running a successful campaign from the streets of Manhattan that elevated her all the way to the halls of Congress. With her trademark hat and Bronx swagger, Bella entered Congress swinging, battling for credit cards for women, equality for the LGBTQ community and trailblazing a path for leadership that reflected the broad diversity of the country.

But, the most recognizable woman in politics also became the target of a Washington establishment resistant to change. With her eyes set on breaking the boys' club of The US Senate or becoming New York's first female mayor, Bella battled mounting forces from both the right and the left, and the powers of the Nixon Administration, the CIA, FBI, even The New York Times.

Using never-before-seen home movies, audio diaries, and a vast trove of newly-discovered news footage, Bella! delves into a colorful and gritty era where one woman sacrificed her own political ambitions for future generations of female leadership.

Synopsis with Production Details

"Bella!" is a brand new documentary film exploring the trailblazing journey of activist, feminist and Congresswoman Bella Abzug.

In 1970, Bella Abzug entered Congress ready for a fight. With her trademark hat and Bronx swagger, the first elected Feminist upended the Washington patriarchy, battling for women's equality, civil rights, and LGBTQ+ protections. Despite Nixon and the FBI's attempts to silence her, Bella persisted.

Securing credit cards for women, orchestrating defunding The Vietnam War and pushing forward the first-ever LGBTQ+ Rights bill, Bella made bold strides in attempts to better the lives of Americans. Yet, oppositional forces were circling closer. The CIA surveilled her home for years - labeling her as "potentially dangerous." When Bella attempted to desegregate the all-male US Senate in 1976, the resistance was so strong that one is forced to consider whether there was an even larger coordination at work. She battled that structure year after year in nailbiter campaigns - fighting presidents, senators, mayors, and even The New York Times.

"Bella!" is the latest film from Director Jeff L. Lieberman (*The Amazing Nina Simone, Re-Emerging: The Jews of Nigeria*) and features brand new interviews with Barbra Streisand, Nancy Pelosi, Hillary Clinton, Gloria Steinem, Lily Tomlin, Maxine Waters, Shirley MacLaine, Phil Donahue, Marlo Thomas, Charlie Rangel, Scott Stringer and David Dinkins.

It is produced by Jeff L. Lieberman, Jamila C. Fairley, Tamar Kaissar and Amy Wilensky through the Harlem-based production company, Re-Emerging Films.

Bella!

Director's Statement

Loud. Abrasive. Bellicose. Belligerent. Bitter.

These are just a few of the titles bestowed upon Bella Abzug.

A more pleasant one was: Battlin' Bella.

She didn't love that one either.

And yes, she did yell, she did bang tables, and that might even be offensive to film-going audiences in 2023.

But when our very democracy is at stake... when the climate is at stake - as both are today - is there any other option than to shake people into caring?

"Bella!" primarily centers on a 10-year period in American history: 1970-1980. It is half a century ago, and yet remarkably the film speaks to today's issues as much as it does to that period. Abortion, gay rights, gender equality, equal justice, police violence, corruption, war, climate indifference are all issues that Bella Abzug "battled" during the 1970s, and can also be ripped from today's headlines. Today, there are so many forces working to reverse hard-earned progress that one has to consider where we would be without the efforts of Bella Abzug, who literally banged through doors in order to sit down at the table to begin to create change. That happened in the halls of Congress, but began with a rough and tumble campaign shaking hands outside of subway stations in New York City.

I was a child during this period, growing up miles away in Vancouver, Canada, but I always had a strong fascination with the larger-than-life personality of New York City. I first visited the city I would eventually call home when I was 13 years old. For two weeks, I independently roamed the streets of Manhattan with a video camera in tow - careful not to step past the boundaries marked by my uncle on a printed map. New York made me feel alive and connected, with a new discovery around every corner that stirred connections to my Jewish roots, or my burgeoning secretive gay identity, or my desire to be in the middle of the film/theatre/art/music world. One of my favorite documentary films eventually became: "New York: A Documentary Film" by Ric Burns, where I first got introduced to the unforgettable Bella Abzug.

Raised in a community filled with strong Jewish women, Bella Abzug was not a totally unfamiliar name. Her orbit filled my 1980's home: the books of Letty Cottin Pogrebin (featured in "Bella!") and Anita Diamant lined our bookshelves; we sang the songs of Debbie Friedman; and were proud to see Gloria Steinem (also featured in Bella!) appear on the evening news. However, Bella's name did not quite push through like it had in other homes throughout the 1970's, when she appeared on magazine covers and became one of the most recognizable faces in Congress - due in part to her trademark branding - her iconic hats. Yet, for all her groundbreaking achievements during the 70's, how did such a well-recognized personality shrink so rapidly from public view? More importantly, in the realms of history, how is it that so few people know her name, her story, or her contributions to the betterment of the world? In the many years of making this film, that became apparent not just in the wider world, but even in the Jewish, LGBTQ+ and Feminist communities who should be crowning her as a hero. It's one of the many reasons why I set out to make this film - based on a suggestion from my mother.

My mom taught me a lot about feminism when I was a child. She went through her own late-stage feminist rebellion in the 80's - leading to a reversal of household and employment roles with my father, who happily agreed. Harder lessons were learned as she was forced to push back against our ingrained sexist thinking. A carefully selected pair of oven mitts I had purchased at the mall for her birthday were rejected. "Oven mitts are for the kitchen, not for me." I was heartbroken but the lesson stuck. In 2016, after completing my previous film, "The Amazing Nina Simone", I began brainstorming ideas for my next project. My mom came up with a list of documentary ideas that like any well-meaning parent included suggestions that ignored many boundaries of reality. After politely rejecting most of the ideas, I paused when she mentioned Bella Abzug. I liked the idea but was pretty confident that her story had been told many times before. My mom said the idea had come from a neighbor who had met Bella when she visited Vancouver for a climate conference. I didn't know George Febiger, but spoke to him on the phone and he told me about his very memorable day spent touring the city with Bella, and the many stories and insights that she had shared. He

thought Bella's story was long overdue. After doing some research, I quickly realized a comprehensive documentary film about Bella Abzug had never been done before, and George was not alone in his belief – it was Bella's time.

When we set out to make this film, it was a very different era. Hillary Clinton (featured in Bella!) was running for president. The film would be about the woman who trailblazed the way for the country's first female president. Donald Trump was elected instead. We began filming in the Trump era, and it seemed everyone's favorite question was: What would Bella say to Trump? Maxine Waters had many ideas! The era gave birth to AOC, The Squad, Katie Porter, and a historic first – the country's first female Vice President, Kamala Harris. Me Too, Time's Up, and the 100-year anniversary of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote swirled around the making of the film. Our producing team of myself, Jamila C. Fairley, Tamar Kaissar and Amy Wilensky dedicated hours to shape the film and find the right words, tone, stories, music, look and feel. And then a pandemic ground things to a halt. The filmmaking team decided Bella deserved not to be buried in virtual screenings and that we should wait for cinemas to re-open. This proved fortunate as it led to an even more prominent debut, with the film winning The 2022 Library of Congress/Lavine Ken Burns Prize for Film and creating a valuable partnership with WNET /PBS.

Bella's accomplishments are many – a full list is included in this kit – but perhaps her most significant impact is one that cannot even be quantified. I recently met a woman who shared something with me that remains ingrained in my head. She knew Bella from volunteering on her campaigns and looked up to both her and Shirley Chisholm. A man told her once that he liked her gentler style of feminism more than Bella's. She stopped him right there with the simplest of explanations. Bella had no choice. She went head first into buildings and institutions because the doors were locked. Somebody had to go first and somebody had to steamroll through a place like Congress which was 97% male in 1971. There was no pussyfooting around it. One needed to yell and shout through megaphones because the institutions were invested in keeping women out. It ended up being an effective way to institute reform, but as the film examines, it potentially cost Bella many of her own dreams and ambitions.

Today, it is clear to me that Bella would still be yelling. The world is in great denial about climate change, and Bella would be ringing that alarm continually. She was passionate about the environment and much of her later decades were spent advocating through The United Nations. Today, the effects of global warming are much more apparent. If it is too hot to walk out of one's home, or the air is unbreathable, if the food supply is on fire, and the ocean is consuming the land, little else matters. Bella was never shy to spell these things out for people, and one can see much of the same alarm-ringing coming from young activists like Greta Thunberg. It is easy to dismiss people like Bella and Greta when the flames are not at your doorstep. When they are, the chance to counter the disaster is long gone. And if a 30-year climate disaster projection is too far in the distance to care about, then the recent decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court regarding abortion and affirmative action should slap one out of their slumber.

"Bella!" ends with a brand new song composed for the film called "The Easy Way." One of its most poignant lyrics is:

I could feel defeated now
I could be broken-hearted
I could be finished long
Before I'd even started
But that would be too easy
And I never take the easy way.

This sums up Bella's example perfectly. It is easy for any one of us to retreat and be discouraged by the onslaught of overwhelming, bad news. It takes more work to stand up and fight - but less work if we all do it collectively. With the perils of climate change, dismantling of civil rights, and our democracy being challenged by both inside and outside threats, we hope that "Bella!" inspires a future generation of leaders who will pick up the bullhorn and lead us toward sustainable solutions. And we hope this film inspires everyone to find those small things they can do improve the world and never take the easy way.

- Jeff L. Lieberman
Director, Writer & Producer of "Bella!"
July, 2023

Bella!



Bella Abzug: Trailblazer

In the 1970's, Bella Abzug was a trailblazing symbol of hope. This is obvious in the opening moments of "Bella!" as we see the rapturous enthusiasm of supporters in reaction to Bella's fist-pounding words. In a time when few women held national office, Bella was at the forefront of institutional change. Yet, as the film examines, Bella's approach may have also been her greatest challenge. As her profile rose, there were those who saw a threat to well-entrenched establishment politics. When Bella attempted to desegregate the all-male US Senate in 1976, the resistance was so strong that we are forced to consider whether there was larger coordination at work. She battled that structure year after year in nail-biter campaigns - fighting presidents, senators, mayors, and even The New York Times.



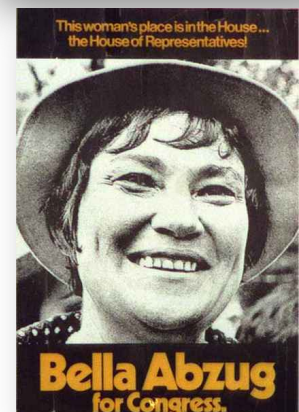
Act 1

Upon graduating law school, the young Jewish woman from The Bronx started her own law practice - prioritizing career, family, and social justice equally. Bella's activism around McCarthyism and Civil Rights led her to a community of female activists: Women Strike for Peace. Their protests against nuclear proliferation were so effective, they changed laws.

That success led to larger ambition. In 1970, Bella launched a campaign for US Congress, representing a large swath of lower Manhattan. Broadway performers lent support, most notably Barbra Streisand, who recalls how Bella easily connected with The Lower East Side's elderly Jewish voters. That connection dated back to Bella's childhood synagogue where her Orthodox grandfather taught her the Hebrew prayers. When Bella's father died suddenly, she was intent on publicly reciting the traditional mourner's prayer. The elders would not allow it. That did not stop Bella from defying the many sexist norms of her childhood - including making speeches on the subway to collect money for Israel.

These interactions became valuable training for the nonstop handshaking of 1970. Many minorities saw their own dreams realized in Bella's vision, and elected her to victory. Bella headed to Washington, joining only 11 other women in Congress. Her priority was the immediate end of The Vietnam War and she made that very clear to President Nixon. Representative Charles Rangel remembers Bella hit Washington "like a sledghehammer."

Bella says her fearless defiance really erupted in the 1940s upon being told Harvard Law School didn't admit women. The young working lawyer was dismissed as "just a secretary", so began wearing her famous hat - a sign of a professional. She proved her ultimate bravery when asked to defend Willie McGee - a black man facing the electric chair in the corrupt courts of the Jim Crow South. Risking her life in pursuit of justice would be a hallmark of her career.



Bella!

Act 2

In her first year in Congress, Bella's fearlessness would be tested immediately, from wearing her hat on the House Floor to challenging DC police on the mass arrest of thousands of anti-war protestors. It was also marked by Bella's legislative wins for the disabled, public transportation, and a monumental childcare bill that passed the House, though Nixon vetoed. With success, Bella suddenly felt the weight of institutional resistance. Her district was re-drawn in a way that made winning again seem impossible. Through a tense street battle that included a defeat, the death of her opponent, and a whole new battle, Bella prevailed, returning to Washington ready for real change.

Her trailblazing efforts led to bills granting women credit cards in their own names, and allowing "Ms." as a valid designation on government documents. She also proposed the first legislation that would grant historic protections to the LGBTQ community. Congresswoman Elizabeth Holtzman recalls Bella was way ahead of the times.

In her 3rd term, Bella proved herself to be more than an advocate for women, but an advocate for democracy. She became chair of an influential subcommittee and took on the CIA, discovering in the process that they had been spying on her for decades. The front-page news didn't sidetrack her as she simultaneously helped pass a bill to defund The Vietnam War, bringing it finally to an end.



With growing national prominence, Bella set her eyes on running for The US Senate. Her friends said it was career suicide. A grueling year of weekly trips around the state led to strong support and a historic battle at The New York Times. The night of the primary, Bella was in tears as she lost by less than 1%. She ran for mayor of New York City and then Congress once again, and in the end faced three stunning losses in three years. Her once powerful rise came to an abrupt end with many in the press gleefully writing her political obituary.

Act 3

While she hadn't begun her political career with a feminist-first agenda, it became clearer to Bella that is where she could make the most impact. She opened the largest gathering of feminists in US history - The National Women's Conference. It's success led President Jimmy Carter to appoint Bella to lead a presidential advisory committee on women. But only months in, Carter publicly fired Bella. His intention to look bold crumbled as the majority of the committee resigned in solidarity.

With sweeping cultural changes in the 1980s led by the election of Ronald Reagan, many women's groups felt a jolting halt in progressive strides. Bella turned her gaze international to help women in other countries. Effectively teaching policy and how to amend UN resolutions, Bella's impact was felt globally. A speech at a UN women's conference in China would be her last, as she ultimately succumbed to the strains of a failing heart in 1998.

Legacy

Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi reflects that Bella's legacy lives on today, highlighting the rise of women in Congress: from 12 to well over 100. But as Hillary Clinton points out, too many people don't know Bella's story, which has the potential to inspire the next little girl from the Bronx to start making speeches on the subway and rise to one day become president.



Jeff L. Lieberman

Writer, Director & Producer

Award-Winning Filmmaker, including recipient of The 2022 Ken Burns Prize

Founder of Re-Emerging Films

Director of *Bella!*, *The Amazing Nina Simone*, *Re-Emerging: The Jews of Nigeria* & upcoming *My Harlem*



Jeff L. Lieberman is an award-winning Filmmaker, Journalist and the founder of Re-Emerging Films. "*Bella!*" is Lieberman's third feature documentary as Writer, Director and Producer. His previous films, "*The Amazing Nina Simone*" and "*Re-Emerging: The Jews of Nigeria*" have been seen in more than 100 theatres in 21 countries. Lieberman's work has also appeared on CBS, HBO, CNN, FOX, and currently streams on Amazon and iTunes.

"*Bella!*" details the life and political accomplishments of the groundbreaking feminist, activist and pioneering congresswoman, Bella Abzug. Bella's inspiring story and crusading work on behalf of women, the working class, and the LGBTQ community is told through brand new interviews with Barbra Streisand, Shirley MaLaîne, Hillary Clinton, Lily Tomlin, Nancy Pelosi, Gloria Steinem, Maxine Waters, Marlo Thomas, Phil Donahue and many more. The film opens in cinemas and festivals in Summer 2023, and will make its broadcast debut on PBS's *American Masters*.

Lieberman's previous film is "*The Amazing Nina Simone*" (2015), which has been called the best of the three Nina Simone films by *The New Yorker Magazine*, and "*The Nina Simone film we should all be watching*" by *Blavity*. It was nominated for Outstanding Documentary by *The Black Reel Awards* and heralded by *The New York Times*, *BBC News* and *The Hollywood Reporter* for its in-depth research into the often misunderstood singer and civil rights activist. The film features interviews with the people who knew Nina best: her friends, family, musicians and fellow activists, including Eric Burdon, Nikki Giovanni & Sam Waymon.



Lieberman's Academy Award-Qualifying documentary film, "*Re-Emerging: The Jews of Nigeria*" was proclaimed as "one of the must-see documentaries of 2013" by New York's *Amsterdam News*. The indie favorite premiered in festivals around the world and opened theatrically in New York and Los Angeles. Lieberman ventured into the far corners of Nigeria to document several Igbo communities practicing Judaism, and introduces audiences to the many individuals who insightfully tell of their journeys to discovering Judaism in the fervently Christian/Muslim nation.

Lieberman has also directed numerous short films including "*In the Mix: 25 Days and Not a Minute More*" starring Usher, and the viral election video, "*Call Your Zeyde*". Previous to forming Re-Emerging Films, Lieberman was a Writer/Producer with CBS National News and a Video Reporter with *The New York Post*, covering events all over New York and Washington, DC.

Lieberman's next project is a feature narrative film delving into gentrification, entitled "*My Harlem*".



Jamila C. Fairley

Producer



Jamila C. Fairley is passionate about creating a space for inclusive, representative, and empowered new storytelling.

Fairley came to the BELLA! documentary project soon after learning of Abzug's leadership, activism, and dynamism. She is inspired to bring Abzug's commitment to feminism, race relations, the LGBT community, and creating a better overall human experience to an audience who has not had exposure to Abzug's contributions. A neophyte documentary producer, Fairley began her career as a CPA with PricewaterhouseCoopers.

There, her main clients were major studios, including The Walt Disney Company and Warner Brothers. Most recently, Fairley joined Re-Emerging Films from Twentieth Century Fox, where she was a lead expert on domestic and international Production Tax Incentives, securing financing for the studio's feature films and television shows.

Along the way, she has performed various on-set production roles and produced numerous EPK segments. In addition, Fairley was an Associate Producer on the documentary, RE-EMERGING: THE JEWS OF NIGERIA. Like Mr. Miyagi's "Wax-on. Wax off." lesson, all of these experiences have prepared Fairley for winning in the world of producing independent film.

Fairley earned her Bachelor of Business Administration from Emory University's Goizueta School of Business, her Juris Doctorate from Temple University's Beasley School of Law, and is easy with a pun and laugh.

Tamar Kaissar

Associate Producer



Amy Wilensky

Associate Producer



Bella!

(Select Credits)

Written, Directed & Produced by

Jeff L. Lieberman

Produced by

Jamila C. Fairley

Associate Producers

Tamar Kaissar

Amy Wilensky

Cinematography & Editing by

Jeff L. Lieberman

Additional Camera

Ewa Brown	Aiden Korotkin
Wes Gathright	Dominic Mann
Dejan Georgevich	John J. Moers
Blake Hottle	Steven Wacks

Original Song

Music & Lyrics by

Mark W. Hornburg

Doug Jervey

Featuring

Eve Abzug	Harold Holzer	Dan Rosenson
Liz Abzug	John Lawrence	Allen Roskoff
Michael Abzug	Judy Lerner	Lois Sasson
Ken Birnbaum	Jack Lew	Nancy Stanley
M. Robert Carr	Steven Livengood	Gloria Steinem
Hillary Clinton	Shirley MacLaine	Barbra Streisand
Letty Cottin Pogrebin	Marilyn Marcosson	Scott Stringer
James Crawford	Bridgette McGee	Renee Taylor
David Dinkins	Robin Morgan	Marlo Thomas
Phil Donahue	Dick Morris	Lily Tomlin
Ronnie Eldridge	Irene Natividad	Maxine Waters

Barry Farber
Max Frankel
Merle Frimark
Eric Hirschhorn
Elizabeth Holtzman

Esther Newberg
John Oakes
Nancy Pelosi
Margot Polivy
Charles Rangel

Faye Wattleton
Arnie Weiss
Cora Weiss
Leandra Zarnow

Filmed on Location in:

New York City

Cheri, Harlem
OH Books
Riverside Church
Roosevelt House at Hunter College
Sardi's
SIPA, Columbia University

Washington, DC

National Archives and Records Administration
The Newseum
The Rayburn House Office Building
The United States Capitol

and in

Ajjic, Mexico

Las Vegas, NV

Los Angeles, CA

Made with a generous grant from:

The Library of Congress/Lavine Ken Burns Prize
through
The Better Angels Society

which awarded

"Bella!"

as co-winner of its highest honor in 2022.

Bella!

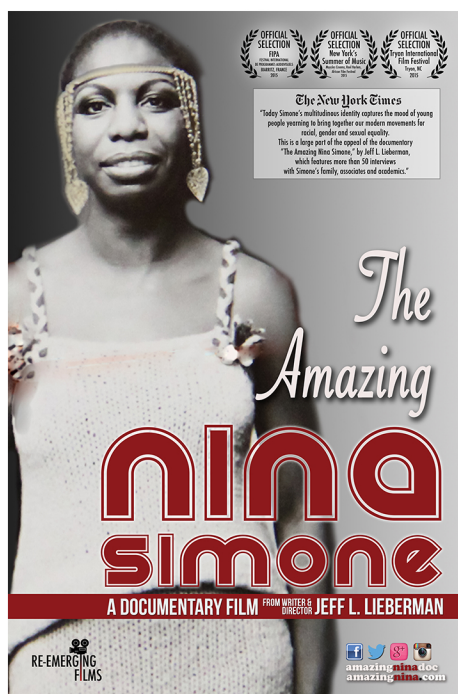
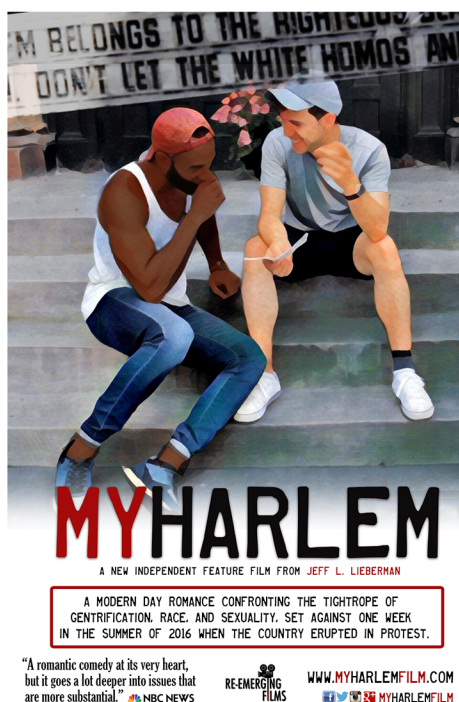
Bella Abzug - Timeline

July 24, 1920	Bella Savitzky born in The Bronx, New York City to Russian Jewish immigrants: Emmanuel Savitzky and Esther Tanklefsky.
1920's	The family owns "The Live and Let Live Meat Market" at the corner of 9 th Avenue and 41 st Street in Manhattan.
Dec 10, 1934	Bella is 13 when her father suddenly dies. She defiantly says the Mourner's Kaddish prayer in the family synagogue - defying ingrained gender roles.
1938-1942	Bella graduates from Walton High. Begins attending Hunter College where she is elected class president. Appears on stage with Eleanor Roosevelt. Bella's activism leads The New York Post to label her as "the campus pink."
1944	Enrolls in Law School at Columbia University where she is one of 6 women out of a class of 120. Marries Martin Abzug after a 2-year courtship.
1947	Graduates from Law School, and becomes an active member of the National Lawyers Guild. Begins working as a labor lawyer. Starts regularly wearing hats to distinguish herself as a professional - not "the secretary."
1949	First daughter, Eve, is born. Second daughter, Isobel Jo "Liz" is born 1952.
1950	Goes to Mississippi at the urging of The Civil Rights Congress to defend Willie McGee, a Black man facing the electric chair on the accusation of rape. Fights for re-trials, stays of execution, appeals to The Supreme Court and to President Harry Truman. Ultimately, McGee is executed in 1951.
1950's	Defends several individuals accused of Communism in the McCarthy witch hunt. Appears for the first time (of many) on the cover of The New York Times with accused client, Elliott Sullivan.
1955	Moves to Mt. Vernon, outside of New York City, where integration was progressing faster than in many other American cities.
1960's	Becomes an active member of "Women Strike for Peace", an organization determined to end nuclear testing, both for the risk of nuclear war, and the fact that US testing was causing the spread of the metal, Strontium-90 to be absorbed into baby milk. The group stages protests in cities across the country, and challenges the behavior roles placed on women in that era.
1965	After the murder of Malcolm X, a committee is formed by Sidney Poitier, Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee to find a home for Betty Shabazz and her children. Bella offers to sell her home to the family, and moves her family to New York's Greenwich Village.
1965-1970	"Women Strike for Peace" shifts focus to The Vietnam War, at the same time as women also begin staging demonstrations in the fight for gender equality. Bella meets Gloria Steinem at a march on The Pentagon. The two find a lot of similar goals and begin collaborating.
1969	Bella and Ronnie Eldridge are active in the New York City political clubs, and force political candidates to state their position on The Vietnam War. Bella is recruited by Mayor John Lindsay to help on his 1969 re-election campaign. The experience leads her to finally pursue public office herself.
1970	Bella launches a challenge against the Democratic representative in Manhattan's 19 th Congressional District, which comprises many of the ethnically diverse neighborhoods of Lower Manhattan. Her campaign includes slogans, buttons, shopping bags, celebrity endorsement (notably Barbra Streisand), and tireless on-the-street campaigning. She embraces the LGBTQ community, speaks Yiddish to the Lower East Side Jews, and campaigns on an anti-Vietnam War platform. She wins. She's not the first woman in Congress - but one of the first to win in this type of on-the-street campaigning. She joins only 11 other women in the 92 nd Congress.
Jan 3, 1971	On her first day in Congress, Bella calls for the US withdrawal from Vietnam. She subsequently begins calling for the impeachment of Richard Nixon.
May 1, 1971	Bella Abzug, Ron Dellums and other anti-war representatives coordinate with protestors to shut down Washington, DC in an anti-war protest. Police arrest 12,000 people over 3 days, using RFK stadium as a temporary prison. Bella commandeers a helicopter pilot to get to the scene to find solutions for release. It remains the largest mass arrest in U.S. history.
November, 1971	Bella and Shirley Chisholm introduce a comprehensive childcare bill that passes both houses. It is vetoed by Nixon.

1972	Several New York congressional districts are re-drawn – pitting Bella against like-minded Rep. Bill Ryan. Bella and her supporters believe it's a way to oust her from Congress. She campaigns again in a heated battle, seeking support in new neighborhoods and famously campaigns in The Continental Baths. She loses to Ryan, only for the ultimate plot twist. Ryan succumbs to illness. His widow challenges Bella, but Bella prevails, returning to Congress.
1973	The Saturday Night Massacre furthers Bella's bold calls for Nixon's impeachment. Watergate overwhelms both Washington and the nation. Bella is instrumental in finding a resolution to force newly-appointed President Gerald Ford to testify before Congress on the suspicion of a deal between Nixon and Ford.
1974	Bella introduces The Equal Credit Act – allowing women the independence to apply for credit cards and loans in their own name. This ended the gender imbalance forced upon women to have a husband or male figure's sponsorship on an application.
1975	Bella begins her third term in Congress and chairs the Subcommittee on Government Information and Individual Rights. She brings CIA Director William Colby to testify, and discovers in the process that the CIA has been spying on her since the 1950's, labeling her as dangerous, and invading her rights to privacy.
1975	Bella and longtime rival, Rep. Ed Koch, introduce the nation's first LGBTQ Rights Bill – an amendment to the Civil Rights Bill. In a time when being gay was still illegal in much of the country, the bill sought to protect from employment and housing discrimination. The bold and symbolic gesture was years ahead of its time, gaining just a small number of supportive votes.
1975	Bella and a group of House delegates travel to Vietnam and Cambodia to assess funding of the war. She is instrumental in a bill that defunds the war, bringing it to an end.
1976	In a daring move, Bella announces that she would be giving up her House Seat in a run for the US Senate from New York. If elected, she would be the first woman to hold the seat, and be the only woman in the totally male Senate. She crisscrosses New York State on weekends. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a Democrat who worked in the Nixon White House, challenges her. The combative race led to a historic split at The New York Times between the editor and publisher. Moynihan defeats Bella by 1%, a crushing result that devastates Bella and her supporters.
1977	Bella quickly refocuses to run in the upcoming election for New York City mayor. If elected, she would be the first female mayor of New York. A boisterous campaign ensues against 5 other big personalities, with Bella seen as the front-runner. The race occurs against the backdrop of a New York suffering from a budget crisis, severe decay and crime, a murderer on the loose, and a heat wave that leads to a blackout and days of looting, fire and vandalism. Bella wins Manhattan, but is beaten citywide by her old foe, Ed Koch.
1977	Bella chairs a historic event – The National Women's Conference in Houston, Texas that draws together roughly 20,000 participants, including three First Ladies. The delegates vote on a platform of issues, with the results presented to President Jimmy Carter.
1978	Bella runs for Ed Koch's former Congressional seat, losing to a little-known Republican. It's a stunning 3 losses in a row that have the media writing her political obituary.
1979	That sting worsens when Carter fires Bella from her role as Chair of the National Advisory Committee for Women – a committee appointed by Carter, stemming from the conference. It leads to the mass resignation of many members of the committee, including Rep. Maxine Waters, Gloria Steinem and Marlo Thomas.
1980's	Bella shifts her focus internationally, creating the organization, WEDO: Women's Environment and Development Organization. She takes on the United Nations, in the same way she took on Congress, bringing women's voices and opinions into UN agreements and pacts. She trains NGO's all around the world with a focus to protect the most under-represented women.
1986	Bella attempts another run for Congress from her old Mt. Vernon, Westchester neighborhood. Martin Abzug dies in the middle of the campaign. She wins the primary but loses the election.
1990's	Bella attends UN conferences all around the world, and continues to teach, speak, and lead the fight on a number of causes. She attends the 4 th World Conference on Women in Beijing, alongside First Lady Hillary Clinton - even as her health is deteriorating.
March 31, 1998	Bella succumbs to illness at the age of 77.
2015 & 2022.	Bella is honored by New York City with the first official testaments to her contributions to the city. Bank Street in Greenwich Village is named "Bella Abzug Way" and "Bella Abzug Park" in Hudson Yards is officially opened.

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