WRITING IX: COMBINING THEATRE ARTS AND PUBLIC POLICY THROUGH THE PROCESS OF PLAYWRITING

by
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ABSTRACT
JOHN BRAHAN: Writing IX: Combining Theatre Arts and Public Policy through the Process of Playwriting
(under the direction of Michael Barnett)

This thesis explores the process of writing a play and compares sexual misconduct policies at universities in the Southeastern Conference. It exhibits the process through examining writing exercises to develop character and plot, showing expanded understanding of dramatic literature through reading additional plays, outlining the growth of the narrative through table readings, additional feedback, and displaying audience feedback garnered through an optional survey filled out by patrons at the end of their theatre experience. Throughout the narrative of the thesis, I explore how I developed each of Aristotle’s Six Elements of Tragedy: character, plot, idea, language, music, and spectacle. The thesis is the resulting full length play, IX, produced by Ghostlight Repertory Theatre during the Fall semester of 2017, in addition to comparative policy analysis of sexual misconduct policies in the SEC, a crucial component of the research necessary for the development of the play, found in the idea portion of the narrative.
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Introduction

During my freshman year, I did not enjoy the Ole Miss party scene. In high school, I took a personal pledge to not drink until I turned twenty-one years old. My refrain from alcohol became a part of my identity. In order to fit in with the ubiquitous, binge-drinking culture, I found a way to be a part of the group in a role which I could fulfill while maintaining my sobriety. I became the 24/7 designated driver. At parties I could hear friends whisper to each other, “Just ask John. He’s always sober.” From taking late night alcohol runs during pledgeship to hauling inebriated freshmen from point A to point B in loads exceeding the maximum limit of my Honda Accord, I saw behaviors, overhead conversations, and witnessed disgusting interactions that ultimately led to the creation of this thesis.

On a Friday night, during the spring of my freshman year, I decided to watch a movie to take a break from “going out.” Around 10:30, I got a call from my friend Abby (all names have been changed for the sake of confidentiality). She frantically slurred, “I can’t find Rebekah anywhere. Please, please come help me. At ATO.” I pressed pause on whatever I was watching and immediately rushed from Ridge South (now Burns Hall) across campus to find my friend. When she got in my car, tears streamed down her face as she explained the situation. One of the Alpha Tau Omegas who lived in the fraternity house kept bringing Abby and Rebekah into his room. He would offer them drinks and while they chatted he would casually lock the door behind him. Abby would notice him locking the door, and they would quickly leave. When they needed another drink, they would find the same brother, and like clockwork, he would supply their drinks, ask them questions, and with attempted subtlety lock the door. Amongst the hustle and bustle of the party, Rebekah and Abby separated. After a few minutes passed, Abby began looking for Rebekah. She did not see her anywhere at the party. She became worried and went to
the room of their “friend.” To her chagrin, the door had been locked. Abby began panicking and trying to get in touch with Rebekah who did not answer her texts or calls.

As we sat in my car, Abby called her repeatedly until she finally answered. With the phone on speaker, Rebekah incoherently mumbled, “At Kappa Sig.” By the periodic silence on the line and her inability to form sentences, I knew that Rebekah was wasted. After she hung up, we drove to the Kappa Sigma house, and Abby ran inside to find Rebekah. Roughly thirty minutes passed, and Abby came back without Rebekah. She began calling her incessantly again. When she answered, Rebekah said she was on the Square. I pulled off campus, sped down Jackson Avenue, and finally picked Rebekah up outside of the Levee. I saw her standing on the sidewalk with a glazed look on her face and her dress disheveled. Nobody stood beside her. She was alone. Like an alien on a foreign planet, she had no idea where she was or how she got there. She stared at us with dead eyes surrounded by the moving crowds of drunken college students only concerned about their next drink or their next hookup. The next day, Rebekah called me, and her biggest concern was finding the earring that she thought she might have lost in my car. She had no recollection of what she experienced, who she was with, or how she even got from the Alpha Tau Omega house, to the Kappa Sigma house, and then to the Levee. As long as she found the earring, everything was cool.

At that point in time, I had no idea how to handle the situation. Abby’s description of the fraternity man’s abrasive, predatory behavior alarmed Abby and me, but Rebekah did not remember even interacting with the guy. Back then, I chalked up the situation as another reason why I should not drink alcohol. I did not realize the cultural problems that college students faced due to their views on sex, alcohol, and respect for one another.
As a freshman, I was oblivious to Title IX and what the policy did for our campus. I certainly did not know that the policy dealt with sexual assaults. At the end of my sophomore year, once I became Vice President of the Associated Student Body, Vice President of Standards for the Interfraternity Council (IFC), and an Orientation Leader, I started to learn about the ramifications and expectations of Title IX. During my time on IFC, I went to a lecture on consent. The speaker spoke of the autonomy universities have over defining terms and delegating Title IX procedures. After this lecture, I began to think about the effects of Title IX on our campus and how differences in sexual misconduct policies could drastically affect the Title IX experience for students across America. A year later, I came face to face with Title IX when my fraternity, Sigma Chi, went under a Title IX investigation for our behavior at our annual philanthropy event, Derby Days. During my sophomore year, I served as the Derby Days Chairman alongside Austin Powell, my roommate and fellow Sigma Chi. We successfully raised money for the Huntsman Cancer Institute and organized a blood drive that gave the most blood in the state to Mississippi Blood Services, but I did not realize the misogyny and degradation were inherently supported and promoted through the entire concept of Derby Days, a competition where sorority women dance for money. When Davis Barron asked women at the competition whether they preferred link, patty, or Sigma Chi sausage, the sexual harassment which women received at the hands of my fraternity in the name of philanthropy proved to be an immense cultural problem as well as a violation of Title IX. During the event, I was performing in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, but by association, I became a respondent to a Title IX violation. The policy which I wanted to research for my thesis became clearer as my experiences changed. While a thesis on Title IX would be great for my policy education, I still faced the challenge of two majors: Public Policy Leadership and Theatre Arts.
I knew that I wanted to combine both of my areas of study for my thesis, however, I had no idea how. During my freshman year, a senior, Shelby Grady, wrote a play about Southern people getting married. When I saw her table read, I really wanted to write a play, but I did not know how to combine playwriting and policy or even why I wanted to write a play. In Freshman Honors II with Michael Barnett, we read *Millennium Approaches*, the first part to *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes* by Tony Kushner. During this phase of my life, I sympathized with Joe Pitt’s struggle with his homosexuality in the face of his Mormon and Republican identities. I started to think about society’s control over the individual. I was introduced to the American government’s choice to ignore the AIDS epidemic in the 80s depicted through the relationship between Prior and Louis and through the chilling scene where Roy Cohn’s doctor reveals his fatal diagnosis. While defending himself against the label of being homosexual, Cohn responds, “Homosexuals are not men who sleep with other men. Homosexuals are men who in fifteen years of trying cannot get a pissant anti-discrimination bill through the City Council.” (Kushner, 45). This quote captures the combination of playwriting and public policy in America by describing the creation of policy told through the voice of one of the biggest hypocrites in modern-day political history. In addition to Kushner’s award-winning play, our class read *Inherit the Wind* by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee which explores the intricacies of a fictionalized account of the Scopes Monkey Trial. These plays exposed me to the marriage of policy and playwriting, and I wanted to show how policy impacted the day to day lives of people as Kushner does in *Angels in America*.

When I took Queer Playwriting and American Culture with Joe Turner Cantú, my perspective and understanding of the duality of policy and playwriting expanded through reading a variety of plays. For example, *The Twilight of the Golds* by Jonathan Tolins questions the
morality and legality of genetics and abortion through the familial struggles of the Golds. Rob Stein, a geneticist, tells his wife Suzanne Gold-Stein that her baby could possess similar genes to those found in a homosexual’s DNA. Suzanne grapples with whether or not to abort the baby and potentially ruin her relationship with her gay brother David Gold who begs her to raise the child (Tolins, 83-84). I read Bent by Martin Sherman which shows the romance and treatment of two gay men, Max and Horst, in a concentration camp in Germany. Through his writing, Sherman depicts the effect, on a personal level, of the German government’s policy decision to incarcerate homosexuals in concentration camps. He explains, “It [Bent] educated the world. People knew about how the Third Reich treated Jews and, to some extent, gypsies and political prisoners. But very little had come out about their treatment of the homosexuals.” Most importantly, I read The Children’s Hour by Lillian Hellman whose writing hinted at the lesbian relationship between two teachers without explicitly stating their desires. Mary, a mischievous little girl, complains to her grandma about the strange noises that she hears and the “unnatural” things that her teachers Martha and Peggy are doing at her boarding school. At the end of Act One, Mary whispers into her grandmother’s ear who becomes very alarmed (Hellman, 37-39). Hellman asserts that the play tells a lie rather than a story of lesbianism (Hellman, 4). However, the city of Boston disagreed in 1936, when Mayor Frederick L. Mansfield banned the play for being “unfit” and threatened a review from the Board of Censors, and defending this landmark piece of theater became the first LGBTQ+ case of the American Civil Liberties Union (Roe, “Fighting Censorship of The Children's Hour Set the Stage for the ACLU”). By the production The Children’s Hour and the trials which ensued, American policy changed to allow content dealing with homosexuality and marked the beginning of fighting discrimination based on LGBTQ+ content. Unfortunately, in 1934, Hellman’s play was deemed “too scandalous” for the Pulitzer
Prize which not only led to the creation of the Drama Critics’ Circle in protest but also opened the door for queer theatre to be critically acclaimed (Churchwell, “The Scandalous Lillian Hellman”). If Hellman had not written *The Children’s Hour*, Kushner’s *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes* may never have won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1993.

Through my experiences in Freshman Honors II and Queer Playwriting and American Culture, I gained a better understanding of how to combine public policy and the stage and knew why I wanted to write a play. I desired to create a piece of theatre that challenged a component of policy in America in addition to causing the audience members to think about their role in spreading negative cultural stigmas. I wanted to use the theatre to change people’s minds about policy and the lives which policy impacts. Early in the process, I thought to write a play about college students dealing with Confederate iconography, based on my experience as the Associated Student Body Vice President facilitating the debate over whether or not to request The University to cease flying the Mississippi flag in order to push towards a campus which is inclusive to all members of our community. I changed my mind when one of my fraternity brothers told me a story about a mutual friend, who was a notorious teetotaler, losing his virginity to a “drunk chick.” I immediately thought about the scenario and how the alcohol could have affected the experience for both the man and the woman. The woman could have felt violated, and the man could have felt like their sex was consensual. Regardless, both of them would most likely have opposite stories and entirely different perspectives on the event. I wondered how a Title IX investigation would respond to their situation. Then, I knew exactly what I wanted to write about, and I started by following Aristotle’s and Jeffrey Hatcher’s advice on playwriting.
In Aristotle’s theory of drama found in *The Poetics*, the philosopher states the following as the six key elements of tragedy: plot, character, diction, thought, song, and spectacle (Aristotle, 25). He asserts that the plot, the arrangement of incidents, creates the action which is the most important part to represent life. On the difference between character and plot, Aristotle writes, “While character makes men what they are, it is their actions or experiences that make them happy or the opposite” (25). Furthermore, he argues that tragedy cannot occur without action, but it can occur without character-study (26). Award-winning playwright Jeffrey Hatcher disagrees with Aristotle in his book *The Art and Craft of Playwriting*. Hatcher takes the same six elements, but he switches the action and character and asserts that character should always come first (Hatcher, 21). While Aristotle states that action leads to man’s emotional state, Hatcher argues that the initial impetus for action comes from a man’s qualities. An angry drunkard will punch someone in a bar, but a calm man casually drinking a beer will simply watch the other man fight. I followed Hatcher’s advice and started with character.

As for the other four elements, the philosopher and playwright possess similar opinions. Thought, or as Hatcher calls it, idea, is “in speeches which contain an argument that something is or is not, or a general expression of opinion” (Aristotle, 29). The ideas which the characters possess or the central opinions and arguments that surround the plot and characters are the play’s thought. In my play, the main ideas are the negative and positive effects of a Title IX investigation. Diction, also known as language, expresses the character’s thoughts and qualities, and music and spectacle are the final elements that the playwright has the least control over determining (Hatcher, 59). Music is the dialogue spoken by the actors, soundscape of the show, and the songs heard in a play or musical, and spectacle is what the audience sees on stage (Hatcher, 47-50). To achieve spectacle, Aristotle gives authority to the costumier, the designers,
over the poet, the playwright, because the playwright does not and cannot directly influence the production quality of a performance (29). His or her words may be said by the characters on stage, but designers exist to create the world which the writer describes through what the characters say and the stage directions.

This thesis explores the process of writing IX. I will break down the process through the six elements of tragedy. Through character, plot, and diction, I will outline my playwriting process starting at the beginning with early exercises from Hatcher’s textbook. Through thought/idea, I will delve into my policy analysis of Title IX and the comparative analysis of sexual misconduct policies in the SEC. In song and spectacle, I will elaborate on the process of bringing the play to life through Ghostlight Repertory Theatre’s production of my work. The appendices contain early drafts of the play which was once called She Asked for It, the play itself, the biographies for the characters, feedback from table reads, the audience survey, journal entries, and parts of the play that did not make the final cut.
Character

After one of our first thesis meetings in February of 2016, Michael sent me an article written by playwright Eric Bogosian. In this article from the online theatre journal HowlIRound, Bogosian explains his writing process. He writes, “Theatre is character, everything else is window-dressing. It’s not the terrific story that makes Shakespeare great, not the action-sequences, not the scenic elements—it’s the characters” (Bogosian, 2016). From the beginning, I knew that Character would be square one, but I did not fully understand the importance, or how to develop the character, until delving into Jeffrey Hatcher’s work.

According to Hatcher, when an audience member is asked about the play, he or she might recount what happened as their primary take away. While the playwright should take the audience perspective into account, Hatcher argues that the playwright follows a different compass. Furthering Bogosian’s point, he writes, “Plays are about people. Start with Character” (19). The action comes from what the character does, and the actions that the character makes result from who the character is as a person. A man does not simply murder his wife, but a jealous, erratic man abused as a child murders his wife. The action of murder results from the psychological components of the character. One of the playwright’s jobs is helping facilitate the illusion of character played out on stage by the actors. In True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor, David Mamet writes:

When the actual courage of the actor is coupled with the lines of the playwright, the illusion of character is created. When the audience sees the steadfastness of the actress playing Joan coupled with the words of Shaw, they see majesty. When they see the courage of the actor playing Willy Loman coupled with the words of Arthur Miller, they see anguish. And it is the coupling of the truth of the actor struggling bravely with uncertainty, with the portrayal made by the dramatist, which, again, creates the illusion of character… (Mamet, 22).
The audience might also recount an actor’s performance as their primary takeaway, but the impact the actor has on the audience can only be successfully achieved through the writing. The actor embodies the character on the page, but the playwright dictates the initial material and circumstances that the actor utilizes. What the actor portrays and what the audience sees result from the words which the playwright chooses to put on the page, and Mamet emphasizes one of the playwright’s roles in conveying emotion and contributing to the illusion of character.

To create characters who experience anguish and moments of majesty, I needed to write people with struggles and desires as real and intimate as the emotions of one of the patrons sitting in the audience. However, creating complicated people alone does not lead to dramatic conflict. Establishing tangible wants and desires for each character and having their goals compete with each other’s objectives creates conflict (Hatcher, 24). My second exercise in the class asked me to write a character and a concrete goal. Hatcher writes, “What are some of the things characters in great plays want? Sex, money, power, love, a jewel, a key, an answer, a fortune, a crown, revenge, truth, justice” (25). Goals are inherent in character because they determine what the character wants, and dramatic conflict occurs when one character’s want clashes with another character’s want (Hatcher, 24). The beliefs, temperaments, and qualities of the character determine the tactics which he or she will employ to achieve the desired goal. The first character I wrote was based off of my childhood friend Forrest Philpot, and his goal was winning the writing award at his high school. Here is my first attempt at writing a character:

I am Forrest. I live down the road from Thames School. I was born in Nashville, Tennessee, but I moved to Petal, Mississippi when I was five. My birthday is June 5, 1994. I am fifteen years old. I moved to this house in Hattiesburg in July. It is white and on Bedford Road. It is August now. I am about to start my freshman year of high school at a new school. I am going to Hattiesburg High School. How do I feel about that? I do not want to leave my friends from Petal, but when I was five, I did not want to leave my friends from Nashville. It will be fine. Life goes on, ya know? My dad is a teacher. He
teaches English at Hattiesburg High now. He drinks a lot, and I think he is gay. He and my mom fight a lot, and sometimes they do not sleep in the same room. He sleeps on the couch. I do not sleep a lot, and I stay up late watching re-runs of the Fresh Prince of Bel Air. When mom kicks dad out, he always makes me go to my room. One time, she caught him masturbating to some porn. I heard her crying. She yelled, “Sorry I won’t let you do that to me. I use that hole for one thing only.” So, that’s why I think my dad is gay. My mom is also a teacher. She used to teach history, but now, she homeschools my little sister. My little sister’s name is Becca. She has brown hair just like my parents. I have black hair. She is ten, and last year, she lit a classmate’s hair on fire. She stole the lighter from my mom. She is a chain smoker and always leaves her lighters lying around. She likes homeschooling. She says, “I get to smoke whenever I want now.” My house reeks of cigarettes and Jack Daniels, and we have only been here a month. We are the Philpots. This is my family. I play bass guitar and write songs. My songs are not great, but one day, I am going to be a musician. I love writing songs. Most of them are about girls. This girl Ellen broke my heart once. So, she is kind of my muse. I get sad when I think about her. I get sad a lot. My friends call me “Sad Boy.” I listen to a lot of screamo and Panic! At the Disco, but I write stuff like Iron and Wine. I play guitar. Kind of. Acoustic guitar. I know chords. Do I play anywhere? No. But I make videos. I make videos for Ellen. I made videos for Ellen, rather. My favorite class is English. I like books and writers. They get me. Have you read Perks of Being a Wallflower? That’s my favorite book. I feel like a wallflower a lot. That’s why I like it. I read it when I was twelve. It gave me a lot of confidence. I started reading my songs to my mom. She has really encouraged me. I did make a video on YouTube of me singing a song I wrote. The song was called, “Her Scars.” It was about Ellen and how she made me want to hurt myself. I got a lot of shit for it. My classmates commented “Fag” or “Gay as fuck” on the comment section. I cried a lot that day. It was in November. I hate that kid Slade. He picked on me the most. He hates my skinny jeans. He hates my Metro Station T-Shirts. He hates me.

When Michael and I met to discuss this monologue, he commented on the passivity of the character. Everything happens to Forrest. He does not do anything which creates conflict. An active portrayal of the character would have depicted him catching his father masturbating rather than his mother catching his father. Towards the end of the monologue, Forrest mentions that he wants to hurt himself. The active character choice would have been Forrest actually hurting himself through self-harm or repetitive substance abuse. Hatcher writes that characters are depicted through what others say, what they say, and, most importantly, what they do (27). A
character could say that he loved his wife. His friends around him could say that he and his wife have been in love for twenty-five years, but the playwright could write a scene where both partners engage in sexual activities with other people. What the audience sees the characters do has a stronger impact than what they say. Actions really do speak louder than words.

The character’s actions lead to their goals being accomplished. Hatcher warns against abstract goals like the concept of justice and insists on creating concrete and tangible goals (25). Forrest’s goal of winning the writing award is concrete. The want itself does not incite particular interest, but the tactics which Forrest employs to accomplish the goal generate excitement. To oppose his want, I created an antagonist whose goal also was to win the writing award. In a play or scene, both of their wants would come head to head creating conflict and thus creating drama. Forrest’s initial monologue tells me, the playwright, what he would do in a circumstance to win the award. However, Forrest is a passive character, and due to his passivity, the tactics he would employ to accomplish the goal would be no more active than simply submitting his work to be considered for the award. Through this exercise, I learned that characters need to be detailed, calculated, active, and fully realized to determine how they would respond to other characters challenging their goals.

I started IX with a monologue for a character named Eddie. I originally entitled the play She Asked for It, and Eddie was the rapist who would say, “She asked for it.” I changed the name due to concerns from the Ghostlight Repertory Theatre board about producing a show with a strong victim blaming title. I agreed and changed the title, but my early character work remained. In this exercise, I did not create a concrete goal for Eddie. Regardless, Eddie is more active than Forrest. His tactics to accomplish any goal could be inferred based on his active internal thought processes. I improved in making active characters from Forrest’s monologue to Eddie’s:
I’m sitting here in my bathroom… and, I have… uh… I’ve got porn pulled up on my phone. “Dani Daniels gets cum on her ass.” Yeah. Just casually beatin’ off before I get in the shower. But I just— (awkward laugh)—feel so conflicted. I feel like shit. Yeah. I mean—for the first time in my life—I’m surrounded by all this sexual temptation. Yeah. I mean— for the first time in my life—I’m surrounded by all this sexual temptation. Frat brothers telling me about the pussy they got over the weekend. Girls kissing on my neck at bars. Chicks walking around with their asses hanging out. And it’s kind of— well, consuming me. I’m acting on the temptation. I’m trying to go home with girls and pulling up porn and, I, yeah. I used to be a good kid, then college. Sorry, I guess I should back pedal? Yeah, alright… well growing up in the church and in a Christian school you, you never… I dunno… you’re taught that sex is bad. Outside of marriage. So, unless you are married—which is basically college grads and up—then sex is bad for you. They tell you to abstain. Because anything past kissing will piss off God and that dude can strike you with a lightning bolt like on a whim. That shit sticks with you. So, here I am. 18 years old. A freshman in college. Still feeling all this guilt for wanting sex. And I blame… I blame the church. I really do. Cause like. I went through confirmation at 12. Methodist. Went to private school. Colloquial. You know like we had to go to assembly and shit and chapel and got graded on knowing facts about Bible. When I was 12—like before my balls even started dropping, before I even thought about sex—I… I… was told that sex was meant for a man and his wife. Not for an unmarried man and woman. Not for a man and another man or a woman and another woman. God made sex and foreplay for married straight couples. Attention everyone else on this planet that isn’t a married straight couple: if you fuck, then well, God’s gonna send you to hell. So, until I get married. I must suppress. I can’t act on wanting to take off Sally Williams’ panties. And this is what’s fucked up. This verse in Matthew… like Matthew 7 something… I don’t even know. But it— Jesus is talking about adultery. And he says, “The commandments say thou shalt not commit adultery, but I say that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully commits adultery.” By that logic, every time I went underwater at the Country Club at 14 years old looking at girl’s butts hoping their bottoms and their tops would magically fall off, I cheated on my future wife, whoever she is. Then, he continues to say, “If your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out. And if your right hand causes you to sin, then chop it off.” And to be honest, that is why I jerk off with my left hand. To this day. Jesus didn’t say anything about sinning with the left hand, so I found a loophole with that one. But the point is… According to Jesus, if you think about other women naked as a single teenager, then that’s just as bad as fucking your secretary when you are fifty years old and tired of your wife. That’s fucked up, but these teachings have been hammered into my skull. That my premature desires for sex are wrong and that the only place they are right is in the bedroom with my wife after our wedding day. And then you go through puberty. Your 15, and licking on a girl’s tits seems so natural. You crave it. You want it. You think about bending her over all the time. You think about pussy in class. You have these random ass boners in math, and you use your textbook to cover it up as you walk down the hall. Your mind is consumed by wanting women dripping all over you. And I don’t know if I feel consumed by these desires because I’ve been told that they are wrong or because I’m supposed to be overwhelmed. Is that how I am as a human? In my freshman bio class yesterday, my professor—Dr. Gilstrap—tells me that humans are designed to have sex with as many women as possible. Or something along the lines of that.
because we just want it all the time—like rabbits. Something like that. But the church says no. Who is right? God or science? I’m kinda at the point where I don’t give a shit anymore. About waiting until that special night with my wife where neither of us will know what the hell we are doing. (laugh). Until I got to college, I had only kissed a girl… Now here I am. I’ve been making out with girls and passing first base. Like ripping clothes off, getting blow jobs, and now, I’m watching this pomo. Masturbating, and God, I would love to try some of that shit… I think I’m ready to do it. Ready to have sex. What’s wrong with it? Its natural. I just want to fuck. Plus, if looking at porn equates having an affair in God’s eyes, then I’m already screwed.

Between these two monologues, my biggest improvement occurred in my use of action verbs. Forrest’s monologue starts out with an introduction and a being verb. He simply says, “I am Forrest.” Eddie does not say his name, but starts the monologue with an action verb, “sit.” The phrase, “I’m sitting here in my bathroom,” describes a human being sitting down in a room that contains a toilet, a sink, and a shower. While the noun describes the location which rings familiar to each audience member, the active verb depicts what the character does in the space. Hatcher encourages the use of active verbs because they create drama where being verbs simply inform (45). The sentence “I am Forrest” does nothing to create a person engaging in any type of activity in the mind of the audience. The audience knows a name, but that is the only thing they know. As William Shakespeare writes, “What’s in a name? That which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet” (32). The qualities of the rose remain the same despite the name of the flower, and thus, the qualities of the rose are more important than the name. Through the same logic, the qualities of the character overshadow the name of the character and other random facts. This explanation does not say that names are unimportant. In my first draft of She Asked for It, the Title IX coordinator was named Matthew. I wanted the character to be impersonal and aloof, so I named him Mr. Williams, the only character who has a prefix before his name. Names are important, and playwrights take intentional time to pick the best name. I changed Eddie’s name because I wanted a character name that connoted entitlement and
privilege. I chose Tripp, a nickname for a boy who is the third. In my mind, Tripp sounds like a pompous individual from a long line of wealthy men who value their name. In Forrest’s monologue, the audience knows more about Forrest’s family, where he lives, his name, and his hobbies, but for an audience member, inferring facts about an individual based on their actions and understanding how a character would achieve his or her goals depicts stronger character. Eddie’s qualities and characteristics shown through active descriptions creates a deeper sense of character stemming from the character’s qualities rather than only the character’s name.

At the end of Eddie’s monologue, he says, “I’ve been making out with girls and passing first base. Like ripping clothes off, getting blow jobs, and now, I’m watching this porno.” This sentence describes an active individual engaging in loose and frequent sexual activity with himself and with women. At the end of Forrest’s monologue, the audience can picture him making YouTube videos, but nothing as strong and active as ripping a woman’s clothes. As mentioned before, Hatcher identifies characters through what they say and their actions. Therefore, when a character speaks, the character must speak actively in order to reflect action and ultimately character. Initially, with Forrest, I focused on getting down the facts of a character. With Eddie, I began exploring more active descriptions of his internal thought processes. Eric Bogosian exemplifies the concept of telling the audience who the character is based on the actions the character makes or intends to make.

In *Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll*, Bogosian uses monologues for the entirety of the play. Michael suggested that I read this play to help with my monologue writing. One performer recites each monologue in sequence and becomes a new, distinct character. Bogosian’s monologues are incredibly active. In the monologue, *Rock Law*, a sleazy lawyer rants to a colleague over the phone:
I don’t know, maybe I’ll buy a new Ferrari for the country house, park it in front of the tennis court, piss off my neighbors… Not even drive, just leave it there all the time… Huh? No, I can’t drive it, I don’t drive a stick…. That’s an idea, Range Rover, they’re good. Very ecological, right? Maybe I’ll get one of those. Hey, “Earth Day” made a big impression on me, I wanna do my part… (Bogosian, 54).

In this short excerpt, Bogosian uses action verbs consistently. The words “buy,” “park,” “piss,” “drive,” and “leave” are all tangible actions that an audience member could easily envision the character acting out in life. Even while reading, I can picture the character doing these things. In comparison, Bogosian could say the exact same thing with a less active description. He could simply write, “I could have a car in the driveway, and it will stay there. The neighbors will get mad.” In this sentence, the only active thing the lawyer does is “have” a car which is less active than “owning” a new Ferrari would be. The other actions, “stay” and “get,” are done by the car and the neighbor. Instead, Bogosian has carefully crafted a monologue where the character describes what he will do through vivid and vibrant verbs. In the same article mentioned above, Bogosian explains the importance of word choice. He says, “Verbal imagery is a matter of moving away from the predictable. I’m making pictures in the audience’s mind with words. The right word or phrase conjures a mental image by being fresh and on the money” (Bogosian, 2016). Furthermore, this short excerpt of the monologue tells me a lot about this character through the active choices he makes or intends to make. We know that he is a selfish and self-centered person because he intends to piss off his neighbors. The audience sees him change his mind from a Ferrari to a Range Rover for supposed ecological purposes. He also tells the audience actions that he cannot perform like driving a stick. This character has only driven automatic vehicles his entire life which connotes privilege. If the man had a rural upbringing where he drove trucks on a farm, then the audience would understand this aspect of his character if he said, “Driving a stick is second nature to me. Cutting through the fields in my grandfather’s
truck taught me everything I need to know about driving.” When he mentions doing his part, the audience further sees his sarcasm and uninformed opinions, and, based on the actions of changing his mind and his self-centeredness illustrated through his active desire to anger his neighbors, the audience infers that he does not want to do his part for altruistic reasons or maybe even do his part at all.

Word choice and verbs solely seem like Aristotle's element of language, and action seems like plot. However, all of them relate as core components that could not exist without the other. Hatcher tips his hat to an old saying, “Action is character as character is action” (27). He provides an analogy to explain the meaning. A man raised to cut corners and take the easy way out steals a suitcase, or the audience sees a man steal a suitcase and infers that he was conditioned to cut corners and take the easy way out (27). This example shows that inference from a character’s action can tell the exact same information as a character directly telling the audience. This idea is called the show-don’t-tell principle. Furthermore, Hatcher writes that “...language is action… Good dialogue is language doing” (47). As Hatcher iterates, character is action, and language is action. Therefore, character, action, and language all coincide and produce the same information to the audience. Every effective character in drama exemplifies the joining of all three elements. As Bogosian chooses words to incite active pictures in the audience’s mind which then show distinct characters, William Shakespeare uses the same tactics in his timeless classics. For example, in Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, shortly before Mercutio, Romeo’s cousin, is killed by Tybalt, Juliet’s cousin, in the public square, Benvolio depicts all three of elements of character, plot, and language in saying, “I pray thee, good Mercutio, let’s retire; / the day is hot, the Capels are abroad: / and if we meet we shall not scape a brawl, / for now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring” (Shakespeare, 52). Through the active
verbs, “pray” and “retire” Shakespeare establishes the status and relationship of the two characters and Benvolio’s goal. Since he asks Mercutio if they can leave, the audience infers that Mercutio is the leader of the group while Benvolio follows. This information creates character, and his goal to retire creates action. The active description of blood “stirring” informs the audience of the tumultuous qualities of the Montagues’ character which will lead to a sword fight in the streets, a concrete action and pivotal point in the plot. Shakespeare uses being verbs to describe the weather and the location of the Capulets which furthers Hatcher’s point of the informative quality of being verbs. In comparison, the choice of active verbs binds the three elements of character, plot, and language.

Prior to reading Bogosian, I read many plays and monologues by Neil LaBute. In his monologue, *Union Square*, LaBute depicts a character asking for directions. The man says:

> I need to get myself downtown. I am headed south, right? I mean this is, you can totally get yourself mixed up around here. Like, completely. I was, too, for about thirty minutes when I first got in, I asked somebody which way to go, but now that I think about it—it was this black kid, you know, with the jersey thing on and his hat all to one side—he was probably just messing with me. I bet that was it. (LaBute, 57).

In response to a comment about his writing reflecting the way people really speak during a 2015 interview with No Film School, a blog and online community of filmmakers, LaBute said, “I use ‘you know’ a lot, but I don't overuse it. I use, ‘I know,’ ‘I mean,’ all those little weird pauses that we do when we're looking for the next thought to arrive” (Anderson-Moore). While this quote may seem to relate more to Language, LaBute’s explanation distinguishes the differences between his writing approach and Bogosian’s style. LaBute focuses on a character’s thought process while speaking, and Bogosian’s accounts for the what the audience will perceive. In the brief excerpt of LaBute’s monologue, he uses “you know” once, but the verbal imagery is not as active as Bogosian which tells the audience less about the character. The phrase “get myself
“downtown” is not very active. Hypothetically, if LaBute had written, “I need to hail a cab or hop on the subway,” the verbs “hail” and “hop” indicate a quick and confident individual. The original phrase does not connote strong attributes to the audience about who the character is. Furthermore, in LaBute’s explanation of the black kid with whom the character interacts, he describes the hat as “all to one side.” He does not say that the black kid chose to wear his hat cocked to the side. The hat is the active player in the description, not the kid. While LaBute remains one of my favorite playwrights and biggest influences, his focus on the character’s thought processes take away from the overall description and depiction of the character to the audience.

From my first monologue about Forrest to my second monologue about Eddie, I take both lessons from Bogosian and LaBute. Eddie is an active character who thinks through his experiences. At the top of Eddie’s monologue, he describes looking at porn and masturbating. At the beginning of Forrest’s monologue, he simply introduces himself using being verbs. To show Eddie’s thought process, he says “I mean” or “well” or “I dunno” followed by ellipses. Forrest simply asks a question to the audience which comes across as me trying to move his conversation along rather than the character organically thinking in the moment. Forrest talks about what others do to him like cyberbullying, but he does not explain how he responds to the influences around him. Eddie describes the influences around him actively with words like “walking,” “kissing,” “hammered,” and “strike.” More importantly, he describes how he feels and actively responds to those influences. For example, Forrest might hear the same verse from The Bible and would only say he heard the words, and Eddie describes how the scripture impacted him to use the opposite hand to masturbate. Though my monologue with Eddie was not
perfect, I improved by making a more distinct, active and vivid character. I will explain more of my qualms with Eddie’s monologues in the Language section.

For all six characters in IX, I used Bogosian’s and LaBute’s advice on writing to create biographies for each of my characters through monologues which can be read in Appendix I.
Plot

Plot is “an arrangement of actions designed to tell the story of the play” (Hatcher, 35).

When beginning a play, Hatcher starts with an outline of the actions (86). I luckily already had an outline based on the Title IX process. In my first draft, I wanted to encompass the steps of a Title IX investigation. At The University of Mississippi, the steps are as follows: filing a complaint, conducting intake meetings, investigating and gathering information, having a hearing to determine the decision, and facilitating the appeals process (The University of Mississippi, “Sexual Misconduct Policy”). My first draft starts in the Title IX office, shows each character meeting with the Title IX coordinator, depicts the respondent and complainant discussing the looming hearing, and ends with the results. I eliminated the appeals process, and the reporting of the incident is alluded to without the audience seeing it happen. From this general outline and later research, I created my outline for what became the final draft of IX:

1. Tripp and Carter meet at the bar. Jake and Sydney are present for a bit. Sydney and Jake leave while Tripp and Claire meet for the first time. Sydney and Claire talk about wanting to go to the party. – Friday, August 26th
2. Claire and Monica are sitting at her apartment. Claire cries about the email she has received from Title IX. Monica encourages her to go. We must see their friendship in this scene. – Monday, September 5th
3. Claire goes to Title IX. – Thursday, September 8th
4. She flashbacks to getting ready, going to the party, and leaving for Tripp’s bedroom. – Friday, September 2nd
5. Back in the office. – Thursday, September 8th
6. Tripp gets his email. Jake and he angrily discuss the email. – Monday, September 12th
7. Sydney gets her email. She gets mad at Claire. Monday, September 12th
8. Tripp goes to the Title IX office. Mr. Williams needs to say “more likely than not” in reference to the preponderance of evidence. – Monday, September 19th
9. Tripp’s flashback and account of the evening. – Friday, September 5th
10. Tripp back at Title IX. – Monday, September 19th
11. The witnesses are interviewed. In between, the interviews other characters discuss. Sydney gets her email, and Mr. Williams interviews all of them in a three week time period. Mr. Williams must tell Carter that he will “prevent its recurrence.” Monica talks with Title IX on Thursday, September 29th. Carter is the last to be interviewed. It is now Monday, October 17th. The order: Sydney and Claire discuss Sydney giving her
testimony, Monica with Mr. Williams, Jake and Tripp talk, Sydney with Mr. Williams, Monica and Claire, Carter and Mr. Williams, and finally Mr. Williams and Jake.

11. The waiting conversation… this is the climax. Carter kicks Tripp out. And Tripp admits to “fucking a drunk chick.” Sydney shares her rape story. Claire finally stands up against them.

12. Mr. Williams, Claire, and Tripp give their statements to the audience as if they were the campus court.

13. The verdict is discussed between characters as Tripp packs up.

On plot, Aristotle writes, “… the plot being a representation of a piece of single action must represent a single piece of action and the whole of it; and the component of incidents must be so arranged that if one of them be transposed or removed, the unity of the whole is dislocated and destroyed” (34-35). The outline above changed by the removal of some scenes. This outline was the working outline during the rehearsal process, and I ended up deleting step five entirely and replacing the scene with an exchange between Tripp and Carter where Tripp expresses his concern of Claire blocking him on all social media and ignoring all his texts. Many things happen in a character’s life, but including the most interesting parts that streamline the action and make each moment irreplaceable is the unity which Aristotle describes. In addition, the dates were important to me because I wanted to stick to the 60 day requirement for Title IX investigations implemented by the Obama Administration. Overall, I had a deep sense of what was going to happen, but I did not have a concrete understanding of who would propel the action.

As I have mentioned the codependency of action and character, the initial conceptualization of IX started with the character Eddie, but I did not know how Eddie would start the action or if he even would start the action. The protagonist of the play is the “carrier of the action,” and an antagonist is the “opposer of the action” (Hatcher, 28, 30). Establishing the protagonist and the antagonist was one of the more challenging parts of writing my play. To
describe the concept of the protagonist and antagonist, Hatcher uses the analogy of a football game. The protagonist's job is to get the ball to the end zone and the other players, or characters, work to help him or hinder him from accomplishing his goal (28). In my first draft of *She Asked for It*, Eddie started the play in the Title IX office. After talking with Honey Ussery, the Title IX Coordinator at The University of Mississippi, I realized that chronologically it did not make sense. She told me that a Title IX Coordinator would never speak to a respondent first. In this draft, I did not really think about the protagonist or antagonist. Though out of order, I simply used the steps of Title IX to create a plot without having a character drive the action. In my fourth draft of *She Asked for It*, Kat, who later became Claire in *IX*, started the play in the Title IX office. She kicked off the action, the Title IX investigation, by filing her complaint. I had chosen her to be the protagonist, but at the time, Kat was an incredibly passive character and did not read as the protagonist.

In this draft, I confused the concept of protagonist with the inciting event. In his book *The Dramatic Writer’s Companion*, Will Dunne defines the inciting event as the incident that “causes the story to happen” by “changing the main character’s world” (217). In my feedback from my second table read, an audience member wrote on their feedback form, “I feel like Kat could use a little bit more development” (Appendix 6, form 6). Another spectator wrote in response to the question regarding whether Kat was raped, “No, I think the play makes Eddie’s case much more strongly and follows his experiences more sympathetically” (Appendix 6, form 1). I had created a story where Kat started the action through the inciting event of reporting to Title IX, but Eddie carried the action. Her filing a complaint altered his world more than her own. In my first and fourth drafts of *She Asked for It* which were read at my first and second table read, Kat started
taking the ball towards the end zone, but her passivity allowed the other characters to run circles around her. Instead, Eddie intercepted and became the protagonist and driving force of the play.

For a while, I believed Claire and Tripp were dual protagonists. Dunne describes dual protagonists as “characters with the same goal and equal time to pursue it” or characters with “related but irreconcilable goals that unite them as adversaries” making them both heroes of their own stories and antagonists to the other’s story (200). Tripp and Claire embody the second type both having the goal of “winning” the Title IX investigation. Dunne points to the example of brothers Lee and Austin in Sam Shepard’s True West. Both Lee and Austin want their scripts to be produced by Saul Kimmer, the hot shot Hollywood producer. With some questionable unknown interaction between Saul and Lee on the golf course, Saul picks Lee’s idea, but Lee cannot write a screenplay. He must rely on Austin to write his ideas into a screenplay for him. Even though Lee accomplishes the first goal of winning Saul’s favor, their relationship generates constant competition on how the script should be written and ultimately who will leave town. The play ends with neither of them beating each other. The stage directions read, “Instantly Lee is on his feet and moves towards the exit, blocking Austin’s escape. They square off to each other, keeping distance between them” (Shephard, 58). In a play about students going through a Title IX investigation, the students could not square off with each other at the end. One of them would have to win or lose.

Dunne describes dual protagonists as characters who pursue the same goal, shape the play’s overall point of view, and share the dramatic weight (202). In the first draft, both Kat and Eddie shared the same goal of winning the Title IX case and both of their experiences shaped the point of view. Their stories had equal amounts of dramatic weight and one of them would have
to win and the other would lose. With further development of the characters, I made Tripp the protagonist because I developed his goals further than winning the Title IX case.

Although some audience members might have felt Claire was the protagonist, Tripp made the initial moves, and at the top of the play, he made his overall goal of being a prominent, successful campus leader known to the audience. After reading *Boy Gets Girl* by Rebecca Gilman, I knew that I wanted to start my play with Claire and Tripp meeting for the first time. In Gilman’s play, the protagonist and antagonist meet on a blind date. The way in which Gilman wrote the opening scene determined who would propel the action for the rest of the plot. The first scene opens with Theresa, the protagonist, struggling with a 90’s era cell phone as she expresses her nerves to her friend about her blind date with Tony, an awkward character (Rebecca Gilman, 7-19). Though Tony makes moves towards his goal, dating Theresa, her goal beats his goal when she decides not to see him anymore. She continues throughout the play trying to achieve her goals of being a successful journalist while Tony’s advancements compete with her mental stability. Tony still wants to succeed in his ultimate goal of dating her and uses tactics such as stalking to get her in his grasp (Rebecca Gilman, 99).

Similarly to Gilman’s opening scene, the first point of my outline starts with Tripp at the forefront. The audience sees an exchange between Tripp and Carter where the audience learns of his concrete goal of becoming student body president one day. Once Jake comes in, the audience learns that Tripp wants to be with Claire in an intimate way. They know two of his goals and see him pursuing those goals throughout the rest of the play. The first scene of *IX* ends with Tripp getting Claire’s phone number, and Jake and Tripp inviting Claire and Sydney to a party the following weekend. Their exchange could be viewed as the inciting event, but Monica reporting the case to Title IX becomes the inciting event because of the impact the complaint has on Tripp.
Once the characters entered the world of Title IX, the idea of dual protagonists became less plausible due to Claire’s passivity.

Dunne describes a single protagonist as a character that “pursues the goal actively by tackling the problems and initiating strategies rather than passively responding to the actions of others” (201). This description helped me fully split the idea of Claire and Tripp being dual protagonists. Through the entire play, Claire is reactive. She goes to Title IX because Monica reports the incident. Although she files the complaint, she describes her experience at the end of the play in scene 7.5 in saying, “I’m nervous… I’m… I’m… scared… BECAUSE I DON’T KNOW WHAT THE FUCK I’M DOING! I thought I was having a conversation with Mr. Williams, not all this legal shit” (Appendix 7, 380). She does not describe tackling problems. She feels stuck and conflicted, which is a very real experience for students going through a Title IX process. In 7.6, even after Tripp has been kicked out of his fraternity and confesses to Jake and Carter that he had sex with a drunk woman, he says, “I’ve gotta win” (Appendix 7, 384). Tripp’s main strategy throughout the play is lying, however, the audience does not know this until scene seven.

In my first and fourth draft, I struggled with having a climax. By following the Title IX process as my outline, I set myself up for the verdict being the climax. Hatcher writes, “The climax is that action or sequence of actions that resolves the conflict… There is a win, a loss or a draw, although audiences prefer plays with winners and losers, not draws” (83). In draft one and four, Tripp gets off without any repercussions. The hearing deems him irresponsible which answers the dramatic question of who is responsible, but left the ending unfulfilling. I wanted Tripp to lose something too. I did not want to create a draw scenario, like in True West, where both characters “tie” in the Title IX investigation and neither is responsible, an impossible
outcome because the majority rule of a panel of three determined the outcome. Instead, I wanted him to lose socially. He won the Title IX case but lost a part of his identity and social networking tools by getting kicked out of his fraternity. On the subject of climax, Aristotle explains the concept as the end “from which nothing else follows” (31). Hatcher furthers this idea reiterating that nothing can occur after the climax because “the central dramatic question has been answered” (84). To establish the moment where nothing can follow, I needed to answer the dramatic question. Throughout the process, I struggled with two dramatic questions. I thought, “Did Tripp rape Claire?” On the other hand, I thought, “Will Tripp win the Title IX case?” If the question revolved around Tripp raping Claire, then the climax could be him getting kicked out of his fraternity because that action led to his confession.

If Tripp admitted the truth, something big needed to happen to him. To create a feeling of loss for Tripp, I needed him to lose something which the audience knew was important to him. Following the suggestions of my readers in my first table read, I created Carter, the antithesis of Jake and everything Tripp aspires to be one day (Appendix 7, 294-296). Through the character of Carter, I created a subplot, a story that runs parallel to the main plot and towards the end of the action should enter into the stream of the main plot (Hatcher, 37). Carter’s story became the subplot that merged with Tripp’s story of clearing his name and remaining on the path of social, academic, and political success. Carter, who is Tripp’s fraternity’s president and has a sexual past with Claire, wants to make sure his fraternity does not get kicked off campus. As the president from a long line of Gamma Lambda Alphas, Carter acts in the best interest of his fraternity as a whole and himself rather than Tripp’s best interest. The conflict in this scene centers around Carter’s goal of saving the fraternity competing with Tripp’s goal of winning the Title IX investigation without any lasting consequences. Carter has made his decision and kicks
Tripp out of the fraternity which causes Tripp to blow up on Carter and Jake. He begins to accuse them of being guilty of “the exact same thing” (Appendix 7, 383). Carter asks what he did, and Tripp responds with “I fucked a drunk chick!” (Appendix 7, 384). At this point, Tripp has revealed that he had sex with Claire and knew that she was drunk. Earlier in the play, he tells Mr. Williams that she was not drunk, and Monica and Mr. Williams have said multiple times that incapacitation excludes a person from being able to give consent. If I had ended the play after this scene, then the dramatic question of whether Tripp raped Claire or not would have been answered, but the play continued. In addition, I do not think that the line “I fucked a drunk chick” carried the weight which I intended. I wish that I had made the line, “I fucked a drunk chick… just because she blacked out doesn’t mean she didn’t want it. Goddamn slut! Ruining my fucking life!” This line would be more likely to make the audience fully believe that Tripp raped Claire.

As I mentioned earlier, Hatcher says that once the dramatic question is answered the play does not continue much further. Since the play continued with the hearing and the announcement of the verdict and Claire’s and Tripp’s responses, the dramatic question solidified to “Will Tripp win the Title IX case?” Tripp’s confession added to the weight of the verdict. Since members of the audience heard him say he had sex with a drunk woman, then being found not responsible makes the outcome even more jarring for some people watching the play.

While constructing the plot, I came up with some single moments with characters that did not work to streamline or to benefit the whole. The first was Eddie’s prayer. After my first table read of She Asked for It, Meredith Dillon, the actress who read for Monica, suggested that I include more of a religious struggle for Eddie. The following is an excerpt from the prayer scene that got cut (Appendix 4, 208):
Eddie sits in his bedroom on his bed facing the audience. He talks on his cellphone.

**Eddie:** Yeah… I don’t know, Dad… I went in there and told them truth. That’s what I did… He has to investigate some more. Like talk to witnesses and stuff… Jake was there… He saw the whole thing so he will get called in to testify. I guess that’s what he is doing. Testifying? Yeah… I’m mad because I didn’t do anything wrong… Well, I mean I didn’t do anything illegal. I don’t think… (beat). She said “Yes”! Dad, that’s all I’ve ever been told. That’s what you taught me in high school. “Make sure she says ‘Okay.’” Be respectful.” I was. I promise… As long as she says, “Yes.” (beat). No, I don’t think that… no doesn’t mean yes… She told me to. How many times do I have to tell you? I’m sick of having to defend myself! Have I ever done anything like this before?! (beat). Sorry… I didn’t mean… Yes sir. Okay. (beat). Yeah I think so… she didn’t seem drunk… It’s… Gahhh (falls back on the bed). I’m… I’m… I’ll let you know what happens. That’s all that I can do… okay… Yeah, put her on… (beat). Hey Mom… I’m okay… Thanks. I know I shouldn’t… (beat). Uh… What? Oh yeah, it’s on my shelf. The Bible that you gave me after graduation? I have it… (beat). Jeremiah 29:11? I’ll read it… Okay… I’ll read it when we hang up… Thank you… Thanks for the prayers… I’ll talk to you later… Love you, too. Tell Dad I said “Thanks.” I’ll call you soon… Okay… Bye…

**Eddie:** “For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”

**Eddie stares at The Bible. His expression changes to show pure contempt. He closes it and throws it across the room with frustration.**

**Eddie (to himself):** Is that supposed to comfort me? What the… Oh yeah, Mom, being a convicted rapist will help me prosper and have hope and… and a future. My future is… is… nothing if I… and this… I don’t know… (looking up). God, why are you doing this? Why? You think this is funny. (laughs). You love doing this shit! You enjoy punishing us and putting us through shit. Like Job. You messed him up. You let Satan ruin his life. And so many other people along the way. Is this your plan for me? To get kicked out of college because I had premarital sex? Huh? (beat). Answer me dammit! (beat). I’m talking to a brick wall. Nothing. It’s just nothing. Silence. I “pray” to thin air or to… to… I’m looking to something for salvation from my sadness. To save me from this pile of shit. That’s what we are all doing. All people. Praying to the great, almighty thing of your preference that’ll make your life better. Science, Santa Claus, the Republican Party. But Mom says you’re the answer, God. (beat). So give me a fucking answer! (beat). I’m sorry… I… God, I know I messed up. I lost my virginity to someone who wasn’t my wife, but I didn’t rape her… At least I don’t think I did. (beat). What do I do? Please say something, or do something. Or… I dunno. (beat). Okay, God. If you’re not gonna do anything… why do you think people don’t believe in you? If you’re not gonna speak to me, I’ll make you.

**Eddie picks up The Bible from where he threw it. He begins flipping through the pages.**
Eddie: I’m gonna open *The Bible* and point to a random verse. That’ll be your advice. *He closes his eyes, flips through the pages, and finally stops. He points his finger and reads.*

**Eddie:** James… what do you have to say, James. “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds…” *(beat).* You’ve got to be fucking kidding me!

_**Eddie throws the book at the foot of his bed.**_*

**Eddie (looking up):** Pure joy? Should I be happy that I’m going through this? Oh yay! Thank you! I’m so happy that I get to defend myself for something I didn’t fucking do! Because some… some slut had to go run and cry because she… she… Gahhhh…._

*Eddie falls to his knees and begins to softly cry. He picks up The Bible and holds it in his lap as he sits on his knees at the foot of the bed._

**Eddie:** I don’t know what’s right and wrong or up and down. I don’t know what’s going on anymore.

After reading this scene, Michael pointed out the phrase, “what do you have to say, James,” as being a particularly awful line. If this scene was a part of the play, then I would need to focus heavily on his faith as a larger element of the plot. This scene is like the moment in some Christian fiction film like *God’s Not Dead 2* where the protagonist realizes he needs to re-dedicate his life to Christ, and with God on his side again, he escapes the wrath of Title IX by the thoughts and prayers of his cliche, verse-quoting mother. Eddie is not even that religious. Not only does this monologue contradict the character entirely, it makes faith a more prominent point of the plot. Eddie discusses faith with his mom, finds his copy of *The Bible*, and prays to God for answers. The conversation causes him to look for *The Bible* that he has not even unpacked since living in the fraternity house, and the stage direction indicating a barely used copy would imply that he has not even opened the book since coming to college. Searching for scripture and praying to God create strong plot points that would need to be further developed throughout the play. I realized that having him pray, look for *The Bible*, read scripture aloud, and cry made the whole of the plot much different than I intended. Furthermore, having religion have this strong of a presence would make faith a big idea rather than a small idea.
Idea

Jeffrey Hatcher writes, “Playwrights get their ideas from their observations of the wider world, their observations of the people around them, and their observations of their own souls— their own concerns, convictions, fears and desires” (42). The ideas permeating IX directly come from my experience as a student at Ole Miss, a Sigma Chi, an elected official in our student government, and an officer in the Interfraternity Council, the body which governs all fraternities on campus. Hatcher defines idea as the “‘theme,’ the abstract issues and feelings that grow out of the dramatic action” (40). Inversely, Will Dunne defines theme as an “idea that the writer believes to be true and attempts to demonstrate through the characters and story” (317). Idea is theme, and theme is idea. Most importantly, for the playwright, the ideas must be a belief or worldview that he or she attempts to convey to the audience. Furthermore, Hatcher insists that all plays should have big and small ideas like Macbeth’s overall idea of the negative outcomes of ambition and the little ideas like war, magic, fate, royal lineage, politics, and marriage (40). In The Poetics, Aristotle stresses the importance of idea and language working together to express “proof and refutation, the arousing of feelings like pity, fear, anger, and so on, and then again exaggeration and refutation” (73). Aristotle encourages his readers to reference his Art of Rhetoric to better understand idea.

In this work, Aristotle defines rhetoric as “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion” (Aristotle, “The Art of Rhetoric”). He expounds on this definition through giving the three kinds of persuasion. “The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself” (Aristotle, “The Art of Rhetoric”). Aristotle’s three kinds of persuasion can be expressed through the other five
elements. The first kind of persuasion is character and plot, which directly correlate to Dunne’s definition of theme. The second kind of persuasion is spectacle and music, the elements used to impress location and mood on the audience, and the third kind of persuasion is language. Therefore, the playwright uses idea through the other five elements to persuade the audience to feel or to believe the themes demonstrated in the play. Also, Aristotle divides rhetoric into three categories: political, forensic, and the ceremony. On political rhetoric, he describes the end goal of the orator as:

The political orator aims at establishing the expediency or the harmfulness of a proposed course of action; if he urges its acceptance, he does so on the ground that it will do good; if he urges its rejection, he does so on the ground that it will do harm; and all other points, such as whether the proposal is just or unjust, honourable or dishonourable, he brings in as subsidiary and relative to this main consideration (Aristotle, “The Art of Rhetoric”).

Political rhetoric relates strongly to idea in IX. Title IX, a prominent piece of policy affecting college students all across America, has negative and positive effects on college students. In the play, evaluating the Title IX process is the proposed course of action, and as the playwright, I aim to urge audience members to think about the rejection and acceptance of certain aspects of the policy through depicting the harm and good that results from pursuing a Title IX investigation. As with most pieces of policy, I see the negatives and the positives that can come from proposed actions and solutions, and I wanted to convey both aspects in IX to communicate my big idea: Title IX investigations for student-on-student sexual assault mentally, emotionally, and socially change, and sometimes destroy, the lives of all the students involved.

To effectively communicate the elements of Title IX through the character’s dialogue, I needed to gain a deep understanding of the policy. I used my education in policy research and analysis gained through studying Public Policy Leadership in the Trent Lott Institute. Through my research, I explored Birch Bayh, Edith Green, and Bernice Sandler’s legislative efforts that
created the policy, the evolution of Title IX to consider student-on-student sexual violence as a policy violation, the Safe Campus Act and backlash following the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter, the differences between sexual misconduct policies on college campuses, what ways I thought that Title IX should be improved, and the depiction of Title IX through the plays *Oleanna, Really Really,* and *Actually.*

*The Origins of Title IX*

Birch Bayh, United States Senator from 1963-1981 and “the Father of Title IX,” describes his wife as his biggest influence on his career. In high school, his wife, Marvella Hern Bayh, had straight-A’s and successfully won her campaigns for Girls State Governor and Girls Nation President. Today, her accomplishments could earn her a spot in many top schools in the nation. When she applied for the University of Virginia in 1951, the prestigious university told her, “Women need not apply” (Bayh, 3). In the early 1940s and 50s, families often set aside their funds for their sons to go to college instead of their daughters. Money spent on women would be money wasted because they would exit the work force to have children. Through the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and the Higher Education Act of 1965, financial opportunities and scholarships through federal student aid were made available to women, but other institutional stigmas existed in higher education that prevented women from receiving equitable treatment. Regardless of a new found access to money, women were told not to apply, and if they did, women needed better grades than men to get into certain classes (Rose, 160). After being told that she came across too strongly for a woman, activist Bernice Sandler “filed complaints with over two hundred and fifty universities” asserting that the institutions violated federal law by discriminating on the basis of gender, and she sent copies of her complaints to Congress (Girgoriadis, 72). Sandler’s letters caught the attention of Birch Bayh in the Senate and
Representative Edith Green of Oregon in the House, and the three of them became the primary leaders on Title IX. The initial impetus for Title IX was not athletics or sexual violence; women wanted to end discrimination in all areas of education.

On July 2, 1964, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. This historic piece of legislation dismantled the racial caste system in the South and prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, and color (Mack, 230). While celebrated for the accomplishments over racial divisions in America, the Civil Rights Act did little to improve women’s rights. In the entire piece of legislation, “sex” only appears in Title VII, which aims to end discrimination in employment. Title VII prevents employers from refusing to hire or segregating the workplace based on “race, color, religion, sex, or national origin” (“Transcript of the Civil Rights Act of 1964”). In contrast, Title VI reads, “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance” (ibid.). The word sex was not included in Title VI, and Virginia Representative Howard Smith amended Title VII to add “sex” in an attempt to cause the bill to fail (Gales, “Filling the Gaps: Women, Civil Rights, and Title IX”). He thought that the sexists in Congress would vote against the legislation based on the idea of creating equality for women. After the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was signed, women still faced obstacles in education, despite their small victory in equitable treatment in employment.

In 1970, while Bayh began working to gain support for the Equal Rights Amendment, a Constitutional amendment to prevent discrimination based on sex, Representative Green began holding hearings to research the equity gaps for women in education and employment. (Rose, 161) The statistics proved that women did not have the same access to educational opportunities
as men. At the University of North Carolina, 1,900 men and 426 women were admitted into the freshman class of 1970 (Blumenthal, 31). In addition, in 1971, 29,997 women participated in collegiate athletics compared to 170,384 men (Zgorc, 205). Also, women in academia were denied tenure or simply not hired for their gender, like Bernice Sandler experienced (Gales, “Filling the Gaps: Women, Civil Rights, and Title IX”). Green gained qualitative testimonials and witness accounts to back up the quantitative data showing the discrimination against women (Rose, 161). These hearings provided the foundations for Title IX, and once Green concluded the hearings, she sent 6,000 transcripts to colleges and universities around the country (ibid., 162).

President Richard Nixon started out 1971 with an agenda to address higher education. While Birch’s efforts to pass the Equal Rights Amendment failed, Green saw Nixon’s policy decision on education as an opportunity and tacked Title IX on to “H.R. 7248, the congressional version of the omnibus reauthorization bill, which was known simply as ‘the Education Amendments’” (ibid., 166). Though Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 denied women equal rights in education, Green modeled Title IX directly after wording in Title VI. On May 24th, through the help of Bayh in the Senate, the Education Amendments of 1972, containing Green’s amendment, passed 63 to 15 in the Senate and 218 to 210 in the House (ibid., 174). Similar to Title VI, Title IX states:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance (“Title 20 U.S.C. Sections 1681-1688”).

Through these thirty-seven carefully chosen words, Green, Bayh, and Sandler intended to end discrimination at institutions of higher learning across the country. After the legislation passed, Bernice Sandler and fellow activist Margaret C. Dunkle wrote, “Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 mandates that sex discrimination be eliminated in federally assisted
education programs. There has been considerable speculation about what changes will be required of educational institutions to comply with Title IX” (1). Nobody knew exactly what change the passage of the legislation would bring, but shortly after, athletics in all areas of education began to change. Title IX required universities to create equal athletic opportunities and scholarships for women, and women’s athletics were to be treated with the same attention and resources as men’s sports (Buchanan, 92). Since Nixon signed the legislation into law on June 23rd, 1972, women playing collegiate sports has increased by 545%, and women and girls playing high school sports has increased by 990% (Brooke-Marciniak, and de Varona, “Amazing Things Happen When You Give Female Athletes the Same Funding as Men”).

Today, from high school sports to hiring practices of institutions of higher learning, this piece of policy affects multiple facets of education. To narrow the impact and scope of Title IX, I focus on how Title IX evolved to address student-on-student sexual harassment and sexual violence.

*The Evolution of Title IX*

In the original statute, student-on-student sexual harassment and sexual violence are not mentioned, but through a series of court decisions including *Alexander v. Yale, Grove City College v. Bell, Bougher v. University of Pittsburgh, Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools*, and *Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education*, legislative action resulting in the Clery Act, and executive decisions implemented through the 1997 Guidance, 2001 Revision, and the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter administered by the Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights (OCR), Title IX evolved and pushed educational institutions receiving federal funding to “establish a comprehensive system for handling sexual assault claims” (Krakaur, 94).
In 1977, *Alexander v. Yale* marked the first case that asserted that sexual harassment violated Title IX. The plaintiffs argued that they were sexually harassed by faculty and that Yale failed to provide a means for them to complain. The federal Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the plaintiffs did not prove their case, but the case still established sexual harassment as a violation of Title IX (AAUP, 73). In 1984, the Supreme Court ruled that private institutions where students received federal funding to attend the institution were subject to Title IX. Grove City College argued that they did not have to follow Title IX or Title VI because they did not directly receive federal funding, but the Court determined that they received federal funding indirectly from students (“Grove City College v. Bell”). Five years later, in *Bougher v. University of Pittsburgh*, a student argued that the university’s failure to respond to her complaints about a professor created a hostile environment. The court ruled that employees are protected from “environmental harassment” only in the workplace due to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title IX does not protect against hostile environments for students in institutions of higher learning. The courts ruled that only tangible cases of harassment could be protected under Title IX, a decision that set precedent for *Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools* in 1992 (AAUP, 74). After students reported sexual harassment from their coaches, *Franklin* expanded the same protections for teachers under Title VII to apply to student-teacher relationships under Title IX (AAUP, 75). Perhaps having the most impact, in 1999, the Supreme Court ruled that student-on-student harassment was a violation of Title IX. In *Davis v. Monroe County*, Lashonda Davis was harassed by a student who repetitively made passes at her like “I want to feel your boobs” (Grigoriadis, 76). The school did not address the issue, and her mother sued the county school district which raises the central question of the case: “Can a school board be held responsible under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, meant to secure equal
access of students to educational benefits and opportunities, for ‘student-on-student; harassment?’ (“Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education”). The Supreme Court answered “yes” in a 5-4 decision. Sandra Day O’Connor tipped the scales as the swing vote (Grigoriadis, 76). These Supreme Court cases deepened the implications of Title IX by defining harassment as a violation of the policy, requiring private schools to follow the rules, expanding the protection from a hostile environment to universities, and finally holding schools accountable for student-on-student harassment.

On the legislative side, in 1990, the The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, was signed into law. After the rape and murder of Jeanne Clery in her own dorm room, the Clery Act required universities to report all crimes happening on or near campus to the Department of Education (Orenstein, 177). By requiring schools to report all sexual assaults to the authorities through the Clery Act and by granting students protection from a hostile environment through the court system, policy makers began to embrace sexual harassment and sexual assault as violations of Title IX.

In 1997, the Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights (OCR) released their Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties, a combination of two guidances dealing separately with students and employees released in 1996 (Cantu). This document enforced the responsibility of schools receiving federal funding to end harassment occurring on their campuses; however, the Guidance provided maximum freedom with little guidelines by instructing “school employees and officials to use their judgment and common sense” and through offering “school personnel flexibility in how to respond to sexual harassment” (ibid.). The 1997 Guidance only required schools to deal with the harassment rather than instructing them how to deal with harassment. In addition, the Guidance
enforced current aspects of Title IX procedure like confidentiality, the ability for students to remain anonymous in a Title IX investigation, and the prohibition of schools releasing information on Title IX investigations under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Vanessa Grigoriadis, in her book Blurred Lines, describes how institutions operated under the 1997 Guidance:

Defensive postures included encouraging survivors not to report the crime, arguing it would exacerbate their trauma, and filing forms and convening hearings in superficial compliance while failing to address the pressing needs of counseling, treatment, and relocating offenders from dorms and classrooms. Many times, victims weren’t even told of the outcome of the complaints they’d brought (77).

Under the 1997 Guidance, universities using their own judgment meant avoiding adequately addressing the issue, and the Clery Act added an initial pressure because publishing assault statistics “runs in direct opposition to a university’s interest in luring prospective students” (ibid.). In 2001, the OCR sent a revision of the Guidance after the aforementioned United States’ Supreme Court decision in Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education. In addition to including student-on-student sexual harassment, schools became financially liable for “showing indifference” towards harassment. Also, the decision worked in tandem with Franklin by further defining a hostile environment as “so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it can be said to deprive the victims of access to the educational opportunities or benefits” (“Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education”). With these new expectations set by the court, in 2001, OCR revised their stance and released the Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties. The 2001 Revision required schools to create sexual misconduct policies, to notify members of the campus community where to make a complaint, to apply their chosen misconduct policies, to impartially investigate, to promptly investigate, to notify the complainant and the respondent of the outcomes, and to assure
that the institution will “prevent its recurrence” (10). Other than these vague guidelines, the Revision does not provide explicit instruction on facilitating Title IX investigations. The bare minimum, “taking prompt and effective action to end the harassment,” fulfills a university’s requirement under Title IX (ibid., 12).

In response to new expectations set by the Supreme Court, the 2001 Revision raised the stakes for a school’s negligence, but the policy instruction only defined sexual harassment as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature” which mainly includes discrimination or quid-pro-quo exchanges between students and other students, employees, and third parties. (ibid., 2). Sexual violence was not included in sexual harassment until the Office of Civil Rights order, famously known as the “Dear Colleague Letter,” released in 2011. In the first paragraph of the Letter, Russlynn Ali, President Obama’s Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, writes, “The sexual harassment of students, including sexual violence, interferes with students’ right to receive an education free from discrimination and, in the case of sexual violence, is a crime.” The Letter goes on to define sexual violence as “physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person’s will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim’s use of drugs or alcohol,” or where intellectual, physical, or other disabilities prevent a person from giving consent (Ali, 1). Ali cites the National Institute of Justice’s influential study, The Campus Sexual Assault Study, which provides the statistics that “call the nation to action” (ibid.). The study originated the “1 in 5” statistic used in sexual assault rhetoric. Through surveys taken by 5,546 women and 1,375 men, the authors concluded that 19% of women and 6.1% of men have experienced “attempted or completed sexual assault since entering college” (Krebs et al.). In addition to making sexual violence a violation of Title IX, the Dear Colleague Letter required schools to create the position of Title IX
coordinator, to inform complainants of their right to pursue a criminal investigation and Title IX investigation simultaneously, to use the preponderance of evidence standard, to allow lawyers or other members of the campus community to advise complainants and respondents, to resolve the conflict in 60 calendar days, and to create programs to educate students on sexual misconduct policies (Ali, 9-14). The Dear Colleague letter pushed universities to become more organized and created concrete parameters that all universities have to follow. If they did not, the entire university would lose federal funding (Grigoriadis, 79). The most controversial of all of these guidelines was the requirement to use the preponderance of evidence standard that states “it is more likely than not that sexual harassment or violence occurred,” or 51% likely that a violation occurred (Ali, 11).

**Backlash Against the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter**

In the court system, the preponderance of evidence is used in civil cases, and “beyond a reasonable doubt” is used in a criminal investigation (“Preponderance of Evidence”). The standard of proof fundamentally impacts whether or not a person is considered a victim of sexual assault. At the University of Montana, Kerry Barrett went to the Missoula police with her sexual assault, and after hearing her side and the accused Zeke Adams’ story, Detective Merifield said there was “insufficient evidence to charge Zeke Adams with sexual assault,” and Barrett, although shocked, realized that convincing a jury that she was assaulted would be challenging if not impossible (Krakauer, 66). Due to the standard of proof, a criminal investigation and a campus investigation can result in two entirely different outcomes, but both investigations can be pursued simultaneously. Kaitlyn Kelly, another student at the University of Montana, also went to the police after Calvin Smith repeatedly penetrated her vagina and anus with his fingers causing her to bleed excessively on her sheets (Krakauer, 72). Unfortunately, she threw away the
sheets, and after investigating, the police determined that no sufficient evidence existed to warrant pursuing the case to a trial. (Krakauer, 86). When she went to the university, the Title IX process found Calvin Smith responsible and expelled him, but Kristen Pabst, Missoula county prosecutor, refused to pursue the case in a criminal court system (Krakauer, 112-113).

Critics of the Dear Colleague letter believe that rape, a crime in all fifty states, should use the same standard of proof as the criminal justice system, however, due to the precedents set by Title IX, rape is also a civil rights issue. Know Your IX, an organization created by sexual violence survivors to inform students of Title IX, explains, “This [the Title IX process] isn’t a replacement for reporting to the police; it’s a parallel option for survivors based in civil rights – rather than criminal – law” (“Why Schools Handle Sexual Violence Reports”) On a college campus, rape violates civil rights and every university’s code of conduct. Therefore, universities are fully justified in applying a standard of proof used in civil cases. Due to the application of the preponderance of evidence standard, critics of the Dear Colleague Letter argue that administrators have shifted in how they view the presumption of guilt due to the Dear Colleague Letter consistent referral to “victims.” Now a person filing a complaint of sexual assault is considered a victim before the investigation even starts, and “innocent until proven guilty” holds little merit on a college campus (Cohen and Wax, 356).

While firmly arguing that due process no longer existed on college campuses, Republican Representative Matt Salmon, from Arizona, pushed the Safe Campus Act of 2015 to Congress. The act aimed to give autonomy over the burden of proof back to the universities and require institutions to report all incidents to the authorities. The legislation read, “An institution of higher education may establish and apply such standard of proof as it considers appropriate for purposes of any adjudication carried out as part of an institutional disciplinary proceeding
under this section” (“H.R. 3403 — 114th Congress: Safe Campus Act of 2015”). If this legislation passed, the ability for universities to choose their burden of proof would be as concrete as Title IX itself. The Dear Colleague letter was an executive decision that used the loss of federal funding as a means to force universities into compliance. In reality, this repercussion proved tricky when a case finding Yale University guilty for violating the Clery Act resulted in the school receiving a fine of $165,000. Yale failed to respond to sexual harassment by the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity as they paraded signs that said “No means yes! Yes means anal!” (Grigoriadis, 81-82). This oversight spurred the Office of Civil Rights Investigation, but their punishment did not reflect the punishment indicated in the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter despite blatant Title IX violations. Yale’s punishment aggravated Republican opposition because the Obama Administration failed to comply with their own rules, or perhaps they created rules that would be impossible to enforce in order to push universities to actually change (ibid.) Therefore, Republicans wanted to take a more permanent approach than a letter from the Office of Civil Rights. The Safe Campus Act of 2015 would have amended the Higher Education Act of 1965 just like Title IX did. For advocates on both sides of the debate, this legislation would have huge ramifications.

The National Panhellenic Conference, North American Interfraternity Conference, Kappa Alpha Order, the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity and the Sigma Nu fraternity came together to form the “Safe Campus Coalition” and hired Sigma Nu alum and former United States Senator Trent Lott to lobby for the bill’s passage (Kingade, “Fraternities Hire Trent Lott To Lobby For Limiting Campus Sexual Assault Investigations”). If the bill passed, students would lose their option of reporting to the police, and universities would be required to report all issues of sexual assault directly to the police despite a student’s wishes to avoid a criminal investigation.
Universities would not have to report to the police issues of theft, drugs, or other criminal activity that doubles as a violation of a university’s code of conduct (ibid.). Trent Lott justifies his defense of this law in writing, “It [The Campus Safety Act] would provide interim measures to improve student safety, due-process protections for students and student organizations, and for more education to prevent such crimes. It is time for a national policy that treats sexual assault on campus as the serious crime that it is.” (Mitchell and Lott, “Rethinking How We Deal with Campus Sexual Assault”). By removing sexual assault from the hands of universities, the criminal system would take over, but proponents of Title IX believe that the criminal justice system does not take rape seriously enough either. The Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN) reports that 31% of rapes are reported to the police, and only 5.7% of those reports lead to arrest. Then, 1.1% of those cases are sent to prosecutors, and only 0.6% of rapists will go to jail (“The Criminal Justice System: Statistics”). Furthermore, some students do not want to report sexual violence to the police due to the standard of proof that controls the criminal justice system, and contrary to Lott’s opinion, the Campus Safety Act would not improve the safety of students. In a criminal court, the judge and jury determine prison sentences and other forms of life altering punishment. Though life altering, the worst that can happen to a student in a university judicial hearing is expulsion. Expulsion and life in prison do not remotely coincide as equal punishments, so a higher standard of proof must be used in the criminal justice system. Fortunately, the Campus Safety Act failed in Congress, and students kept their right to refrain from reporting to authorities.

As I started researching Title IX, I disagreed with the amount of autonomy universities are given to determine their individual sexual misconduct policies. Under the Dear Colleague Letter, universities could tailor the system to fit what they wanted, and these small differences
can drastically affect the student experience. To have a deeper understanding of different Title IX procedures, I reviewed the sexual misconduct policies of other institutions of higher learning.

*Sexual Misconduct Policies on SEC Campuses*

In *Missoula*, author and journalist Jon Krakauer highlights the Title IX investigations between January 2008 and May 2012 of the University of Montana's football team. While reading this book, I noticed several aspects of the University of Montana's sexual misconduct policy that varied drastically from The University of Mississippi’s policy. When hearing a case, the University Court is composed of “three undergraduate students, one graduate student, two faculty members, and one staff member” (Krakauer, 96). So, when a student goes through a Title IX hearing at the University of Montana, their case is evaluated by seven people, but at The University of Mississippi, the hearing board consists of three members, one student, one faculty member, and one staff member. The Dear Colleague letter does not determine how many people of what kind should hear the case, and the makeup of the panel could impact a person’s experience.

To better understand the nuances of Title IX policy on college campuses, I analyzed the sexual misconduct policies for the following eight universities in the Southeastern Conference: The University of Alabama, The University of Arkansas, Auburn University, The University of Georgia, The University of Kentucky, The University of Mississippi, Mississippi State University, and the University of Missouri. I researched who investigates, who decides the outcome, who sits on the panel, how many members are on the panel, and how long does a university allow before a decision is reached (see Table 1). In addition to these questions, I found other information regarding incapacitation that impacts the process.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Who investigates?</th>
<th>Who decides the outcome?</th>
<th>Who sits on the board?</th>
<th>How many sit on the board?</th>
<th>How many days?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>The Title IX Coordinator</td>
<td>A hearing board</td>
<td>Faculty and staff</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75 business days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>Title IX Coord or 1 of 4 Deputy Coords</td>
<td>Title IX Coord. If a student appeals the decision, a panel hears the case.</td>
<td>Title IX Coords, deputies, or members of the legal community</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60 business days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>A senior admin serves as the Title IX Coord or 1 of 2 Deputy Coords</td>
<td>An investigator. If a student appeals, the Appellate Authority decides.</td>
<td>No hearing board</td>
<td>The Appellate authority consists of 1 senior admin</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>EOO Director, NDAH Officer, or Title IX Coord</td>
<td>A hearing board</td>
<td>Faculty/staff</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>60 calendar days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Title IX Coord or 1 of 3 Deputy Coords</td>
<td>A hearing board</td>
<td>1 faculty member, 1 staff member, and 1 grad or undergrad</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“As quickly as possible”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ole Miss</td>
<td>Title IX Coord</td>
<td>A hearing board</td>
<td>1 faculty, 1 staff, 1 student</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60 business days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS State</td>
<td>An investigator appointed by the Title IX Coord</td>
<td>A hearing board</td>
<td>Admins</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>60 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>The Equity Officer or Title IX Coord assigns an investigator or team.</td>
<td>A hearing board</td>
<td>Faculty and administrators</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Each phase takes roughly 10-14 business days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.
Differences in Sexual Misconduct Policies at SEC Schools
The 2011 Dear Colleague Letter required each university to hire a Title IX coordinator or to require someone working at a university to become the coordinator. The coordinator oversees all issues regarding Title IX and works with other branches of the university system like the campus police or office of student conduct to investigate violations. At Auburn University, Kelley Taylor serves as the Title IX Coordinator and the director of Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Offices (Auburn University, 6). Taylor serves in two roles at Auburn while Honey Ussery acts only as the Title IX Coordinator at The University of Mississippi. Not all Title IX coordinators have to investigate cases themselves. Only at The University of Mississippi and the University of Alabama does the Coordinator investigate alone (The University of Mississippi, 2, and the University of Alabama). At the University of Arkansas and Auburn University, Deputy Title IX Coordinators, who also serve in other administrative roles, investigate, and at Mississippi State University, the coordinator appoints an investigator trained by the university to facilitate the investigations. On training members of the campus community adjudicating sexual violence, Naomi Schaefer Riley of the National Review writes,

But this is absurd: We have an extensive legal system that is trained to deal with exactly such matters. There are police who are trained to ‘conduct prompt, fair, impartial, and thorough investigations,’ judges who understand ‘how to evaluate evidence and weigh it in an impartial manner.’ There are lawyers who spend years studying how to ‘promote accountability’ and assure ‘confidentiality.’ It is true that we do not give jurors in courtrooms ‘training’ in these matters before deciding guilt or innocence, but the campus panelists are acting like judges, too, in these instances (“Campus Kangaroo Courts: Blame Colleges, Not Just the Federal Government”).

Riley’s opinion aligns with the advocates of The Campus Safety Act, and her qualms are justified in comparing the backgrounds of those investigating on campuses across the country.

At Auburn University, Dr. David D. Mines serves as a Deputy Title IX Coordinator and the Senior Associate Athletic Director. His educational background includes a BA and MA in Political Science and a PhD in Higher Education. Mines oversees the swimming, diving,
gymnastics, and golf programs at the university, and during his time in athletics, he has worked as an Interim Director of Compliance at Auburn and facilitated a variety of athletics programs on the high school level (“David Mines Bio”). In addition, Lady Cox serves as the other Deputy Title IX Coordinator and Assistant Vice President for Student Engagement and Outreach. Her educational background includes a BA in Communications from Mississippi State University and an MA in Higher Education from Auburn University. As Assistant Vice President for Student Engagement and Outreach she has overseen areas such as Greek Life and Student Conduct (“Lady Cox Announced as AVP for Engagement”). While both Mines and Cox are accomplished individuals, their experience deals directly with athletics and student life, and both have been conditioned and influenced in a setting of academia. In contrast, Ross Brown serves as an Equity Consultant and Investigator for Title IX at the University of Missouri. Brown has a JD and MA in History from the University of Arkansas. In addition, before joining the Title IX office last year, Brown served as an Assistant Attorney General for six years at the Missouri Attorney General’s office where he oversaw over 300 cases (Brown, User Profile). At the University of Mississippi, in an interview, Title IX Coordinator Honey Ussery describes her experience before working in Title IX:

I went to law school as a nontraditional student. My daughter was six months old and my son was three when I began in 2005. I finished early, in December 2007, and took the February bar. During that last year of law school, I started working as an intern in the prosecutor’s office here. The office used to have a VAWA [Violence Against Women Act] grant that had lapsed. I submitted a proposal to have it restarted. It was approved and I began working as an assistant district attorney. VAWA covers violence against women and children. Off and on, my role has changed while working there. I covered Lafayette County for a while for all cases. Somehow, I always went back to working the sexual assaults and violence. Once you start that kind of work, you really enjoy it. I enjoyed working with victims, the public, children and also with law enforcement. I worked there for six years. (Diggs, “Q&A: Meet Honey Ussery, UM's New Title IX Coordinator.”)
By comparing the backgrounds of these individuals who all serve as investigators for Title IX violations at universities, clear differences in experience exist. The Dear Colleague Letter mandated that the position be made, but the order did not give any baseline requirements for the position. Mines and Cox are accomplished, educated individuals, in their respected fields of higher education, but they do not have legal backgrounds remotely comparable to Brown and Ussery’s experience working as attorneys. At Auburn University, Mines and Cox also decide the outcomes of the investigation, which is even more alarming.

At six of the eight universities, a hearing board will decide the outcome. At Auburn University and the University of Arkansas, the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator will decide the outcome and the sanctions. Then a student can appeal the case and, at Arkansas, the case will then be reviewed by a hearing board. At Auburn, a singular senior administrator serves as the appellate authority and decides the outcome. If a student gets in a Title IX investigation at Auburn, they will have two people, who may or may not have a legal background, decide their outcome, only if they decide to appeal the decision. At five of the eight universities, three people sit on the board. Mississippi State University and the University of Georgia do not disclose the number of panelists, but at both universities only faculty and/or staff sit on the boards. At the University of Kentucky and The University of Mississippi, students will sit on the panel, and the presence of students on a panel creates differing experiences.

When I became the Vice President of Standards for the Interfraternity Council, I envisioned that I would oversee any judicial matters concerning fraternities on campus. After my first week in the role, I quickly realized that most issues involving fraternities would go straight to Student Conduct, and I would never even know about the allegations being brought against members of fraternities or entire chapters. I oversaw formal recruitment and monitored fraternity
grades, but I simply was not equipped to handle any cases dealing with hazing or sexual misconduct. Other students on our campus do have the skills and knowledge to participate in the hearing process through training seminars conducted by the university. Will Nowell, the Associated Student Body Judicial Chair agrees that students should sit on panels. During his time at the University, Will has been trained by the university to handle cases and understand the intricacies of sanctions and the process. Will said:

In my experience, having sat on a couple Title IX cases, students typically have a better understanding of the cultural and social circumstances surrounding an altercation. It typically takes less for them to understand social behaviors, and I mean we’ve even had things like having to explain Tinder and Snapchat to people [faculty and staff]. It’s useful to have students on there because they’re in touch with the cultural norms in a way that makes them understand what’s really happening in a situation quickly, and I’ve heard people complain that they think students might go easier on other students which is not the case at The University of Mississippi specifically for Title IX and Student Conduct... students tend to elect to have harsher punishments.

However, some institutions disagree entirely. After the Office of Civil Rights investigated the University of Virginia for violating Title IX, UVA removed students from sitting on their hearing board.

In 2014, *Rolling Stone* printed a story about Jackie, a college student at the University of Virginia gang raped by a group of men at a Phi Kappa Psi fraternity party. One of the men penetrated her with a beer bottle (Grigoriadis, 256). The University of Virginia (UVA) went under federal investigation and, after a grueling process, the university changed their sexual misconduct policies (Brown, “Making Sexual Assault Hearings Fair”). The article was “debunked” by the Columbia School of Journalism, but the Department of Education still found that UVA violated Title IX in the 2008-09 and 2011-12 school years for failing to address issues of sexual assault and contributing to a hostile environment. In 2008-09, 50 complaints were made to the university, and the school failed to properly respond to 22 of these complaints.
(Kingkade, “UVA Violated Title IX, Had ‘Mixed Record’ on Sexual Assault Cases, Federal Investigation Finds”). UVA signed a resolution agreement that pushed them to evaluate their Review Panel. In response, UVA changed the hearing-panel chair from a university employee to an outside lawyer, and removed students from sitting on the panel. The university argued “students don’t necessarily want their peers serving on these panels” (Brown, “Making Sexual Assault Hearings Fair”). To further improve the hearing process, Vassar College eliminated their panel of students, faculty, and staff and hired a singular retired judge to decide the outcomes of the hearing (ibid.).

In the small pool of policies that I researched, other than Auburn, universities have the same size panels of three, and five of the eight do not allow students to sit on the panel. Within this small group, enough discrepancies exist to create differing experiences for students across the nation. At one institution, a lawyer with years of experience in the courtroom could be facilitating the investigation, and the panel could consist of a retired judge or a panel of lawyers. At another, a person who has worked in higher education for three years at only one institution could investigate and decide the outcome and sanctions of the case. The Title IX investigation and hearing processes are not equitable. When dealing with an issue as unclear and detrimental to both the complainant and respondent as sexual violence, our nation’s policy makers must prioritize creating an equitable process for all students. If all sexual assaults were clear cases, the small details of each incident would not carry as much weight but the definition for sexual assault encompasses a myriad of scenarios which leave even the most intelligent, legal minds puzzled.

According to a study conducted by The Journal for Sex Research, 89% of college students drink before hooking up with a stranger (Walsh et al., 151). In addition, students
consume anywhere between three and six drinks before a hook up, and depending on the person, three drinks could lead to incapacitation (Vrangalova, “In Hookups, Alcohol Is College Students' Best Friend”). Consuming alcohol makes students less self-conscious and makes sexual intimacy casual. In *Girls & Sex*, Peggy Orenstein writes, “Hookups aren’t just lubricated by drinking; they depend on it” (117). In writing her book, Orenstein went across the country interviewing young women about their experiences with sex, and one sophomore from the East Coast described a typical weekend at college to Orenstein. “From Sunday night to Thursday afternoon we’re in the library all the time, working really hard. Then comes the weekend. We all rip back shots in our dorms before a frat’s pre-party. Like four to eight shots in about a half hour. That’s pretty normal. And then it’s normal to wake up next to some guy and not remember how you got there” (ibid.). By failing to remember getting into bed with “some guy,” this student describes incapacitated sex as normal, and unfortunately, the aforementioned statistics reinforce the truth of her story: incapacitated sex is a critical component of modern day hookup culture.

Due to the normalcy of rampant drunk hook ups, how universities define incapacitation is incredibly important. In 2012, Attorney General Eric Holder and the FBI changed the definition of rape in the Uniform Crime Report (UCR). In 1927, the UCR defined rape as “the carnal knowledge of a female, forcibly and against her will” (U.S. Department of Justice, “Attorney General Eric Holder Announces Revisions to the Uniform Crime Report's Definition of Rape”). For 85 years this definition remained until Holder pushed for a change in the definition. According to the new definition, rape is “the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim” (ibid.). This definition no longer defines rape as only female, includes rape with objects, and factors in individuals who cannot give consent due to incapacitation. For
85 years, people incapacitated due to drugs and alcohol could not legally say that they were raped. With a shift in national policy, consent has become a common word in and outside the bedroom.

The other seven universities that I reviewed define consent almost exactly the same as The University of Mississippi. Consent is an “affirmative agreement through clear words and actions to engage in sexual activity,” and a lack of protest and silence do not constitute clear actions to engage in sex (The University of Mississippi, 3). In 2012, due to the changing of the national definition of rape and the Dear Colleague Letter, colleges were suddenly dealing with cases that were never considered rape only two years prior. By definition, drunk sex, if considered synonymous with incapacitation, is rape, and drunk hookups including digital penetration and oral sex are also rape. Grigoriadis describes this changing of definitions as “a wild shift from the past, when no one thought much about drunk sex” (69). Now people think about drunk sex, but do they actually know what drunk sex is?

Defining incapacitation at a university is of utmost importance. Incapacitation can be defined as an inability to understand who, what, when, where, why or how while unconscious, asleep, or unaware under the influence of alcohol or drugs (The University of Mississippi, 5). Auburn University explains incapacitation as “a state beyond drunkenness or intoxication” (15). Their policy adds, “A person is not necessarily incapacitated merely as a result of drinking or using drugs. The impact of alcohol and other drugs varies from person to person” (ibid.) The University of Alabama asserts that “the mere presence of alcohol, drugs or other substances” does not exclude a person from being able to give consent (3). Mississippi State University’s sexual misconduct policy gives an example of a person speaking while they have blacked out. Incapacitation overrides what appears to be consent and Title IX has been violated unless “a
reasonable individual under the particular circumstances would have believed that the incapacitated person’s actions signaled active, knowing and voluntary agreement to sexual activity” (Mississippi State University, 4). All eight universities I researched had similar stances on incapacitation, a state beyond being drunk that must be determined on a situational basis. All eight universities condemn incapacitated sex, adhering to the Uniform Crime Report’s definition of rape. However, in the general public, incapacitation connotes incredibly different things, and in California, skeptics of campus rape strongly opposed legislation amending the education code to require universities to follow an affirmative consent policy.

In 2014, Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate No. Bill 967 into law. The legislation amended the state’s education policy to codify affirmative consent, an ongoing verbal or physical “yes” to engage in sexual activity that can only be given when a person is sober (The State of California). In response to the legislation, Janet Bloomfield of Thought Catalog writes, “Under the California standards of consent, it turns out that I have never even once had sex that was not legally rape” (“Sex While Drunk Is Now Legally Rape In California (Seriously, It Is)”). While this statement reveals a sad reality about Bloomfield’s sex life, under the affirmative consent law, Bloomfield argues that all drunk sex is rape (ibid.). Senate Bill No. 967 enforced aspects of the Dear Colleague Letter like the preponderance of evidence standard as components of state law and solidified the standards that precluded people from giving consent; however, the legislation uses two contrasting, related terms: intoxication and incapacitation (The State of California). Auburn University separates the two by defining incapacitation as a state beyond intoxication, but, for policies that do not clarify the distinction, the terms alone do not provide enough clarity. Though intoxication is mentioned within reference to the accused rather than the complainant, the legislation only defines incapacitation as a state which prevents a person from
giving consent. In California rape is not intoxicated sex. Rape is incapacitated sex, and if the accused is intoxicated, he or she cannot blame their intoxication as a reason for having sex with an incapacitated person (ibid.). In the minds of people like Bloomfield, this explanation simply does not matter because she views drunkeness, incapacitation, and intoxication as synonymous. Therefore, the following question must be answered: if incapacitated sex is illegal or a violation of the code of conduct, how can a student tell if another student is incapacitated?

Similar to Auburn University, Dartmouth College explains to their students that “incapacitation is a state beyond intoxication,” and “with their consent, you can have sex with someone who is intoxicated” (“Sex, Drugs & Alcohol”). Dartmouth College blatantly embraces the culture of intoxicated sex and instructs students on how to determine the difference between intoxicated and incapacitated. Signs of intoxication are “slurred speech, weaving or stumbling while walking, and exaggerated emotions,” and signs of incapacitation are an “inability to speak coherently, confusion on basic facts (day of the week, birth date, etc.), inability to walk unassisted, and passing out.” Harvard University acknowledges that people act differently while incapacitated and the signs vary for each person. Harvard encourages students to look for “stumbling or difficulty maintaining balance, vomiting, inability to focus eyes, disorientation, unresponsiveness, inability to communicate coherently, and unconsciousness” (Harvard University). Even with defining the term incapacitation, differences exist within a university’s interpretation, and, regardless of location, people will always act differently while incapacitated. Dartmouth says stumbling is intoxication, and Harvard says stumbling is incapacitation. Dartmouth says speaking incoherently is incapacitation, but slurred speech is intoxication. Harvard says incoherent communication is a sign of incapacitation. All of these explanations and signs are completely subjective. A student could interpret slurred speech as incoherent speaking
or communicating, but the Title IX coordinator or hearing panel could interpret slurred speech as only intoxication. Furthermore, the word drunk must be defined. At Auburn University, drunkenness and intoxication are the same. If a person becomes too intoxicated, they transition from intoxication to incapacitation. Incapacitation is an inability to determine who, what, when, where, or why because an individual got too drunk.

Vice President Joe Biden in his interview with Teen Vogue advocates, “If a young woman is drunk, SHE CANNOT CONSENT. She cannot consent, and it's rape. It's rape. It's rape. It's rape” (Papisova, “Joe Biden Says Men Who Don't Stop Sexual Assault Are ‘Cowards’”). Legally, the Vice President of the United States who also authored the Violence Against Women Act is wrong. In this interview, a strong leader in our country with an extensive background in sexual violence uses incorrect terminology to explain assault. Americans are misinformed on the meanings of impactful, “buzz” words used in sexual assault rhetoric, and Grigoriadis writes, “Rape is a problem of definitions” (68). While universities have the autonomy to define incapacitation and what outward actions infer incapacitation, the nation will never have a unified definition with concrete examples of what constitutes incapacitation. If Joe Biden, one of the biggest proponents for the nation’s shift in sexual misconduct policy, does not use the correct terms, how can we expect average students to know what they can do and cannot do in sexual experiences?

I wanted IX to educate students. I wanted them to walk away feeling informed of the process and question the differences between being drunk and being incapacitated. I wanted them to evaluate their own sexual experiences and pinpoint moments where they may or may not have been in the wrong. After my second table read of She Asked for It, one of my friends who saw the reading called me the next morning. He told me that he went out to the bars after the
table read. Like normal, he got drunk and went home with a random woman. When he arrived at her home with the intention of having sex with her, he noticed that she was forgetting parts of their conversation and unable to walk without his help. He said, “I only thought about your play.” He knew she was incapacitated and called a cab to go home. After talking with him, I felt that I had accomplished my goal as a playwright by educating a student about the issues surrounding Title IX and sexual assault. To fully understand the ideas that I wanted to communicate about sexual assault, I consulted other plays to see what ideas other playwrights promoted on the topic through their writing.

**Policy Suggestions**

In September of 2017, as I began directing IX, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos rescinded Obama’s Dear Colleague Letter. The interim guidance allows for colleges to choose their standard of evidence, eliminates the time frame of 60 days, lets colleges set their appeals process for only the accused, and permits universities to use mediation as an “informal response” to sexual misconduct (Kreighbaum, “New Instructions on Title IX”). For schools in California, DeVos rescinding the Dear Colleague Letter did very little since the state government codified several aspects of the Letter in statute. Of the eight institutions I researched, none had changed their standard of proof. The Obama Administration essentially forced universities to use the preponderance of evidence, but if the Trump administration forced a different standard of proof, then the process would look drastically different across America.

I would have strongly disagreed with the Trump Administration forcing a different standard of proof such as “beyond a reasonable doubt.” Currently, the Trump Administration’s rescinding the Dear Colleague Letter and pushing their own interim guidance has not drastically changed the way universities address student-on-student sexual assault. Through my research, I
suggest that the current administration create a unified sexual misconduct policy with clear definitions of incapacitation and intoxication for all universities to follow. Colleges have too much autonomy and freedom to choose aspects of their policy. All Title IX coordinators should be lawyers or members of law enforcement. Those members of the university community in charge of investigating should be well versed in the law. The qualifications must be raised in order to ensure an impartial investigation for both parties. Inexperience in the law can be just as damaging as personal bias. I suggest that every university follow an intake process followed by an investigation by the Title IX coordinator or a qualified investigator approved by the coordinator. Then, the Title IX coordinator should make a decision on whether or not a violation occurred, write a report, and send the information to another university entity like Student Conduct to facilitate the hearing and decide the sanctions. A Title IX coordinator or investigator should never be both the fact-finder and decision-maker. All universities should have the same size hearing panel of three, and those who sit on the panel should be students, faculty, staff, or members of the legal community. Students must sit on the panel to provide insight about cultural mentalities and phenomenon foreign to older members of the panel who do not engage with student life. If the office of Title IX is strengthened by more qualified individuals, then the quality of education for members sitting on the panel will increase, and those members can adequately determine responsibility and sanctions. In addition, a lawyer or member of the legal community should preside over the hearing separate from the panel. The preponderance of evidence standard should be used, and the panel should reach a decision through majority rule and not unanimously. Once the decision is reached within a 60 day time period, students can appeal the decision. The appeals hearing process should be the same except with different individuals presiding and sitting on the panel.
The solution to investigating and reprimanding students is unifying the small aspects of the sexual misconduct policies at the universities. Through reading other plays dealing with sexual harassment and student-on-student sexual assault, I felt more positively about my policy suggestions.

Title IX in Oleanna, Really Really, and Actually

A lot of plays are written about money, love, and war. Very few plays are written about Title IX. Oleanna by David Mamet, Really Really by Paul Downs Colaizzo, and Actually by Anna Ziegler all address the impacts of Title IX. When writing IX, I noted how these playwrights represented Title IX through their writing and what tactics I should use to display the elements of the policy most important to me.

Before Oleanna appeared on the stage in 1992, the Hill-Thomas hearings in 1991 challenged American ideology surrounding power, race, and sex. In July 1991, after President George H. Bush nominated Judge Clarence Thomas to fill Justice Thurgood Marshall’s seat, the Alliance for Justice, a public interest group that follows the nomination process for Supreme Court Justices, sought Anita Hill, a former colleague of Thomas, to testify against him during the confirmation hearings (Hill and Jordan, xx). Senator Joe Biden, who would later preside over the hearing, pressured Hill to testify, and after consistent persuasion, Hill sent her allegations to Biden and the FBI. On October 7th, 1991, Anita Hill, a black woman, testified in front of the nation and a panel of fourteen white, male Senators, some of them dead set on tearing her story to pieces. While serving as his assistant during his time as the Assistant Secretary of Education for Civil Rights, Thomas repeatedly asked Hill “out” for social occasions, despite her saying, “No,” and discussed pornographic material and his own “sexual prowess” (Committee on the Judiciary, 37). Due to her desire to continue working in the public arena, Hill continued to be his
assistant as he transferred into his role as Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 1982. At the start of their relocating, he stopped making sexual comments towards her, but as the year progressed, Thomas began commenting on Hill’s clothing and hinting at his own penis size and ability to please women orally. He even asked her if she knew who put a pubic hair on the rim of his Coke (ibid., 37-38). When she left the commission in 1983, Hill went to dinner with Thomas where he told her that his career could be ruined if she spoke out about his behavior (ibid., 39). Eight years later, Thomas denied all of the allegations and referred to them as a “high-tech lynching,” and he refused to even watch Hill’s hearing (Berke, “The Thomas Nomination; Senators Who Switched Tell of Political Torment”).

The whole process reflected a greater conversation about believing women (specifically, women of color) and political power in America. The nation watched as a woman recounted sexual harassment while the accused denied the interactions; both of them under oath. The only evidence the Judiciary Committee had was the testimonies of people and phone records. On October 15th, after the Judiciary Committee tied in a 7-7 vote on approving Thomas, the Senate approved Clarence Thomas with a vote of 52-48 (Hill and Jordan, xxiv). In the end, only three Democratic Senators changed their vote to oppose Thomas after Hill’s statement. Senator Harry Reid of Nevada said, “From a political standpoint, I badly wanted to vote for Clarence Thomas. However, my conscience wouldn't let me do it. I thought she was telling the truth” (ibid.).

Today, Clarence Thomas still serves as a Supreme Court Justice, and how Biden conducted the hearings marks one of his biggest moments of political scrutiny. Three other women shared similar experiences to Hill, but they did not want to testify. Biden had the authority to subpoena the women and their witnesses to add to the testimonies against Thomas, but he did not (Cheney, “Biden’s ‘Anita’ Problem”). Politico describes the hearing as “Biden's
subjecting an African-American woman to public humiliation and abuse” (ibid.). Republican Senator Arlen Specter was perhaps the most insensitive, downplaying Hill as a jealous, power-hungry woman. Through hinting at testimonies suggesting Hill testified out of “disappointment and frustration that Mr. Thomas did not show any sexual interest in her,” he attempted to invalidate her story and her perspective and to expose the inconsistencies within various stories (Committee on the Judiciary, 60). In his attempts, he showed his own blindness towards sexual harassment in saying, “You testified this morning in response to Senator Biden, that the most embarrassing question involved—this is not too bad—women's large breasts” (ibid., 61). Specter said that talking about women’s large breasts is “not too bad” and, in doing so, publicly dismissed Hill’s discomfort in comments that sexually exploited a woman’s body. Critics note that Biden allowed this behavior to ensue. In 2017, in the face of the #MeToo movement, Biden’s handling of the Hill-Thomas hearings tarnish his good name and his advocacy of women’s rights. Anita Hill stepped out and spoke up against the negative treatment she received, and her efforts did not prevent Clarence Thomas from receiving the confirmation. After all, the case was Thomas’ word versus Hill’s word, and the Senators and the American people had to choose a person to believe based on explanations of the past.

Similar to the subordinate relationship between Hill and Thomas, Oleanna explores the power dynamics between men and women through his characters Carol, a student, and John, her professor. Vanessa Grigoriadis describes Carol, the student and young woman, as a character who “irrationally categorizes a professors’ arrogant comments” (75). However, the comments made by John could fully be interpreted as sexual harassment instead of arrogance, and Carol could be viewed as brave and not irrational. John tells Carol that he is talking to her as if she was his son and expresses his desire to be “personal” with her (Mamet, 19). John’s wife constantly
calls him because he is needed to discuss their buying a new house. He stays with Carol, and
when Carol asks why he stays when he should leave, he says, “Because I like you” (ibid., 21).
Then, he expresses his own problems with his marriage because they have taken off the
“Artificial Stricture, of ‘Teacher’ and ‘Student…’ (ibid.). Through a conversation about “starting
over,” eerily similar to a couple discussing a fresh beginning to their failed relationship, John
offers Carol an “A” if she visits him one on one throughout the rest of the semester (ibid., 25).
Towards the end of their meeting, John tells her that his job is “to provoke her” and “to force
her” (ibid., 32). With Mamet’s truncated, conversational writing, John never says what his job
forces her to do which allows the audience to interpret his intentions on their own. To top it all
off, mirroring Thomas’ tendency to discuss sex with Hill, John tells Carol that the rich “copulate
less often than the poor” (ibid.). After all of these comments, Carol reports his behavior to the
Tenure Committee. This move frustrates and scares John, and at the end of Act Two, John
“restrains her [Carol] from leaving” (57). She then turns around and calls this interaction rape in
Act Three. She says, “You tried to rape me. I was leaving this office, you ‘pressed’ yourself into
me. You ‘pressed’ your body into me” (78). Grigoriadis describes Carol as irrational because of
this line, and in 1992, rape only referred to “carnal knowledge” by force, according to the FBI.
The rape allegation seems far-fetched, but depending on how the play is directed the touching
could come across as attempted rape; however, within the context of the scene, John attempting
rape is still unlikely. In 2017, all of John’s lines could be interpreted as sexual harassment,
“objectively offensive, pervasive, and severe” harassment in a sexual nature that contributes to a
hostile environment (The University of Mississippi, 6).

Oleanna premiered five years before the Department of Education’s 1997 Guidance on
Sexual Harassment and three months after Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools which
protected students from faculty-on-student sexual harassment and hostile environments. In 1992, Title IX did not possess the power that the law has today. Within the world of *Oleanna*, Title IX does not exist, and Carol embodies an early representation of today’s student advocates, like activists Andrea Pino and Annie E. Clark who founded the End Rape on Campus organization. In his play, Mamet does not mention Title IX once. Instead, Carol, taking charge of her situation, reports to the Tenure Committee because John is being reviewed to receive tenure, not because reporting to a Tenure Committee is the proper avenue for students to report assault. Her telling that specific committee reads as a ploy for her to achieve her own agenda of banning the professor’s book. In addition, John and Carol reference legal terms like “guilty,” “indictment,” and “court officers,” which either reflects Mamet’s misunderstanding of Title IX or that Carol has pressed charges outside of the school (61-64). This represents another element of ambiguity.

In *The Guardian*, Alfred Hickling writes a review of a 2011 production of Mamet’s play. He writes, “In the original production, the unctuous male academic seemed as much a victim of circumstance as his passive-aggressive female student. Yet today, for someone in a position of authority to make physical contact without expecting disciplinary action seems culpable or, at best, naive (“Oleanna – Review””) Due to the shifting landscape of sexual misconduct on college campuses, the audience’s interpretation of the characters has shifted. John no longer reads as a victim.

Similarly to the American people during the Hill-Thomas hearings, when watching or reading *Oleanna*, the reader or audience member picks a side, either John’s or Carol’s. In contrast to the Hill-Thomas hearings, the viewers see the interactions between John and Carol in Act One and Act Two rather than hearing the characters talk about what happened between them years later. Mamet uses the show-don’t-tell principle which lets viewers interpret on their own
before the characters describe their opinions of the dispute. John feels that he did nothing wrong while Carol feels that he has harassed her, and their differing opinions directly correlate to the power that Title IX possessed in the 90s. Although it premiered three months after the landmark Supreme Court case, Mamet wrote the play before *Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools*, and until this decision, Title IX did not legally recognize the hostile environment that result from some teacher-student interactions as violations. John’s confusion and misunderstanding results from a time period where he legally could not create hostile environments for students. He does not understand why Carol feels the way she feels because her feelings have not been legitimized through the law. Ultimately, *Oleanna* has not aged well because Title IX has changed. In 1992, an excerpt from *The New York Times* review of *Oleanna* reads:

John, an intelligent if harried and pedantic man, is given an offstage life that he may lose if found guilty. He is up for tenure, has just made a deposit on a new house and has an apparently loving wife and son. By contrast, Carol is presented alternately as a dunce and a zealot. Though she does not understand the meaning of some garden-variety 25-cent words, she all too easily wields such malevolent jargon as “classist,” “paternal prerogative” and “protected hierarchy” once her cause is taken up by an unnamed campus “group.” She is given no offstage loved ones that might appeal to the audience's sympathy and is costumed in asexual outfits that come close to identifying her brand of rigid political correctness with the cultural police of totalitarian China. (Rich, “Review/Theater: Oleanna; Mamet's New Play Detonates The Fury of Sexual Harassment”).

Although the above excerpt responds to directing elements, like Carol’s clothing, the article references that Mamet’s writing indicates sympathy towards John. Other than referring to the Hill-Thomas hearings, Frank Rich does not once mention or suggest that Carol could perhaps be legitimate in her complaint towards John. In 1992, many Americans believed Anita Hill was lying, and many audience members would believe that Carol too is lying. In contrast, in 2017, a Boston Globe review of a performance at the New Repertory Theatre reads:

Or is Carol simply responding out of a sense of legitimate personal affront at the words and actions of her male antagonist, and, by extension, at the teeming world of entitled
men beyond his office? Mamet, ever the riddling provocateur, has deliberately shrouded “Oleanna” in a haze of ambiguity, where a certain amount is open to interpretation, for a while at least. The playwright does put the often-unexamined prerogatives of male power under a microscope in “Oleanna,” but he seems primarily interested in delineating the excesses of identity politics and political correctness, as exemplified by Carol. (Aucoin, “In New Rep's ‘Oleanna,’ a Power Play in Academia”).

This reviewer at least suggests the option that Carol is correct in her thinking. Still, Mamet is perceived as targeting Carol and her extreme feminism. Even 25 years apart, audiences do not have a unified stance on whether John harasses Carol which creates a hostile environment for her. Though ambiguous, the writing reflects the time period of the policy. My biggest frustration with Mamet’s play is his depiction of Carol. Like the Republicans did to Anita Hill in the hearings, Mamet makes Carol incredibly hard to like and depicts her as a power hungry, manipulative young woman instead of a victim of sexual harassment. In my play, I wanted the woman’s feelings to be legitimized by the world around her. As Title IX has affected cultural thinking, the public’s collective opinion of sexual harassment has shifted substantially in 25 years. Now women more likely to be believed when they speak of sexual harassment, and powerful men will lose elections, step down from their position as a United States Senator, and resign or be removed from boards, television networks, and production companies. Times have changed.

Another play that depicts the female lead as a conniving and manipulative woman is *Really Really* by Paul Downs Colaizzo. I read *Really Really* in an acting class I took in Los Angeles before my sophomore year of college, and I re-read the play after I did my second table read of *She Asked for It*. After a night of partying, Davis cannot remember whether or not he had sex with Leigh, but Leigh is convinced that she was raped. Initially, Davis feels awful because Leigh is the long term girlfriend of his friend Jimmy. The characters in the play are concerned
with the infidelity surrounding Davis and Leigh’s hookup. Once Jimmy finds out, Leigh tells her boyfriend that Davis raped her and begs him to stay with her (57-60).

The play premiered in 2012, one year after the Dear Colleague Letter, but Colaizzo workshopped for five years before his work saw the stage. Colaizzo wrote during a time where universities were responsible for addressing sexual misconduct, but they did not have much guidance on how to address the issue. Since universities did not have a consistent way of addressing sexual misconduct, Colaizzo does not tell the audience how the school found out about the incident. Throughout the entire play, he discloses very little about the process. In scene seven, Davis receives a phone call from the dean’s secretary who tells him that he is suspended from all of his classes and that he needs to report to a meeting that afternoon (63). Colaizzo does not reference a Title IX coordinator, but Davis’ friend Cooper says, “And even though Jimmy’s dad is on the board, that doesn’t make this an academic issue” (ibid.). At this point in the play, Davis believes he hooked up with his friend’s girlfriend which is the morally questionable behavior, and Davis confesses, “I don’t remember even having sex with her. I just said that stuff so you guys would leave me alone about it” (66). As the play progresses, Davis complains, “I have to go to a special hearing tomorrow to plead either way so they can figure out what to do with me” (83). He believes he has to plead no contest and if he does not their case will go to “trial” (ibid.).

Colaizzo’s characters navigate sexual assault allegations with difficulty. The unseen character of the dean’s secretary delivers the news that Davis is suspended from class; however, suspension before discussing with the respondent would be highly unlikely unless Leigh and Davis shared the same classes. Furthermore, without referencing Title IX or any legal authority, the audience could easily infer that Jimmy’s father “pulled some strings” to put Davis under
investigation. If Leigh had reported the incident to an authority at the school, the university may have interpreted her scenario as a woman feeling guilty or cheating on her boyfriend and crying rape (Krakauer, 60). Based on the political climate at the time, the university could have easily dismissed her complaint. Regardless of how Leigh reports the incident or if Jimmy’s father uses his clout to punish Davis, the university reprimands Davis before starting an investigation. They immediately punish Davis and administer his punishment before taking the proper measures of an impartial investigation as required by the Dear Colleague Letter. Furthermore, Colaizzo only has the students describe the case. Title IX is not the court system. In their ignorance, the students only describe the hearing process in legal terms like using the word trial. This creates an unidentifiable barrier because the language used allude to both a criminal and university investigation.

Before the hearing the next day, Davis confronts Leigh, which is a violation of a standard “no contact” letter, which prevents the respondent and complainant from communication and states that doing so could result in severe punishment (Colaizzo, 98). Their confrontation scene ends with the pair hooking up, and Davis saying that he does not remember anything. After they have sex the stage directions indicate that Leigh has scratches on her back, and she tells Davis that the night before was amazing and that she will see him at 2:00 (ibid., 105-106). Davis is so confused as to why she would have sex with him and then still continue with the investigation. He urges her to be better than this, and Leigh tells Davis, “Four years I was not good enough for you… What makes me better than this is my future… This whole fucked up thing—is a blessing” (ibid., 108-109). Then, the stage directions read, “Leigh smacks herself hard across the face” and “Leigh rips her dress down the center” (109). Earlier in the play, Haley, Leigh’s sister, admits that Leigh faked a pregnancy to stay with Jimmy, and at this point, the audience or reader
fully believes that she is potentially faking a rape to ensure that Jimmy will be her husband. The ambiguity of the writing does not clarify whether Leigh is raped and capitalizes on the opportunity, or whether she faked the whole thing. Regardless, she uses her night with Davis to advance herself socially, and her having sex with Davis right before the hearing makes the reader and audience see her as a manipulative, threatening person like Carol in Oleanna.

Like Mamet used the Hill-Thomas hearings, Colaizzo found inspiration from the Duke lacrosse scandal, another case highlighting race and gender relations in America (Lanes, Elliot. “‘A Quick 5’ with Paul Downs Colaizzo”). In 2006, Crystal Mangum, a black single mother with two children, was paid to strip at a Duke lacrosse party. She went to the police the following morning claiming that she was raped (Cohan, William D. “Remembering (and Misremembering) the Duke Lacrosse Case”). The police publicized the event in order to gain information, and ultimately, Mangum identified three lacrosse players. With Mike Nifong, the district attorney in charge of the case, representing Mangum, the media rigorously publicized Nifong’s case and bombarded the university. As a result, the team’s coach resigned following the cancellation of the season. As the investigation progressed, no actual evidence could be found associating the three players with the woman’s rape. Though the rape kit proved that she had relations with a man, the DNA of the accused was not a match, and the defense attorneys sought the help of the state bar which “brought charges against a sitting district attorney—Nifong—for being too outspoken and concealing the crucial DNA evidence” (ibid.). North Carolina’s Attorney General Roy Cooper dropped all the charges against the three men stating, “We have no credible evidence that an attack occurred” (Luther, “The Duke Lacrosse Case's Long Shadow of Doubt”). For people who view women who come forward about their assault as liars or women who turn regret into rape, the Duke lacrosse scandal acts as “the quintessential example of the danger of
false rape accusations” (ibid.). This case acted as Colaizzo’s primary influencer on his writing. In an interview with Maryland Theatre Guide, he described the cases as gripping his attention and making him think, “Now that’s good theatre” (Lanes, Elliot. “‘A Quick 5’ with Paul Downs Colaizzo”).

Since Colaizzo found inspiration from this particular case, he did not discuss Title IX properly. Through the characters’ use of legal terms instead of terms associated with Title IX and the ambiguity of the university’s role, Colaizzo, like Mamet, depicts a world void of Title IX. Mangum went to North Carolina Central University, also in Durham (Cohan, William D. “Remembering (and Misremembering) the Duke Lacrosse Case”). Since she did not attend Duke, she had no protections under Title IX, therefore, she could not pursue a Title IX investigation at Duke. If the players had been from North Carolina Central University, she could have filed a complaint with the Title IX office instead of going straight to the police. Colaizzo followed a case completely outside of Title IX, and therefore, he lacked insight in writing his play on how a university would handle sexual assault. Furthermore, an actual case of a false accusation inspired his writing. In reality, only two to ten percent of reports are false (Lisak, et al. 1316). The false allegations of Magnum explain why Leigh is objectively conniving and questionable.

Both Oleanna and Really Really heavily influenced my writing. Like Mamet, I wanted to show the interactions between the students. Colaizzo does not show the actual interaction between Leigh and Davis, so the audience can only infer. For my play, I wanted to show what happened between Claire and Tripp, but I wanted ambiguity to be a major component like in Oleanna and Really Really. In Oleanna, the ambiguity surrounds whether or not what happened between Carol and John could be sexual harassment, but in Really Really, the ambiguity revolves around who is telling the truth. In IX, I create ambiguity by showing both perspectives through
flashback and raise both questions of what is rape and who is correct. Both plays were written before the Dear Colleague Letter, the biggest policy move that drastically changed Title IX. Perhaps, the timing is the best explanation for Mamet’s failure to mention the policy and Colaizzo’s incorrect depiction of the policy. Both playwrights found inspiration from events in history that challenged racial relations in addition to gender issues, and both playwrights eliminated ideas of race from their plays. I also eliminated race to narrow the focus to only the Title IX process, the perception of rape, and gender relations. Adding race would have created a layer that would take an entirely separate thesis to accurately explore. Anna Ziegler addresses race in addition to sexual assault in her play *Actually*.

I read *Actually* after my production of *IX*. In this play, Amber and Tom are the only two characters. Tom is a black man, and Amber is white and also Jewish. The play explores ideas of privilege, intelligence, and racism but primarily focuses on student-on-student sexual assault. In contrast to *Really Really* and *Oleanna*’s failure to explicitly address the Title IX process, *Actually* depicts Tom and Amber sharing their experiences in a Title IX hearing. On November 14th, 2017, the Manhattan Theatre Club premiered Ziegler’s play, three days after *IX* opened in Meek Auditorium. Once I read the play in January, I felt slightly defeated and excited that the content of my play closely mirrored hers.

Tom and Amber tell their stories through monologues and occasionally interact with each other in a scene. The setting takes place at Princeton. Amber describes a friend named Heather who convinces her that Tom raped her, and Tom gets an email from a man named Leslie “from the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity” (Ziegler, 6, 11). Then, Leslie tells Tom about Title IX and “how it’s his responsibility to oversee all investigations of conduct that might have violated the policy” (ibid., 12). The audience never sees Leslie or Amber report the assault. In
my play, the audience watches Claire file a complaint after Monica makes a report, sees the
tension between Mr. Williams and Tripp, and observes Mr. Williams’ rational, cold approach to
sexual assault allegations instead of hearing Tom describe Leslie as “speaking carefully” (ibid.,
12). I utilize the show-don’t-tell principle, and Ziegler has her characters tell only. In the office
with Leslie, Tom asks if he is innocent until proven guilty, just as Tripp does in my play, and
Leslie explains that the system is different than a criminal justice system and that the
preponderance of evidence standard will be the burden of proof, just as Mr. Williams tells Tripp.
Initially, I thought I had written a play that delved into the policy of Title IX in contrast to Really
Really and Oleanna. I felt frustrated that Ziegler wrote a play focusing on the policy and had her
play Off-Broadway. Though we both used the Title IX process as a influencer of our plays’
central ideas, Ziegler explains the nuances of the policy differently than I do.

One of the primary differences between IX and Actually is the council that oversees the
case. In her play, Tom and Amber separately describe talking with Leslie, which correlates to the
intake process; however, Leslie does not interview witnesses. Within the structure of the play,
Leslie does not investigate the scenario before sending it to the panel. He sends the case
immediately to the panel. In my research, I had never come across a university where the panel
investigated. At first, I thought Ziegler misrepresented the policy, but, actually, Princeton’s
hearing panel investigates the case. Princeton’s Sexual Misconduct Policy reads, “The panel will
interview the parties to the complaint separately… All three members of the panel will
participate in interviews with the complainant and the respondent” (Princeton University). At
Princeton, the Title IX Coordinator, who is the Vice Provost of the Office of Institutional Equity
and Diversity, does an initial intake meeting with the complainant and can decide whether or not
a violation occurred. If he or she does suspect a violation, then the hearing panel will
immediately investigate. In the eight institutions of higher learning that I researched, the
investigation occurs outside of the panel. A report is written by the Title IX Coordinator or
whichever trained and qualified investigator analyzes the case, and the hearing panel listens to all
the evidence presented to determine the outcome.

Tom describes his panel consisting of a white man who is the assistant to the Assistant
Dean of Students, a black woman in Women’s Studies, and a female art professor with the last
name Diaz (17). Tom feels that the panel is not neutral due to the affiliation of the individuals. In
my research, some universities like Mississippi State University will allow students to review the
panel before the hearing and lobby to have certain members removed for fear of potential bias
(Mississippi State University, 13). Princeton does not allow students to review the panel, which
explains Tom’s uneasiness towards the makeup of the panel. In my play, I do not discuss
students having the ability to influence who sits on the panel, but the students do not express
frustration about the makeup of the panel until the end. In IX, the Campus Council consists of
three people, but one of the individuals is a male student, as Monica explains in the final scene.
A student is not present in Tom’s hearing. Monica also expresses her assumptions that the male
student caused Claire to lose the case (Appendix, 387). With my fictitious Sexual Misconduct
Policy, I did not want Claire and Tripp to influence the makeup of the panel in order to convey
the frustrations students may feel when they believe the panel is naturally biased like Tom feels
at Princeton. Perhaps if Princeton allowed students on their panel, Tom would have reacted more
positively and would have been less isolated from the individuals asking him probing questions.

Amber willingly goes to the Title IX office although Heather convinces her that she was
raped. I wanted to highlight the Responsible Employee aspect of Title IX by having Monica, a
Responsible Employee, report the incident to the school. Ziegler does not do this. On the issue of
advisors in the hearing, Amber describes having a lawyer, and Tom does not have an advisor (21). Tripp and Claire both have lawyers and express their shared frustration of having to speak on their own behalves while the lawyers can only advise. Ziegler does not delve into the pressure students may feel for having to defend themselves without someone representing their interests. Amber’s lawyer does not speak in the hearing, therefore, the reader can infer that advisors are not allowed to speak in these hearings which Princeton’s Sexual Misconduct Policy forbids (Princeton University).

Amber tells the audience that she and Tom did have sex and that she did not give a yes or no. She says she was too drunk to give “meaningful consent” (44). Tom replies, “You think I wasn’t drunk?” (44). Both characters were drunk. In IX, Tripp was sober, and Claire blacked out. In Actually, both Tom and Amber are in the hearing together. A scene erupts between their monologues where the two characters argue about whether or not Amber jumped out of the bed. Tom describes Diaz as saying, “Both of you sit down!” (48). Ziegler strays from Princeton’s policy because students are interviewed separately, as I mentioned above.

The play does not tell the outcome of the Title IX investigation. Ziegler leaves the scenario to audience interpretation and paints Title IX as a messy and chaotic system. I aim to describe Title IX as a concrete system that can be perceived as unfair by students affected by the policy. In one of the last lines of the play, Amber tries to convince Tom to play a game with her. He refuses and asks why he should play the game. Amber says, “If you wanna sleep with me tonight, for one thing” (56). At the end of Actually, a stage direction reads, “A light gray feather falls from above, right in between Amber and Tom. Before it hits the ground—blackout” (56). This element of spectacle refers to the explanation of preponderance of evidence as “fifty percent plus a feather” (17). I disagree with Ziegler not giving the audience an outcome. Ziegler focuses
so heavily on Title IX that an outcome resolves the whole play. She ends the play on a draw rather than having a concrete winner and loser. Perhaps Ziegler used Title IX only as a vessel to explore the “he said, she said” elements of sexual assault. Title IX heavily influenced the main ideas which I wanted to convey. To contradict the narrative of Really Really, I wanted to write a story where the man lies his way through a system that greatly impacts the lives of those involved but can still be manipulated by a person who tells the better story.

Oleanna, Really Really, and Actually all heavily influenced how I wrote IX. I analyzed how the plays discussed the idea of the impacts of Title IX and what ways I could enhance my own ideas.

Audience Survey Response

Out of the 460 people who saw IX, seventy audience members filled out the survey which is a 15.2% response rate. I was pleased with the outcome. Dr. Melissa Bass, my professor in the Lott Institute, and I discussed her experience viewing the play. She suggested that if I had worded the survey differently that I might have gotten a better response rate. She specifically referenced the question, “Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?” She explained that some audience members may have felt so unsure that they could not have answered a strongly worded question like that. I should have spoken to her before I made the survey, but I was on a time crunch and needed to turn the survey into the Institutional Review Board. Regardless, Dr. Bass agreed that the survey would render interesting information.

Out of the 70 people who filled out the survey, 57 believed that Claire was raped, despite the Campus Council’s verdict. Only three said she was not, and 11 did not answer. Perhaps many of the people who did not fill out the survey felt that she was not raped, but due to the questioning, did not want to answer no to such a blunt question. I should have asked something
like, “Do you support the Title IX decision?” A question about the Title IX outcome would have been more pointed to the big idea of the play.

Fifty-one people said that they had received sexual assault and Title IX training. 13 had not received training, and six did not answer. Of the 13 who had not received training, five of them were above college age. The other eight were within the age range of college students. I did not know how to decipher this outcome. Since Title IX did not gain the power that it has today, I had assumed that all of the people 30 and above would not have received Title IX training. Six of the 12 over the age of 23 had an understanding of the policy either through “occupational training” and “University of MS [Mississippi] training” (Appendix 8, survey 3 and 44). A female who was 78 years old worked as a staff member for the University Police Department. I had hoped to gain insight on the generational gap between how older people and younger people viewed assault, but ten of the 12 over the age of 23 said Claire was raped, and two did not answer.

I did discover that The University of Mississippi is doing an outstanding job at educating their student body on Title IX, assault, and consent. Of the 51 people who had received Title IX training, seven learned from Rebels Against Sexual Assault, the student group dedicated to raising awareness and helping survivors. Twelve learned about consent and Title IX through Freshman Orientation and The University’s Title IX Coordinator Honey Ussery. Six learned from taking Campus Clarity. Five learned through Greek life. Four learned through “class” or EDHE 105: Freshman Year Experience. One student wrote that he had learned about the process through his own assault. Student groups and the University have successfully educated our campus community on Title IX. I would like to do this play at another university to see how students respond to their education on the topic.
Sixty-two of the 70 said that the title of the play was engaging. I asked this question because some of my professors suggested that the title was not engaging. Dr. Peter Wood told me that titles should be “evocative.” Michael preferred the title *She Asked for It* because it let the audience immediately know what the play would discuss. He thought that the people would view *IX* as two letters instead of Roman Numerals, but 62 audience members said that they found the title engaging. One student wrote, “Roman numerals are exciting and mysterious” (Appendix 8, survey 6). Another student wrote, “I like the title, but I found the *She Asked for It* title a lot more engaging!” (Appendix 8, survey 10). She must have heard about the title before I changed it.

*Idea Continued*

In 1976, to protest men’s athletics receiving better equipment and facilities, the Yale women’s crew team stripped naked and ran into the office of Physical Education. They yelled that Yale was exploiting their bodies for athletics, and on their backs, they wrote in black marker “the symbol of the equal treatment they were legally guaranteed as Yale students: IX” (Grigoriadis, 73). IX means power. The numerals symbolize a process, a policy, a promise, and more. In the end, I chose *IX* because I felt that it communicated my big idea to the audience: Title IX investigations alter the lives of the students involved. From this idea, others stem like the definition of consent, the pitfalls of binge drinking, and rape culture promoted through fraternity life and athletics. Outside of Title IX, I discussed smaller ideas like faith as a label rather than a religious practice. All the characters consistently refer to Tripp as a Christian guy, but Tripp does not do anything particularly “Christian” other than wearing a cross necklace. He rapes someone. If he followed his faith, he would not even have sex. For him, being a Christian was a label that exuded goodness and purity. I also discussed college students finding individuality outside of their friend groups and transcendentalism. Of all the small ideas,
transcendentalism, a philosophy founded in New England in the 1830s, has to be the most obscure. Transcendentalists believed that man could understand the higher law of God by “listening to his instincts and conscience rather than accepting a truth externally defined by traditional authorities like church and state” (Dubrulle, 478). This philosophy tied in with the idea of individuality outside of friend groups. Claire and Tripp never tried to find their own truths. They would comply with the other characters around them instead of looking within. I reference this philosophy through transcendentalist authors referenced like Margaret Fuller, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and John White Chadwick. Specifically, I mention the poem “Nirvana” by Chadwick to contrast Tripp’s Christianity. Buddhists reach Nirvana through self-sanctification and their own personal meditation and discipline. Perhaps Claire and Tripp would have had different lives if they had found truth within instead of following the influences of their peers, their culture, and the church.
Language

Language is the words spoken by the characters in the play, and good dialogue gives information such as time period, setting, style, and background in addition to giving exposition, showing action, and alluding to future action. (Hatcher, 45). Aristotle writes, “Diction as a whole is made up of these parts: letter, syllable, conjunction, join, noun, verb, case, phrase” (75). From these eight parts, the previous elements of character, plot, and idea must be conveyed, and how these parts are employed indicates the elements either effectively or ineffectively. Changing a noun, verb, or phrase spoken by a character can fundamentally change the character, the time the action takes place, or even the worldview of the speaker. I found that language was one of the most meticulous parts of playwriting. One of Hatcher’s maxims states, “A well-drawn character with language specific to that character will never sound like another character” (46). Michael told me that he should be able to read my play without having to check and see who is speaking. The dialogue should be so clear and distinguished that the identity of the character is communicated simply through the verbs, nouns, phrases, letters, and syllables. Sam Shepard uses language to distinguish his characters. In this excerpt of his 1979 Pulitzer Prize winning play *Buried Child*, Vince comes home to his father’s house and brings his new girlfriend, Shelly. Vince has been away for a long time, and when he arrives, his grandfather, Dodge, does not recognize him. Vince has left the family and moved to California for music. Dodge shows hostility towards his grandson and makes the reunion highly uncomfortable. In this excerpt, Vince’s character is not shown clearly, but the distinctions between Dodge and Shelley are clear:

SHELLY: Vince, this is really making me nervous. I mean he doesn’t even want us here. He doesn’t even like us.
DODGE: She’s a beautiful girl.
VINCE: Thanks.
DODGE: Very beautiful girl.
SHELLY: Oh my God.
DODGE: *(to SHELLY)* What’s your name?
SHELLY: Shelly.
DODGE: Shelly. That’s a man’s name isn’t it?
SHELLY: Not in this case.
DODGE: *(to VINCE)* She’s a smart-ass too.
SHELLEY: Vince! Can we go?
DODGE: She’ll get used to it. *(to SHELLY)* What part of the country do you come from?
SHELLEY: Originally?
DODGE: That’s right. Originally. At the very start.
SHELLEY: L.A.
DODGE: L.A. Stupid country.
SHELLEY: I can’t stand this Vince! This is really unbelievable!
DODGE: It’s stupid! L.A. is stupid! So is Florida! All those Sunshine States. They’re all stupid. Do you know why they’re stupid?
SHELLEY: Illuminate me.
DODGE: I’ll tell you why. Because they’re full of smart-asses! That’s why. *(Shepherd, 87-89)*

Shelly’s and Dodge’s voices are distinct and can be easily separated from each other. For example, Dodge’s lines are broken up with short phrases, and Shelly speaks in complete thoughts. When reading *Buried Child*, I know that Dodge is speaking if his lines are broken up. From this passage, the audience infers that Dodge is mean and grumpy. The audience sees that Shelly is uncomfortable, but at the same time, she is a confident woman which is indicated in her exasperated response to Dodge calling her beautiful. She stands her ground with him which is why he calls her a smart-ass. By the end of the exchange, Dodge, full of frustration, says “smart-asses” like her are the reason L.A. is stupid. The audience infers that he is slightly misogynistic and an old-school thinker on the relationships between men and women and old and young people. In his mind, Shelly should be showing him the utmost respect as her superior in age and as a man. Shelley’s line, “Illuminate me,” is perhaps the best use of language in the above excerpt. Shepherd could have used so many different words to say the same thing. He could have simply written, “Why?” The word illuminate correlates with the references of the Sunshine States and indicates a level of education that Dodge does not have. She is the smart, young
woman from out of town, and Dodge is the grouchy, old man stuck in his home in the middle of nowhere.

On plot, Vince’s goal is to come home and be welcomed by his relatives. When he enters his family’s home, Dodge smashes his goal to pieces by failing to recognize his own grandson. If Dodge had welcomed him with open arms, tension would not have occurred. Furthermore, in this passage, Shelly expects to be treated a certain way. When Dodge does not treat her with the respect she believes she deserves, a new goal develops for her. Shelly wants to leave the house and get as far away as possible. From this brief exchange, character goals shift due to the clash with the other characters.

On idea, Richard Gilman in the Introduction to Seven Plays by Shephard writes, “Nearly everyone agreed that the great majority of his plays deal with one or more of these matters: the death (or betrayal) of the American dream; the decay of our national myths; the travail of the family” (Richard Gilman, xi). All three of these Ideas are captured within this small exchange. When Shelly says, “He doesn’t even like us here,” this phrase embodies the travail of the family. Their reunion which should be an exciting and happy time is instead a sad and painful time which happens to be the case for many American families. Shephard’s Idea of the struggle of family is clear within the fractured relationship between Dodge and Vince. Also, Dodge asks Shelly, “What part of the country do you come from?” Shepard wrote this line intentionally to indicate concepts of otherization. Asking where she is from would have sufficed, but the chosen phrase indicates regional identity. Once she says where she is from, Dodge’s hostility creates the otherization which portrays the decadence of the American myth of the melting pot. Dodge, who lives on a farm in the Midwest, rejects identities outside of his own rural persona. Shelly’s character illustrates the betrayal of the American dream. As an educated woman wanting to
advance socially in America, she is met with misogyny by an older man with a patriarchal worldview. He sees her for her beauty and hates her mind and wit.

All of these important distinctions of character, plot, and idea derive from Shephard’s careful construction of language. Perhaps one of Shepard’s strongest assets to communicating to the audience is his use of everyday speech. Aristotle encourages this concept in saying, “The clearest diction is that made up of ordinary words...” (85). Contemporary playwrights, like Neil LaBute, focus heavily on realistic dialogue. For me, I wanted my characters to sound as consistent and as real as possible like Shepard’s and LaBute’s characters.

In my first monologue of Eddie’s, his voice showed inconsistencies. He would say some words or phrases that would sound like two different people speaking. For example:

That’s fucked up, but these teachings have been hammered into my skull. That my premature desires for sex are wrong and that the only place they are right is in the bedroom with my wife after our wedding day. And then you go through puberty. You’re 15, and licking on a girl’s tits seems so natural.

The same person would not use the phrase “premature desires for sex” and “licking on a girl’s tits” in the same sentence. The language and choice of nouns and verbs does not correlate with similar qualities. In my first monologue of Eddie’s, two distinct characters existed within one character voice. So, I separated the crass from the reserved and created Jake and Tripp. The crass side became Jake, and the more reserved side became Tripp. Once I created these two distinct characters I could talk about the same exact thing, however, based on the character’s individual qualities the words used would be different. I will rewrite the section of dialogue above as Jake would say it and then again how Tripp would say it. Jake would say:

That’s fucked up. All this bullshit has been hammered into my skull. Like I want to fuck, but that’s a bad thing. And the only place that it’s right is with my wife after our wedding. And then, puberty hits. And at 15, licking on a girl’s tits is fucking awesome.

Tripp would say:
All of these teachings have been like... *ingrained* in my head. That my premature desires for sex are wrong and are only right on my honeymoon. And then you go through puberty. I’m fifteen years old, and touching a girl seems so natural.

Both characters say the same thing, but how they say it relies on the use of language. In addition, the language of the character must reflect the character’s background. Tripp, who is very religious, refrains from using a lot of curse words. In the play, he says “fuck” only when he quotes Claire in the Title IX office and at the end of the show when he is blowing up on Carter and Jake. On the other hand, Jake says “fuck” ten times in the first scene. One of my biggest struggles was finding a way to use contractions. Mr. Williams, the Title IX coordinator, does not use contractions at all. I wanted him to sound like a piece of policy. Initially, I did not want Monica, a student and responsible employee well versed in Title IX, to use contractions either. I know some students who use few contractions, but as I listened to other people speak, I realized that almost everybody uses contractions. Since I wanted to distinguish Mr. Williams as policy, I wanted to eliminate contractions in his voice. In my conversations with Honey Ussery, our Title IX Coordinator, I noted how she spoke. She used contractions, but sprinkled in policy terms with her conversational approach to talking with students. Honey comes across as an open, understanding, and warm person. I did not want the audience to feel this way about Mr. Williams. I did not want him to even sound like a person. On the other hand, I wanted to eliminate contractions from Monica’s speech, but I realized that most normal people needed to use contractions and convey their intelligence in other ways.

Michael and I went back and forth about using contractions. Michael once said to me, “To contract, or not to contract.” I used contractions inconsistently in Monica’s speech. I need to decide if to use them and, if I were going to use them, how I would use them. Not only did *Oleanna* provide insight on Title IX, the play exemplifies the importance of language and the
playwright’s intention in word choice and consonant usage. As the play progresses, Carol, the passive, unassuming character that originally sits down in John’s office, becomes an empowered, calculated woman. In Act One, at their first meeting, Carol and John have the following exchange:

CAROL: How can I go back and tell them the grades that I…
JOHN: … what can I do… ?
CAROL: Teach me. Teach me.
JOHN: … I’m trying to teach you.
CAROL: I read your book. I read it. I don’t under…
JOHN: … you don’t understand it.
CAROL: No.
JOHN: Well, perhaps it’s not well written…
CAROL: (simultaneously with “written”): No. No. No. I want to understand it. (Mamet, 10-11).

Carol then calls herself stupid (Mamet, 12). In Oleanna and other works by Mamet, the playwright’s characters speak with short phrases that constantly overlap each other. Like many people do in real life, Mamet’s characters interrupt each other, as seen above. Stylistically John and Carol speak similarly, but their word choices contrast. John uses words like “perhaps” while Carol struggles to get her points across and can only articulate her thoughts through simple words like “teach.” In IX, I contemplated modelling Mr. William’s language after John’s dialogue. John speaks with contractions, but he also uses other heady words to assert his power and dominance as a professor. Instead, I chose to create a character who embodied the impartiality demanded through Title IX without the distinct personality of an educator like John. Mr. Williams speaks with no contractions and uses words directly ripped from sexual misconduct policies to make his points. When writing Monica, I wanted to create a smart, intelligent woman and found inspiration in Carol who reads as smarter and wiser than the professor who sits across from her in Act Two.
At the top of Act Two, Carol says, “I don’t know what a paradigm is” (Mamet, 45). She feigns her stupidity when meeting with him again. Once John hints at Carol recanting her complaint made to the tenure committee, her character begins to shift. Carol’s frustration grows as John tries to negotiate with her to save his reputation. Five pages later, she launches into this monologue:

CAROL: Professor. I came here as a favor. At your personal request. Perhaps I should not have done so. But I did. On my behalf, and on behalf of my group. And you speak of the tenure committee, one of whose members is a woman, as you know. And though you might call it Good Fun, or An Historical Phrase, or An Oversight, or, All of the Above, to refer to the committee as Good Men and True, it is a demeaning remark. It is a sexist remark, and to overlook it is to countenance continuation of that method of thought. It’s a remark… (Mamet, 50).

At first, I felt that Carol had an incredibly inconsistent voice. Carol uses contractions in Act One and, in the monologue above, she essentially drops all use of contractions. When I pointed this out to Michael, he instructed me that Mamet uses contractions for a reason. Carol uses contractions when she wants to make a point or to emphasize the importance of what will follow. She says, “It is a sexist remark…” Then when she uses the word remark again, she has already raised the issue of the remark, so she says, “It’s a remark…” (ibid.). Another area of inconsistency I noted was the words that Carol uses. In Act Two, Carol says, “By, say, one low grade, that keeps us out of graduate school; by one, say, one capricious or inventive answer on our parts, which perhaps, you don’t find amusing” (Mamet, 70). In Act One, only John uses the word “perhaps,” but Carol begins to use “perhaps” as well as “capricious” and “inventive” (ibid.). I wondered why a character could not know what paradigm means and then use the word capricious, but Mamet chooses this contrast to develop the character and ultimately contribute to the climax of the play. In Act Three, Carol offers John a list of demands that, if followed, will result in her dropping the charges she has brought against him. She is willing to withdraw her
complaint if the university will remove John’s book from the required reading (Mamet, 75).

After Carol makes her offer, the reader or audiences can perceive Carol as manipulative and even assume that she planned for him to react the way he did so she could make her point. To make this distinction in character, Mamet needed her to read as passive and unintelligent. Then, he had to develop her fortitude and wit to fully enrage John. At the end of the play, John beats Carol. He calls her a “vicious bitch” as he holds a chair over her head (Mamet, 79). If Carol had been as intelligent in the beginning, perhaps she would have never baited John into patronizing and coddling her, and then, the play would have never happened. Mamet’s writing glues the element of character, plot, and idea together, and his dialogue also heavily influences the music of his plays.
Music

When Aristotle wrote *The Poetics*, music was a substantial component of Greek theatre where dialogue was sung rather than spoken (Hatcher, 47). Aristotle says that song-making is essential to the enrichment of tragedy (29). As theatre has developed into the 20th and 21st centuries, music refers to any sound in the play. Modern musicals like *Kinky Boots* and *Hamilton* use music to tell the story in a similar fashion as the ancient Greeks, but straight plays contain elements of sound throughout the entirety of the play through the work of the sound designer.

Before discussing the role of the sound designer, I want to note the playwright’s role in choosing dialogue that creates substantial music for the audience even without the lines being sung like in Greek theatre.

In *David Mamet: Language as Dramatic Action*, Anne Dean describes Mamet as a “language playwright” who writes dialogue that shapes the play and becomes the character (15). Critics often target Mamet’s lack of physical action on the stage, but Anne argues that his “vibrant and rich” language contain movement (100). As I mentioned above, Mamet uses language to combine the elements of character and plot and communicate his ideas. In addition, his poetic writing creates music. Dean describes Mamet’s poetic writing as “a stylized evocation of the tonality of discourse” (17). Mamet describes his writing as free verse rather than casual dialogue. He intentionally utilizes literary devices to create music for the audience (ibid.). Dean breaks down one of Teach’s lines in *American Buffalo*, a tale of a conniving pawn shop owner, Don, and his friend Teach’s plans to steal a buffalo nickel back from a customer. Bob, a young man that works for Don, feels that he has messed up Don’s plans to steal the nickel. To make it up to him, Bob finds another nickel, buys it, and brings it to Don. Teach, an abrasive and ambitious character, suspects that Bob stole the coin instead of buying it and verbally attacks
Don for taking Bob under his wing like a son. Teach says, “You fake. You fucking fake. You fuck your friends. You have no friends. No wonder that you fuck this kid around” (Mamet, 80).

In this line, Mamet uses alliteration, a poetic device defined as “the repetition of a consonant sound” to “accentuate different meanings” (Bauerlein, Kennedy, and Gioia, *Handbook of Literary Terms*, 5). Mamet repeats the “f/v” sounds, also called fricatives, the “k” sound, also called a guttural, and the “d” sound, also called a dental (Packard, *The Poet’s Dictionary*, 19).

The “v” and “f” sound are classified together because the “v” is a voiced version of the “f” sound. Dean explains that Mamet chooses to alliterate the “f” sound to associate any word containing “f” as an explicative. She writes, “In this context, the word *fuck* becomes only one of the obscenities; all words beginning with *f* become, by association, obscene” (94). Through alliteration, Mamet makes the words “fake” and “friends” to sound as biting as the word “fuck.” Furthermore, this line creates cacophony, “an extreme use of dissonance to create a sense of conflict, tension, and disharmony” (Packard, *The Poet’s Dictionary*, 19). Mamet achieves the dissonance by using the fricatives, gutturals, and dentals repetitively (ibid.).

In addition, Mamet successfully creates poetic rhythm within the back and forth of his characters. In the following excerpt of *American Buffalo*, Mamet uses assonance, repetitive vowel sounds, to create internal rhyme (ibid.):

```
TEACH: Are you mad at me?
DON: What?
TEACH: Are you mad at me? (Pause.)
DON: Come on.
TEACH: Are you?
DON: Go and get your car. Bob?
TEACH: (Pause.) Tell me are you mad at me.
DON: No.
TEACH: You aren’t?
DON: No. (Pause.)
TEACH: Good.
DON: You go and get your car. (82-83).
```
This dialogue occurs after Teach hits Bob in the head because he believes he is lying about how he got the coin. Teach then goes on a rampage and tears up the store. Don subdues him (Mamet, 80). Throughout the play, Don and Teach use the word “fuck” several times, as seen in the line above. The moment after the hit could easily be an angry moment for both of them, but instead, Teach is finally subdued for what might be considered the first time in the entire play. Mamet excludes “fuck” from this exchange because adding a word containing fricative and guttural sounds would ruin the assonance which Mamet uses to depict Teach as subdued through the sound of the words. Teach uses “you,” a noun containing an open vowel, repeatedly to create a rhythm consistent with his lines, and Don creates the same vowel sound through the use of the words “no” and “go” repetitively. Teach uses “you” five times in a row, and Mamet writes a pause after Don’s “no.” This pause is crucial because the silence sets up the shift in sound. Teach says, “Good,” a word containing a slight variation of the vowel sound heard in “you.” Since the sound shifts, by the connotation of the word and the change in sound, the audience can infer that Teach is satisfied. Silence is also a powerful tool to create the music of a play. Hatcher writes, “The impact of what is not heard—like an expected action that does not take place—is often as theatrical and dramatic as what is [heard]” (49).

Like Mamet, I wanted to create poetic elements in my dialogue. Michael suggested that the dialogue should become more intentional and poetic to communicate music through what the characters say. In the following monologue, I use poetic elements to create a sense of music in Jake’s monologue convincing Tripp to lose his virginity.

**Jake:** Hear me out. There’s never a “perfect time” to do it. You just gotta get it over with. The first time… it’s not supposed to be this magical moment. It’s like… like ripping off a Band-Aid. Just nut up and do it. The quicker you get it over with, the better
it’ll be. Cause like… you don’t know what you’re doing. Or how long you’ll last. So, the first time is always awkward as shit. And you’ll never be a good fuck unless you practice… and I don’t mean in the bathroom with a box of tissues. You gotta get some real pussy. (Beat). Tonight, Tripp… dude. It’s gonna happen. Take Claire back to your room, put on the moves, and boom. Fuck her. (Appendix 7, 345)

I use alliteration to emphasize important moments. In the phrase, “just gotta get it,” I alliterate the “t” sound. Overall, Jake repeats “it” a lot to refer to sex. I wanted Jake to alliterate the “t” sound and refer to sex as “it” to bombard Tripp with sharp sounds and reduce sex to the most common noun. Also, “magical moment” uses the “m” sounds to heighten the significance of a perceived importance of sex, and assonance in “always awkward” separates these two words as important amongst a repetition of the “t” sound. Jake uses a simile, “an indirect comparison using like or as,” when comparing a person losing their virginity to ripping a Band-Aid off (Packard, The Poet’s Dictionary, 174). I chose the word “rip” to create onomatopoeia, the “recreation of a thing that tends to imitate the thing itself either through sound or rhythm” (ibid., 135). The word “rip” combines sound and rhythm to sound similar to the action of ripping a Band-Aid off of the skin. Furthermore, with writing in a beat, I use silence to set up the most prominent use of imagery, “a simple picture, a mental representation” (ibid., 93). Jake bombards Tripp with sharp consonants again with “Tonight Tripp,” and then, he describes what Tripp should do to make a move on Claire. “Take Claire back” repeats the “k” sound three times which is sharp and jarring. The phrase also paints an image of someone grabbing a woman. “Put on the moves” uses a vowel sound to separate this line from the consonants to imply a more tactical and suave approach to seduction rather than pure aggression. I wanted a balance between aggression and romance to further the confusion between consent and rape. Furthermore, “boom” uses onomatopoeia to signify an explosive accomplishment of his goal, and “room” and “boom” create an internal rhyme within the free verse. The monologue ends with the recurring, strong
“k” sound in the line “Fuck her.” I could have written the final line as, “Go show Claire your room, make out with her, and bang. Do it.” If I had done this, the imagery would lose the aggression by starting the description with assonance instead of alliteration. “Make out with her” would eliminate the contrast between aggression and romance, and the internal rhyme would be lost for the sake of a different onomatopoeia. Also, the last line would not be as strong because the recurring “k” sound is gone and replaced by a less aggressive consonant.

Overall, Mamet’s writing helped me make my dialogue more poetic and create music when other sounds were not occurring during the play. Besides the dialogue, music refers to the actual music in the play. For a playwright, music can be tricky because he or she cannot always determine how the show will sound to the audience. In the fall, I played Charles Condomine in Ole Miss Theatre and Film’s production of Blithe Spirit by Noël Coward, and this performance showed me how the playwright’s portrayal of music in a script may or may not fully translate to the stage.

In Coward’s play, Charles Condomine, a wealthy writer, calls together a séance to get inspiration for his next story. With his wife Ruth, the medium Madame Arcati, and his friends the Bradmans, Charles observes Madame Arcati as she attempts to summon a spirit. Before she begins to call on the spirit world, she wants to use music to aid her communication skills with the spirit world. As she peruses the Condomine’s record collection for their gramophone, she finds a recording of “Always” by Irving Berlin. This song triggers an emotional response in Charles causing him to exclaim, “Not ‘Always’. Don’t play ‘Always’—” (Coward, 20). As the play progresses, Charles’ dead ex-wife, Elvira, comes back from the grave and begins to haunt Ruth and him. After Ruth angrily storms out of the room due to Charles’ flirting with his dead wife and her inability to see or hear the spirit, Charles tells Elvira that he must talk to Ruth and that
while Elvira waits she may “play the gramophone” if she’d like (53). Once Charles leaves, she plays the same record, and the audience hears “Always” which alludes to it being Charles’ and Elvira’s song. Later, in another séance, Madame Arcati plays the song again to maintain continuity for her haphazard attempts to communicate with the spirit world.

In *Blithe Spirit*, “Always” provides the primary example of music. Coward chose the song specifically because the lyrics correspond directly with the characters, plot, and ideas of the play. The lyrics to the chorus are, “I’ll be loving you always. / With a love that’s true always. / When the things you’ve planned / Need a helping hand / I will understand always” (Berlin, “Always”). The first line implies that Charles has committed to loving Elvira always, even if she is a ghost. The second line brings up fidelity with the word “true.” As the play unfolds, the audience finds out that both Elvira and Charles were unfaithful to each other. Though their song implies loyalty, their actions indicate otherwise. The third, fourth, and fifth line of the chorus can be interpreted as a reference to Elvira’s attempted plans to kill Charles to bring him to the spirit world to live with her forever; however, her plans lead to Ruth’s death and both of his wives haunt him.

The song is never sung by characters in the play, and to a person only reading the script, he or she misses out on this element entirely. With this element of music, the audience only hears the song in a performance unless someone reading the script wants to play “Always” in the background. With this element, the music can only be heard in a performance, and in a performance, other professionals, like the directors and designers, control how the sound is portrayed to the audience. “Always” is heard by the audience due to the sound designer’s work which is why Aristotle places music second to last and leaves the elements of music and spectacle up to the costumiers, the designers (29).
According to the Association of Sound Designers, a sound designer in the theatre is “responsible for everything the audience hears” and works with the director to create the “aural” world of the play. (“What is a Sound Designer for Theatre?”). At our university, Jonathan Lee works at the department’s sound designer. When designing for our production of *Blithe Spirit*, Jonathan had to decide how to use the song “Always” as indicated by the script. A theatre company producing *Blithe Spirit* not only buys the rights to use the script but also to use “Always” by Irving Berlin in association with the Irving Berlin Music Company. Noël Coward died in 1973, and Irving Berlin died in 1989. Unless Jonathan wants to do a séance of his own, the playwright’s or the musician’s opinion cannot be used in directing a 2017 production of *Blithe Spirit*. The ability for a play to outlive a playwright furthers the logic behind music being out of the control of the playwright. While Coward chose this song, the script does not indicate what part of the song should be played or how long the song should be played. If the designer only wanted the instrumental part of the song heard during the séance, then the audience would miss out entirely on the thematic parallels between the song and the play. The designer determines what portion of the song the audience hears.

Furthermore, *Blithe Spirit* contains many other elements of music through the sounds of the play including cars, telephones ringing, a clock chiming, and Charles mixing cocktails. On the example of mixing cocktails, the directors, the designers and the actors had full control over how the audience heard this sound. In the stage directions, the italicized portion of a script, the script only says, “Charles is mixing cocktails” (Coward, 2). Coward gives very little direction, and he does not have to give anymore. Jonathan could have inserted a sound of a cocktail being mixed, or I could have made them on stage myself which would create sounds in real time. Before Charles begins mixing cocktails, he complains about the absence of ice, and then his
maid brings him an ice bucket. The audience observes this exchange and therefore expects ice to play a role in their experience. Lucy Taylor, the prop master for *Blithe Spirit*, used non-melting ice cubes, a tumbler, and a martini stirrer for me to mix water in martini glasses to follow the stage direction of mixing cocktails. Joe Turner Cantú, the director of *Blithe Spirit*, gave me the option of stirring the cocktails or shaking them. Every performance, I did something different, but I created the sound of cocktails being mixed either through shaking water and ice together in a metal tumbler or using the stirring stick to mix the water and ice in the metal tumbler. Metallic sounds of ice clinking and sloshing in water were heard by the audience through my work as an actor. In all actuality, Coward may have intended for this stage direction to create no sound at all, but alas, music cannot be fully controlled by the playwright.

In *IX*, I acted as the playwright and the director, but I was not the sound designer. Marshall Baird, a junior in the theatre department, served in this role. I could influence the sound Marshall chose by the words I wrote and by the direction I gave him, but I could not fully control the outcome. I also did not find the sounds for the play like Marshall did. He spent hours on finding what sounds the cell phones would make and how to mix the sound of a crowd with music. As my writing progressed, the sounds I wrote into the script became more minimal.

At first, like Coward, I specifically indicated songs to be used in the production. For example, in draft one of *She Asked for It*, I wrote in the stage directions before Kat moved from the Title IX office into the apartment:

*The lights change. “Blame It” by Jamie Foxx begins to play. Kat moves out of the office and into an apartment with Sydney and Monica. The women are drinking and getting ready for the night. The Spotify playlist “Ultimate White Girl Pregame” plays throughout this scene.* (Appendix 2, 154).
The song “Blame It” is about people making decisions and then blaming their choices on being drunk. This song promotes some of the ideas of the play like “Always” does for Blithe Spirit. I had originally intended for this song to play as she transitioned out of the office into her apartment, but in the final draft, I followed Bogosian’s example set in his stage directions in Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll. He writes, “Amplified hard rock blasts at the audience” (Bogosian, 4). With the words “amplified” and “blasts,” Bogosian indicates how he intends for the music to sound for the audience, and “hard rock” specifies what type of music should be played. Contrary to Coward, he does not give a specific song. In the final draft of IX, the stage directions read, “The lights change as Claire gets up from her chair and moves from the office and into the apartment. Party music begins to crescendo” (Appendix 7, 316). My directions are not as active as Bogosian’s directions, but I do follow his example of telling what type of music instead of which song. I also instruct how the music should be heard with the word “crescendo.” I made the direction less specific to give freedom to the designer. In addition, “Blame It” represents the worldview of the men rather than the ideas of the women, so the song did not correlate with Claire’s flashback at all. Furthermore, I eliminated the specifics of the Spotify playlist because Spotify could one day be less prominent for music listeners like a gramophone is today, and the specifics restrain the designer.

In Peter Shaffer’s 1975 Tony Award winning play, Equus, the playwright gives a lot of authority to the designers. Equus tells the story of a psychiatrist dissecting the mind of a young boy named Alan after he blinds six horses. At the climax of Act One, as Alan begins to have his evening routine of spiritual intimacy with the horses in the stable, Shaffer writes, “Humming from the CHORUS: the Equus noise” (68). “The Equus noise” could be one of the most unspecific yet incredibly specific sound directions that I have ever read. The only hint to what
the Equus noise could be is the humming from the Chorus, but this could mean anything. Do the members of the Chorus make the sounds? Does a sound come from where the chorus stands? Shaffer’s vagueness creates opportunity for the production team to embody the world of the play. He does not overly dictate the soundscape. At the same time, with his iconic, sad, and ominous story, he establishes specificity to what the sound should be like for the audience. Shaffer’s writing implies what the sound should be without having to describe the noise. After reading Equus, I began to focus less on how I described what was happening through stage directions and tried to create sound through action and dialogue. I thought that if Shaffer can win a Tony by just writing “Equus noise” then I can be less specific.

One of the biggest elements of sound that changed had to do with the game that Jake and Tripp played at the beginning of Tripp’s flashback. In draft one of She Asked for It, they play pool. In the directions, I wrote, “They head to the pool table and begin [to] start a game” (Appendix 2, 165). I could have communicated sound by writing, “As the actor’s cues strike the cue ball, the other pool balls clink off each other and thud against the felt walls of the table.” I wrote something as simple as “Equus noise” to indicate the sounds that would be heard if the game were played. I wanted them to play pool because I needed to create sound in this scene. Also, playing a game is active and prevents the characters from only sitting and talking. I needed it to seem natural like a pregame for men, and guys play games while they drink and before parties. However, a game of pool seemed highly impractical. The table is incredibly cumbersome, and the game requires a certain level of skill. If they scratched, then the actors would have to start over. Initially, I liked the sounds that the game would create. The sounds of a cue ball breaking the balls, balls going into pockets, sticks hitting balls are all iconic party sounds. The concept was good, but the execution would be impractical.
In draft four, I changed pool to beer pong. Beer pong proved to be even more impractical. The balls would have bounced all over the stage. Also, very little sound would be available to the game. The sounds would be a light bouncing of a ping pong ball on a surface or a ball landing in a cup. Also, the game is unpredictable. The actors could have missed the cups for the entire scene. So, I changed beer pong to cornhole, a game where participants throw bean bags into boards with holes in them. This game was the perfect choice that created a variety of sounds. The tossing of a bean bag in hand created a different sound than the bean bag hitting the stage. Each character has four bean bags. Whenever we were rehearsing in Meek, Marshall Baird, the sound designer for IX commented that the bean bags were too loud, so Lucy Taylor, the prop master, added a felt covering to the bean bags to reduce sound.

In addition to commenting on the sound of the cornhole game, Marshall provided all of the sounds heard in IX. Marshall picked the sounds for the ringing of cell phones. He chose specific songs for the party and bar scenes. In the first scene, Marshall mixed the sound of party music with the sound of people talking to replicate the sound of a bar. In the flashbacks, Marshall mixed the sound in a way that would make the music of the fraternity party sound distant. In this scene, my stage direction read, “The same muffled sounds of party music and party life can be heard through the walls” (Appendix 7, 352). From the phrase “muffled sounds,” Marshall manipulated the music to sound as if it were coming from a room far away from Tripp and Claire. One of our biggest obstacles in the sound design came in Mr. Williams’ office. In the stage directions, I write, “A clock and a calendar hang on the wall. The clock ticks” (see Appendix 7, 324). I wanted the clock to tick in the office to symbolize the passage of time. Tripp and Claire tell their stories in flashback, so I wanted a sound element that would ground the audience in the present. When the clock ticked, the characters were in the present. When the
clock did not tick during the flashback scenes, the characters were reliving the past. However, I could not have a clock ticking, if a clock was not on stage. Clay Wooley, the set designer, would be the final say in whether a clock would be present. If the audience could not see a clock, then they should not be able to hear one tick. Clay ultimately decided to put a clock up, and this scenario is a perfect example for the overlap of sound and spectacle (Fig. 10.).
Spectacle

Spectacle refers to what the audience sees on stage. Hatcher defines spectacle as “whatever looks neat onstage” and what makes the audience exclaim, “Wow” (50-51). He gives the examples of sword fights, dance numbers, puppet shows, iconic set pieces, and the entrances of characters (50). Two famous examples that he provides are the falling chandelier in *Phantom of the Opera* and the helicopter in *Miss Saigon*; however, spectacle does not always have to be a grandiose set piece. This element also refers to the “human form and the physical/spatial relationship onstage between human beings” (Hatcher, 52). In my earlier drafts of IX, I tried to go big with spectacle due to my reading *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* by Edward Albee.

Albee’s 2002 Tony Award winning play shocked audiences with striking content matter and gruesome spectacle. Martin, a middle aged architect, has a midlife crisis that leads to his extramarital affair with a goat named Sylvia. His wife, Stevie, is repulsed by her husband, as most women would be. At the end of the play, Stevie reacts to the affair in an unexpected way. Albee writes in his stage directions, “Stevie is dragging a dead goat. The goat’s throat is cut; the blood is down Stevie’s dress, on her arms. She stops” (Gainor, et. al, 1604). Stevie went and found Martin’s lover and killed the animal because Martin claimed it loved him as much as she did. When I first read this, I had to re-read the directions to make sure I was following correctly. I pictured a beautiful, blood-stained actress dragging a nearly decapitated goat leaving a thick trail of blood as if the goat’s fur, like the bristles of a brush, painted the floor. Seeing that action on stage would be an amazing spectacle. I felt like my play needed something as shocking as this to be a success.

In my first draft of *She Asked for It*, I created an element of spectacle with the concept of fast forwarding through a scene. To transition from the characters meeting with the Title IX
Coordinator, I wanted to have them rapidly speed through a conversation and the sound of a tape recorder being fast forwarded would be heard (Appendix 2, 178). After the first table read, all of the actors and Michael told me to cut this part of the script (Appendix 3, 194). I wanted to create something visually interesting that would propel the story forward and excite the audience, but this attempt would not produce the desired results. I went back to the drawing board and wanted to create a dead-goat-being-dragged-across-the-stage moment. Drawing inspiration from the retaliation policy of Title IX, I wanted the characters to get in a fight. After Kat found out that Eddie was found not responsible, I wrote a scene where the characters would retaliate against each other. Gamma Lambda Alpha throws another party, and Claire, Sydney, and Monica show up. Jake gets mad that they come to the party and things get out of hand. I envisioned the scene as fully empowering Claire, but the scene failed in that attempt. Their tension culminates into the following violent outburst (Appendix 4, 203):

**Jake:** Alright that's it. If you aren't gonna leave, I'll make you.
**Sydney:** Stop!
*Sydney grabs Jake’s arm, but he pushes her away. Jake grabs Monica by the shoulders and begins pushing her stage left. She struggles. Kat moves out of the way and behind the pool table.*
**Monica:** Do not touch me! Let me go!
**Sydney** *(not moving):* Stop it! Jake!
*Eddie rushes towards Jake. He pushes himself between Monica and Jake. He pushes Jake back.*
**Eddie:** Get off of her! You're making everything worse!
**Jake:** Come into my house and insult me?! This is my / house. Get the fuck out! You don't belong here!
**Monica:** I’m not insulting you! It's who you are! It's what you do!
**Jake:** I’m not a rapist!
**Eddie:** Back the fuck up man.
**Jake:** Get out of my way, or I'll... I’ll fuck you up.
*Jake pushes Eddie.*
**Sydney:** Jake, come here. Let's go talk somewhere.
**Jake:** Everyone shut up! This is between me and her!
**Eddie:** Dude!
**Jake:** Move!
*Eddie pushes Jake back. Jake yells and swings at Eddie. He ducks and tackles Jake.*
Monica: Shit!          Sydney: Oh my God.
Kat: Fuck

Kat grabs a pool cue from the table. Eddie is on top of Jake.

Eddie: Calm down. You’re drunk!
Jake: Get off me, piece of shit!

Jake flips Eddie over onto his back. Jake hovers over him. Kat moves around the table and gets between Monica and Jake and Eddie fighting. She holds the pool cue in front of her.

Jake: You asked for it!
Jake punches Eddie in the face. Sydney screams. He gets up and turns around. Eddie moans in pain on the ground. Jake starts advancing towards Monica, but Kat’s in the way. He advances on Kat

Monica: Oh my God…
Jake: You better fucking move or—
Kat swings the cue and clubs Jake in the head with the butt of the stick. Jake falls on the pool table and slides on to the floor. Short silence

Sydney (in disgust): Holt shit. I can’t believe you did that.
Monica (in adoration): Holy shit. I can’t believe you did that

Eddie (rising up): Did you knock him out?
He moves to Jake and examines him.
Sydney: I’m gonna go find some ice… Kat, I swear…
She exits stage right.

Monica (approaching Kat): I love you. That was amazing. But let’s get out of here.
Before he wakes up and everything gets worse.
She turns to exit stage left.
Kat: Yeah, right behind you.

Eddie looks up from Jake’s limp body. He stares at Kat. A silence passes between them.

Eddie: Um… Jake shouldn’t have done that… hey, do you wanna go to my room? We can talk about this and I think—
Kat: No. I don’t need your help or anything else from you.
Kat tosses him the stick. Eddie catches it. Kat turns and exits stage left. Eddie stands with Jake’s body. Jake begins to murmur. Eddie looks down. He puts the cue on the table. He rolls Jake to face the audience on his side, in case of vomiting. He exits stage right.

The scene above is terrible. I wanted to create a big moment of awe for the audience, but instead wrote a thematically inconsistent and totally random action scene involving some stage combat where Kat wields a pool cue like a quarterstaff. I had overcomplicated the concept of spectacle.

The simplest way to define spectacle is what is seen onstage (Hatcher, 50). In Annie Baker’s Circle Mirror Transformation, a play about a group of people taking an acting class, the stage directions in the opening of the play describe the five characters silently lying in various
positions on the floor (9). This simplistic description qualifies as spectacle, but through the various design elements, spectacle can be incredibly complicated. In *The Twilight of the Golds* by Jonathan Tolins, David, an opera fanatic, describes the ending of Richard Wagner’s *Die Walküre* to his sister. While he describes magic fire surrounding one of the title characters, the stage directions read, “As he speaks, the sky behind him starts to flicker then becomes engulfed with beautiful red flames. This is the “Magic Fire” and the music from this scene can be heard softly in the background” (Tolins, 34). The playwright creates the ideas of magic fire corresponding with the element of Wagner’s music, but the playwright does not implement these ideas on the stage. The director and the designers entirely control this aspect. Even in Baker’s description of the actors lying on the floor, the director decides in what positions the actors will be which determines the spectacle. I use Tolins’ example because this stage direction should be interpreted by the lighting designer, the sound designer, the set designer, the costume designer, and the director. Aristotle does not expound upon spectacle in *The Poetics* because the playwright does not control what the audience sees. The playwright can inform the director and the designer, but ultimately he or she cannot depict what the audience sees.

I had the privilege of directing Ghoslight’s production of *IX*. I got to control what the audience sees to an extent. Clay Wooley, my pledge brother and former president of Sigma Chi during the fraternity’s Title IX investigation, worked as the set designer for *IX*. The set is composed of scenery, props, and furniture, and the set designer job is “to design these physical surroundings in which the action will take place” (“The Set Designer's Job”). Clay designed and built the set and worked with Lucy Taylor, the stage manager and prop master, to pick out the appropriate pieces of furniture. When Clay started his designs in the summer, he read draft four of *She Asked for It*. In this version, I only had four locations: the Title IX office, the bedroom,
the fraternity house, and the women’s apartment. I did not have the bar that is only in the first scene of IX. My stage directions for the set were complicated. I wrote:

A bed sits stage left, and a bedside table sits to the left of the bed. A desk lamp like the one at the beginning of a Pixar movie casts light on the bed. A tissue box sits on the table. Clothes are scattered over the floor. A rolling desk chair is pushed under the desk. A poster of Kate Upton hangs on the wall. A door stands stage right. Eddie and Kat enter the room (Appendix 5, 233).

If directors and designers were bound by the stage directions, Clay would have had to build a door and a space big enough for a bed, a table, a desk, and a chair. In theatre, directors and designers do not have to follow the stage directions, but the actors must read the lines exactly as they appear on the page, unless the playwright gives permission for the lines to change (Flynn, “Blocking A Play”). If I had written a line where the actors talked about the Kate Upton poster, Clay would have had to build a wall, and Lucy would have had to find a Kate Upton poster to hang on the wall. Since they were in the stage directions, Clay could have chosen to ignore my comments, but he used what I had written to inform what his design would be. At our first production meeting, Clay came in with a very complicated design. He wanted to create a two story set that had doors and walls. He wanted to create a literal replication of the stage direction that I had written in the draft that he read (Fig. 1.)
At first, we were very excited about the idea of trying to build a two story set. In reality, the project would not be feasible, and we would not be able to light the bottom floor because it would be obstructed by the top floor. Clay met with Jared Spears, The University of Mississippi’s Production Manager for the Department of Theatre Arts and frequent set designer. Jared encouraged Clay to go for a more minimal approach (Fig. 2.)
This rough outline became the basis for what we would build the set around. Clay wanted to create four separate spaces that would be connected by the bridges and staircases and would still allow the characters to move fluidly between the spaces (Fig. 3.)

![Diagram](image-url)

**Fig. 3.** Brahan, John. “Clay’s Final Design.” September 2017. PDF.

When he built his design on the stage, Clay and I were both pleased with the final product. In the above image, the Title IX office is the first platform in the top left. The next
platform to the right is Claire and Sydney’s apartment. The Title IX office connects to Tripp’s bedroom at the bottom left. On the bottom right, the rest of the floor would be the fraternity house (Fig. 4.). The various rectangles represent the furniture that would be placed on the stage.

I learned from this process that I need to simplify my stage directions. In the final draft of \textit{IX}, in describing the bedroom, the stage directions read:

\textit{Tripp grabs her by the arm and leads her to his bedroom. Lights fade on the fraternity house and light up his room. There’s a bed with a small bedside table downstage of the bed. Cheap, plastic drawers are under the bed. A desk lamp sits on the table.} (Appendix 7, 329)
As the director, I had liberty with my own stage directions. During the rehearsal process, the cheap, plastic drawers were not utilized. I put that in the script because I wanted the audience to see Claire pull out a t-shirt and put it on. When we began working through the play on the set, I realized that the audience could not see drawers from their seats. I decided to set a t-shirt beside the bed and out of the audience’s view and directed Kaelee Albritton, the actress playing Claire, to “rummage around” behind the bed to create the illusion that she was looking for something. Then, she grabbed a shirt from the floor and stood up. I set the shirt on the ground and accomplished the same objective without using plastic drawers. In addition, I added another element of furniture not included in the stage directions. In scene 4.1, Carter and Tripp talk in his room. Riley McManus, the actor playing Carter, struggled with standing during the scene the whole time. Gregor Patti, the assistant director, and I agreed that it looked strange for Carter to stand up the whole time. Riley wanted to move, and we were not letting him. To give him more liberty and to use the different levels of sitting and standing, I directed him to use a blue, folding chair to sit on at points in the scene. After having the opportunity to direct my own production, I realized why some playwrights do not describe the sets at all in their stage directions. For example, Richard Greenberg keeps his stage directions at a bare minimum in his play Take Me Out. The play revolves around an openly gay baseball player and how his teammates react to his sexuality and takes place in a variety of locations, but Greenberg does not go into detail. In his stage directions he writes, “The clubhouse. Darren and Kippy” (10). Greenberg uses a total of five words to establish the setting and who is present. He does this because he knows that what Aristotle says is true. Spectacle should be left to the designers and the director.

In the element of lighting design, a playwright has minimal control. Through color, intensity, movement, and distribution, a lighting designer uses the medium of light to subtly and
drastically portray mood and time of day, to shift the focus on different points of the stage, to communicate the stylistic approach of the production, and to alter the dimensionality of the stage (“The Lighting Designer’s Job”). In the example from The Twilight of the Golds, a lighting designer could make the “magic fire” look like anything he or she wanted without consulting Tolins. The lighting designer’s vision could be completely contradictory to Tolin’s idea. In the magic fire description, Tolins uses words like “flicker,” “engulfed,” “red,” and “flames.” All of these words guide a lighting designer but leave a lot of artistic interpretation. In IX, I do not have any magic fire moments, but I tried to indicate lighting cues as literally as possible and leave little room for figurative interpretation like magic fire described by adjectives. Even with basic descriptions, I found that my intentions could be completely altered and changed by a lighting designer.

In Claire’s flashback in scene three, the stage directions indicate that the lights should cut out periodically to convey an individual blacking out due to alcohol (Appendix 7, 329-330). After one of her blackouts, I write that only the desk lamp should turn on and illuminate their bodies (Appendix 7, 330). The stage directions encourage the lighting designer to use an actual desk lamp and, in lighting design terms, a practical, a costume or scenic element that needs to be lit from the stage. I envisioned that the lamp, a set piece, would be used to light the stage. Using a practical as I hoped, Trace Bush, an aspiring freshman lighting designer, designed the lights for the show and controlled what this moment actually looked like (Fig. 5.)
Although the silhouette of Tripp and Claire sets an ominous mood for the audience, the lighting designer’s choice does not correspond exactly with my stage direction. When Trace was designing the show, he originally had the lamp pointing at the bed to spotlight Tripp and Claire; however, the angle of the desk lamp would have blinded some audience members. To fix this problem, Trace turned the lamp to face upstage and illuminated the stairs leading from the bedroom to the Title IX office instead of the characters. Also, the holes in the back of the lamp add a lighting effect that I did not put in the script. As the director, I wish I had encouraged them to use a weaker bulb, get another lamp, or put duct tape on the back of the lamp to cover up the holes. On the other hand, barely being able to see them on stage added to the ambiguity of the moment. Overall, I was pleased with the lighting in the scene, and I learned that what I wrote in the script, no matter how literal, could be interpreted and changed.

The Department’s production of *Chicago* overlapped with *IX*, so we did not have access to as many lights as I would have liked. This show was also Trace’s first time designing on his
own. Perhaps a more experienced lighting designer like Michael Barnett would have used lighting in a more in depth way to tell the story. For the most part, the lights were all the same color white just at different levels of brightness which does tell the story. For example, during the party scene during both scenes three and five, the white light washed the area of the fraternity house. To add a tinge of blue, we utilized a scrim, “a theater drop that appears opaque when a scene in front is lighted and transparent or translucent when a scene in back is lighted” (“Scrim”). Due to the overlap of the set and lack of barriers, the lights would wash into other areas of the set. In the party scene, the refrigerator of the apartment was visible (Fig. 6.)

![Fig. 6. Scott, John. “Tripp’s Flashback of the Party.” _DSCO445.JPG. November 2017. JPG](image)

When we got into the technical rehearsal, where we began putting the design elements into place, I told Trace that I wanted him to do the basic job of a lighting designer: to illuminate the actors. He accomplished this goal.
McKenzi Massey, a freshman majoring in Costume Design, created the costumes. A
costume designer creates the look for each character and uses the accessories and articles of
clothing to suggest relationships between characters, to distinguish status, to convey age, and to
express mood and style (“The Costume Designer’s Job”). When McKenzi and I discussed her
design process, I told her that I wanted each character to have a color, and each color should
reflect aspects of the character. In an interview with Vulture, Vince Gilligan, the creator of the
award winning television series Breaking Bad, said, “Color is important on Breaking Bad; we
always try to think in terms of it. We always try to think of the color that a character is dressed
in, in the sense that it represents on some level their state of mind” (Flaherty, “The Showrunner
Transcript: Breaking Bad’s Vince Gilligan on Season Four and His Experiences on the X-Files”).
I had been watching Breaking Bad at the time, read the article on the color theory associated with
the show, and wanted a similar effect in IX. Sydney, the most promiscuous, carefree character,
wore red which represents passion, lust, crudity, anger, and extreme emotions (Birren, “The
Psychology of Color: A Designer's Guide to Color Association & Meaning”). Jake’s color was
orange which represents pride, hilarity, cheerfulness, and indulgence (ibid.). Tripp’s color was
blue which signifies sobriety, honor, truth, and sincerity (ibid.). Claire’s was pink which implies
passiveness, (ibid.). Mckenzie did a fantastic job in choosing the colors that represent the
qualities of the characters shown through their actions in the play. In the first scene of the show,
these four characters wore these colors vibrantly (Fig. 7.)
As the show progressed, McKenzi had their clothes become darker. As Title IX began to impact their lives, all characters could be seen wearing Mr. Williams’ beginning colors of grey and black which imply fear, ambiguity, depression, neutrality, and emptiness (ibid.). At the end of the play, all the characters could be seen in dark clothes except Claire and Tripp who both wore white. White represents purity and innocence (ibid.). During scene eight, the hearing, Tripp wore a dark blue suit, and Claire wore a white dress. In this scene, she appeared almost angelic compared to Tripp and Mr. Williams in their dark suits (Fig. 8). Claire’s all white costume
communicated that she would win the case.

When Tripp actually wins the case, he removes his jacket to reveal a white button down. He sheds his dark blue jacket to reveal his innocence, but he still wears a dark blue tie which communicates power (ibid.). He does not appear as pure as Claire, but his clothes represent his having won the case. Now, both characters are seen in white at the end of the show while the rest wear dark colors (Fig. 9). Occasionally, Scotty Givhan, the actor playing Jake, would come out in the final scene wearing an orange polo that he wore previously in the show. Jake comes to congratulate Tripp on his big win, but Tripp, still hurt by being forced out of his house and fraternity, remains aloof and leaves the fraternity house. When Scotty would wear the orange polo, the costume communicated a different meaning. Jake seemed more positive and as if he
was not affected or did not learn anything at all. When he wore the grey shirt, the moment seemed more somber than jovial. McKenzi intended for Scotty to wear the grey shirt, but Scotty did not always follow the directions.

![Fig. 9. Scott, John. “Curtain Call: Left to Right: Carter, Jake, Tripp, Mr. Williams, Claire, Sydney, and Monica.”_DSCO160.JPG. November 2017. JPG.](image)

In addition to conveying emotion and color through costume, McKenzi used costumes to distinguish status. When the characters would visit the Title IX offices, Mr. Williams wore a full suit and the students dressed like typical college students. Also, Claire began wearing darker tones before anyone else to signify the immediacy of her emotional distress (Fig. 10).
Overall, the designers had a much bigger role in creating the spectacle of the show. By directing my own show, I could tell them how I wanted the spectacle to come across. At the same time, I wanted them to express their creativity through choosing set pieces, lighting cues, and costume elements. Furthermore, when writing stage directions, less is more. I should leave the creativity of spectacle to the costumier.
Conclusion

When I was the Derby Days Chairman with Austin Powell, he and I would watch old Derby Days videos on YouTube to get ideas and inspiration for the event. When I was elected to serve in the position by my brothers, the fraternity had not put on Derby Days for two years. In 2013, the fraternity was put on suspension, and in 2014, we were on social probation and could not have the event. Austin and I had never experienced Derby Days firsthand, so we looked to the most recent Derby Days in 2012.

In 2012, the event was hosted at the practice fields that are off campus. Hundreds of people can be seen in the videos all over the practice fields. Sororities, Sigma Chis, and people who appear to be alumni and community members gathered for the event all in the name of philanthropy. The dances are high energy and somewhat scandalous, but the questioning of the Derby Day Queens is blatant sexual harassment. As per tradition, the chapter elects two “Derby Daddies” to serve as the hosts for the event. AJ, rocking his tank top, striped shorts, and sunglasses, asks most of the questions while his co-host Brent, shirtless and wearing tiger print parachute pants hoisted up with suspenders, throws in casual one liners (“Ole Miss Sigma Chi Derby Days 2012 - Kappa Alpha Theta”). After the women of Kappa Alpha Theta perform their dance number, their nominee for Derby Day Queen is carried by Sigma Chis on a float to the stage. With white and red angel wings on her back and a red, fuzzy bow in hand, she wears a white bra and a white skirt with the sides slit open and billowing in the wind. She tells the judges that she is Cupid, and AJ says, “Oh, I thought cupid was a naked-ass, baby guy?” After Brent asks for Theta to cheer for them again, he says to their candidate, “Show yo ass off to the judges, girl.” She responds by placing her hands on her waist and shaking her hips from side to side as she glances over her shoulder at the judges. The judges appear to be one of the women that
works in our kitchen, an older white man, a woman in her thirties, and two sigma chis. Our house mom Aunt Mary is standing behind them too. Brent asks her, “If you were any animal what would you be and why?” AJ yells, “I’d be a sex kitten!” In another video, the women of Delta Gamma finish their Egyptian themed dance and carry their candidate to the stage as she dances and “drops it low” to “Buttons” by the Pussycat Dolls. She is dressed as a gentrified Cleopatra wearing a white bra and a tight, small skirt with golden flourish and a turquoise cape (“Delta gamma derby days 2012!!!!!”). Both women show their entire mid drifts. AJ and Brent refer to the Sigma Chis that carried her float as her slaves and AJ asks, “I know you are an Egyptian Queen and everything, but the question I have to ask you is, if I was your slave what would you have me do and why?” (ibid.). She looks shocked at first and answers, “If AJ was my slave I would have him feed me grapes all night and carry me on his back. And then, show me a night like I have never had before” (ibid.). He responds. “Okay I can do that. I think I can do that. I can do that. I would sign up for that” (ibid.). With the women of Kappa Delta, AJ and Brent take it further. Brent suggests that Callie Monger, Kappa Delta’s nominee, should tell the judges where she is from and AJ throws in, “And what your name is, baby girl!” (“DERBY DAY 2012 QUEEN CALLIE MONGER”). The first question they ask is, “You gotta marry one, bury one, bang one. Here we go, girl! Me, my man, AJ, or your fiancé?” In the second question, the hosts ask “how many rounds” she could go if they were to “wrestle around” in the ring. In the final question, they ask her if she has a hidden talent. In a seductive tone, she answers, “Bend over and I’ll show ya” (ibid.) The crowd goes wild. Then Callie reads a poem that she has prepared. “Happy Derby Days! / I hope my eyes are not glazed. / I hope you pick me. / If not you are very mean. / I love Sigma Chi, I really mean it. / I even got one to put a ring on it. / I’ve known you guys for quite some time. / I hope you enjoy this rhyme. / Sigma Chi means so much to Kappa
Delta. / Y’all are such wonderful fellas. / We're badass, and you know it. / I know our dances really do show it. / We're fighting for our right to Derby. / Brent and AJ are so purty’’ (ibid.).

These videos are only a snapshot of the event. The hosts ask hypotheticals about the women having sex with them, tell them to show off their “asses” to the judges, refer to slavery in a casual way, and lace everything with innuendo. The women respond sexually too by telling the judges to bend over. Despite all the derogatory comments made by the hosts, Calli Monger still calls the fraternity “wonderful fellas.” In 2016, many women felt differently. Abby Bruce posted on her Facebook page that she left the event crying with other women and was repulsed by the questions asked. When I began hearing about the references (since I was not present) to Sigma Chi sausage and Delta Gammas going down faster than anchors, I knew that the event had taken a step back. Austin and I used questions from pageants off of the internet and invited the Dean of Students Dr. Mindy Sutton-Noss to be one of the judges. Our event did not have any negative backlash, but the 2016 Derby Days flopped due to the questions that were no worse than the questions asked in 2012. What happened between 2012 and 2016 that made the difference? Title IX acted as a component that changed the culture of our campus and held our fraternity liable.

The story of Derby Days in 2016 cannot be told without mentioning Title IX. If the policy did not exist and Facebook also existed, Abby Bruce’s Facebook status, though shared over 1,000 times, would do nothing other than point fingers at Sigma Chi. Since Title IX exists, our chapter was put under an investigation for whether or not we created a hostile environment due to the sexual harassment at our event. Without the 1997 Guidance and the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter, universities would not have been held accountable to investigate and eliminate hostile environments while using a preponderance of evidence as a standard of proof. Without movies like The Hunting Ground, a documentary delving into sexual assault on college
campuses and universities’ failure to prevent the recurrence, reaching over 1,000 college campuses, including ours, college women would not understand their rights under Title IX (Grigoriadis, 255). Without organizations like Rebels Against Sexual Assault working to end assault on campus, women would not know that they have support and can speak out. Title IX began empowering women, and, through pop culture and student life, women began to see that their sexual harassment and assault could be stopped through the resources readily made available to them on campus. The culture shifted in accordance with Title IX, and Abby Bruce, living in a time where no really does mean no, could be heard and expect action in response to the harassment that she felt. Public policy shifted to believe women. Through Title IX’s evolution, women are believed time after time. At The University of Mississippi, women began to understand how they are legally supposed to be treated. I imagine that many women were uncomfortable at Derby Days in 2012, but they did not speak up.

For the fraternity, Title IX came down hard. I had to go to a Title IX seminar with Honey Ussery as part of our punishment. I sat and listened as my mind raced back and forth through scenario after scenario about what rape meant and how could harassment be perceived differently. I used to look back at the Derby Days Scandal of 2016 as one of my biggest failures in college. I felt a lot of shame. Since I ran the event the previous year, I wished that I had acted as more of an advisor to the other Derby Days Chairs. I wished that I had intervened and told them that they what they were doing was incorrect. I wished that I could have been there to stop it from ever happening. Now, I look at the event as one of my biggest points of inspiration. My fraternity brothers were angry. At first, they blamed political correctness instead of themselves, but eventually, most of the guys realized that what happened was indeed wrong. From where I stood, I could see both sides of the frustration. I understood the women being frustrated for being
harassed, and I understood the men being frustrated for not being able to make a joke about sex anymore. The negative and positive responses to Title IX fascinated me.

In *IX*, the primary idea, highlighting how Title IX can drastically alter students’ lives, originated from the frustration students were feeling amidst the Title IX investigation. Arriving at this conclusion took several different questions. At first, during my sophomore year when I began to think about my thesis, my first question was, “How can I combine both of my majors, Theatre and Public Policy?” I answered this question by choosing to write a play that could address public policy in America. I asked, “What policy should I choose?” As the process evolved, I found that my questions would ultimately change and that one question was not enough to summarize my research and process. Initially, I decided to write a play on Confederate iconography, and, after evaluating my experiences as a student, I shifted gears to focus on sexual misconduct. I wanted to write a “he said, she said” type of story revolving around a hookup gone awry, but I did not know how this would deal with public policy. By placing the incident between students on a college campus, Title IX would automatically be involved. If I wanted to write a play about Derby Days and the men of Sigma Chi asking degrading questions to the sorority participants, I could not effectively tell the story without mentioning Title IX. If Title IX did not exist, who or what would have held my fraternity accountable? When I made this realization, I knew what my primary research question should be and how I would use the play to tell the answer. I asked, “How does Title IX negatively and positively affect all students involved?”

I answered this question through combining all of Aristotle's six elements of character, plot, idea, language, music, and spectacle. I started the play with idea, which Michael warns against doing in explaining that plays are about “people not policy.” Since the play was a thesis,
I started with idea. My research question inspired the primary idea of the play, and I started writing characters who could embody my idea. On the issue of preponderance of evidence, I show Tripp’s frustration with a low burden of proof. He feels that the burden of proof could be the reason he gets in trouble. Monica looks at the preponderance of evidence standard and the majority rule standard for the campus council as hopeful. Both characters view the same thing in a different way. On incapacitation versus intoxication, Mr. Williams must find evidence to indicate that Claire was incapacitated other than her and Monica’s word. He specifically says that the presence of alcohol is not enough. Through plot, I followed the outline of a Title IX investigation to create dramatic conflict between my characters. Through language, I used Mr. Williams and Monica as experts on the policy who speak correctly about every angle. Other characters like Jake use incorrect terminology to explain the process. With music, I used the stage directions to inspire the designers to create sounds that resonated with college students like the murmuring of a crowded bar and a cornhole bean bag hitting the ground. Inspired by David Mamet, I wrote poetic moments into my dialogue with internal rhyme and alliteration. Through spectacle, I wrote a rape scene that could be told through the blacking out of lights like the blacking out of a memory due to alcohol.

I used playwriting as a tool to comment on hookup culture affected by Title IX in our country. Sex on a college campus is not isolated from policy. College students oftentimes do not realize that Title IX controls what they do in the bedroom. My fraternity did not realize that Title IX can control what we could do on campus. When older members of the audience write in their feedback form that they did not know anything about Title IX and that they did not know whether she was raped or not, the cultural shift is apparent. In comparison, a large majority of those who filled out the form were college students who had been taught that consent is ongoing
and cannot be given due to incapacitation. In 1972, when Title IX passed, women who drank too much and were taken advantage of at fraternity parties were not viewed as rape victims. In 1991, many Americans did not believe Anita Hill when she described her harassment by Clarence Thomas. In 2012, the men of Sigma Chi were not punished because nobody spoke up. Now, women are believed more than ever, but the Title IX system still has flaws. The federal government must create a unified sexual misconduct policy to create an equitable experience for all college students. Education like The University of Mississippi’s use of Campus Clarity must be increased so women understand that they need to utilize campus resources. For sexual assault to truly end on campus, men and women should learn to respect one another sexually and should understand the ramifications and implications of Title IX, and IX challenges viewers to do just that.
Lillian Claire Fitzpatrick
Goes by Claire
Birthday: June 30, 1996-21
Sign: Cancer
Information about her sign (Astrotwins. “Zodiac Signs: All About The 12 Horoscope Signs”):

- **Symbol**: The Crab
- **Ruling Planet**: Moon—celestial body of moods and emotions
- **Body Part**: Chest, stomach
- **Element**: Water
- **Quality**: Mutable
- **Good Days**: Helpful, patient, compassionate, nurturing, romantic, creative
- **Bad Days**: Gossipy, clique-y, isolated, uncommunicative, hypersensitive, overly competitive
- **Favorite Things**: Gourmet meals, intramural sports, hosting parties, working with kids, museums and art galleries
- **What They Hate**: Tacky clothes, frozen dinners, public speaking, being rushed, paying full price
- **Secret Wish**: To take care of friends and family
- **How to Spot Them**: Walking with their chests puffed out, round “moon-like” facial features
- **Keywords**: Nurturing, Sensitivity, Emotions, Moodiness, Home, Family, Children, Femininity

Random Facts:

- **Favorite Color**: Uh… I don’t really have one. If I had to pick though, I guess it would be… blue or maybe green. I like them all. If I pick a favorite, I leave the others out.
- **Favorite Movie**: I can quote all of Mean Girls. “Whatever. I’m getting cheese fries.”
- **Last Meal**: Avocado toast.
- **Favorite Holiday**: I love the Fourth of July… reminds me of the lake with my family and friends. Fireworks are beautiful. Sparklers are my fav, and taking pics with them like where you spell stuff in the air.
- **Cats or Dogs**: I love them both.
- **Politics**: My family is like really Republican. My dad registered me to vote. So… I just kinda go with it. I voted for Trump.
- **Religion**: I’ve gone to church my whole life. Not as much in college, but yeah, I’m Baptist.
- **Song**: National Anthem by Lana Del Rey
- **Clothes**: Forever 21 is my place… I just got a new pair of Addidas.
• **siblings**: my little sister’s a mess. she’s 17 and thinks she knows everything. she’s a brat. i know that was bad, but i don’t know how else to describe her.

**monologue:**

*a high school gymnasium post cheer practice.*

Hey ladies! Clap once if you can hear me! *(claps once)* Clap twice if you can hear me! *(claps twice)* Clap three times! *(claps 3x)* Great! I have a few announcements… so let’s… uh Betsy? Hey… yes, sorry. I’m trying to… No, it’s cool. I’m sorry… Anyways. Okay. Thanks for your attention. So, as you all know, tomorrow’s the big game against our rivals. Titans vs Saints. But we know that our boys can do it. A couple of things real quick… I know you’re ready to get out of here. Principle Lancaster told me to tell you to please stop rolling up your cheer skirts to school on game days. He says, “It’s a privilege. Don’t abuse it or you’ll lose it.” I know we want to look good and all. But we need to be modest. And… let’s see… Oh yes. Don’t pregame the game too hard. Our half time show does not need to be sloppy. I’m cool with like maybe a little bit… a shot… but don’t be obvious about it! And that’s it. Good practice! I’ll see you tomorrow! Happy Game Day Eve!

**bio:**

Dad and Mom met in pharmacy school here at Ole Miss. Then, they fell in love and got married. They moved to Amarillo and started working as pharmacists together in the 80s. After a couple of years, they started their own pharmacy. They wanted to be their own bosses. So yeah. Simmons Pharmaceuticals. That’s my family… and why I’m majoring in pharmacy. It’s the “family business.” It’s… it’s the thing to do. My little sister won’t do it. She’s 17 and still reads *Tiger Beat*. I was reading *Seventeen* at 14. *(laughs)* That was a dumb example… You get my point though. She isn’t as smart as I am. She won’t be able to handle Pre-pharm. At all. Since she can’t do it, I will. I… yeah. I don’t dislike it. But I’m not crazy about it. It’s okay… It’s hard. I’ll have a good job though, and my parents are happy. I’m not… passionate about it. But I’m not like really passionate about anything. Well, anything like real. I like art and cheer, but those are things I can’t make a career out of. Dad says, “Do something substantial; your art will always be a hobby.” I might if I tried, but obviously my parents don’t encourage it. So… Drawing and painting and stuff is just a hobby. I paint like coolers for girls when they are going to a formal. Little stuff like that. Canvases for bid day baskets, etc. It’s a nice little side thing I like to do. I listen to music while doing it. Chill music. I listen to Taylor Swift a lot. I listen to the *Red* album when I paint. One time I saw her live. It was *Speak Now* tour. I cried. Monica and I went together. My mom brought us. We had such a good time. We cried and couldn’t speak the rest of the weekend. Monica loves Taylor Swift. We were like 14. I remember that we tried to look
really hip. We looked like wannabes. Monica and I have been best friends ever since ninth grade. We met in art class.

Oh... and cheer. I would love to be like a Dallas Cowboys Cheerleader, but I’m not good enough. I’m good enough for college. I’m on scholarship here. I have a like almost full ride. A quarter cheer and the rest are academics. I got a 31 on my ACT.

I’m smart, but it’s not a thing. Like Monica is so intelligent and that’s what she is known for. In high school, I was a cheerleader. I did tumbling and dance my entire life. Since I was like five. Monica was always a little different. We both tried out for varsity cheer in eighth grade. I knew she wouldn’t get it, but I wasn’t going to tell her that. She wasn’t even on JV cheer. I told her she should and it would be fun. I don’t know if that’s me being a bad friend by not being upfront and telling her she wouldn't make it. Besides, she wouldn’t have taken no for an answer. Monica set goals. She is driven, but I made it—because I had been doing it forever—and Monica didn’t. That was fine because I was the only eighth grader who got on the team. Monica didn’t make it the next year either. She quit trying after that. She started doing other stuff. Like speech and debate, drama club, stuff like that. She found her place. Cheer was my thing. Go Warriors! I can still do our routines in my sleep.

On game day, you could see me wearing yellow and gold in all my outfits. I was trendy. A lot of girls copied my style. I got Converse when all the like... underground kids had them and before the popular kids got them. Monica actually bought me my first pair. I was a trend setter. People looked up to me. They still do. This sounds really arrogant... but I’m looked up to in just about every area of life. Everyone knew me as the cheer captain. I got most school spirit and most beautiful in high school. I was liked. All the football players knew me. They were popular. And that’s how high school was. The pretty or athletic or... or in my case, both... we were on the field. That sounded really shallow, but you know what I mean. I did well in school, but nobody seemed to care about that! I didn’t get elected Homecoming Queen for getting an A in Chemistry. I didn’t date Jeff Stanley for being smart. I know that’s what’s important in the end, but growing up it wasn't for me. I was on top for other reasons. Boys thought I was hot. Girls were jealous of me. But I was nice to them! I was nice to everybody, and Monica being my friend helped me out. She defended me when the band kids and other... other nerds—I know that’s harsh, but I don’t know how else to describe them.

Monica never liked Jeff though. He and I started dating when I was a sophomore. He was a junior. She thought he didn’t “treat me well.” When I look back, I realize that’s true. He kind of manipulated me into a lot of stuff. Like before I started dating him, I had like made out with two guys in ninth grade. My first kiss was Bradley Thomas. He was a senior when I was a freshman. I was just kinda like really into him. He tried to make me do other stuff, but I didn’t really want to. I’m Baptist, so for a while I was weird about that stuff. One time he tried to take my clothes off in his car when we were making out one day after a football game. I didn’t want to. He dropped me off and texted me that it was over. I cried and cried. I went to Monica’s house. We were neighbors. So, I walked over there. We cried and ate ice cream. It was so dramatic.
(laughs). Her mom always talked with us too about how men sucked. She would buy the ice cream and talk shit with us.

But back to Jeff… yeah. I really liked him. He was popular. He was cute. He wasn’t that smart, but I didn’t care about that then. He was elected Mr. Oak Grove his senior year. We dated for two years. He broke up with me in August right before he went to State. I was heartbroken. But while we dated, I started wanting to do other stuff with him. Uh… I can’t believe I’m sharing this… I gave him a blowjob on his seventeenth birthday. September 15th. In a month, we had done just about everything but. I was really swept up because he was older. I liked him a lot. But I was weird about having sex. Also, after we had done so much so fast, I wanted to slow down. He didn’t want to. He would get all pouty and upset when I wouldn’t want to blow him. He would always say, “Come on blow me, I’ll eat you out.”

Eventually I had sex with him. I was 16. I did it because he wanted to. I didn't want to. And honestly, he was so pushy. It bothered me. But he was popular. I was “lucky” to be with him… at least that’s what the cheer team would tell me. We dated until he graduated the following spring. I felt like I loved him. What? I was young and… yeah… I was in love with him… in a high school way. I was so upset when he broke up with me. That summer before my senior year and his freshman year… we were off and on. He would pick me up. We would have sex in the back of his truck. Then he would drop me off. He always would be like, “We should stop.” I would cry. I would go over to Monica's. She would tell me to stop. Then, I would repeat… over and over until August. He went to college, and now I only hear from him when he's horny and home for the holidays. I don't reply.

Over senior year, I dated around. I would go on one date or two. I would make out and fool around and stuff. I had sex with my prom date. Trent Loggins. (smiles). We had been going on dates and hooking up for a bit. We didn't date, but had a casual sex thing. At parties and after games, we would all get together at someone's house and drink. Trent and I would usually get drunk and hook up. Being with him was like my first… like first casual sex thing. I liked it.

Before college, I had given a lot of head and slept with two guys. Once I went Omicron Kappa at Ole Miss, I really bought into the hook up culture. Ya know, going home with guys or players after games… shacking with randoms… swaps and date parties and blind dates. I think during spring of sophomore year I had slept with 7 guys before spring break and then 2 complete strangers while in Destin. After break, it just kinda hit me. I hated what I was doing. I hated being like a slut. After I lost my virginity to Jeff, I promised that I would never get into double digits. But in one semester I almost hit double digits. I felt dirty and kinda gross… but it's what everyone's doing. I mean I think Sydney has slept with like more than 50 boys. She doesn't care at all. I like that she doesn't care and I honestly wish I didn't care. I envy her free spirit. So, after spring break I promised that I wouldn't be slutty anymore. I started going to CRU and wanted to have more church friends, but that didn’t really last long. I love Sydney… and Monica… and well, I don’t want to have a ton of best friends. I like being popular, but that’s what I like… the mystery. People know you, but they’ve never had a conversation with you.
Over the summer of freshman year, I worked at the pharmacy. But I hated that. So, after sophomore year, I took classes in Oxford for a month and went back to Amarillo to work with my parents. It's good on the resume, and now, I'm learning like the business side too. Dad wants me to add a business minor, so I took some really easy business classes in July. Sydney also took classes, and we lived together that summer. I kept drinking a lot with her and making out with boys, but I really worked on not having so much sex. That summer I only slept with one guy. His name was Tim Passarella. We studied for our Bis 200 class. He and I flirted a lot. And then we would go out together. I'd make out with him and blow him and stuff. It was nice and casual. He kept pushing for sex though. I eventually gave in. I know it sounds weird that all these guys pressure me. But my sex with Jeff and Trent was fine. I didn't really orgasm, but it feels good to know that you make a guy hard. I like that. I love making them cum fast. It's a rush. Oh my God. That makes me sound like such a slut. I'm really not. I slept with Tim because he wanted to do it and I wanted to please him and feel that satisfaction and I guess… value? No… that's not the word. I don't find worth in boys wanting me. I just like to know I'm sexy to them.

What do I find value in? Uh… I don't know. I like… like to make others happy. Mom used to tell me when I was little, “Be the kinda person that's a kind person.” She would always talk about how my actions could hurt or help other people. I want to build others up. That's something I love about cheerleading… I support the players. I give them encouragement. And I love to be there for people. Like being friends with Monica makes me feel good. Like hearing her talk about her family and body issues. I came up with a workout plan for her. She looks great now. Our friendship is special because I can be 100% real with her because we've known each other forever… and she's intelligent. One thing I hate though is that she doesn't get the social scene. She says she hates social climbers. But she would do it too if she could. She about lost it when she got cut from everybody, but the lower tier sororities. She felt more rejection and betrayal, but like she always does… she turned it around and used it to fuel her hate against the things that rejected her. So, that's where we don't see eye to eye. She accepts her, but others don't. And so… yeah. She hates it. Or says she hates it. At the same time though she still surrounds herself in it. Like coming to OK Crawfish and sometimes going to a frat party to “see the band.” She gets in with me. She's a window shopper kind of. She likes to look but doesn't like to buy. Not because she doesn't want… but because she can't afford the outfit or the store won't sell it to her.

I… I uh… yeah that's what I value. Making others happy. And yeah… I want to be happy too. And… sleeping around like Sydney doesn't make me happy. I love Sydney. I really do. She's so fun and carefree and that's so important right now. In two more years… I'll be in pharmacy school and then I'll be back in my hometown. I want to live it up here as best as I can before I go back. I love living with her. We met on bid day. Her last name is Weissman. Our chairs were right next to each other when we went to the house. Welch and Weissman. We started talking and immediately hit it off. We spent the majority of freshman year getting drunk and curing hangovers with chick fil a breakfast. We would set an alarm for 10am so we wouldn't miss the breakfast. As I've got older, I realize her like “live fast” attitude doesn't sit well with me. You
know alcohol has a ton of calories? That's hard too because I have to look good for cheer. I have to stay fit. I have to look good or I'll get cut. And I would hate that so much. That wouldn't make me happy. At all. I work hard to stay in shape… and sometimes. Well I hate admitting this. But I skip meals so I can drink more. It's bad but. It's fine. I'm fine. It's not a habit just an occasional thing. Idk why I shared that.

That's what sucks though. I can't make everyone happy all the time. Like I've always wanted to go to Ole Miss but my entire mom's side of the family went to LSU. I knew that I didn't want to go there. But I applied. Toured and even tried out for cheer there. I made it. And everything. But I wanted Ole Miss the whole time. I experienced a lot of stress and anxiety spring of senior year because I didn't want to let my grandmother down or upset LSU because they gave me lots of money and a spot on the cheer squad. Eventually, I had to make a decision. I cried and cried when I told my parents. I convinced Mom to tell Grandma. I sent LSU an email. It was short and really apologetic. I don’t like conflict, and I remember Dad telling me that conflict is a part of life and that I need to learn to deal with it. Like he used war as an example. Americans wouldn’t be Americans if they hadn’t of revolted. That was a little much for me, but it made sense. That’s something that I admire in Monica. She’s way more courageous than I am. Honestly, she welcomes conflict. To get what she wants she isn’t afraid to push others around or “challenge systems” as she likes to say.

One time, I challenged a system. I had this professor that I hated. He hated me too. I don’t know why. I think it was because I reminded him of the girls that turned him down. I worked super hard in his class. He taught Writing 101. It’s a freshman class that’s entirely subjective. I would go to his office hours. He would still give me a C on a paper. I got so upset about it. I hate feeling like cheated. Like something that I earn or is mine is taken away from me. I felt like I deserved As. So… I went to the Dean. He went to college with my dad. I showed the Dean my papers, and he loves me. He told me he would take care of it. Then, the next week in class, the professor was being so weird towards me. At the end of the semester he gave me an A on my final paper. I didn’t really want to ask any more questions to him directly because that’s awkward… I trusted the Dean to take care of it, and when grades came out, I got an A! I feel comfortable taking things into my own hands when I know that somebody has my back… like the Dean.

I care about school because that’s what’s important for me getting into a good pharmacy school and making my parents happy and… I don’t mind confronting something that’s important to me. Like school and… What are some other things important to me? I dunno. A lot of stuff. I think freedom is important. Like… People should be allowed to be, but not like to hurt other people. Now I sound like my Poli Sci 101 class. Ya know the debate of freedom v order… something like that. But freedom. Let people be. Like the Beatles… “Let it be.” Words of wisdom for sure. I care about having fun and being happy. That’s important. I do get sad sometimes. I don’t get like moody or depressed like Monica or anything, but at the same time, I’m not as like… free-spirited as Sydney. If I get upset, I try to find resolution. I don’t like ignore my problems like Sydney. I’m not vindictive like Monica either. I just want to fix it or figure it
I got in a car wreck… It was totally not my fault. I didn’t get hurt and neither did the other guy. But my car was so messed up. He kept insisting that it was my fault. He even made a comment like since I was a woman I couldn’t drive at all. Which is stupid. He told the police that I was texting and wasn’t paying attention and changed lanes into him. He was like 50 or something. He ran into me, but said I was like snapchatting and ran into him. Luckily, there was an eye witness. But that made me so mad. I kinda shut down when we were talking to the police because I was really shaken up, but still I was so pissed. I remember the lady who saw it. I was so grateful for her because she saw the whole thing. But the worst part about it, I started questioning whether he was right. He said it was my fault and I kinda started to believe it for a second. Especially because the policeman was totally taking his side. He asked me like questions, “Who were you texting?” He didn’t even ask if I was. He assumed. He said, “Is something really that important that you are risking your life and others on the road?” I mean I was on my phone but I didn’t run into him. His wife showed up to the accident and made a comment to him about texting and driving. So, he was doing it too and she showed the policeman the message he sent at the same time as the accident. She calmed down the man and said, “Don’t worry about it. Our insurance will take care of it. It was probably his fault.” She saved my ass. That made me mad. I want to be better about sticking up for myself. The last two stories I told you involved somebody else getting involved.

That’s a big goal of mine as I start my junior year. I want to take control more. I feel like I do a pretty good bit. I’m a captain on the cheer team. People really like me. People defend me and step up for me and… and I like that, but at the same time, I feel helpless sometimes. What if that man had gotten away with lying to the police about the car accident? Would I have believed him? Would I have eventually said it was my fault when it really wasn’t? I don’t know. I think about that day every now and then.

Monica Lee Hartford
Goes by Monica
Birthday: January 10th, 1996- 21
Information about her sign (Astrotwins. “Zodiac Signs: All About The 12 Horoscope Signs”):
• Sign: Capricorn
• Symbol: The Mountain Goat
• Element: Earth
• Quality: Mutable
• Ruling Planet: Saturn — the planet of discipline and maturity
• Body Part: Knees, skin, bones, teeth
• Good Day: Loyal, family-minded, hardworking, devoted, honest, fearless
• Bad Day: Pessimistic, unforgiving, cold, materialistic, snobbish, hopeless
• Favorite Things: Business cards, goals, official titles, being in charge, exclusive clubs, “leg sports” like soccer or track, motorcycles, leather
What They Hate: Quitting, shouting in public, careless mistakes, traveling without an itinerary, doing things “just for the heck of it"

Secret Wish: To have every need taken care of

How to Spot Them: Distinctive jaw, strong teeth, wise look in the eyes

Where You’ll Find Them: Enjoying quality time with the family, working obsessively on a large-scale project, running for Senior Vice President of the company, directing a full-length feature film

Keywords: Ambition, Structure, Goals, Long-Term Plans, Prestige, Public Image/Acclaim

Random Facts:

- Favorite Color: It has always been purple.
- Favorite Movie: Hmmm… a hard question for me… I would have to say Frances Ha. She goes for it… despite being told she cannot.
- Last Meal: I had a smoothie that I made myself.
- Favorite Holiday: Halloween and not because that’s the one day I’m allowed to be “slutty”… By the way, I hate that saying and slut shaming. I like Halloween because it is creepy. I do like Horror Movies too.
- Cats or Dogs: Cats.
- Politics: I felt the Bern before you even touched the stove.
- Religion: Religion is not real. It is something that man made to cope with bullshit.
- Song: I listen to Women of Indie on Spotify usually. Oh, I do love Washed Out.
- Clothes: Thrift stores or outlet malls. I like cheap, fashionable clothes.
- Siblings: Only child.

My awkward phase lasted way longer than I would have liked. Oh my god. You should see my tenth grade class picture. Ya know those like cardboard-like Catholic school girl blouses? I am wearing one of those with like this plaid jumper, which is atrocious. I have a bow in my hair and for some reason I thought blonde highlights would be cute. My acne was a lot and… and I was awkward. All the way until senior year. I was one of those girls. Ya know the ones who everyone calls ugly behind her back and who knows that everyone calls her ugly behind her back. Then, summer and everyone thinks it’s like some big transformation when in reality, my acne cleared up, I started working out religiously, and I dyed my hair black, a solid color instead of streaks of greenish blonde. And on the first day of senior year, everyone was like, “What happened to Monica? She’s… I can’t believe I’m saying this… She’s actually kind of hot.” Yeah that was my high school.

I graduated with about 150 people. We were a small private high school. Not Christian, thank god. But like one of those segregationist academies. Jackson Preparatory School. JPS… that’s what we called it. Everyone knew each other. So, I was known, but not loved. I had my friends of course. And my absolute best friend was Claire Welch. She was like Homecoming Queen and Cheer Captain, but we were best friends as kids. We still live right next door. She had an awkward phase too. She does not talk about that. She had bad acne in like sixth and seventh grade. She also wore glasses. I still wear mine though. She ditched them. Her cocoon summer was between seventh and eighth grade. We decided to both go out for cheer. She got it, and I did not. That school year all the boys were saying, “Whoa, what happened to Claire? She’s hot as
fuck.” Nobody understood why we were friends, but we just were. Claire’s smart. She is not as smart as I am, but we connected academically through our advanced course loads, study sessions, ACT tutors, and countless hours spent applying to colleges. She would go to cheer practice, and I would go to Debate or rehearsal. Afterwards, I would walk over to her house or she would come to mine where we would study, eat ice cream, and laugh.

I found my place on the debate team and in the drama club. Those were the people who got me, like who liked the same things as me. I became highly opinionated very quickly. That’s why I loved debate and drama because it was like an acceptable outlet for me talk and share and… and express the shit I wanted to say but couldn’t express publicly. After joining those teams, I kinda became that girl in class. “The know it all.” I fit into a lot of the weird, unwanted stereotypes. I argued with teachers, challenged classmates constantly asking for them to reference their sources. Some people are just fucking stupid. Claire would make all A’s but in class she kept her mouth shut. Smart girl but like her biggest fear is stepping on other people’s toes. I don’t care at all about that. I’m like, “Move your foot.” She’s like, “Umm… Excuse me? Could you please step to the side? I’m so sorry… I just need to get through real quick. It’s fine. I can wait a second. Okay. Yes. Thank you.” She’s great. I used to struggle with comparing myself to her. You would too if your best friend was beautiful, athletic, known, and loved. I stopped caring… Okay… Yeah. I did care a lot, but I found my own outlets and activies. My own forms of expressions. And my own identity. “The smart, independent, know-it-all bitch.”

I really took on the identity when I caught my dad cheating on my mom in the tenth grade. I was fifteen. I came home early from school—you see my mom is a nurse that works the afternoon shifts. My dad is a realtor, so he sets his own hours. Anyway, I came home thinking they were both gone, but I saw my dad’s maroon Honda parked outside I went inside and called out for him. He didn’t answer, and the silence kinda worried me a bit. He drank a lot. So, I often felt scared and worried for him anyway. When I was little, he would sometimes get really drunk, and my mom and I would leave and drive for thirty minutes or so to grandma’s in Magee. It became the refuge for us to escape my drunk dad. He quit drinking so much during my ninth grade year because my mom threatened to leave him and take me with her. Yeah… they had a terrible marriage, but they were still together and well… Mom loved him. She still does. I… I don’t know. Sometimes… I just… I do not know what happened that made him become this… this overgrown fuckboy… but I came home and was worried that maybe his silence meant he started drinking—I would have nightmares about him relapsing. It gave me a lot of anxiety. So, I went inside, called for him, and started wandering around when he did not reply. As I walked down the hall, I could hear the shower water running. When my parents are in the shower, I’ll go into the bedroom and talk to them through the door. Only child things. So like always, I walked in the room and saw her… Some girl who looked like maybe five years older than me standing their naked in his room. She gasped, and he popped his head out. We made eye contact. He said, “Monica…” I started crying and ran outside. I immediately ran to Claire and told her everything. I stayed their for a while. By the end of the month, dad moved out. I still don’t speak to that piece of shit. It has been six years.

From that point on, I hated men. I hated all the boys who liked to look up every other girl’s skirt accept mine, and I hated my dad. My mantra became “All men are shit.” I still think that. Honestly, I have incredible trust issues. I’m not one of those people who just says that. So many men in my life have seriously fucked me over.

Whenever I came back for senior year, this boy who I loved started noticing me. Chase Anderson. He was like the best actor in our drama program, and he and I always spent a lot of
time together hanging out at rehearsals and what not. During spring of junior year, we did Cinderella. Yes, Roger and Hammersteins. He was the Prince of course, but I was an “ugly step sister.” I did not care because the step sisters make the show in my opinion. This time type casting worked in my favor. Sharon Roberts, a senior at the time, played Cinderella. She and Chase developed this romance off stage too, but he and I... well, we were just good friends with a lot of weird tension like magnets. We laughed all the time. He would say, “You’re way better than Sharon, but let’s be real... You were made to be an ugly step sister.” For some reason— god, I fucking hate myself sometimes—that back handed compliment that could be interpreted as either an insult or high praise for my acting abilities... it captivated me. I thought, “He thinks I’m talented!” I just was happy he was talking to me. He was the first boy to ever really show a genuine interest in me. Claire was best friend, but we had different lunch periods and stuff. I spent a lot of my school time with my drama club friends. We were all the freaks and late bloomers. We jelled, but none of the boys wanted me. Even the boys who were rejected by everyone else in school. Ya know, nerdy boys tend to be the most fucked up, at least in my experience. Gamers, band geeks, goths, scene kids, and dudes who spend their Friday nights scrounging Chat Roulette yearning for the chance to talk some random girl—who has her own image and family issues that propel her to partake of the most self-loathing internet activity— into showing their boobs. Those weirdo boys who take forty five minute showers and lull themselves to sleep with the sounds and images of MILFs and fake girl-on-girl action at their fingertips on their i-Phones. Creepy boys whose right hands—or dominate hand, I should say for those left handed boys—seem to always be soft due to the excessive lotion used to lubricate their five inch dicks as they jerk off and fantasize about taking supplements or something to make their dicks seven inches while telling everyone at school that their dick is at least nine inches long. Flacid... Those boys rejected me. So, when Chase just talked to me like a human being, I fell for him, and I fell hard.

I look back on that time as a period of innocence. He was a man that I started to trust... We would go to Sonic after rehearsals. Over slushies, I opened up to him. I told him about my dad, how my mom filed a restraining order, how his new “girlfiend” had the gall to add me on facebook, and how I hated them. He talked to me about how his dad hated him in theatre, his mom worked too much and missed his performances for work, and how he dreamed of being on TV like a Big Bang Theory kind of show. He was a weirdo, but a beautiful weirdo. Ya know, like Ben Platt. I liked to think he did not look at porn or view women in a gross hypersexualized way. The popular girls did not even look twice at him until his junior year. Sharon—who was decently popular because she was on dance team, the not as popular supportive group for the douches on the football field—took a liking to the new and improved Chase Anderson. He opened up to me as well. He talked to me about her, about losing his virginity to her, and how he loved her. Anyway, around the time when senior year started, Sharon went off to college and guess what? Yeah. She broke his heart. And I suddenly became beautiful. I was an idiot to think that he truly cared about me. I thought, “There is absolutely no way that I am a rebound. You and him have history and chemistry. Two of your favorite subjects.” I used to think that those late nights talking in the Sonic parking lot meant that he really wanted to be with me and not her. I trusted him, and thought that despite saying he loved her, he really loved me, but I was weird and not pretty. I thought he loved me for my heart, but at the same time, I was not enough for him. That sounds crazy, I know. But think about it. Why was he taking me to Sonic and not her after rehearsals? She went straight home to get “beauty sleep” or some other self-absorbed way to say I am tired and lame.
Fall of senior year, we did Twelfth Night. I played Viola, and Chase played Duke. Like him and Sharon, we also developed an off stage relationship. Our first onstage kiss was my first kiss in general. No boy had ever wanted to kiss me or tried too. I totally felt a spark. It was embarrassing. I did not know what I was doing, so I joked and laughed. I tried to make him feel self-conscious and like he was the bad kisser and not me. Yes, some say I am manipulative. We continued our tradition of going to Sonic. But now, he complained about Sharon all the time. She broke his heart. He was depressed. Etc., etc. I listen. I let him dump all his burdens on me. I became his unofficial therapist whose fee consisted of mozzarella sticks and corndogs. One night, we started talking about the stage kiss. I confessed to him that I had never had a real kiss before. He laughed. Smirking, he said, “We need to fix that.” He drove me back to the school to get my car, but before I got out, he grabbed my hand. He said, “Let me be your first for real.” My stomach knotted. My palms went cold and wet with the nerve induced sweat. He leaned in and kissed me. I drove home screaming Weightless by All Time Low. As soon as I got home, I ran over to Claire’s house. She was so happy for me. I finally got my first kiss. Something she had a 14 with Cal Tomlinson, a 16 year old football player. She was way ahead of me, but she never rubbed it in my face. I would listen with full attention as I shot questions at her after boys dropped her off. For a while, I lived vicariously through Claire’s sexual experiences. She could get any boy she wanted, and they followed her around like fucking puppy dogs. She held the leash. Sometimes when I would see her at break or in between classes with a gaggle of boys around her, I would picture her wearing big sunglasses walking through Central Park with a handful of multicolor leashes attached to stereotypical manly dogs like black labs. Tongues out slowly dripping saliva like syrup on pancakes, all the dogs would be looking at her instead of at the park path ahead of them with squirrels and other distractions zooming past them and their focused and attentive gazes. She was it… And the thing I loved about her most is that she knew that I was not it and would never be it, but she continued to be nice to me, talk to me, include me in her life, and never treat me like a nobody. She was a true friend. I say was, but I guess I mean is. Things have been different since college. I still love her. I do, but she adapts. She becomes whatever she is around. Even me. You have to be a special person to get my attention and the quarterbacks attention at the same time. People flock to her like pigeons over popcorn in Central Park. I really love New York by the way… Sorry for that tangent, I will get back to Chase.

My Sonic runs with Chase turned into make out sessions in the back of his Tahoe. We listened to Blink 182 and Cute Is What We Aim For. We would drive out to Tatum Park behind out school. We would get out of the car and lay on a blanket in one of the soccer field and look at the stars. I thought I was in love. I had all these like bubbly feelings like I don’t know… that is the only way I can think to describe it. Bubbly. It starts in my toes then I crinkle my nose. It has been a long time since I have felt that way. Even my boyfriend now… dating him is more about like getting back what I lost. Getting back that sexual power I used to feel. I loved my body personally. I never had anyone to hook up with in my early years, so I masturbated. I learned about my own body. How to touch myself. How I could make myself feel good. I ordered a dildo, and my mom intercepted it when it came in the mail. We had a sit down talk about it. Like major mom moment. She was concerned about my ordering it, but I explained to her that I was not currently sexually active and probably would not be for the rest of high school. I wanted to love myself and learn to pleasure myself. I was kind of worried, but honestly, she hated men now too. She started reading books on feminism. She got all my Virginia Woolf books from my shelf. She supported it and let me keep the vibrator. She said, “I ordered one for myself when I kicked
your dad out.” We hugged and laughed. Then, we started crying… I was about to turn sixteen. It was just after New Years right before my birthday.

I keep going on these tangents. Maybe I am avoiding telling you what really happened with Chase. I do not talk about this. I suppress it. I bury it, but it stays with me. It affects me. Sometimes I feel like it controls me and my actions, reactions, and interactions. My deep rooted hatred for Chase and what he did to me… god… If you have not figured it out by now… Chase raped me.

It was the cast party for Twelfth Night. We had just finished closing. At this point, Chase and I had moved past making out. We would take each others clothes off on the blanket under the stars. He would just stare at my body—I got really into running over the summer and lost weight which totally reshaped my body. I even started feeling sexy, but I was my own person. I refused to be dictated by those around me. When I finally had a fit body, I still wore the same baggy clothes and turtle necks. In my mind, whoever I showed it to was the lucky one. I wanted to continue wearing what I wanted to wear without flaunting my boobs and great ass just because I had it. I felt like Chase was the lucky one. He could look at me. His eyes could gaze. I would even masturbate for him out there on that blanket under the stars. I remember the way my skin felt on that blanket, his navy blue sweatshirt blanket from his ritzy family trip to Breckinridge, Colorado. The white letters spelling out the name of the resort in the middle with the Rocky mountains in the background. The wind would caress our naked bodies, tickling our sensitive genitalia in an unfamiliar way due to our societal obligation to cover up and make our universal features our private parts. He would tell me that I was beautiful. He said he liked my “bush.” Generally, I hate it when men use that word, but I did not care. A man actually wanted me… I think back on this sometimes and look at myself in the mirror and say, “Fuck you for being such a naïve little bitch.” I reprimand myself. I slap myself on the wrist. I beat myself up. I blame myself. I do this when the self-loathing sinks in, but I know rape is never the victims fault. Tell rapists to stop raping… that is the solution. On that blanket under the stars, I gave my first blow job to him. He stood up. I got on my knees. I practiced on my dildo at home and read a bunch or articles on how to give great head. He came in a couple of minutes. It tasted like… pizza and Goldfish. It was not pleasant, but I made a man cum. That made me feel pretty powerful. Then, he ate me out. Honestly, I enjoyed it because I loved having a man want to taste me like that. However, he could not make me orgasm… as expected. We would do hand stuff and oral stuff out there on the blanket under the stars. One night, he pulled out a condom. I said, “No.” I was eager to do stuff sexually, but I was hesitant about sex. It all seemed so fast. After all, a couple of months ago, I had my first kiss and that was a stage kiss. I wanted to fuck him, but it seemed to soon. He respected that and put the condom away. I appreciated that. I thought he was respectful… Yeah...

At the cast party, I blacked out. Prior to the party, the only times I had been drunk were with Claire. Some nights when my mom went out of town, we would drink wine together. She left me at home because she felt I was mature. I am very mature. Claire and I would get drunk watching chick flicks. I had never been publicly drunk before. I never really had the option because nobody invited me to the drinking parties. But… Nancy Miller, her older brother bought a keg and some vodka for her. We had the party out at her lake house. Her parents were not there. It got wild. No rules. No parents. Everyone got wasted. I was drunk, and Chase was drunk. But he had been drinking for a while. He started drinking when he was like fifteen with his big brother and while dating Sharon he went to the drinking parties that excluded me. He knew how much he should consume and should not. He knew his limits. He knew what he was doing. We
snuck off together to an empty bedroom in the back of the house. Everyone was either outside or
in the living room. Some people had passed out in other bedrooms, but not that master. I do not
remember that much. I had drank more than I had ever had before. It was November 24th, 2013.

We went in the bedroom. Turned out the lights. I do not remember much from being on the
bed. I remember kissing. I remember clothes coming off. All normal things for me and Chase. I
remember a pain in my vagina. I remember him pushing on my chest. Like his forearm laid
across my collar bone—I had a bruise the next day. His other hand pushed one of my hands on
the bed. I remember being on my stomach and feel finger nails digging in my anus. I remember
feeling his sticky, Goldfish-flavored cum splattering on my back. I remember snoring. I
remember tears. I remember waking up the next morning to sunlight streaming into the room… I
rolled over panicked, and he was gone. At first I thought it was a dream… but my vagina still
hurt. I began to cry. I grabbed my cell phone and called Claire. She picked me up and took me to
the doctor. I had a rape kit done. They found some abrasions in my vagina, but nothing too
severe. The nurse said, “You have slight bruising on your collar bone, but nothing out of the
ordinary.” I got the impression that the nurse thought that I had consensual sex for the first time
and did not know how wet I should be before penetration and my partner did not know how to
hold his body so his failure to balance his weight distribution led to the bruising. “Nothing she
hadn’t seen before.” I told my mother as soon as Claire dropped me off. She cried with me. We
got ice cream. I missed school for the next week. Chase did not text me or anything after that
night. On Monday, two days after my rape. He said, “U ok? Didn’t c u in school today. Worried
ab u. :).” Bull shit. He worried about himself because he knew what he did to me. I did not reply.
Mom told me to talk to the school counselor. She asked me all sorts of questions about what I
was wearing, about if I wanted to take all my clothes off, if he knew that I did not want to, and
all sorts of other questions that made me think that somehow what happened could have been my
fault. I told her I wanted to report it to the police. She told me, “For your well being, going to the
police will only make it worse. I advise you to stay away and learn how to get through and cope
with this situation on your own.” She said, “The police will most likely not find efficient
evidence to have the state prosecute for rape.” I hate public high school counselors. The only
reason you work here is because nobody in the real world will dare to hire you. She discredited
my rape. She made me feel like I had no way out. I decided to not press charges. I would get
over it on my own. I spent the rest of the school year avoiding Chase. One time, he tried to
apologize to me. I ignored him.

I opened up to Mrs. Stephenson, the drama teacher. She believed me and told me in
confidence that Sharon complained to her about his sexual dominance and obsession. She made
me feel like I was not crazy. At this point, I felt like going to the police was too late. So I stayed
quiet. Mrs. Stephenson told me, “If he tries out for the spring musical, that bastard will not get a
part.” She was right. She did not cast him. We did Wizard of Oz. I was the Wicked Witch. I
loved the role and loved even more that he was not in the show. He was furious that he did not
get cast. I remember him yelling, “God damnit!” and slamming his locker after the cast went up.
A teacher saw his outburst and gave him a detention for foul language on the spot. I smiled as I
peered his meltdown from around the corner. He came to the show of course. Then, like I
predicted, he sent me a text that said, “Wow, u were so amazing.” I blocked his number. I saw
him one last time at graduation and then again at Walmart. I avoided him both times. I blocked
him on all social media. I hear that he goes to some college in Massachusetts. I hate him. One
day, I want to personally castrate him.
Now, in my current relationship, Ryan is helping me gain my sexuality back. We fuck a lot. I get on top of him. I love being on top. God, I love being in control. Sometimes I even think about proposing pegging to him. I doubt he would be down, but whenever we try anal, I will suggest it.

I drunkenly made out and blew other boys in my freshman and sophomore year, but never sex. Ryan is my first time. I feel ready. It is time for me to start sharing my body with him in the ways that I want. I finally feel like I have taken control of my body again.

I take assault very seriously.

Sydney Millicent Leake:
Goes by Sydney
Birthday: July 24, 1996- 21
Sign: Leo- The drama queen and regal ruler of the horoscope clan, Leo energy helps us shine, express ourselves boldly and wear our hearts on our sleeves.
Information about her sign (Astrotwins. “Zodiac Signs: All About The 12 Horoscope Signs”):

- **Symbol:** The Lion
- **Element:** Fire
- **Quality:** Fixed
- **Ruling Planet:** The Sun
- **Body Part:** Heart, upper back, spine
- **Good Day:** Courageous, kind, generous, loyal, protective, nakedly honest, entertaining
- **Bad Day:** Arrogant, wasteful, sloppy, cold-hearted, jealous, aggressive
- **Favorite Things:** Theaters, cameras, DVDs, rich desserts, red roses, exchanging gifts, singing, affection, compliments, great clothes
- **What They Hate:** Being ignored, silver medals (instead of gold), bland food, being alone, goodbyes
- **Secret Wish:** To rule the world
- **How to Spot Them:** Distinctive mane of hair, regal posture
- **Keywords:** Passion, Romance, Expression, Drama, Playfulness, Courageous, Loyal

Random Facts:
- **Favorite Color:** On Wednesdays, we wear pink. (laughs). Me too… I love pink, but like I wear black and gray tone shit.
- **Favorite Movie:** *Failure to Launch*. Matthew McConaughey is so sexy.
- **Last Meal:** I don’t remember… Tacos, maybe.
- **Favorite Holiday:** My birthday. It’s the best holiday.
- **Cats or Dogs:** Puppies and kittens… Grown dogs are gross… I wish they could just freeze as a baby.
- **Politics:** I’m voting for Dwayne Johnson in 2020.
- **Religion:** Catholic, but… ya know, forgive me father for I have sinned. A lot.
- **Song:** TBH Rae Sremmurd like gets me. *Come Get Her* is about me.
- **Clothes:** I wear a lot of Lulu Lemon.
• Siblings: Two older brothers who lived with my dad mostly. They’re cool. Bought my alcohol in high school.

Monologue:

In a strange bathroom standing at the sink, Sydney talks to herself in the mirror.

Yeah… Just take his wallet out… his ID is probably in there. If he didn’t put in his pocket after getting in the bar… I dunno. Check the pockets. (opens drawer). God, what a slob… fucking used razors next to his toothbrush… Probably gets hair in his mouth. No thank you. (slams drawer). Okay… he’s still asleep—or at least he was when I snuck in here. Get his wallet. Figure out his name. Wake him up. Ask him nicely to drop you off. Act like you had a good time when you ask… Not too nice though… you don’t want him to think he can get a round two out of you. Then, get home and grab a ride with Claire to campus. All before nine a.m. Or plan B… Skip. (silence as she thinks). I can’t. (to herself in the mirror) You’ve skipped like five times already. Why do you always do this to yourself? Again. Always. Stranded at a stranger’s house in who knows where. And your phone’s dead. So, you can’t blast out an SOS. Great. Awesome. You go Glenn Coco. (silence as she backs against the door and slides to the floor). Make up your mind… What did you even do last night? Blacked out again: the story of Sydney Leake’s college years. (silence). I probably fucked him. (standing back up). You’re so fucking stupid. You piece of shit. Wasting your education and parents money on alcohol and Plan B. And… and God, your number is so fucking high. Oh yeah? Just keep lying. Keep smiling, and fucking denying shit so you can keep—(a knock at the door and a muffled man’s voice). Just a second! I’m just uh… washing my… face… (she quickly flips on the sink). One second! Coming! (she stares at herself in the mirror as the sink runs).

Bio:

I was running all over town… And you know, Oxford is small as fuck. I left my cheer uniform at Michael’s house after the game. We had to take pics the next day… and I can’t remember anything. I finally pulled up to the school… like 15 minutes late per usual. I got out and walked up to the field. I made up this whole story about going to Sonic and getting a Cherry Limeade and spilling it on my uniform and blah, blah, blah. But when I got there, all the football players and cheerleaders were huddled around waiting for me. Michael had a Walmart bag in his hand. He smiled and said, “You left this.” Everyone started laughing. Coach yelled at them to shut up and told me to go change. Story of my life. Late, forgetful, and well, just fucked someone. Michael was terrible… so joke was on him when I told Bradley that his dick was the smallest on the team. I didn’t really know if that was true. I didn’t fuck all of them in highschool… okay? Chill. Maybe a few.

High school was great. My school was wild… parties every weekend and all that shit. I would always host the party. I was 100% the social chair of my school. My brothers—they’re a year apart—were both GLAs. They would buy me alcohol. They only bought it, so they could come try to fuck my friends. Yeah… they were kinda creepy like my dad. My mom divorced my dad like when I was twelve. Then, she married some other dude from the country club named Rick. He doesn’t have kids and makes a fuck ton of money. So, I grew up with mom and Rick in
a big ass house, and my brothers grew up in my dad’s big ass house. I saw dad every other weekend and on holidays.

My family has a lot of money. Like… I get a Coach bag every Christmas and a fuck ton of clothes and jewelry and shit. From my dad and mom and Rick. Dad’s one of those creepy bachelors. He’s had some girlfriends… but God, they were total bitches. I’m his little girl.

I lost my virginity at 14. He was 18. He was one of my brothers friend. It was quick. I didn’t really like him… I just wanted to fuck somebody. Honesly, I can’t tell you how many guys I’ve slept with, but I don’t give a fuck. It doesn’t matter. My family was Catholic, and we went to church every Sunday until the divorce. After that, we stopped. Which was fine with me. I think I’ll pick that up later in life. Nobody at school really cared about it. Guys liked me because I’m hot and girls… well, girls are bitches. I had a best friend in high school. Betsy Athon was the best… we still talk and fuck shit up when she comes to town… She was a really talented dancer and goes to Julliard. I loved Betsy because she did whatever I did… She had no problem turning the fuck up with me. We bonded over that.

High school did get hard sometimes… especially senior year. I’ve never had a boyfriend. I’ve liked guys, but I mean nothing serious. I’m ready to get out of college and can… this sounds so basic… but reinvent myself. I went to the college in my hometown. My reputation followed me. I’m so glad I didn’t get cut from OK… I should have been cut because I was so ratchet. Senior year… I sent a bunch of nudes to Andrew, the quarterback at the time. He is now a GLA too. But he sent them out to other people. I was so upset. Mainly because dudes who I would never ever fucking show my tits too saw them. I hated Andrew and… and… Rick told me that it was my fault. He was right. I chose to send those pictures… My dad said the same thing. Oh fuck no. I didn’t tell my parents. The principle called my mom because the pictures were going around and causing a distraction… God… It was just me topless smiling. I looked so stupid. Snapchat is the devil… I still have mad streak game though. That time senior year pushed me to take responsibility for my shit. I started to own it. Oh… one time, these bad losers were talking mad shit about me… and I went up to them and said, “You talking shit about me?” They said that they weren’t. I was pissed and said, “One… I heard you… Two… don’t like to me… and three… yes, I took nudes, but the more embarrassing thing is that you used them to jerk off with. Fuck you.” And walked away.

I should have been cut, but guess what? My mom is the chapter advisor! So, when I came into OK, I was like the black sheep… but I didn’t care. People liked me in high school because I lit up the room and I brought the party. Like… it came with me. I made people do the shit that they were too scared to do. I took a lot of people’s pot virginity. Behind my back they’d call me a slut and a bitch and cunt… but to my face, I was queen. That’s how I am in college too.

Do I ever get upset? No… I don’t get made at other people. I do get angry with myself. I’ve always been a wild child. Like… running around naked when my parents would have their annual Christmas party. Or prank calling people. I was raised by babysitters and given Adderall to chill the fuck out. I’ve always been this way. So, I get mad that I’m this way. People, especially men, are assholes. Since day 1… God created assholes. Everyone’s a bitch and everyone’s a dick… but like my dads both always taught me… I’m responsible for what I do. If someone talks shit about you, then, Godamnint you gave them shit to talk about. Don’t fuck the entire football team, if you don’t want the entire football team to talk about it. The only thing is… I want to fuck the football team… I just don’t want them to be dicks about it. But! I know that they will be! I can only be mad at myself. Sometimes I am. Most of the time… I don’t give a fuck.
Okay… okay… okay… stop being a bitch… Don’t try to be some fucking psychologist and analyze me. I’m a marketing major.

**Matthew Drew Williams:**
Goes by **Mr. Williams**
Birthday: August 3rd, 1981 - 36
Sign: Libra

Information about his sign (Astrotwins. “Zodiac Signs: All About The 12 Horoscope Signs”):
- **Symbol:** The Scales of Justice
- **Element:** Air
- **Quality:** Cardinal
- **Ruling Planet:** Venus — the planet of beauty and love
- **Body Part:** Lower back, butt
- **Good Day:** Charming, lovable, fair, sincere, sharing, hopelessly romantic
- **Bad Day:** Vain, indecisive, melodramatic, manipulative, spoiled, delusional
- **Favorite Things:** Concerts at large venues, poetry, designer clothes, rich food
- **What They Hate:** Dull or practical people, bullies, being pressured to decide, saying goodnight, hearing the word “maybe”
- **Secret Wish:** To love and be loved in return
- **How to Spot Them:** Small symmetrical features, dimples, gentle eyes, outrageous designer outfits
- **Keywords:** Commitment, Partnership, Equality, Balance, Mutuality, Fairness

**Random Facts:**
- **Favorite Color:** Black.
- **Favorite Movie:** *Primal Fear* was a good movie.
- **Last Meal:** Portobello mushroom pie.
- **Favorite Holiday:** I like them all because I do not have to go to work.
- **Cats or Dogs:** I have a cat named Sparky. He keeps me company.
- **Politics:** I voted for Hillary. I did not want to, but I did anyway. I hate Donald Trump. I loved Obama.
- **Religion:** I do not believe in God. Religion is man’s way of coping with the hardships of life. I do not need extra help in doing that.
- **Song:** *A Horse with No Name* by America. It is a good song.
- **Clothes:** I always wear a suit or business casual attire. At home, I wear sweatpants and other workout clothes. I go to work and exercise.

**Bio:**

I am the Title IX Coordinator.
Edward Thomas Butler III
Goes by Tripp
Birthday: March 25th, 1997 - 19
Sign: Aries
Information about his sign (Astrotwins. “Zodiac Signs: All About The 12 Horoscope Signs”):

- **Symbol**: The Ram
- **Element**: Fire
- **Quality**: Cardinal
- **Ruling Planet**: Mars, the planet of war and energy
- **Body Part**: Head, face
- **Good Day**: Energetic, encouraging, unstoppable, bold, devoted, heroic, caring
- **Bad Day**: Proud, self-centered, impulsive, bossy, stubborn, reckless, jealous
- **Favorite Things**: Competitive games, new clothes, road trips (in fast red cars), debating, expressing themselves through stunning verbal and physical feats
- **What They Hate**: Sharing their toys, being ignored, cramped spaces, losing, the word “no”
- **Secret Wish**: To be number one
- **How to Spot Them**: High foreheads, focused or manic energy, aggressive stance
- **Keywords**: Willpower, Initiative, Determination, Passion, Beginnings, Self-Belief, Innocence
Random Facts:
- **Favorite Color**: Red, if I had to pick one. Or Blue actually.
- **Favorite Movie**: Any James Bond movie.
- **Last Meal**: Orange Chicken from Panda.
- **Favorite Holiday**: Easter. I love Easter Sunday and the message of resurrection. Makes me feel good.
- **Cats or Dogs**: Dogs. I got a black lab named Bosco.
- **Politics**: I voted Republican. It was hard for me to vote for Trump, but it was the right thing to do. I just vote and let God take control.
- **Religion**: I grew up Baptist, but now, I go to Eklesia, the non-denominational church in town.
- **Song**: Mighty to Save by Hillsong or Save a Horse Ride a Cowboy by Big and Rich. I can’t decide.
- **Clothes**: I wear a lot of Ralph Lauren and some J Crew. I try to dress nice, but at the same time, I gotta fit in with what the other guys in GLA wear.

**Bio:**

It's dumb, but it's important. Well, then it wasn't dumb. You might think it's dumb. It doesn't matter. In seventh grade, I was voted class favorite. That's when I knew. That’s was like the first injection, the first bump. I got elected or… chosen rather. My peers thought that I was their favorite. I didn't plan to get it. I didn't try to get it. I didn't even think about it. I just existed.
That's when I knew that something about me attracted people. I had charisma. Naturally. I was born with it you could say--maybe my parents taught it to me.

My dad’s a lawyer, and he’s super good at his job. He is a partner at a big firm here in Jackson. He started it right out of school. Butler Snow. Yep that's my dad. Edward Thomas Butler Jr. Obviously his dad the first. I'm Edward Thomas Butler III. They've called me Tripp since I was born. Tripp is short for triple because I'm third generation… Not sure why there is an extra P. But everyone calls me Tripp. Tripp Butler. So, my dad and his partner, Ronny Snow… they started their firm after ronnys dad retired. They absorbed his clients from Snow and Associates. Ronny and his dad didn't have a good relationship. So it became Butler Snow. And Butler first because it sounded better. They’ve got several other locations. One on the coast. One in Canada. Yeah I don't know either. But they do well. They are successful. They are loaded. My mom doesn't work. She was or is a stay at home mom, but we’re old now--as in my brother's and me. I've got two younger brothers. Bradley is 16. Rand is 14. Both on the football team that. My dad and mom met in college. Dad didn't have shit. Mom came from a super wealthy family. Her dad was a doctor, OBGYN… in the hay day of medicine. Before insurance companies messed everything up… When doctors made like almost 7 figures a year. Her dad delivered like half the babies in Meridian, where she grew up. That was Mom. Beautiful, wealthy, and popular. She says “he charmed me. And everybody else.” I get it from Dad.

I did everything in high school. Football and basketball. And I managed to do the school plays too. I was the tin man in wizard of oz senior year… good times… Let me tell you… I had this costume and it looked they strapped a car hood to me. I had to paint my face every night. So, I walk out there looking like a Honda Civic with silver makeup and the audience died. Every night. It was like five minutes of laughter. I couldn't even get my lines out. They were rolling. People like me. If it had been anybody else, the audience wouldn't have responded that way. That's what my drama teacher said.

I try to be nice to everyone. It's important to me how people view me. I care about what people think about me. I know that might seem shallow to some, but it isn't to me. My dad has always taught me that your name is your brand. When people hear Tripp Butler, what do you want them to think? I want people to think: nice, driven, “he’s a good guy.”. I want people to look up to me. I don't think those are shallow things to want. I'm not one of those people who craves significance. It's not ambiguous to where I believe any publicity is good publicity. I don't want a bad image. I always want to be right or not be the bad guy.

Okay… so get this. I'm in ninth grade. I'm mature for my grade. The girls like me, and I had never had attention from girls like for real before. And before ninth grade, We were underdeveloped and believed in cooties. Molly and Ruby, who were in the same click… cheerleaders, both cute and popular. They both were texting me a lot. I talked to them both at school. I was like one of the only dudes confident enough to talk to the girls, and We went to a small private school. Jackson Christian Academy. Like 80 kids in each class. Everybody knew everybody's business. I was nice to both of them. Well, at Randy's house party during homecoming weekend, Ruby and I snuck off from everyone. Molly was talking to some other people. Ruby and I ended up kissing. My first kiss. Ruby Dees. It was innocent. We sat by Randy's pool. Our feet in the water. The distant, muddled sounds of music and laughter in the background… the stars… it happened. It was great. Ruby had kissed someone before but not like made out or anything. It was both of our first makeouts. So, we walked back holding hands and Molly saw us before the others. She ran upstairs and hid in Randy's sisters room. Stacy went and confronted her. Stacy's kinda like the peace maker of the group. Man this was years ago now.
Anyway… Stacy comes down and says that I had been leading molly on. And well… honestly, I bet I would have kissed molly too. If it had been her with me by the pool. It just kinda happened. I was into both of them, but then, people started calling me a player. A man whore and stuff. Which is stupid, but I didn't want people thinking that. I began telling my version of the story which consisted of my always liking Ruby but was friends with both of them. I would say, “Molly is a great girl, but it's not my fault she read too much into our friendship. I didn't mean to.” Then, people started calling her crazy. She and Ruby weren't friends anymore, but Ruby and I dated the rest of the year. Her dad got a job in Yazoo, so she left. We broke up. It was pretty chill. She was super Christian. And I was too at the time. We didn't go passed making out.

I was really religious for a long time. I use religious because that's what I was and still kinda am. It wasn't really spiritual for me. Like I've never felt a divine connection or anything, but I see the benefits of religion for society. Community, safety, purpose, etc. and come on, name one openly atheist president? None… exactly. Back then, I really drank the Kool-aid though. I went on all the church retreats. I led worship for my youth group. I led small groups for junior high. I spent a lot of my time at the church. It was a big part of my identity.

When I stated my junior year of high school, I started really questioning. World History and Christian Worldview. Those two classes really messed with me. I started learning about all the issues caused by religions. Like in our current events portion of class, Mr. Ratcliff talked a lot about what was going on in the Middle East. Islamic terrorism, the taliban, al qaeda, all those dudes. They legit believe that by killing westerners… trying to oust the American ideals… they will get to their version of heaven… my teachers would say it was “bad religion.” But I would just ask, “how?” Like how… can you really say that they are wrong when they kill themselves for the beliefs? That's more than I do. I pray and go to church. Then these dudes jump in cars laced with homemade explosives and drive them into buildings and crowds of people and shit. That's way more dedicated than I am. I would never do that. That's when I started viewing religion as a social construct. I didn't have a name for it until college. But I just started thinking… damn. When I started slipping in my faith, my morals got weaker and weaker. Nah… let me rephrase that. I took less stock in the guidelines of the church. However, I understood the value of a pure image in high school. That kept people thinking good things about me. I'm ashamed to admit that, but it's true. I liked being the “good, Christian guy.” All the dads would shake my hands at church, but had no idea I was thinking about their daughters with their clothes off.

I try not to be as manipulative as I used to be. It's hard though. I want to be more genuine. I don't want people to just think I'm genuine. I want them to say, “he's a genuine guy.” And I want to actually be a genuine guy. But I have my secrets. I have my sins and the skeletons are piling up in the closet. Just shit that I don't want other people to know about.

Junior year of high school… I keep going back here because it's pivotal. Big developments here. When I started thinking that religion was religion--a way of life for individuals that helped them cope with the world--and nothing more, I began experimenting… in small ways. I stayed away from the stuff that would make me look bad publicly. Like… no drinking, no pot… nothing public. I did start masturbating a good bit and looking at porn. I wanted that… I wanted to be the guys in the pornos. Reverse cowgirl with Dani Daniels… all that shit… I dunno. This is my dark side. I hate it about myself sometimes. I mainly hate it because I fear exposure. What if the girls in my youth group read the shit that I had searched in porn hub? What if they knew? Does that make me fake?
I wanted a girlfriend. I wanted to do that stuff, but I didn't want others to know. Gah I wanted to get with Morgan Callahan. She went to Oak Grove and was like the hottest cheerleader. But she was a slut. So I couldn't do that. I did find a girl though. Angela Stewart. She was in the tenth grade. Cheerleader, big tits, beautiful, sweet… popular and a notorious good two shoes. She was perfect. I could see it in her eyes. She was a good two shoes for the same reason I was… it's how you survived and stayed on top of the totem pole at JCA. High school kids are brutal… we started going out. Same story you've heard a hundred times… texting, ice cream, homecoming dates, everyone starts talking, first kiss--which was good--and a little more, official, then it just kept rolling. We dated for two years. At that point in time, I wasn't aware of what I was doing or why I was doing it. I can tell you what I was doing because… well, hindsight is 20/20. At the beginning, we both promised to not go past kissing. 6 months later… we were in her parents hot tub. It was like the very beginning of January. Her parents are out of town. It's just us. She also lived in nowhere… the stars… something about the stars… turns me on I guess. I was hard and she was wet. Like in more ways than one. I started kissing down her chest and kissing her boobs. This had been done but always stopped. She let it keep going. I slid my hands down. She didn't stop me. I pulled her top off. She didn't say anything. She just stared. Then she pulled me back in and started grabbing at my dick. It was… god it was hot. We ended up stopping when I shifted positions and it got awkward. We said we wouldn't do it again. But… guess what? We did. By the summer before senior year. We had done everything but. I didn't want sex at the time. Neither did she. I was content with hand and mouth shit. So was she. We kept it that way until we graduated. We dated over the summer too. We had become best friends at this point. We ended on a good note. Over two years, nobody ever knew that she sucked me off under the bleachers during a basketball game… or that I ate her out in the library during a drama rehearsal. People didn't know these things. It was our secrets. That's how I liked it and that's how she liked it. Private. I can't tell you if I ever loved Angela. I never told her. She never told me. But man… she was a great partner. Like long term… we could have been a power couple. Like my parents.

I haven't been this self-aware before. I was super extroverted all of high school. Then, I started to think more. I'm in the Honors College here. People started pushing me and asking me, “Why?” I never had that. I started thinking about my why's. Why do I do the things that I do? Why am I the person that am? I'm a sophomore now, and I'm starting to question everything. Ya know how i said purity meant popularity in high school? Well that's not the case in college… but I do get a lot of respect for not drinking or smoking. That's why I refrain from that. I was pledge class president and the unofficial pledge class DD. That made me incredibly popular with my fraternity… on the other hand, my purity doesn't give me any additional clout. It's kinda a cock block. The really fun sorority girls don't ask me to functions because I don't drink. I get asked by like the super Christian girls. Which is fine. I'm really popular in RUF here, which is great for networking. A lot of the big shots on campus go to it. Carter goes to it a lot. That's who got me involved, but he partys just as hard as the rest of them. He's kinda the “dude who is always struggling.” I want the respect… at the same time, I want to experience life. I don't want to feel like I wasted my college years. This… me now… it's probably my prime. And there are so many gorgeous girls here. Like so hot. And they want to get with me.

Freshman year was… it was normal. Not as wild as other people, but I branched out and experimented a little with the hook up scene. I loved it. I made out with a lot of drunk girls at bars. I would go out with my pledge brothers and just see girls and go talk to them. And then make out with them. It was so weird how I could do that. Just let them get a little drunk and then
who knows what would happen. It's kinda like alcohol made everyone do what they really wanted to do. Like their most primal, basic desires. Even me who was sober… their drunkenness made me feel free… made me feel like the judgment and the image and… and all the fake shit didn't matter anymore. That's what college is like. Get fucked up, hook up with a ton of people, and you're still the homecoming queen. It's crazy and was a total shock to me.

I spent my summer working at Alpine Camp for Boys. It's a Christian camp and… I worked there because Carter told me to. He's my unofficial big brother. Most of the big guy leaders on campus work at Alpine. The past three student body presidents worked there after freshman year. It's what you do. So I did it. I was surrounded by all these really Christian guys who “loved God,” whatever that means… and I had to do devotionals and that's kinda when it hit me. This isn't me. Of course I didn't share that with the guys around me.

This semester I'm living with Jake Thompson in the GLA house. We got the second floor, 22B courtyard side. It's going to be unreal. It's carters old room. Jake is… he's one of a kind. He's like the funny guy in the pledge class. He's gets the most fucked up. He goes home with the most girls. All the guys love him. For different reasons than they do me. They love him, but respect me. They want Jake at the party and they want me to drive him there. That's our relationship. But he and I do get pretty real. I feel like I can tell him how I feel because he doesn't give 2 shits about anything. If I tell him, “I'm thinking about doing coke.” He will say, “you sure? Hell yeah man.” If I tell him

I want to join a monastery. He would say the same thing. He might argue a bit on that one, but he's supportive. I consider him to be one of the only real people I know. What you see is what you get. That's not the case with me. I admire the shit out of him… Carter too. In a different way though… Carter is what I want to be… Jake does the things I wish I could do. It's yeah… that's how I feel about them. I'm looking forward to this year because I can experiment with Jake without feeling shame or remorse or that I have to fake. I can do what I want with him. I'm comfortable. And hopefully, I'll lose my virginity this fall. That's what I want to do. That's what I've wanted to do for a while but the social pressure wouldn't let me. Now, i can.

I still have to be careful. I want to be student body president one day. I want to do what's needed to get there. But I want to be the president type. Jake isn't. Carter is. It's a fine line. I'm gonna do what I can. Play with fire and not get burned. I can do it. That's what I do. But I don't fly too close to the sun.

This goes back to high school too.

**Jacob Mitchell Thompson:**

Goes by Jake
Birthday: November 20th, 1996- 20
**Sign:** Sagittarius

**Information about his sign** (Astrotwins. “Zodiac Signs: All About The 12 Horoscope Signs”):

- **Symbol:** The Archer or Centaur
- **Element:** Fire
- **Quality:** Mutable
- **Ruling Planet:** Jupiter — the planet of luck and expansion
- **Body Part:** Hips, thighs
- **Good Day:** Honest, fair-minded, inspiring, optimistic, enthusiastic, encouraging, dedicated
- **Bad Day:** Argumentative, reckless, flaky, preachy, tactless, overconfident- Jake really exemplifies his bad characteristics because his life is unhealthy. He is preachy about sex and stuff not religion.
- **Favorite Things:** Dares, flirting, pets, pop music, international travel, laughter, karaoke, inspirational stories
- **What They Hate:** Prejudice, routines, rules, being bored, taking things too seriously, the words “you can’t”
- **Secret Wish:** To make the rules
- **How to Spot Them:** Strong legs, laughing eyes, comedic facial expressions, cracking inappropriate jokes in the middle of a staff meeting
- **Keywords:** Adventure, Travel, Expansion, Honesty, Outspokenness, Wisdom

**Random Facts:**
- **Favorite Color:** Orange
- **Favorite Movie:** Inglorious Bastards or any other Tarantino movie. That dude is fucking nuts.
- **Last Meal:** Whatever we had at the house. Fucking chilli dogs I think.
- **Favorite Holiday:** Fourth of July all the way.
- **Cats or Dogs:** Cats are for pussies. Get it?
- **Politics:** MAGA!
- **Religion:** Uh, I’m Christian, but just kinda chillin on all that religion crap right now.
- **Song:** Ass Drop by Wiz. Oh, I fucking love Future.
- **Clothes:** I wear whatever. A good thrift store polo is nice. Oh, I usually got a snapback on.

**Bio:**

I came all in her mouth. A couple sucks and I blew my load. My first blow job was fucking incredible, but I lasted like 2 seconds. She still sucked my dick though. So, cudos to me. I was 14. She was 15. Hannah had been eyeing me all year. It was the end of the year party. She was drunk. I was drunk. I mean I started drinking like… uh… oh yeah, New Years Eve party in eighth grade. I had just turned 14. That was the first time. Man… What a night. I got fucked up on like Malibu or some pussy shit. I made out with Claire though. I touched her tits too. She wouldn’t let me take her bra off, but like a couple minutes into the make out, I threw up. Damn. I’m telling you my shitty sex stories. I tell you what though, I’m a fucking champ when it comes to sex. I’ve fucked at least 50 girls. And I’m 20. I lost my virginity at 16. Rebekah Nelson. Yeah… her dad left town and she threw a party. She threw the party just to fuck me. We snuck out back and went to her pool house. And we fucked. It was pretty bad ass. We kinda randomly hooked up after that. I dated one girl at 15 for like a couple of months, but I ended up… well she says I cheated on her. But to be fair. I had been wanting to break up with Kim for a while. Like we still hooked up and shit, but like I never wanted to really hang out with her. I hadn’t taken her on a date in weeks. We used to go to Olive Garden, ya know… that kinda shit. Then Susan Miles saw me at a party. I was drunk. She kissed me first. I went for it. I blacked out. I don’t know if it
was a five minute make out or if she sucked me off, but yeah. Kim dumped me after that. I kinda realized I wasn’t a relationship guy. I mean… hear me out… I’m young. These are my glory days. I don’t want to waste them being tied to one bitch. I need to test the waters. Nothing wrong with going fishing and throwing them back. I don’t have to put it in a fucking fish tank. No. I just do my own thing. Whoever comes my way, I let be my guest. I just keep my mind open and eyes open. Except fat chicks. I wouldn’t go there. I do kinda wanna fuck a black chick though. That would be awesome.

Sometimes I watch like Ebony porn. Sometimes when I’m really bored or just ate Popeyes—I’m just fucking with you. But I do like Ebony porn. Jada Fire. Damn… shes fucking sexy. I would love to just be like get on top of me let me see your black tits bounce… those asphalt colored nips. I mean it beats some white girls like peperoni nipples. Ya know there isn’t a bigger buzz kill than huge or like weird nipples. Boner repellent for sure. Once I hooked up with this one chick and her nipples look like they had been clamped down by like one of those paper holder things that are black with the metal. Ya know what I’m talking about? You find them at Office Depot. When we were fucking, I kept imaging those things like clamped down on her nipples. I got kinda soft. Coulda been the whiskey or it coulda been her gross tits. Or both. I dunno. Damn… Another shitty story of sex. I’ll get to good one. Random question… why are black girls pussies like purple? Something I want to figure out one day. I dunno… maybe I’ll ask when I fuck one eventually.

That’s something that I love about college. Women. Throwing themselves at you. So many of them too. And I’m a GLA. Basic bitches love frat guys, and I love basic bitches. Right now in my life, I’m just looking to get with someone hot and have a good time with them. Buy some drinks. Maybe buy her Cook Out. Casual, hot sex. Random too. Spice it up. That’s what I want. I’ll grow out of it one day though. I mean one day I would like to… to be a dad. I guess. I kinda have to, right? I think that would be really cool. But I don’t want a fucking daughter, and I’m sure you know why. I don’t want to think about her fucking anybody. Or what if she ended up on Porn Hub. Would I be a shitty father then? How fucked up do I have to be to have a daughter want to get fucked for a living? I dunno. I think having a son would be cool. We could throw football and play tee-ball and all that father-son shit. I’d like that… one day. That’s years away though. I’m a big fan of YOLO. I’m gonna live it up now and settle down later.

Do I care about my future? Of course I care about it. I just said I want to be a dad one day. Yeah… I care about it. I don’t try that hard in school because I know that everything is about networking and making connections. Shaking hands. Getting coffee. Sucking corporate dick. Blah. Blah. All that bull shit. I’m a business major. Just like my dad and his brother and their dad—all of them were GLA by the way. Dad works for a cellphone company. C-Spire. He isn’t the owner, but he is like some corporate manager. He makes a fuck ton. Mom doesn’t work. She works out and goes to yoga and the country club with all the other high class ass. She plays tennis. She says she’s a stay at home mom, but my little bro is 16 now. He does whatever he wants. She makes us dinner and that’s about it. Also, I remember my babysitters way more. God, Vickie. She was a total bitch. One time I spilt an ICEE in her car and she screamed at me. So that’s who raised me. Some chick in college who needed to pay her rent by putting up with me and my bro and taking us to McDonalds. My dad’s chill though. He will be able to get me a job. Just like his dad did for him. I got an internship this summer. Dad’s making me get one for the company. I’ll be doing like… uh I dunno… working in the marketing department or something. I’m not a marketing major, but if this goes well, I might pick up a minor. Stay another semester. Ya know, for the grades not the extra football season. Ha! I’m going with the flow. I’m working
as hard as I have too. C’s get degrees. George Bush got C’s. So who knows I could be your next President. Republican President. Watch out for Jake Thompson 2045. I guess a President will run then. Whatever… I’m not Poli Sci. That’s Tripp. Let me tell ya… that’s who you need to watch out for. Smart as fuck. Funny, charming, ya know… like the next Reagan. He’s the shit.

I’m a huge Donald Trump fan. He’s probably the best thing that could happen for America. Mitt Romeny was cool, but he was a total pussy. I like Trump because he says what’s on his mind and doesn’t let anyone fuck with him. That’s what our country needs. Someone to actually shut ISIS down. Not someone like Obama who claims to kill Bin Laden. That was a Navy Seal. Fucking dip shit. Don’t get me too heated on this topic. I watch Fox every morning when I eat my Frosted Flakes. It’s my routine… the only thing really steady in my life. I might go to class. I usually shower… go to the gym or maybe smoke some weed. Drink… well that’s pretty consistent. Uh… I rarely go to church. I don’t remember the last time I called my mom. We talk like once a monthish. But. You get my point, and you better bet. Every morning… well sometimes its like in the afternoon depends on how hungover I am… I will wake up and eat those Frosted Flakes and watch Fox News. It’s nice having something consistent when my life feels like random or unexpected sometimes. Like I have no clue if I’m gonna pass or fail a test. It’s like a 50/50 shot.

Whoa…. Whoa… whoa. I don’t like that look you’re giving me. You’re judging me for not taking school seriously? Is that it? I do take it seriously. I already said I care about the right things… Networking… yeah. I mean sometimes… when Tripp gets like all A’s a semester, I might like… like question what I’m doing. It’s not really a thing. Sometimes I feel… guilty… nah… I dunno. Not sure what word I’m looking for… Sometimes I feel bad when I fail because my dad is paying for me to go here. But! I know he did the same thing and his dad and the whole line of Thompsons. I could be a better student if it was important to me. Uh… because… Yeah… because I don’t have to care. I’ll be just fine. Just you wait.

Besides if nothing works out with my family, my fraternity—which is like my second family—will help me out. Gamma Lambda Alpha, baby. You’ve heard of us for sure. We’re like the biggest frat in America… all over TFM, Capitol Hill, local governments, fucking business tycoons, athletes… you name it. Legends in every area of life. We’re so connected that I will be fine. My big brother’s dad works for a construction business. He could get me like an administrative job. Of course, I’d be at the bottom. I can always climb to the top. Started from the bottom now we’re here. Started from the bottom know the whole team’s fucking here. On top… GLA… top frat on campus, top frat in America. I will be fine.

Going GLA was one of the best decisions I’ve made in my life. A couple dudes from my high school went KA. They rushed me pretty hard. I was tempted to go KA, but they aren’t connected like we are. And my dad would have fucking killed me. Disowned me. Thrown me to the wolves. Sold my birthright. You think I’m fucking with you. Greek life is serious shit in my family. All the women are Omicron Kappas and all the men are Gamma Lambda Alphas. GLA and OK are like brother and sister frat and srat. Most of the groupies are OKs.

GLA has made my time in college. I met the guys that’ll be standing in my wedding and then they guys that will be carrying my coffin. Dark I know, but the bonds are serious. I’ve met so many girls. Some serious wife material, and also some serious slaw—ya know like the chicks you hook up with, but rush them out of the house without a shacker shirt and don’t tell your boys about it later. I wouldn’t be where I am in life without GLA. I love this place. I would hate being a fucking Geed. Eating at the student union everyday instead of at the house. Frat food does make you kinda fat though. I’ve gained maybe 15 pounds since high school. Freshman 15 for
sure, but then lost it, then gained it back. It goes up and down. I try to work out a bit ya know. Do some curls and crunches. Just like a quick rep in the gym. Some of the dudes in the gym are fags and douche bags. Like the dudes who come in all jacked and have like cut the sleeves out of their shirts. You can always see at least one nipple at all times... (beat). No. I’m not gay. You fucking asshole. When nipples are hanging out somewhere, anybody notices that shit. I see those dudes with their hair all slicked back, and I think, “Fuck you.” I hate them. They look like they could beat the shit out of me though. So, I steer clear. No chick wants to get with that. I try to rock like a nice in between. A dad bod kinda… but more like a dad in his late 20s. I like beer too much to really get in shape.

Carter Kemp Barnhart
Goes by Carter
Birthday: August 1st, 1995- 22
Sign: Libra
Information about his sign (Astrotwins. “Zodiac Signs: All About The 12 Horoscope Signs”):
- Symbol: The Scales of Justice
- Element: Air
- Quality: Cardinal
- Ruling Planet: Venus — the planet of beauty and love
- Body Part: Lower back, butt
- Good Day: Charming, lovable, fair, sincere, sharing, hopelessly romantic
- Bad Day: Vain, indecisive, melodramatic, manipulative, spoiled, delusional
- Favorite Things: Concerts at large venues, poetry, expensive jewelry, designer clothes, rich food
- What They Hate: Dull or practical people, bullies, being pressured to decide, saying goodnight, hearing the word “maybe”
- Secret Wish: To love and be loved in return
- How to Spot Them: Small symmetrical features, dimples, gentle eyes, outrageous designer outfits
- Keywords: Commitment, Partnership, Equality, Balance, Mutuality, Fairness

Random Facts:
- Favorite Color: Green.
- Favorite Movie: Does Friday Night Lights count?
- Last Meal: I cooked up a steak and broiled some asparagus. Good shit.
- Favorite Holiday: Christmas. Love spending time with my family.
- Cats or Dogs: Dogs.
- Politics: I’m kinda liberal. Don’t tell anyone. I voted for Hillary.
- Religion: I’m Catholic.
- Song: American Girl by Tom Petty.
- Clothes: Dress for the job you want. That’s what my dad would say. I wear khakis and nice chinos. Big fan of Banana Republic.
Bio:

“It’s the best thing I did in my life.” That’s what Dad kept saying to me… over and over. He’d call and ask… all excited and proud… He’d say, “You’re running for Commander. You’re continuing the legacy!” I’d tell him I was because back then… a year ago, so before I even really knew what the position meant… I wanted to do it. I wanted to be the Commander of GLA. The President. The Leader. Large and in charge, ya know? The title… the line on the resume. That’s what sucks you in. At least, I got that out of it though—the influence. I wanted to because GLA had been good to me and good for me. Back in Freshman year, I was PCP. I worked my ass off and did a damn good job. None of the other PCPs after me have even come close to doing as well as me. I always had the coolers full at gameday. Pledge drivers every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. If an active called, I picked him up. I got his apartment clean. I got the fucking job done. Then, as philanthropy chairman, I worked my ass off even more and actually made some real accomplishments and contributions. I ran the best Charity Bowl in years… I raised about $30k for the Children’s Miracle Network. Now talk about a resume booster… that’s high quality, like DC internship kinda shit. I actually did intern for Congressman Wicker last summer. Wicker only lets GLAs intern for him. That’s his rule. Pretty bad ass. And guess what? He was GLA philanthropy chairman too. One day, he was just asking me about GLA and shit in his office. I told him about what all I’ve done for the frat. He smiled and extended his hand. He said, “I commend you and thank you for keeping the fraternity alive. You set the standard.” Yeah… that’s what I do in GLA. I set the standard. The old Commander, Tyler, he told me that I had it in the bag. He told me it was mine if I wanted it. And I did. I won unopposed. Yeah… the guys took me out, and we blacked out. The new head table got wasted before we took power. It’s a tradition. “Black out before you get Power.” That’s our motto. We call the night, The Passing of the Torch. (smiles). Man… good times. I woke up next to a sophomore and of course she wanted a GLA shirt… especially after getting with the new Commander. It felt good to be in charge, but I had no idea.

The country is changing. Frat life isn’t the same. The country is cracking down. The liberals want frats to die. All of them, and my name is on GLA. It’s a war against me and my brothers and… and Greeks all over the country. I feel like I have this giant target on my back. Like get this… For out spring party, Groundhog Day, we had a tank—tanks are fucking gay, I know, but this one was bad ass… The tank had a little groundhog on it and said, “Wine em, dine em, 69 em.” We took the university’s name and GLA letters off of it, so it wasn’t like our official t-shirt. We put it up on our website for our members to buy… and about an hour later, the university fucking called me. Luckily it was the graduate assistant for Greek life. He’s chill. He was like, “Carter, take that shit down… you know as well as I do that that’s a bad idea.” Honestly, it was for us and it didn’t say the university’s name or GLA. Like holy shit… But he said, “If you leave that up, you’ll be up shit’s creek.” He didn’t really need to explain to me because I read the news. I see frats getting shut down all the time for hazing or jokes or whatever. I get it. The guys in power want us out. All universities want a good name for themselves. They wanna do what they have to do to survive… I’ve adapted. I took the shirt down. The guys were pissed, but I told me that if we want to survive, we have to play their game. That’s what I’ve been doing.

I learned my lesson from watching Tyler. Last year, we had this field party and a kid got really fucked up… a high school kid. He was so fucked up… he walked in front of one of the busses as it was driving off. He didn’t get hurt… not a scratch on him. He was chill about it, but
somehow his parents found out. They flipped their shit. They wanted to sue the frat. And Tyler’s name was on it. Tyler was the Commander, and he was responsible. It was like Rich Ass Family v. Tyler, GLA Commander. He said negotiations were the worst, and either way, he was fucked. Tyler Carmichael, fucking stud… but in an instant, he was almost ruined. Luckily, that fall we gave the kid a bid, and his parents dropped the charges. That kid was a dick too. For a while though, Tyler thought he was done. No grad school. No nothing. Just trying to survive it.

But now, I’m in charge. My goal is to prevent this place from burning to the ground. I took the tank down because I wanted to stop a forest fire. It’s for the greater good, and it’s all on my shoulders. I’d rather the guys be mad at me for a stupid shirt than for getting the frat kicked off. Man… my dad would be so disappointed in me… Being president seemed cool on the outside, but once I got it… so much pressure. I used to drink and party all the time for fun… it’s an escape now. Which scares me… but I do it to escape, and when I’m drunk, it’s like all my responsibilities go away. Like… I forget. I know I still have them, but I forget about them for a couple hours. Then, sometimes I get paranoid, because I remember them… and know that if something happens at this party it’s on me. I’ve had to kick some guys out for partying too much. Sometimes I feel like a hypocrite… but like I don’t smoke weed in the house. Man… I had to kick out a pledge brother of mine for smoking too much in the house… It sucked, but I’m not afraid to send someone to the chopping block to have the backs of everyone else. Even if you’re my best friend… Hey, even if I fucked up. Then… Yeah, I’d have to go to. But that’s not gonna happen. I’ll fight. I’ll survive. My dad used to tell me, “There are two people in the world: those who call the shots, and those who get shot.” Pretty fucked up… I think he made it up. But I’m gonna be the one to call the shots. I’m not gonna take a bullet for someone else’s mistakes. I won’t…

Wanna know something about my father? I was 4 years old. I played like little league soccer. The ones where they give everyone a trophy. Dad would yell at me from the sidelines. When we would lose, the rides home were so long. He wouldn’t talk to me. We wouldn’t drive through Wendy’s or anything. We’d go home. Mom would make me a sandwhich… she was always nice to me even when we lost. Mom’s kind. She puts up with a lot… when we won, Dad would constantly talk about the game. He’d say, “Son, how you made that goal…” This and that. He’d take me to Wendy’s or wherever I wanted I got to decide because I was the “big man.” The rewards made me want to win. I didn’t want to win for the sake of winning. I wanted to win to please him… Kinda fucked up… But that’s how I am. I win, and I work and hustle to… to achieve and get on top… to get rewards. I took this psychology class freshman year… and we talked about like Nature v Nurture. That made me start thinking about how his pressure like… like shaped me.

In high school… damn, that seems so long ago. I would pick paper topics that I knew would impress my teachers. Like Mr. Cartwright. He was obsessed with the War of 1812. Random, but I wrote my final history paper on the War of 1812. He loved it. Everyone else chose like WWI and WWII. He told me, “Carter, you get it. You learned the most important thing in this class.” I have no idea what that meant. Maybe that meant I learned to suck up.

I see these things in other people too. That’s why I pay attention to Tripp. He reminds me of myself. He’s always making moves and always looking towards the future. Eye on the prize. He thinks like I do. I’m at the top now. Greek man of the Year… I might be in Hall of Fame too, but that’s next semester. I see that he wants to be where I am. Does he suck up to me? Probably… but hell, I did it too… and still do. Kissing ass and taking names. That’s my motto. Not really, but it kinda is. I’ve got dreams. I want to be the President of a University. Preferably
this one. But it’s Chancellor here. I want to be Chancellor of Ole Miss one day. I gotta play my cards right. I need to go to Vanderbilt for Higher Ed. It’s ranked fifth in the nation for higher ed. I want to be a director of Greek Affairs. Then, eventually a Dean of Students. Then, a Vice Chancellor or Vice President of Student Affairs somewhere else… Finally, I’ll get the Chancellor’s spot. That’s the path right now. I like to plan it out long term. I could follow my sister’s footsteps though. She wants to be a chief attorney for a university. She’s super smart. Mindy—she is going by Melinda now—graduated from law school and somehow got her masters in Higher Ed too. It took her five years, but now she’s like working in the legal arm at Brown. She’s bad ass. That’s another pressure. She’s super successful… my dad and mom own their own law firm. I don’t really want to do law because I want to do this, but my family is successful. I want to be successful too.

Yes… my mom is a lawyer. My mom and dad met in law school, but I grew up in a traditional Presbyterian home with traditional male and female roles. I completely agree with that. I respect my mom for being intelligent and hardworking, but my father is the head of the household. A lot of people ask me what its like having a mom who works and owns a business… those types of questions… as if it meant that she had some kind of power. She does, but in the family, dad called the shots. That’s how I want it to be in my family… Mindy wants an assertive husband too.

That’s how I view myself in most areas of life… I view myself as in charge. I’ve always been. In elementary school, I was always a team captain for hand ball. I was the leader of the guys in my grade. I was class president from ninth to eleventh grade. Then, I was student body president. That’s kinda my identity… the team captain.

I’ve got another year of school. I’ve already started my application to Vanderbilt. I hope to meet my wife there too. I’m not dating anybody. I had a couple girlfriends in high school. Cynthia and Ann Michelle. I liked them, but it wasn’t serious. They were both pretty upset when I broke up with them. I dated Cynthia for a like five months in tenth grade. Then, I dated Ann Michelle all of senior year. I broke up with her before I came here. She went to State. It wouldn’t work. I haven’t wanted to be with anyone in college. I’ve been with a lot of girls, but that’s different. Going home with randoms and hooking up with date party dates has been my speed in college. I don’t have time for a girlfriend. I’ll settle down later. I don’t really think about it.

One of the best hookups I’ve had with Claire Fitzpatrick. I have a pretty extensive list… Abby, Kelly, Mary Claire… Sicily… uh… Regina… wait maybe not… I dunno. A lot of people and a lot of alcohol. Claire Fitzpatrick… it’s kinda hard to forget a girl like that. We were both wasted. I don’t remember the night, but I do remember the morning after. This was spring of my sophomore year… we had a house party after Charity Bowl, the big philanthropy event I was telling you about. I was the king that night. I remember taking some shots and then getting paraded around. I started talking with Claire… everyone knew her as the hot, OK cheerleader… and I took her back to my room. We both woke up in my bed… Both naked and both disoriented. She started giggling. I asked, “Where are your clothes?” She laughed and said, “Looks like you don’t even have to take them off again.” She put her hand on my chest and slid it down. I rolled on top of her. She laughed some more. Then, we fucked again. We had a couple more drunk hookups… but she would stop replying to my messages. Which was fine… but I liked being with her. One of the few girls who let me fuck them the next day too. There’s something about her. She’s… she’s charming. To say the least.
Appendix 2: Draft One of *She Asked for It*

*She Asked For It*

A play by John Brahan
Scene 1.

An office. A desk sits diagonally stage right. A computer monitor, papers, pencils, and a coffee mug sit on the desk. A clock and calendar hang on the wall behind the desk. The clock subtly ticks. A chair sits next to the desk stage left. It’s a comfortable chair, but not too comfortable. The chair faces the audience diagonally downstage right. Facing the audience, Matthew sits behind his desk writing in his notebook. A door stands next to the chair even further stage left. A small plant sits next to the table. A cold and gloomy light illuminates the grays of the office. The rest of the stage is dark. A knock is heard at the door. Matthew writes.

Matthew (jolting his head up): One second.

Matthew fiddles with the items on his desk. He arranges them neatly though the desk appears clean. He pulls out a digital recorder from his desk drawer. He lets out a breath.

Matthew (standing up): Come in!

Kat walks in the door. She wears jeans, a blouse, and a sweater.

Matthew: Katherine, I am glad you are here.

Kat (smiling feebly): Hey Mr. Williams, please call me Kat.

Matthew: Oh yes, Kat. How are you?

Kat: I’m okay. Tired. I haven’t slept much this week. This whole thing… It’s… it’s… It’s a lot. Ya know? Emotionally—I’m all over the place (awkwardly laughs). And my friends. Monica won’t stop asking me so many questions.

Matthew: Monica will have her turn to speak to me again.

Kat: Yeah.

Matthew: Now, I need to ask, are you positive that you want to pursue this process?

Kat: What do you mean?

Matthew: Do you want to officially file a complaint with the Title IX office?

Short silence.

Kat: Yes. I… I—talking with friends, and hearing about other… other victims… And their situations. I want to speak out. For them... And for me.

Matthew moves back towards his desk.

Matthew: Very well. Katherine—Kat, please take a seat. I need to hear your statement.

Kat (sitting down in the chair): Yes.

Matthew nods. He flips through his notebook to a clean sheet of paper. A short silence.

Kat: Can we start? Please. / I’m sorry, Mr. Williams. That seemed rude, but I didn’t… yeah.
Matthew: Absolutely. / It’s okay, I understand. Retelling the story can be like reliving the moment.

Kat: Thanks. I want to do this, but I’m ready to get it over with.

Matthew: Yes. To be as thorough as possible in my investigation, may I record your statement?

Kat (hesitant): Uh… Yeah.

Matthew (preparing recorder): The recordings allow me to cross reference my notes, so that I am completely informed on my individual conclusions for each person with whom I speak. Please do not leave anything significant out.

Kat: Yes.

Matthew turns on the recorder. He places it towards the front of the desk with the microphone facing Kat. He clears his throat.

Matthew (leaning over and talking in the recorder): Today is Wednesday, November, 9th. Katherine Marie Simmons and I are in my office at 1:05 p.m. (leaning back to a sitting position) So, Kath—Kat, I want you to be as detailed as you can be. I know this experience is difficult for you to recount, but please do not leave any details—people, or words spoken, or places—do not neglect the tiny details. Every little aspect is important for me to be as informed as possible to determine whether a case exists.

Kat: I understand.

Matthew: Well, first—a basic question—what happened between you and Eddie on Friday, November, 4th?

The lights change.

Kat: Uh. Well, we—like me, Monica, and Sydney. We were about to go to the fraternity house…

Short Silence.

Kat (holding back tears): I can’t do this Mr. Williams.

Matthew cuts off the recorder, and the lights revert to the original lighting of the office. Silence.

Kat (crying): It’s too hard. I was blackout. I don’t remember all of it. It’s hard. I… I can’t remem—remember the details. Just how I felt. How he made me feel. What he did made me—that’s all I can remember…

Silence.

Matthew: Yes, I understand. But if you want to file a complaint, I need your statement.

Kat: The details. They’re… They’re fuzzy. I blacked out.

Matthew: That’s not uncommon.
Kat: Please…

Silence.

Matthew: Another person’s word and account of the evening is not enough to file a complaint. You, as the complainant—the person who has potentially been sexually assaulted—must provide the foundation for a case, if an incident of harassment or assault has occurred.

Kat: If assault occurred?

Matthew: I will need to hear your statement and Eddie’s statement. I will talk to witnesses—maybe even examine texts and calls—to determine whether sexual harassment or an assault has occurred.

Kat: It did.

Silence.

Matthew: After thoroughly investing, I will reach a conclusion, a conclusion based on facts. May we start again?

Kat: I… I… Yes.

Matthew: Your statement begins the process. If you do not want to do this, you have the choice to walk out of my office and never deal with this again. Or we can continue. I am here to help you. (Silence.) Kat?

Kat: Eddie raped me. I want to do this.

Matthew clicks on the recording.

Kat: Monica, Sydney, and me. We were getting ready at Sydney’s and my apartment before we went to the fraternity house…

Scene 2.

The lights change. “Blame It” by Jamie Foxxx begins to play. Kat moves out of the office and into an apartment with Sydney and Monica. The women are drinking and getting ready for the night. The Spotify playlist “Ultimate White Girl Pregame” plays throughout this scene.

Monica: Why did you do that?

Sydney: He was cute. And he bought all my drinks.

Monica: That doesn’t mean anything. Nothing substantial at least. It doesn’t mean you should go home with a random guy.

Kat (laughs): Monica, chill. She was having fun. She likes the guy. You did like him, right?

Sydney: I mean, yeah. I guess. Like I said he’s cute. And he—

Monica and Kat (mocking): Bought all my drinks.
Sydney and Kat laugh. Monica sits quietly. Sydney's phone vibrates. She looks at it as she begins her next line.

Sydney: But like I was saying… Drunk sex is so much better than sober sex. Let me tell you. / Monica, shut up and listen to me. Not everyone is feminist as fuck like you.

Monica: You’ve got to be kidding me. / It’s not about feminism!

Kat: Monica.

Monica: It’s about consensual—

Sydney: Shhhhh!!!!

Kat laughs. Kat sends a text message.

Sydney: Drunk sex is so much better because… One… you don’t have to worry about like looking at the person. You can’t think straight. So, you can’t see straight. And f all that eye contact—romance bull shit. Sometimes I just want dick, ya know?

Kat: I like the eye contact. It’s sweet.

Monica: No, it’s conscious.

Sydney (glaring at Monica): TWO, The sounds. Oh my God. The sounds. You know how uncomfortable a… a queef…

Kat: Sydney!

Monica: But isn’t that so liberating?

Sydney: What?

Kat: I hate that word.

Sydney: Whatever! You don’t have to deal with the… the… wet? Yeah, sounds that come out of your—hoo ha— / You either forget they happen or you’re so gone that you don’t even notice them.

Kat: Are we twelve? / That’s a good point.

Monica rolls her eyes. She pulls out her phone.

Sydney: Three. The next morning. You’re… you’re…

Monica: Disoriented?

Kat: Awkward?

Sydney: No, it’s over. Like you don’t have to kiss them back. You don’t have to eat breakfast or lunch with them or shower with them. I mean, if you don’t want to. It’s over.

Monica: How?
Kat: I actually agree with Sydney on that one. The night before seems like a dream. You wake up. You think… / Exactly. You are yourself again. Not the… the promiscuous girl / (laughs) Chill, Nelly Furtado. You are yourself again, and the boy next to you is himself again.

Sydney: Where the fuck am I? / (singing) Wherever you are, I’m all alone… / Yes! Since your drunk alter ego did it with that boy the night before, you—your sober self… your regular, normal self—technically didn’t hook up with him? My Hyde side is—

Monica and Kat: Deedee.

Sydney: Ha! You know me so well. Yes, Deedee, my drunk alter ego. When Deedee hooks up with a boy, that doesn’t mean Sydney hooks up with the boy. I sober up in my sleep—sometimes sober up—Deedee slips out. Then, there is Sydney. Me. In my full hungover glory. Lying in a stranger’s bed. If he tries to kiss me, I can be like, “Hell noooo. Last night, that was Deedee.”

Kat (laughing): That’s… That’s honestly, so true.

Monica: I can’t believe you two.

Sydney: What?

Monica: You’re acting like getting drunk is like this… this great transformation. Like a werewolf at a full moon. No.

Sydney: Ooh well Tequila turns Kat into an animal.

Kat (laughs): Shut up.

Monica: No, both of you. Drunk sex is rape.

Sydney: Not this again. It’s not. Rape is rape. Drunk sex is drunk sex.

Monica: It’s the same thing!

Kat: Monica, please don’t get into this.

Monica: When you are drunk, legally, you cannot...

Sydney: No, no, no. If I am fucked up and want to have sex with a boy, who is also drunk. Or maybe even sober. I’ll let a boy sleep with me when I’m drunk. I’m gonna do it. It’s my body, and you can’t control it Monica.

Monica: That right there—what you just said, your mentality—

Sydney: What? Are you gonna say something about women being silent? And 80 something percent of women are raped and don’t speak out? Huh?

Kat: Syd… Monica: The statistics aren’t—

Sydney gets a phone call.
Sydney (answering phone): Whatever. I don’t give a shit about your stats. They are probably made up anyway—alternative facts or something. I gotta get this. (into cellphone) Hey hey hey!

Sydney exits. Kat gets out her cellphone. Silence. Kat is scrolling through Instagram or something.

Kat: Sorry about Syd.

Monica: It’s fine.

Silence. Kat types a text and sends it. She puts it down, letting out a sigh.

Monica: I don’t get why you are friends with her. Or why I am friends with you two?

Kat: We have been best friends since like birth!

Monica: Yeah, but things are different now.

Kat: What does that mean?

Monica: You don’t really care about anything. / You drink so much, and constantly— / Boys, boys, boys. All the time. You think like her and act like her and hook up like her—ya know, drunk.

Kat: Yes I do. / I go out like twice a week. / That’s not true. Are you slut shaming me?

Monica: NO. I don’t slut shame.

Kat: Yeah you have no room to talk.

Monica: Are you slut shaming me?

Kat: NO. You have been dating Brandon for like—what, a month now?

Monica: Yeah, a month.

Kat: You and Brandon do it all the time.

Monica: But I am not incapacitated, hooking up with strangers. Neither is he. I’m choosing to do it with him. I have control over my vagina and choose to use it for sex.

Kat: That’s what she just said! She does too!

Monica: No, that’s completely different. I decide to have sex with my boyfriend. Sydney gets drunk, and… and on a whim after not being able to coherently think, a man sees that and takes advantage of it.

Kat: Let’s not get into this right now. Please? / But we are about to— / Uh…

Monica: Now we are talking about it… / But what? / What? I don’t see any “middle ground” on this.

Kat: No, chill. What if, I don’t know what—
Monica: And honestly, you’ve been hanging out with Eddie. I don’t know how I feel about that. He has a reputation.
Kat: We hung out once! I barely know the guy. / WHAT! / For what!?
Monica: Come on. / He has a reputation. / For hooking up with drunk girls while he is sober?
Kat: That’s not true.
Monica: Well, does he drink?
Kat: No— / He doesn’t sleep with them, but—
Monica: Does he hook up with girls? / You know what I mean, past kissing.
Kat: Yeah… I guess.
Monica: Well then, that’s sexual assault.
Kat: But I… well—
Sydney walks in with three drinks.
Sydney: Hey, the Uber’s here.
Kat (eagerly): Great…
Monica: Wait. I’m not finished with what I’m saying.
Sydney: Oh my God. Every f*cking time! Just take a drink and relax.
Sydney gives Kat a drink and moves to give Sydney hers.
Kat: Thanks.
Monica: I’m fine, I don’t want another drink.
Sydney: More for me then.
Monica (ignoring Sydney): Kat… I just want you to be careful.
Kat: Yeah, I got it.
Sydney: The Uber’s gonna leave us and I’m not getting the next one.
Kat (heading for the door): Fine, let’s go.
Monica sighs. They exit.

Scene 3.
The women move towards the door as the sounds of a party—murmuring of people, laughter, etc.—crescendo. The Spotify playlist “Frat Party Playlist” plays in the background. The lights fade on apartment and illuminate a bar, a pool table sitting stage right, and a couch stage left. A pool cue rack holding a cue and a triangle sits stage right of the pool table. Three bar stools sit under the bar. The bar looks homemade. The women walk through the door out of the apartment
into the set of the fraternity house. Jake and Eddie are playing pool. One of the bar stools from under the bar sits in front of the pool table. The women holding solo cups approach the men.

Monica: And as soon as we walk into the party, there they are.
Kat: Monica…
Sydney (interrupting): Look who it is!
Kat (excited): Eddie! Jake!
Eddie: Hey Ka—
Sydney (whispering audibly, grabbing Eddie’s arm): Eddie, tonight’s the night.
Eddie: Hey, I hope. She’s older and, I don’t know her—
Sydney: She likes you. She kept talking and talking about you.
Eddie: Really? I haven’t texted her since last week or sometime, but—
Sydney: I know, I know. But, you’re not a fuck boy!
Eddie: Yeah. Thanks. Don’t freak me out.
Sydney (flirty): You’ll be fine.
Sydney (noticing the squabble): Okay! Why don’t we all take some shots?
Jake: Hell yeah. Eddie, play me in pool again. I’ll rack em.
Eddie: For sure.
Sydney: Bartender?
Eddie: I gotcha, what are you drinking?
Jake goes to rack the pool balls. Eddie goes behind the bar and pulls out some handles.
Sydney: What do you have?
Eddie: Uh… Fireball, Malibu, Titos, Burnetts—
Sydney (interrupting): Fireball!
Jake: Fuck no. Kat: Sure. Monica: Ew?
Eddie: Coming up!
Eddie grabs some solo cups from behind the bar and pours generous shots for his friends.
Jake: Why do we only have shitty liquor in the house?

Sydney: IDK, hold your nose if you’re gonna be a bitch. Eddie: Because you buy shitty liquor.

Eddie comes back around from the bar and passes out drinks. Monica gets a text message.

Monica (looking at her phone, under her breath): Shit...

While Monica is engrossed in her phone and Jake and Sydney speak at the pool table while Jake breaks the balls, Eddie leads Kat away from the group.

Eddie: So how’s everything?

At this point in Kat’s statement, she is drunk. The alcohol is hitting her. The lights are dimming, and the music rises in volume.

Kat (giggling): I’m good. Just school and cheer. Ya know?

Kat spills her drink on Eddie’s shoes.

Kat: Shit, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean, to—


Kat (laughing): A little clumsy, but anyway, school. For you?

Eddie: It’s fine, but I don’t see how you do it. Pre pharm. Wow.

Kat: But one day it’ll be... be. Worth it. (smiling). That’s what I’m telling myself. Soooo...

Eddie: Yeah, so... Sorry I haven’t texted you.

Kat: Nbd.

Eddie: (lightly grabbing her arm) Hey, wanna get out of here?

Kat is drunk. Lights start getting lower and lower. The music gets louder.

Sydney (holding one of the handles): Shots!

Jake: Everybody!

Sydney: Shots!

Kat (almost yelling, to Jake): What did you say? It’s really loud!

They take shots.

Eddie: Another round!

Monica: Kat, why don’t we / Go home?

Kat: What! / Stay here. Toasts?

Jake: To rich dads! Sydney: To hot moms!
Eddie pours the shots. Jake shoots at the table.

Monica: You are pigs.

Sydney: Kat, come on take another.

Everyone but Eddie takes another round. Monica gets a phone call.

Monica: Hey—hold on. (looking at the phone) Shit. This is urgent. I gotta go. Kat. Text me tonight.
Monica exits.

Sydney: Byeeee….

Eddie (grabbing Kat around the waist): Let’s go to my room.

The stage goes dark, and Eddie and Kat move to the bedroom.

Scene 4.

A small dimly lit bedroom. The muffled sounds of Wiz Khalifa and Future can be heard through the walls. A twin bed sits stage left. A bed side table sits upstage of the bed. A desk lamp like the one at the beginning of a Pixar movie casts light on the bed. A tissue box sits on the table. Clothes scatter the room. A rolling desk chair is pushed under the desk. A poster of Kate Upton hangs on the wall. A door stands stage right. Eddie and Kat enter the room.

Kat (tripping as she enters): Oh shit. / Am I this drunk? / I swear…

Eddie (grabbing her forearm): Whoa! / (laughs) No just watch your step / Should have had more Fireball, huh?

Kat (incoherent mumbling): Uh…

Eddie (tosses his keys on the bedside table): What?

Kat: I need to sit. Didn’t you drink?

Eddie: Just Coke.

Kat sits in the rolling chair. The lights cut out. Kat has blacked out. Silence for 10 seconds. Lights cut back on. Kat sits in the chair still, but now facing the bed. Eddie sits on the bed.

Eddie: Having a fake is no big deal. Staying sober is. I DD for my friends. They think I’m a good guy. Sweet, right?

Kat (giggles): So cute.

Eddie: You seem nervous?

Kat: What is this… What do you like about me?

Eddie: What’s not to like? Come on. Sit. I know this isn’t your first time doing this. I’m not an idiot.
Eddie advances and helps her out of the chair and on to the bed. Kat is silent and sits with her feet hanging off the bed. Eddie, standing at the foot of the bed, spreads her legs, moves in between them and kisses her on the lips. Kat holds the kiss. Then she minorly shifts out of his embrace.

**Eddie:** You look so… God, you’re hot.

Eddie aggressively and sexually pushes her down on the bed. Lights cut out. Kat blacks out again. Silence for 10 seconds. Then, the only light that turns on is the desk lamp. The lamp shines on a shirtless Eddie and Kat wearing a red bra. Eddie is on top of Kat lying on her back on the bed.

**Kat:** Eddie… fuck.

**Eddie (undoing his belt buckle):** I want to do this with you.

Lights cut out. Silence for 10 seconds. With a crescendo, Eddie breathes in an intimate and sexual manner.

**Kat (mumbling):** Fuck.

Scene 5.

**Back in Matthew’s office. Kat sits in the same chair. Matthew sits at the desk and jots notes.**

Silence except for the ticking of Matthew’s clock.

**Kat (softly crying):** I… I… (sighs)

Silence. Matthew finishes his notes, looks up, and stares intently.

**Kat (pulling herself together):** I don’t even think he had a condom. But I’m on birth control, and took care of it.

Silence. Matthew writes.

**Matthew:** Is there anything else you want to tell me?

**Kat:** No that’s it. / Thank you so much Mr. Williams.

**Matthew:** Alright then. / You’re welcome.

**Kat:** I’m beyond grateful for you. You have been the sweetest through all of this.

**Matthew:** No problem. I will be in touch.

**Kat:** Yes.

Silence.

**Matthew:** If that’s all, you are free to go.

**Kat:** Okay.

Kat gets up and walks towards the door. She opens the door and turns around.
Kat: Seriously, thank you.

The lights go out.

Scene 6.

Matthew sits again at his desk. The scene begins the exact same way as the first scene. A knock on the door.

Matthew (standing up): Come in!

Eddie walks into the office. He wears khakis with loafers and a button down tucked into his khakis. He is trying to look nice. He has a backpack on.

Matthew (walking around the desk and extending his hand): Hello, Eddie. / Glad you could make it today. I’m Mr. Williams, the person facilitating and overseeing… / Of course.

Eddie (smug): Yeah, great to see you. / I remember from the emails.

Short silence.

Matthew (turning towards his desk): I am happy that I could finally get a hold of you. Would you like to start by—

Eddie: Uh, before we start, can you explain what exactly I’m doing here? I mean I know why I’m here, but what am I doing because if this whole thing is what I think it is, then I’m… I’m pissed off.

Matthew: Absolutely. I have received a complaint from another student—Kat Simmons—that you were potentially part of a sexual assault. So, you are the respondent to the complaint. To determine whether an assault occurred, I need to hear your statement from the night of—

Eddie (nervously): What? Am I under criminal investigation or something? / Hm.

Matthew: No, well, not now. / The campus police have been notified of the occurrence. Which is strictly protocol. If—I’m not saying that it will—if something like this would occur again associating you, the university police should know. However, they are not conducting a criminal investigation. Kat has not pressed charges. However, per university policies and by requests of the complainant, I will conduct an investigation to get all the facts straight and decide whether a there is a case, before student conduct can address the issue. If evidence is found supporting the incident, then the Office of Student Conduct will have a hearing to determine… / I never said that… / Like the law has always said, “Innocent until proven guilty.”

Eddie (boiling): Hey, look I didn’t rape her. / Then, why am I here? / (sarcastically cool) Right. Right.

Matthew: A student has come to my office expressing concern. And as the Title IX coordinator, that’s my job, to investigate, and that is what I am doing.

Short silence.
Eddie: This whole situation has caused me and my family a lot of stress. I feel attacked and stressed out.

Matthew: I understand. You are entitled to feel that way.

Eddie: I want to get this straightened out. I’m coming in here to clear my name. I didn’t rape Kat. She... she wanted to... to—do it. I mean... she asked for it.

Silence.

Matthew: How about you sit down and we can get started?

Eddie: Yeah. Okay.

Matthew walks back around his desk and sits. He clears his throat. Eddie stands in the same spot.

Matthew: Will you take a seat please? Yes, that is perfectly fine

Eddie (awkward): Oh, in this chair? Great.

Eddie sets his backpack down and sits in the chair. Matthew picks up the recorder.

Matthew: Now, may I record your statement? Nobody else will hear this.

Eddie: Uh... I guess...

Matthew: Great.

Matthew turns on the recorder. He places it towards the front of the desk with the microphone facing Eddie. He clears his throat again.

Matthew (leaning over and talking in the recorder): Today is Wednesday, November, 9. I’m here with Edward Mitchell Hodges at 3:05 p.m. in my office. (leaning back to a sitting position) Great. So, Eddie, I want you to be as detailed as possible. Do not leave any details—times, people who interacted with you both—do not leave the details out. Every little thing is important.

Eddie: Sure. Yeah.

Matthew: Well, then. What happened between you and Ms. Katherine Simmons on Friday, November 4th?

The lights begin to change.

Eddie: Well, it started at the frat house, Jake and I were shooting some pool...

Eddie stands up and moves towards the door in a trance like state. The guitar riff of “Simple Man” by Lynyrd Skynyrd begins to play as the sounds of party life crescendos. Eddie goes out the door. The lights fade on the office and illuminate the fraternity house.

Scene 7.
Eddie walks into the fraternity house. As he moves, he untucks and unbuttons his dress shirt and reveals a t-shirt underneath. The shirt is a little big for him, but in a fashionable way as seen on many SEC campuses. The Spotify playlist “Frat Party Playlist” plays in the background. Jake enters from stage right. He has a beer in hand. Jake is dressed as a typical dude. Eddie pats him on the back, and they approach the bar. Eddie grabs a clear cup containing a brown liquid that is sitting on the bar. As the scene switches, Eddie is suddenly cheery and charismatic. They head to the pool table and begin start a game.

Jake: Dude it fucking sucks going places with you. / You can’t walk two feet without seeing someone you gotta say hey to. / Not them. I know them. How do you know all these girls?

Eddie: Ha! Why? / Not even man, these are our brothers. / I don’t know all of them.

Jake: Yeah, but at least half of them at this party. Who has that chick who like tackled you when she saw you?

Jake begins racking the balls. Eddie checks his cell phone.

Eddie: Annie? She was in my Bio lab last year. Nice girl.

Jake: Yeah, everyone you know is a “nice girl.”

Eddie: Hey, I don’t like to have bad blood with people, so she’s good with me.

Eddie grabs the cue ball and tosses it in the air.

Jake: Whatever. Okay, so before the chicks swarmed you. I was saying. After we left the bar last night, I went back to her place.

Eddie (laughs): I remember you didn’t come home last night. Wanna break?

Jake shakes his head signifying “no.” Then, Eddie precedes to break. For the entirety of this scene, the actors will play pool. If they scratch, they start over. The actors can ad lib to react to the game when winning or losing.

Jake (taking a swig of his beer): What do you expect? We were both fucked up.

Eddie: Most nights you are…

Jake: Get off your high horse man.

Eddie: I’m not on a “high horse.” Let he without sin cast the first stone.

Jake (laughs): Okay, cut the Jesus shit cause you’re judging me.

Eddie: I’m not judging you! I’m really not. I don’t care what you do with girls. It’s your life.

Jake: Yeah, but because you want to “wait” and all of that shit—which is great, but you know—you’re judging me.

Eddie: About that…
Jakes phone vibrates. He checks it.

Jake: Sorry, she’s blowing up my phone.

Eddie: It’s cool.

Jake (putting his phone away): Anyway… So, we get back to her place. (swigs his beer). I’m like barely walking at this point. So, I hit the couch. She comes over to me. Turns on Netflix—Clueless or something. And we start making out, and she starts grabbing my dick, right? / And I’m like holy shit. / What?

Eddie: Right. / So, lemme guess how did it end? / You went back to her room and you “banged” (mockingly).

Jake (laughs): Yeah dude. It’s like you’ve heard this before.

Eddie: Every weekend. Same old song, same dance, different partner.

Jake: Hey, you make me sound like a man whore. Sometimes it’s the same girl.

Eddie: Rarely. Did you invite her to come tonight?


Eddie: Nice.

Jake: Nice? Dude I know you’re digging her.

Eddie: Well, she’s… she’s hot, but I’ve talked to her once…

Jake: Hold up, lemme call Syd.

Jake gets out his phone and makes a phone call. They pause the pool game.


Eddie rolls his eyes. Jake puts his phone away.

Eddie: They coming?

Jake: Yeah, they are waiting on the Uber. Probably gonna hook up with Syd again. You jealous that I’m gettin some and you aren’t?

Eddie: No, you know I hook up.

Jake (laughs): Hook up?

Eddie: Everything but. / What? / No like but.

Jake: Butt stuff? / You know? / You said butt. (beat) Dude, I’m fucking with you.
Eddie: Very funny.

Jake: But anyway, dude you don’t have sex, so stop saying you hook up. Nobody says hook up if they don’t mean sex.

Eddie: I dunno man. / I’m just…

Jake: What? / Just what? Are you not a virgin?

Eddie: I am, but…

Jake: Yeah. You’re totally still a virgin!

Eddie: I don’t know if I want to be anymore. / Yeah, I think I wanna lose it.

Jake: Huh? / No I heard you, but why?

Eddie: Yeah, I’m tired of being one.

Jake: You’re like a monk when it comes to sex. Like you think you your dick will fall off if you stick it in.

Eddie: No, I don’t…

Jake: But your morals hold you back. They’re like handcuffs, not in a S&M kinda way. But you’re like imprisoned by the Bible.

Eddie: No, I’m not. How?

Jake: Uh… You don’t drink, you rarely curse, you go to church like every Sunday, Jesus Calling is sitting on your bedside table.

Eddie: Yeah, but why do I do that stuff?

Jake: Because you are a Christian?

Eddie: Yeah, but you say you’re a Christian, and you sleep around.

Jake: Yeah, I’m Christian, but this is college. I’m taking a break.

Eddie (laughs): Not exactly sure if it works that way, but why are you a Christian?

Jake: What do you mean? / Why are we talking about this at a party?

Eddie: Why are you a Christian? / Just answer the question.

Jake: I dunno. My parents are. I’ve been going to church. I got sprinkled as a baby. Uh… / Yeah?

Eddie: Exactly! / Did you choose to do any of that?

Jake: No.

Eddie: See? Your circumstances chose it for you.

Jake: Okay, are you trying to be a, a philosopher or something?
**Eddie:** No, but think about it. Did you choose Christianity or did your environment—society—pick it for you—

**Jake:** Hold up, hold up. You’re saying a lot of shit that’s too deep to get into right now. But let’s focus on what’s important. You’re ready to toss that v-card!

**Eddie:** I’m thinking about it. I haven’t decided, but—

**Jake:** That’s why you want to fuck now? / You know?

**Eddie:** What? / Oh yeah I’m unsure about my faith. Yes.

**Jake:** No no, Kat.

**Eddie:** Oh. Yeah I guess. Kat seems cool. I’m kinda into her.

**Jake:** Then, tonight get into her. / We’re gonna get you laid!

**Eddie:** What? / No please.

**Jake:** Why not? Kat’s totally down.

**Eddie:** Maybe it’s not the right time.

**Jake:** You think I thought that junior year of high school when I lost my virginity to Rebekah Nelson in her dad’s pool house? / Yeah, she threw that party just to get with me.

**Eddie** *(smiling):* I remember that. / Sure. Keep telling yourself that.

**Jake:** Dude, hear me out. There is never a “perfect time” to do it. You just gotta get it over with. The first time… it’s not supposed to be this magical moment. It’s like… like ripping off a Band-Aid. Just nut up and do it. The quicker you get it over with, the better it’ll be. Cause like you don’t know what you’re doing. Or how long you’ll last. So the first time is always awkward as shit. And you’ll never be a good fuck unless you practice—and I don’t mean in the bathroom with a box of tissues. You gotta get some real pussy. Besides. Don’t you want to be able to make your wife happy one day? Get all your shitty sex out of the way. That’s what my big bro told me. Best advice I’ve ever gotten… Tonight, Eddie, dude. It’s gonna happen. Take Kat back to our room, put on the moves, and boom. Fuck her.

**Eddie:** If she wants to, it’ll be hard for me to say no.

**Jake:** Syd makes it sound like she wants the Ed-D! Get it? Like Ed and D. The D.

**Eddie:** You’re an idiot.

**Jake:** Hey I just call it like I see it. Who won the last game?

*From stage left, Sydney walks in with Monica and Kat. Each of them holds a solo cup like the ones Sydney had before.*
Sydney (interrupting): Look who it is!

Eddie looking at Kat jumps up.

Eddie: Hey, Ka—

Sydney (whispering audibly, grabbing Eddie’s arm): Kat’s here… / Tonight’s the night.

Eddie: I see. You told me already. / Don’t stress me out.

Sydney laughs and side hugs him.

Jake (not moving): Sup Kat. Monica…

Sydney (noticing the squabble): Okay! Why don’t we all take some shots?

Jake: Hell yeah. Eddie, play me in pool again. I’ll rack em.

Eddie: For sure.

Sydney: Bartender?

Eddie: I gotcha, what are you drinking?

Like before, Jake goes to rack the pool balls. Eddie goes behind the bar and pulls out some handles.

Sydney: What do you have?

Eddie: Uh… Fireball, Malibu, Titos, Burnetts—

Sydney (interrupting): Fireball!

Jake: Fuck no. Kat: Sure. Monica: Ew?

Eddie: Coming up!

Eddie grabs some solo cups from behind the bar and pours generous shots for his friends.

Jake: Why do we only have shitty liquor in the house?

Sydney: IDK, hold your nose if you’re gonna be a bitch.

Eddie comes back around from the bar and passes out drinks. Monica gets a text message.

Monica (looking at her phone, under her breath): Shit...

Like before, while Monica is engrossed in her phone and Jake and Sydney speak at the pool table while Jake breaks the balls, Eddie leads Kat away from the group.

Eddie: So, how’s life?
Kat: It’s good! School and cheer. Taking over my life.
Eddie: I get that, school sucks right now, but I don’t see how you do it. Pre pharm? That sounds awful.
Kat: One day it’ll all be worth it. Or that’s what I keep telling myself. So. / Why haven’t you texted me? / (smiling) Didn’t have any fun?
Eddie: Sooo… / I… / No, I did. I enjoyed meeting you.
Kat: Me too. I really did.
Eddie (smiling): Listen, Kat. What do you say—

*Sydney begins distributing the shots amongst her friends.*

Sydney (to the tune of the LMFAO song): Shots, shots, shots, shots, shots, shots, shots!

Jake (excitedly): Everybody!

Kat: Thanks Syd.

Monica, Jake, Sydney, and Kat have their shots in the air.

Kat: Who wants to make a toast?

Jake: To rich dad’s and hot moms!

They take the shots except Eddie.

Monica: You’re such a pig.

Monica gets a phone call.

Monica: Hey Kat—hold on. (looking at the phone) Shit. This is urgent. I gotta go. Kat. Text me tonight.

Monica exits.

Sydney: Bye!

Kat: So, Eddie, you were saying?

Eddie: You wanna go to my room?

Kat smiles. She grabs his hand and move towards the bedroom.

Scene 7.

The same small dimly lit bedroom. The same muffled sounds of Wiz Khalifa and Future can be heard through the walls. Eddie and Kat enter the room.

Kat (tripping as she enters): Oh shit, (giggles) / I’m not drunk… / I swear…

Eddie (grabbing her forearm): Hey! / Watch your step… / (laughs) Nah its good, that Fireball will do it to ya…
**Kat:** (giggling) Maybe…

*Kat sits in the rolling desk chair.*

**Eddie** *(tossing his keys in hand):* Ha, no worries, I mean I could take you back— / If you wanted.

**Kat:** No, no, you can’t. / You drank too.

**Eddie** *(smiles):* Well, no.

**Kat:** What?

**Eddie:** I didn’t.

**Kat:** Ha! Yes you did! / At the party. / Jack and Coke.

**Eddie:** No, I really… / Yeah, it… / No Jack.

**Kat:** What?

**Eddie:** Just Coke.

**Kat:** But you had a shot…

**Eddie:** No. Just you, Jake, and your friends.

**Kat:** But we all took one?

**Eddie:** I didn’t.

**Kat:** Oh. / I mean… / (giggles) Why do you have a fake? and not drink?

**Eddie:** What? / It’s not a… / Oh, well. I get in 21 bars, and well, for you. To buy you drinks

**Kat:** But why? Why not drink?

**Eddie:** A lot of reasons.

**Kat:** Like?

**Eddie:** For one. It’s illegal. I’m not 21.

**Kat:** But, the ID. / Yeah… / Def…

**Eddie:** Yeah having a fake is illegal, but it’s no big deal. The bouncer will usually just take it from me. / Plus, my dad’s lawyer knocks fake ID charges off kid’s records all the time, but MIP or public intox that’s like basically, a death sentence on my future career. / I can kiss Harvard Law goodbye. And well, my family. My grandad died of liver cancer. A couple years ago actually. I’m scared to abuse it. And I DD for my friends. It’s a good thing to do.

**Kat:** You’re sweet. I like that.

**Eddie:** You’re sweeter… That was so lame.

**Kat** *(giggling)*: No, don’t. It’s cute.
**Eddie:** I’m sorry… it’s…

_Eddie smiles and looks down at the floor. A brief silence passes between them. The muffled sounds of Wiz and Future continue._

**Kat (smiling):** I make you nervous.

_She reaches her hand out and grabs his hand. She starts pulling him towards the bed._

**Kat:** Come. Sit.

**Eddie:** I’m not nervous! I know this isn’t your first time doing something like this. So, I guess I don’t want to look like an idiot.

_They both sit on the bed._

**Kat:** You don’t look like an idiot.

**Eddie:** Thanks… / You look so pretty tonight. / Like I’m glad I saw you out tonight.

**Kat:** No prob… / Eddie… / What do you like?

**Eddie:** What do you mean?

**Kat:** About me?

_She puts her hand on his thigh._

**Eddie:** What’s not to like? / Your blue eyes. / Your laugh. / You’re a cheerleader. / laughs / You make me laugh.

**Kat:** Yeah. / Hmmm… / giggles / Go bears… / Yes?

_With each compliment, Eddie moves closer and closer to her mouth. She begins to lean back slowly until she is lying on her back. Eddie now hovering over her, goes in for a kiss. After a short kiss, they launch into a make out. She starts grabbing the back of his head. She puts his hands on her thighs. He moves them up. The bass of the trap music can be heard over the other muffled sounds. The beat speeds up like a beating heart. Eddie pulls back. They stare at each other briefly. The bass slows down to a steady beat._

**Kat:** Get the lights.

_Eddie hops up. He runs to hit the overhead light by the door. The stage goes dark. The desk lamp provides the only light on stage. The light shines on Kat’s body on the bed._

**Kat:** Hurrrrryyyy.

_Eddie jumps back on the bed again. He and Kat start making out again. She moans. The bass of the trap music begins to speed up again as their pulses race. Kat takes off Eddie’s shirt. Eddie grabs a blanket from the bed to cover them. The blanket should rest around their waists. Their waists and below should not be seen, but their chests exposed. Eddie takes off her shirt._
wears a red bra. He kisses up her stomach. She starts undoing his belt buckle. He kisses her neck as she slides his pants off.

Kat (breathy): Eddie. / Fuck me.
Eddie (breathy): Hey. / What?
Kat: Come on… Fuck me.
Eddie: Uh… / Huh?
Kat (whispers): You’re… / A virgin.
Eddie: Yeah, but I want to… to do this with you
Kat: Then do it.

Eddie pulls of her red panties and tosses them towards the door. He pulls the blanket over them.

Eddie: Wait. / I don’t have a condom.
Kat: Hmm? / Nbd. I’m on birth control.
Eddie: Good, I’ll pull out. Just to make sure. If that’s cool.
Kat: Whatever… Just. Quit teasing me.

Scene 8.

We are back in the office. Mathew jots in his notebook. Silence. Eddie coughs. Matthew looks up.

Matthew: Does that conclude your statement?
Eddie: Yeah, I guess so.
Matthew: Just to double check, you did not drink anything at all?
Eddie: Oh my gosh, how many times—I don’t drink. I’m waiting until 21. I was the only sober one out of Sydney, Monica, and Jake and Kat—I… I… Okay, Kat said she wasn’t drunk. I don’t know what she’s like when drunk. I barely know her. But it doesn’t matter. She said yes.
Matthew: Did you think she was drunk?
Eddie: No. She seemed fine to me. I wouldn’t have had done anything with her if she had been like passed out, unconscious. That’s not okay.
Matthew (writing): How many drinks did she have?
Eddie: I don’t know! Why do you keep asking me stuff like this?
Matthew: Eddie, legally, if a person is drunk, or incapacitated, he or she cannot give consent.
Eddie: She said, “Fuck me.” That sounds like consent to me.
Matthew: Consent is an affirmative agreement through clear—I want to reiterate that—through clear… clear action and words to engage in sex.
Eddie: How is “Fuck me” unclear?

Matthew: Incapacitation—the inability to determine who, when, why, or what is going on—excludes a person from giving consent. If she was incapacitated, then, she cannot be clear.

Eddie: How can you prove that she was drunk then? Do you have her BAC?

Matthew: That is why I am investigating. In your statement, you did not mention her stumbling or throwing up or any outward sign of drunkenness. Besides, BAC would not matter because that is a subjective measurement.

Eddie: She seemed completely fine to me.

Matthew: Well, I will talk to Sydney, Jake, and Monica and hear their statements on the evening. Is there anything else you want to add?

Eddie: Uh… Yeah. I didn’t rape her.

Matthew: Once again, I am not accusing you of rape.

Eddie: Yeah you aren’t right now, but what about when I leave? Hey. I told you all of this to clear my name. To show you that I was innocent.

Matthew: Well, there is a process that…

Eddie (standing up in frustration): I don’t care about the process!

Silence.

Matthew: Eddie, thank you for your statement as the respondent. Once I have conducted a thorough investigation, I will determine if student conduct will have a hearing.

Silence.

Eddie: I should have had a lawyer. / So, what do you think?

Matthew: That is not completely necessary at this point in the process. / Yes?

Eddie: Are you gonna say that I “assaulted” her? / That’s not answering my question.

Matthew: I am not going to “say” anything. I am going to decide using acquired evidence whether a case... / Eddie.

Eddie: It’s all on tape now, so I guess I will “trust the process.”

Silence.

Matthew: I do not affirm whether a sexual assault occurred. That is not my job. I compile the facts and deem the incident as having the potential to be an assault. If I see fit, that there is room to believe that an assault has happened, the report will be sent to student conduct who will have a hearing and will ultimately decide.

Eddie: Beyond a reasonable doubt, right?
Matthew: Well, no. Student conduct uses the preponderance of evidence standard.

Eddie: What the hell is that?

Matthew: It is the burden of proof. For example, X vs. Y. If 51% of the evidence falls in favor of X, then X has the preponderance of evidence. X will win the case.

Eddie: 51%. A 1% more chance that I… You’ve got to be shitting me… Look, I’m innocent. I didn’t fucking rape her.

Eddie gets up and heads for the door.

Matthew: I will be in touch.

Matthew sighs. He begins to piddle with stuff. He looks at the clock on the wall. The clock ticking is the only sound heard. Eddie slams the door. Matthew looks around for a minute and flips through his notes. He lets out a sigh.

Matthew: Fuck.

Lights out.

Act II

Scene 8

Lights up on Matthew’s office. Just like Act I, Matthew writes at his desk as the clock ticks behind him. A knock at the door.

Matthew: One second!

Matthew looks around at his desk. He lets out a breath and stands up.

Matthew: Come in!

Monica walks in the door.

Matthew: Hello Monica. It’s good to see you again.

Monica (extending her hand): Mr. Williams. Yes, you too.

Matthew: As you are familiar with this process— / Kat has given her statement and acts as the official complainant— / Of course.

Monica: Yes. I am. / I know.

Short silence.

Matthew (moving behind his desk): Anyway, it’s your turn. As a witness, I would like to ask you a few questions.

Monica (taking a seat): Absolutely. Do you want me to start at the beginning of the night or give some background details leading up to it?
Matthew (grabbing the recorder on his desk): Let me start my recording. (leaning over and talking in the recorder) Today is Monday, November, 14. Monica Jean Phillips and I are in my office at 1:03 p.m.

Monica nods.

Matthew: What compelled you to report this incident to the Title IX office?

Monica: Mr. Williams, as a Residential Assistant, I’m an employee of the university. So, I’m required to report sexual assault or sexual harassment that is shared with me or that I observe.

Matthew: I understand, but this duty normally pertains to the residents on your floor in your residence hall.

Monica: Yes, I know. You know this isn’t my first time acting as a witness, but I personally feel that reporting to the university extends past the dorms. I feel responsible to my friends and peers around me.

Matthew: Did Kat ask you to report this case on her behalf?

Short silence.

Monica: Well, no—not exactly. But it’s my responsibility as a woman too. And as a person. If I witness someone taking advantage of another human being, I’m not going to contribute to the bystander effect that cripples people at this school.

Matthew writes. Monica shifts in her seat.

Matthew: Thank you. Did Kat seem drunk to you?

Monica: Yes, Kat was drinking.

Matthew: Let me rephrase the question. Well, how long have you known Kat?

Monica: Since high school. We became best friends when we were fifteen. Ninth grade Art.

Matthew: Have you seen Kat drunk? / Many times?

Monica: Yes. / Yeah, I guess.

Matthew: Have you ever seen her throw up from drinking too much, or act uncharacteristically, or have trouble with her motor skills?

Short silence.

Monica: Yeah, I have. She got like that a lot back in high school. Falling at parties or drunk calling people and barely making any sense. Yeah, she’s gotten like that some too in college. Sydney brings that side out of her.

Matthew: On November 4th at the Delta Kappa Sigma party, was she stumbling around or slurring her words?
Monica: Uh. Well, no, but she was drunk.

Matthew: Did you have a breathalyzer?

Monica: No, I didn’t. But she was drunk.

Matthew writes.

Matthew: But how do you know?

Monica: She had—well, probably three or four drinks.

Matthew: Did she throw up? / Did she fall or anything?

Monica: Uh. No, no she didn’t. / Not that I know of.

Matthew writes.

Matthew: Back to my original question. In your opinion, did Kat seem drunk?

Monica: It doesn’t matter if she did that stuff at the house. I just know she was drunk because… I know her, Mr. Williams. She had a… a couple of drinks within the time that we went to the house and… Well, I—in my opinion, yes, she was drunk. And when a person is drunk, they cannot give consent—which you already know. But Eddie didn’t have her permission. Besides, she told me the next day that she blacked out. You don’t black out if you aren’t drunk. That’s like chemically impossible. Do you think it really mattered if she threw up or not when I was sobbing and… and driving her to get Plan B the next day?

Short silence.

Matthew: Okay. When you saw Kat and Eddie talking, did you try to intervene or stop her from talking to him? / Why did you do that?

Monica: Yes. / What do you mean why? I wanted to be direct and tell her Eddie was a shitty guy and I was trying to distract her from him, but I got a phone call... uh… I don’t really remember too well about that part specifically.

Matthew: Were you drunk? / How much did you drink?

Monica: I mean no, not really. / I don’t know like three or four drinks.

Matthew writes.

Monica: I intervened because Eddie has a sketchy reputation. I’m surprised he hasn’t been kicked off campus. I’ve heard some really messed up stuff.

Matthew: You did not intervene because you thought Kat was drunk. Correct?

Monica (frustrated): Why do you keep asking me that?

Matthew: I want to be thorough.

Silence.
Monica: She needed to stay away from Eddie.

Matthew: In both Kat and Eddie’s statement, you left the party after receiving a phone call. Why?

Monica: Well another friend of mine from Sanford, who is going through an incredibly difficult time was calling me. She was upset and needed my help.

Matthew: I see…

The lights dim. The actors continue to speak silently. They rapidly move and speak quickly emulating the fast-forwarding of a movie. The sound of a tape being fast-forwarded plays. After a few moments, Kat jolts up, rapidly shakes Matthew’s hand, and quickly exits. Matthew looks down and writes in the same speedy fashion. He looks up. Jake walks into the office and sits down. Matthew hits the recorder. Then, lights come back up, the fast-forwarding tape sound stops, and real time begins.

Jake: Like, I’m a witness. Like on NCIS?

Matthew: Not exactly, but yes, you are a witness. You were present and observed the event.

Jake: Yeah.

Matthew: Was Eddie sober?

Jake: Yeah, he doesn’t drink.

Matthew: Have you ever seen him drink?

Jake: Nah. He’s always sober. Like he thinks he can’t because he’s not 21 and something about the Bible.

Matthew (writing): Did Kat seem drunk to you?

Jake: Uh… honestly, I was black out. So. I don’t really remember anything.

Matthew: I see.

Jake: That’s why I’m confused. Like didn’t get why you asked me to come here.

Matthew: You’re his roommate and you were present. You know Eddie very well and can attest to his character.

Jake: Oh yeah, solid guy—I mean. He’s a really good guy. He respects women.

Matthew: What do you mean by that?

Jake: By what?

Matthew: You said “he respects women.”

Jake: Yeah.

Short silence.
Matthew: How?

Jake: All the girls love him. He can’t go anywhere in public without girls talking to him and hugging him and ya know? Like he’s just a nice guy, and people like him.

Matthew writes.

Jake: Look, he didn’t rape Kat. I know that her friends are gonna say some… some stuff. But he didn’t. He wouldn’t hurt a fly. I know the guy. And he’s like super religious.

Matthew: What do you mean?

Jake: He’s the most Christian dude I know. He’s saving himself for marriage. Or was, I dunno, honestly. Okay, yeah. Him and Kat did, yeah, they… But like she wanted to.

Matthew: Are Kat and Eddie friends?

Jake: No, he barely knows her. They talked like once last week. He knows who she is. But everybody knows her. And him too. But like they’ve only talked once. I think they follow each other on Instagram, but no. Strangers pretty much.

Matthew: Why did he ask her to go back to his room?

Jake: I don’t know. She’s hot and popular. I mean, she’s a good person to lose your virginity to. Uh… yeah, I meant that in a good way.

The lights dim again. The actors continue to silently and quickly speak and rapidly move. The sound of a tape being fast-forwarded plays again. Jake leaves. Matthew writes. Sydney comes in. Lights come back up and real time resumes.

Sydney: Kat was drinking, but she didn’t vomit or anything. Like she seemed fine when I was with her. But yeah. Kat likes to drink.

Matthew (writing): How much had you been drinking?

Sydney: Uh… I drank a bit. Not too much.

Matthew: How many drinks?

Sydney (shifting in her seat): Maybe four or five.

Matthew: What did you talk about?

Sydney: I dunno, school. I don’t really remember.

Matthew: Do you remember Monica trying to intervene?

Sydney: Ugh, yes. I wanted her to leave them alone. She’s always over Kat’s shoulder like trying to control her. She’s probably jealous of all the attention Kat gets.

Matthew: Does Eddie have a reputation of any kind?


Sydney: Not like a bad one. He’s pretty Christian, like goes to church and stuff. But he does make out with a lot of girls, if that’s what you mean. He’s a really sweet guy.

Matthew: When Kat left with Eddie, when did you next hear from her?

Sydney: Uh… she texted me the next morning.

Matthew: What did she say?

Sydney (pulling out a cell phone): Hold up lemme check.

Short silence as she scrolls in her phone for the messages.

Sydney: She says, “Omg, what happened?” Then I said, “lol, girl, where are you?” She said, “Eddie’s bed.” I was like blushing emoji, but then, “Wait. Are you still at the frat house?” And she says, “Ya.” And an upside down smiley face emoji. That’s it. About an hour later she came home.

Matthew: Was she upset?

Sydney: I—kind of. More embarrassed than upset. She shacked at a frat house. She’s a senior. He’s a sophomore. Wouldn’t you be upset—or embarrassed?

Matthew: I’ll take that as a rhetorical question.

Short silence.

Sydney: Anyway, Monica came and got her shortly after that. She told me that she thought they hooked up. But didn’t remember too much either. When Monica dropped her off, she was like really, really upset. But I think I know why cause I’m sitting here talking to you now.

Matthew: Did you try to help her or talk to her about it whenever she first came home?

Sydney: No. I didn’t think it was a big deal. Shacking isn’t uncommon in our house.

Short silence.

Matthew (standing up): Well, I think that’s all I need. Thanks for your time.

Sydney (standing up): No problem. I hope nobody gets in trouble. It’s just a misunderstanding if you ask me.

Matthew: Well, thank you for your input.

Sydney: (walking towards the door): No problem. Have a nice day!

Sydney exits. Matthew stares at the door. He lets out a sigh.

Matthew: These college… supposed to be adults… I swear. Fucking kids.

Matthew moves back to his desk and picks up his note pad. He begins shifting through the notes. He picks up the recorded, presses the button, a soft rewinding sound is heard. He presses play.
Kat’s voice: It’s too hard. I was blackout. I don’t remember all of it. It’s hard. I… I can’t remem—remember the details. Just how I felt. How he made me feel. What he did made me—that’s all I can remember…

Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Kat’s voice: Eddie raped me. I want to do this.

Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Eddie’s voice: She… she wanted to… to—do it. I mean… she asked for it.

Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Eddie’s voice: How is “Fuck me” unclear?

Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Monica’s voice: Do you think it really mattered if she threw up or not when I was sobbing and… and driving her to get Plan B the next day?

Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Jake’s voice: Uh… honestly, I was black out. So. I don’t really remember anything.

Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Sydney’s voice: It’s just a misunderstanding if you ask me.

Matthew: Hmm.

Matthew rewinds and presses play.

Kat’s voice: Eddie raped me.

Matthew: Fuck. I am sending this to student conduct.

Scene 9:

An apartment clearly inhabited by women. Monica and Kat sit on a couch talking. An empty chair sits next to them. On the other side of the stage, Jake and Eddie’s bedroom sits. Throughout this scene, the dialogue will hop back and forth between the women and the men. The lights will adjust with the focus on the scene.

Monica: Now we wait.

Kat: Yeah.

Monica: What are you thinking?

Kat: I dunno. At least he says there is a case.

Monica: Right.

Silence.
Kat: Student conduct gets to decide.

Monica: I’m confident.

Kat: Really?

Monica: Yes, think about it. You were drunk. He was sober. You didn’t want to. He wanted to. It’s black and white. He took advantage of you. Anybody could see that.

Kat: But he doesn’t see that. And we have to go to a hearing and talk in front a panel or something.

Monica: Eddie only cares about himself. And don’t worry about that, I will support and be here throughout the process.

Kat: He’s not a bad person. He doesn’t deserve to go through all of this trial shit. He’s a nice guy, or at least has always been nice to me… but—

Monica (laughs): Listen to yourself. Don’t go all Stockholm Syndrome on me. / Yeah, you’re defending him.

Kat: I’m not. / But I’m not in love with him. This isn’t even the same situation.

Monica: But that’s how it starts. Just because he didn’t try to kill you or tie you up or something.

Kat: What the hell?

Monica: All I’m saying is don’t go falling for this dude or feel like you are hurting him because he hurt you. (silence.) Well, didn’t he? I remember how upset you were when I drove you to the CVS.

Kat: I got upset because you starting talking about rape and I couldn’t remember anything and—

Monica: Exactly! You can’t remember, but you remember him. The next day. What did he say to you?

Kat: I don’t want to go there—

Monica: No, what did he say to you when you woke up next to him?

Kat: He said…

Kat begins to cry softly.

Kat: He said, “You’re a great fuck.”

Silence.

Monica: Exactly. Did you expect him to say that? Were you even thinking being with him in the most intimate physical way the night before?

Kat: No! I was trying to find out why I was naked in a strange bed in a strange room. Next to Eddie.
Monica: When I hear that, red flags are going up. He raped you.

Kat: Yeah, you’re right.

Monica: I’ve seen this happen a hundred times. Not literally, but it feels like that. Last semester, Rebekah—she goes to Sanford. She called me while as I the party. That’s why I left you with Eddie because I thought she needed me. Because a couple of Saturdays ago, she called me. I could barely understand her through her sobs. She woke up completely naked on the floor in a random Kappa Sig’s room in the frat house. She couldn’t remember anything. But her friend had sent her a video of two dudes fucking her. Like taking turns with her limp, unconscious body. And her friend—supposed friend because that’s shitty—texted her, “Someone had a wild night.” That type of shit happens. These “fraternity men” are not good people. They do not care about you. They care about getting your panties off and doing what they please. Don’t defend them.

Kat: Oh my god, was she the girl in the news?

Monica: Yes and one of my best friends from summer camp. You remember her?

Kat: Oh, she’s in that picture of you with the swimming caps.

Monica: Yes. I want you to know like I told her—

Kat: Know what?

Monica: This isn’t your fault.

Jake: This isn’t your fault.

*The lights fade on Kat and Sydney’s apartment and illuminate Jake and Eddie’s room.*

Eddie: I know, that bitch. I swear. She’s destroying my life!

Jake: Be mad, dude. She fucked you over.

Eddie: I shouldn’t have even talked to her. Gah… I can’t believe I’m having to go to a hearing. What the hell? What is a hearing? Like this is like real court or some shit. Is Judge Judy gonna be there? Like what’s going on! What if I get expelled? Then, she presses charges. And I get arrested and go to court. Then, jail.

Jake: You’re not. If she presses charges, sue her!

Eddie: For what?

Jake: I dunno! For telling lies. Or for crying wolf. Or for being a bitch.

Eddie: Yeah, I should do something about this. I should call my dad, but you know what else is fucked up? My parents can’t know anything about this from the university. Like something about FERPA? Or something like that? Because of some other law, the school can’t like disclose information to my parents. So, they only know what I tell them, but if they knew the whole thing, shit. My dad would tear them up. He knows a bunch of lawyers. I should have had one when I talked to Mr. Williams. Gah, that asshole.
Jake: Yeah, but like you thought you could just tell him what happened and that you’re innocent. Which you did, but you’re being accused of rape.

Eddie: Don’t remind me.

Jake: Sorry man.

Eddie: Do you know what it feels like to be accused like this? To think that with that person that everything was cool. Kat made me feel comfortable. And I was a virgin, and I thought she wanted to get with me. And then, this? Like to go complain to the university about what I did with her in a bedroom. We were the only two people there.

Jake: I mean yeah. I’ve had girls say they didn’t want to fuck me after they fucked me.

Eddie: You don’t get it! That didn’t happen to me.

Kat: You don’t get it! That didn’t happen to me.

Lights fade on Eddie and Jake and go back on Kat and Monica.

Monica: It could have! What if Jake had come in the room? And they both took advantage of you? Just like my friend at Sanford. If more of those frat dudes had been in that room, I guarantee they would have all done whatever they wanted with you.

Sydney walks in the door with backpack on her shoulder and keys in hand.

Sydney: Hey, hey.

Kat: Hi.

Monica: Hey.

Sydney sits in the chair next to them. She pulls her laptop out of her backpack.

Sydney: I hate school. My professor sucks. You know? Like get this. The class only meets once a week. It’s Art Appreciation. And we had a test last Friday—which last Friday was the first baseball game, which I was not going to miss for anything. Well, I forgot about the online test we had due at midnight that night. I was too drunk to have taken it anyway, but I told him I was sick, and he won’t fucking let me retake it unless I show him a doctor’s note! I’m just gonna print one off the internet or something. I dunno. Whatever.

Silence. Sydney types.

Monica: I can’t believe you.

Sydney: Excuse me?

Sydney stops typing.

Monica: You’re so fucking selfish.

Kat: Hey—
Monica: No, do you even know what happened today?

Sydney: What? Did the inventor of birth control die or something?

Monica: Oh my god. No, your roommate and your friend just heard back from the Title IX office.

Sydney: Ohh yeah that thing that I had to go talk about. That Mr. What’s-his-face? Williams. He was weird.

Monica: There’s a case. Kat’s case is going to student conduct.

Sydney (beginning to type): Oh, great.

Monica (to Kat): Is she seriously not supporting you in this?

Kat: She doesn’t really think—

Sydney (frustrated, closing laptop): You want to know what I think about this?

Silence. Sydney gets up and walks around the couch.

Sydney: This—this whole thing, the “case” and, everything—it’s your fault.

Monica (getting up): What did you just say to me?

Kat: Syd…

Monica moves behind the couch as well. Monica stands stage left of Kat, and Sydney stands stage right. Kat sits in the middle with Sydney and Monica at each shoulder.

Sydney: Kat, did you regret what happened with Eddie?

Kat: Yes.

Monica: It’s not about—

Sydney: Shut up, Monica, and let me fucking speak. Kat, do you remember that one time with… uh… you know what—this is perfect for the situation—you remember that one time I went home with Jake.

Kat: Yes.

Sydney: You remember when you came and got me? You remember how embarrassed I was? Because I got drunk and let Jake fuck me. In the moment, I didn’t want to, but I went back to his room with him. He smoked me out. He looked kinda cute. Ya know drunk goggles. I was so cross-faded, I couldn’t even. Yeah. I was fucked up. But we made out, which was gross, but I was fine. Then, he got out a condom. My panties were on at this point, but just the panties. And he pulled them off and, and it happened. I laid there and stared at the ceiling. Just waiting for it to be over. I don’t remember much, but I remember his breath smelling like Natty Light, and he lasted like 10 seconds. Then, I passed out.
Silence.

Kat: I… I remember.

Sydney: Monica here would say that I was raped—

Monica: Technically, yes.

Sydney: SHUT UP with this “technically” bull shit! People like you have two… two things. That’s it. It’s either consensual, like sex, or it’s rape. What about the in-between?

Monica: Your situation is different. You remember most of it. Kat was raped. You physically consented—

Sydney: Do not tell me that I was not raped! Wait… No, do not try to… to tell me what happened to me. I felt uncomfortable and I regretted the situation immediately. But I didn’t turn my regret into rape. Kat, what happened to Kat, is the same exact thing that happened to me. She drank too much. She passed out. But she fucked a dude first. She’s not a virgin. She’s slept with random guys before. You made her think it was—

Monica: No, I helped her! That’s what I did. You didn’t pick her up… You didn’t hold her hand as she swallowed that fucking pill. You laughed at her.

Sydney: I would have picked her up! But it wasn’t a big deal! The amount of times that this… this shacking with random boys.

Monica: Shacking and raping are two different—

Sydney: Being raped and crying wolf are two different things! You made Kat go to the Title IX office. You convinced her. You made her get help. You forced her to make a statement. She would not have done that on her own. I know her. She would have been like the countless other girls who have unwanted sex. The girls who sleep with guys in their Chemistry classes when they are fucked up. The girls who take responsibility for their choices and don’t say they were raped whenever they regret fucking someone. And Kat. I talked to Jake about this too.

Kat: Oh shit. What did he say?

Monica: It doesn’t matter.

Sydney: Yeah, it does. She got drunk. She got blackout apparently. And took his virginity. That seems like the definition of rape to me. To have your way with someone while you’re fucked up. Did he want his first time to be with someone who claims to not know what she was doing? Probably not, but you fucked that up for him. Jake says that you told Eddie… You know what she said, Monica?

Monica (angry): I don’t know, what?

Sydney: Fuck me. Eddie: Fuck me.

The lights fade on the women and go back up on Eddie and Jake.
Jake: What?

Eddie: No, like fuck me. My life is ruined. No law school. No grad school. I’m going to be labeled as a rapist for the rest of my life. I’ll probably have to sign up for those websites that notify neighborhoods if sketchy people move in next to them. Life fucked me.

Jake: Yeah, we should get back at her.

Eddie: I want to. I want her to know what this feels like.

Jake: Let’s do it.


Jake: Yeah, I understand man. I hate her too.

*Lights go up on Sydney, Monica, and Kat. Lights illuminate both parties for the following discussion.*

Eddie: She’s not who she says she is.

Jake: What do you mean?

Eddie: She acts one way and then acts another. She goes back and forth. She seems cool, but will just mess you up in the end.

Jake: Hey, I tried to warn you about her.

Eddie: No, you didn’t!

Jake: She’s just trying to ruin everything for you.

Eddie: Well, mission accomplished because I hate myself.

*Lights go out over Jake and Eddie. The women continue.*

Monica: She’s not who she says she is.

Kat: What do you mean?

Monica: She acts one way and then acts another. She goes back and forth. She seems cool, but will just mess you up in the end.

Sydney: Hey, I tried to warn you about her.

Kat: No, you didn’t!

Monica: She’s just trying to ruin everything for you.

Kat: Well, mission accomplished because I hate myself.

Monica: And who’s fault is that?

Sydney: YOURS!

Kat: BOTH OF YOU SHUT UP!

Silence.

Kat: Were you in the room with me?

Silence.

Monica: I tried—
Kat: IT’S MY TURN. Both of you were not there. Just me and Eddie were in that room. And I don’t remember anything. He was sober. And some might say… that… that he is the only one who might actually know what really happened. But… I did not want to sleep with him. I didn’t, and I... The next morning I felt violated and like I had no control. And… and I… I was so sad. So, so sad. And the two of you… my two closest friends are… are trying to tell me what happened. The two of you! Both of you were drunk, and you weren’t in the room! Monica, you always talk about this… You always say, “It’s your body; you’re the only one who can define your sexual experiences.” But you didn’t treat me that way. You immediately said I was raped. And Sydney, telling me to stop being a bitch about it? How is that even supportive? And the worst thing about it all. Is… is that I don’t know which one of is right, or maybe both of you are wrong. (beat). You know how shitty this is? To feel like, like you are maybe fucking someone over? Ruining their life? All because you drank too much. I made that choice. I made that decision. To drink way too much. I did those shots. Eddie didn’t force me to drink. I can’t… Whatever. I’m… I gotta go.

Kat gets up and heads towards the door.

Monica: Hey, where are you going?

Kat: Just leave me alone, both of you.

She exits.

Sydney: Shit.

Monica scoffs and exits. The lights fade and go up on Eddie and Jake.

Jake: Dude, don’t hate yourself. You’re Eddie Fucking Hodges! The man! Women are always all over you all the time. You’re smart and you drive a BMW. And you want to be a bad ass lawyer one day. You’re the fucking king. I know that you got this. You’ll go into that hearing and blow that student conduct panel away. They won’t even know who came in the room. They’ll be like, “Holy shit, who’s this great guy? Why is he getting accused of rape? He is harmless!” You were the only sober person. If that Mr. Williams guy was saying if she was too drunk to say yes to sex. How could she be sober enough to correctly tell him what happened to her? You know what happened. You’re gonna win this.

Eddie: Thanks man. Sorry for getting pissed, but I’m going through a lot right now. And… and I’m scared. 51% of the evidence has to be in her favor. I’m freaking out. That’s like. Such a slim chance. I’m so scared.

Jake: I would be too.

Eddie: Yeah.

Jake: Now we wait.

Lights fade out.
Scene 10.

Matthew’s office. Matthew sits alone at his desk. He holds his recorder in hand and flips through his notes. A knock is heard at the door. Matthew shuffles some things around.

Matthew: Come in!

Eddie walks in the door wearing a suit.

Matthew: Oh, Eddie. I was not expecting you.

Eddie: Oh, I’m sorry. Is this a bad time?

Matthew: No, it’s fine. Can I help you with something?

Eddie: Uh, yeah… I’ve got a question.

Matthew: Yes?

Eddie: Uh… well… I’m about to go to my hearing. In like an hour. I was killing time and thought I’d stop by. Yeah. Uh… I’ve been thinking about this a lot. And… I… What’s gonna happen to me?

Matthew: I told you before. I do not have a say in the outcome. I only put together the case.

Eddie: Yeah, but you’ve done this before. You know what the outcomes can be. I’ve read some stuff online, and I’m worried that I’m going to end up in jail or something.

Matthew: I cannot tell you what will happen. I sent it to student conduct because I did not know the answer at all. If I knew based on the evidence I gathered that you did not assault Kat, the incident would have died in this office. However, I had no idea. Based on the statements and some text messages I read, I could not come up with a conclusion. Student conduct must decide.

Eddie: But, like what could happen?

Matthew: Well…

Eddie: Like, what’re some possibilities?

Matthew: They could administer a series of sanctions. If you are preventing her from being able to continue her education, they could remove you from any classes that you have with her. Or maybe suspend you. Or potentially expel you. You could be put on social probation for your fraternity. You could have to do some sort of sexual assault and harassment training. Or… or nothing. They could decide that you did not do anything wrong. They could determine that she did indeed consent.

Eddie: Hmm.

Matthew: Yes. They will decide. (beat). Do you have any other questions?

Eddie: This whole thing… is… is my word against hers. Or Jake’s words and my words versus Sydney’s, Monica’s and Kat’s words. It’s just a bunch of he said, she said.
Matthew: Yes, you could put it that way, but the process is much more complicated than—

Eddie: No, it’s not. It’s 51% of the words spoken by the five of us will either fall in my favor or in hers. Words. No videos. No recordings. No fingerprints. No rape kits. No blood work. No bullets. No knives. Nothing. Just words.

Matthew: Yes, I see what you are—

Eddie: And the cops aren’t even investigating this. Like the police aren’t calling me down to the station to play good cop bad cop with me in some cold, dark room. Nobody cares about this. Nobody is trying to arrest me or hunt me down. But you… you could have stopped this right here in this office.

Matthew: Sexual violence is a huge problem on college campuses, and therefore, people like me exist to help stop these violations from happening to students.

Eddie: You could have stopped this

Matthew: You think Kat willingly wanted to have sex with you. You were sober. Kat claims to have blacked out and to have not wanted to have sex with you. In your mind, you had sex, but in her mind, you raped her.

Eddie: But you can’t actually prove that!

Matthew: The evidence—

Eddie: It’s not evidence! It’s people telling stories!

Silence.

Matthew: I know that you are upset, but this how the system works. This is the policy.

Eddie: Whatever man, fuck you.

Eddie leaves and slams the door on his way out.

Scene 10:

Kat and Sydney’s apartment. Kat sits on the couch, and Monica sits next to her. Monica consoles her.

Monica: What exactly did they say?

Kat: I’m trying to remember, but like I don’t remember all of the words. I was so… so… so shocked that those were the results. The panel said something like… Because they couldn’t prove that I was drunk that they couldn’t prove that I was raped.

Monica: But you blacked out!

Kat: I know that. And I told Mr. Williams that.

Monica: I said the same thing.
Kat: But Eddie said he couldn’t tell that I was drunk. He thought I had been drinking, but knew what was going on. That I could still clearly say yes or no.

Monica: That’s such bull shit!

Kat: I don’t know.

Monica: No, their biased. They are victim blaming. This happens all the time. They probably asked you what you were wearing. Because somehow a woman’s clothing is like a signal to all the world how bad she wants to have sex? Which is so fucking stupid. Women dress how they want because they want to, whatever makes them personally feel good. Not whatever will most likely make dudes follow them around and buy them drinks. No. That’s not. Did they?

Kat: What?

Monica: Did they ask what you were wearing?

Kat: Yeah they did—

Monica: Fuck them.

Kat: I just want to go to bed.

Monica: I don’t blame you.

Kat: It just sucks to be raped and then told you weren’t raped.

Monica: Yeah. That… that… I’m so sorry. I should have never left that night.

*Sydney walks in.*

Sydney: Hey hey hey.

Monica: Do not say anything to her.

Sydney: I’m not. I’m not heartless. Kat, do you need anything?

Kat: No, I’m just going to go to bed. I’ve had a long day. And honestly, I’m just. I don’t really know what to believe anymore. I… yeah… that’s pretty dramatic, but yeah. Eddie was right. And I was wrong. So. Yeah or that’s what student conduct thinks. Shitty. I’ll talk to you guys tomorrow.

*Kat exits.*

Sydney: Poor thing.

Mon.: I can’t believe it turned out this way. *Jake: I can’t believe it turned out this way.*

*Lights fade on the women and lights go up on Jake and Eddie as seen earlier.*

Eddie: I’m grateful. Thank you God. You saved me.

Jake: This is fucking unreal. Dude, I thought you were fucked.
Eddie: Me too, but I guess someone’s watching over me.

Jake: Yeah… maybe.

Eddie: But, dude, fuck Kat. She’s a bitch.

Curtain.
Appendix 3: Notes from First Table Read

I did my first table read today on March 8th, 2017. Today is International Women’s Day, so I guess this was appropriate. I didn’t intend to do that. Overall, I feel very confident in my work. I am pleased with what I have created so far. I learned a lot, and honestly, it was a really cool experience to hear my words read back to me. It was even cooler to hear people laughing at the lines that I wrote. My friends are great and so is Michael Barnett. It was a fun and positive experience.

Cast:
Matthew……………………………………………………………………….......Riley McManus
Kat…………………………………………………………………………………...Anders Bandy
Sydney……………………………………………………………………………….Alexis Simon
Monica……………………………………………………………………………Meredith Dillon
Eddie…………………………………………………………………………….Dan Schultz
Jake………………………………………………………………………………Josh McLemore
Stage Directions………………………………………………………………………Nicole Fava

Notes from Cast and Michael:

- Overall the show was 65 minutes. I have it written write now as an Act I and an Act II. Act I was 35 minutes. Act II was 30 minutes. I should condense what I have now to one Act. If I extend the show, which is highly likely, then I might want to go back to having two acts, but right now, it should be one act.
- Rebekah Nelson is a real person. Mer knows her and I know her. Change the name. Also, Rebekah is the name of Monica’s friend from Sanford as well who gets raped. So change those names.
- Riley says he feels its compelling and feels relevant. He said great job especially because he saw my early writings last August. He said I have come a long way in making compelling characters.
- I shared with them my original idea of having the final scene show Sydney drugging Kat’s drink. All cast agreed that that ending would be a bad ending. The cast described it as potentially being “trite” or “contrived.” Michael says it adds an extra plotline at the very end of the show. Riley says, “That ending is more like Act III in a five act play.” Anders says people don’t actually mix Adderall and Vyvanse with alcohol. She says, “It’s not a thing.”
- They liked the back and forth Kat experiences between being raped or not being raped. They want to see Eddie experience something similar, but did not know what that would be. One of them suggested showing Eddie grappling with his faith and the things that
Jake says. They suggested writing in another character to contrast Jake like how Monica and Sydney directly contradict each other.

- In Kat’s recount, Kat should appear really drunk. In Eddie’s story, Kat needs to be sober. The cast agreed that the lines indicate this, but Mer suggested that in the stage directions I point out clearly that Kat is drunk in her version and sober in Eddie’s version.
- Mer suggested that Kat be the one sobbing on the way to CVS not Monica. One reason being that you can’t drive and sob. Riley says, “You can, but it’s hard.”
- Dan suggests that switching between the bedroom scenes back into the office could be a challenging transition for the actor. Should I fix this? Should I make it easier? Should I rearrange the script? Dan says, “But that’s not your problem. It’s the actors.” Riley believes that if the actor can pull the switch off it will be “really powerful.”
- They all agreed that the fast-forwarding was weird in the witnesses questioning. Cut that. Riley suggested just have a blackout between each exchange.
- They all commented about Eddie’s faith and said it should be used more. Eddie would be looking at the situation of through a lens of faith. This gave me an idea to maybe have a scene wear Eddie is praying to God and doesn’t feel like he is there. Then, Jake can interrupt him or something.
- They suggested potentially adding a hyper religious character that’s friends with Eddie.
- Eddie needs to be more developed.
- It needs to be more clear that Monica reported to the Title IX coordinator not Kat. Maybe add Sydney chastising her for tattle telling.
- The ending line for Eddie is “But, dude, fuck Kat. She’s a bitch.” All of them agreed that this switch was kind of harsh. They suggested that his anger and him calling that needs to be justified. It doesn’t seem like a really Christian guy would say that unless I can show that he would. Maybe reiterate is abandonment of religion a bit more.
- I use the wrong “they’re” on page 43. “They’re” is the correct one.
- Monica’s diatribe about women’s clothing seems long and takes away from Kat. Mer suggested adding Title IX’s new policy of asking a women her sexual past as a type of evidence in the investigation. She suggests that Title IX can discredit a rape if a woman has had frequent casual sex prior.
- I wrote on page 40 that “Eddie needs more stuff.”
- It sounds like Kat browns out. Josh suggests having a part about the colors of outing. That was obviously a joke, but it could potentially be a funny moment.
- Josh says that Eddie’s situation is believable because he’s surrounded by all the sin that is fun in college. “Fuck hoes, get money.” A person grows up as a Christian and abstains from drinking and sex. Then, that person goes to college and sees how fun drinking and sex is.
- Jake and Kat seem most real.
- Pieces of Eddie’s arc are missing that would make him more believable.
- On page 24, a lights out stage direction is missing.
● Eddie needs to have the doubt moment. Dan says there are two types of Christians. The self righteous who condemn others and then the church goer who likes to have a good time and drink and sleep around. Which one is Eddie?

● Speaking in abbreviations and text talks was weird at some points. “Nbd” was weird. Dan says he only hears people say “lol.” Also, Eddie probably wouldn’t recount someone speaking in abbreviations.

● Eddie is frustrated, but comes across as sullen. If he was a good Christian guy, wouldn’t he be more respectful to Matthew?

● Michael asked particularly about Matthew’s line on page 25. The line that reads “I don’t affirm…ultimately decide.” Did this work? Riley says his overly formal tone acts as a crutch for when he communicates with students and when he is alone. “He rests in his formality because he deals with so much shit.” Maybe add more contractions to his speech.

● The line explaining the preponderance of evidence is weird. It’s too textbook-y. Make it more relatable by using Kat and Eddie instead of X and Y.

● Dan liked the 1% aspect because it makes the hearing seem more daunting.

● At the end Michael asked the characters whether or not Eddie raped Kat. Josh said yes then switched to no because Eddie is a virgin. Josh thinks Eddie didn’t know what was going on because it was his first time. Riley said Eddie definitely raped her. Mer said that if you’re drunk you can’t give consent. Then, Dan asked if she would feel the same way if it was a guy on the other end. Dan and Nicole don’t think he raped her. Nicole says that when you are blackout you try to justify what went on. However, no matter how much you try to justify it, the situation still remains unclear. Alexis did not really answer the question. At first she said, “If I was in this, I would tell my friend to report it.” Alexis eventually felt like he raped her. Anders said he raped her. So in total, Riley, Anders, Mer, and Alexis said rape. Josh, Nicole, and Dan said no rape. 4 said rape, and 3 said no rape. This gives me the idea to poll the audience members after the show to further my research. It would just be an interesting number to get.
Appendix 4: Scenes and Monologues that Didn’t Make the Cut

**Tripp Gets the Email**

Scene 6.

*Tripp and Jake are hanging out in Tripp’s bedroom. Tripp sits in his bed. Jake sits on the floor with his back against the bed. He types on his laptops.*

**Jake:** This happened last Sunday?

**Tripp:** After church. You know he went to First Baptist when he was in college.

**Jake:** Did he just come down for the game?

**Tripp:** Probably. I saw him standing by the coffee. He’s like the most prestigious alum from the Gamma Phi chapter of GLA. So, I walked up to him—

**Jake:** Did you throw him the grip?

**Tripp:** Oh, hell yeah. I threw him the grip and I said like… “Mr. Cantrell. I’m Tripp Butler, and I’m a big fan of your firm.”

**Jake:** What’s Spanish for apple?

**Tripp:** What? Oh. I’m not doing your homework for you. I told him—

**Jake:** Just one word.

**Tripp:** Manzana.

**Jake:** Thanks.

**Tripp:** We’re getting lunch Wednesday.

**Jake:** It’s the hands you shake. Not the grades you make.

**Tripp:** Eh… I need like over a 3.7 for like Ivy League after college.

**Jake:** Guess I’m fucked then.

**Tripp:** You’re not wanting Ivy League.

**Jake:** How do you say lettuce?

**Tripp:** Dude. It’s Spanish 101.

**Jake:** Last question!

**Tripp:** Lechuga.

**Jake:** Thanks. *(beat)* When’s your lunch date?

**Tripp:** It’s not / a date.

**Jake:** You payin?
Tripp: I dunno.

Jake: K, we’ll see then.

Tripp: I don’t remember what time we said.

*Tripp pulls out his cellphone.*

Tripp: He signed his last email, “Ducere Exemplo.”

Jake: Brother Cantrell still signing with that GLA motto.

Eddie: Yeah man. I’m excited. I think this could really open some doors for me. Maybe an internship in D.C. like Carter had.

Jake: Good for you.

As Tripp opens his email on his phone, Jake scrolls on his laptop.

Jake *(to himself)*: What kind of dog are you… yeah, I’d like to know.

Silence.

Tripp: Holy shit.

Jake: What?

Jake looks at Tripp. He hands him his phone.

Tripp: Read this email I just got.

Jake *(reading)*: “Tripp Butler… After receiving a complaint from a student, we inform you that you are under an investigation for having violated Section II, Subsection C of the Campus Code of Conduct which states, ‘The University prohibits sexual misconduct of any kind including assault, harassment, abuse, or discrimination.’ Your presence is requested Monday, September 19th…” That’s next week!

Tripp: I know!

Jake *(continuing)*: “To give your statement on a series of events that took place on September, 2nd.” Hold up… is this about you and Claire?

Tripp: I mean… I guess…

Jake: Are they saying you raped Claire?

Tripp: That’s what it looks like… sexual assault…

Jake: Oh come on!

*Tripp is silent. He is shaken up.*

Jake *(tossing Tripp’s phone on the bed)*: I swear… this is some liberal-PC-bullshit.

Jake: I know you didn’t do anything wrong.
Tripp: What… like, but… I… I can’t believe this!
Jake: Dude, you didn’t do shit.
Tripp: You’re right…
Jake: Yeah and rape is like… like… something off *Law & Order*.
Tripp: Yeah.
Jake: Ya know, that episode where that dude trapped those two chicks in his basement for like a decade, and fucked them and beat them and shit… like… like against their will. That’s rape.
Tripp: And I definitely didn’t do that.
Jake: If she’s making out with you, giving you an over-the-pants-hand-job, that’s like a flashing billboard telling you that she wants your dick.
Tripp: She was all over me.
Jake: Exactly. You’re not a rapist. This is stupid.
Tripp (*grabbing his phone*): But the school thinks I am!
Jake: But you’re not! You’re not violent or aggressive. You weren’t trying to… You’re not Ted Bundy, ya know… murdering a bunch of college girls.
Tripp: That’s the most extreme example.
Jake: But you get my point!
Tripp: But what if this… (*reading email to himself*) This coordinator? The Title IX Coordinator—
Jake: Isn’t that the law that makes like women’s basketball important or something? The sports thing?
Tripp: And, apparently, “sexual misconduct” too. What if this Williams guy doesn’t believe me?
Jake: You didn’t do anything wrong!
Tripp: I know that I didn’t do anything wrong. And you know that I didn’t. But like the, the… uh…
Jake: I know, I know. The government and the liberal media are saying that universities are like hot beds—
Tripp: Right, so what if they are trying to… to exploit me for their cause. And make me into something that I’m not.
Jake: It’s all bullshit! The whole like rapists-among-us thing is ridiculous.
Tripp is silent.

Tripp: I didn’t fucking do anything wrong!

Jake: Then, go to the Title IX office and tell him the exact same thing that you told me… about what happened with Claire.

Tripp: Yeah. You’re right.

Jake: Anyone who hears that story will know that both of you wanted it… and the she’s full of shit.

Curtain.

Fight Scene

Scene 14.

Eddie and Jake are shooting pool. Jake is absolutely wasted. Only the que ball and eight ball are left on the table. Eddie is shooting.

Eddie: Ready to lose?

Jake: Yeah right.

Eddie: Even if I miss, you're too drunk to make the last shot.

Jake: Oh yeah? Then explain why I was able to make the rest?

Eddie: Uh... you took a shot for each ball you made? So 7 shots… and now I'm just killing time while the alcohol kicks in.

Jake: Shoot. damnit!

Eddie (laughs): Okay, okay…

Eddie leans over the table to shoot his final shot. He concentrates. Jake watches. As he shoots, Jake interrupts.

Jake (slamming his hands loudly on the table): Don't miss!

Eddie misses the eight ball entirely.

Eddie: Jake! What the hell man?

Jake (laughing): Way to crack…

Eddie: You suck.

Jake: You lost.

Eddie: No, I didn’t.

Jake: You missed the eight ball. Entirely! You lost...

Eddie: I thought we stopped playing by that rule.
Jake: No… I dunno… whatever! You lost. Rack them again.

Eddie: Fine… we tied. How about that? Compromise?

*Eddie moves to the rack and grabs the triangle.*

Jake: If it makes you feel better…

*Eddie starts pulling balls out of the pockets to rack them again. Jake sits down on a barstool.*

Eddie: So, who did you invite to the party tonight?

Jake: A few chicks.

Eddie: Anybody you're eying?

Jake: Yep… Mary Claire…

Eddie: That freshman you've been talking to?

Jake: Yeah, it's gonna happen tonight.

Eddie: What if she says no?

Jake *(laughs)*: Right.

Eddie: No. I'm serious.

Jake: Man… I'm a good salesman. So, she'll say yes.

Eddie: Dude… I don’t think that you are in a / state to make a decision like that.

Jake: No, I'm good. I'm good.

Eddie: Be careful. We just went through hell. Don't put us through that again.

Jake: You're making your issue about me.

Eddie: No. I'm trying / to make a point.

Jake: Are you judging me again?

Eddie: No!

Jake: Cause it sounds like you are. Telling me what I should and shouldn't do.

Eddie: Hey, I just want you to be careful and think about someone other than yourself.

Jake: Maybe worry about *yourself* this time.

Eddie: I hate when you get this drunk…

*Sydney, Kat, and Monica walk in stage left. Jake jumps up.*

Jake: Who invited them? I didn't.

Eddie: Fuck…
Eddie rushes to Jake.

Sydney: Jake! Eddie!

Eddie *(under his breath)*: We can't not let them / in. That wouldn't be smart.

Jake: Hey Syd! What's up?

Eddie: Ignore them.

Jake *(under his breath)*: Whatever man.

Sydney: Great party.

*Sydney hugs Jake.*

Jake: Yeah... Why are you here?

Sydney: I come to every GLA party.

Jake: Not you. Them.

Monica: This party is open to anybody. Anyone with boobs at least.

Jake: Oh yeah? I don't want you here.

Monica: So?

Eddie: They can be here. It's no problem.

Sydney: Let's just have a good time guys. Shots?

Kat: I knew this was a bad idea.

Monica: How? It's fine. We are allowed to be here. They can't bar certain people from coming to an open event.

Jake: Are you just trying to piss me off?

Monica: No, I just love coming to your parties.

Sydney: Well, I'm gonna help myself then. Shots? Kat? Anyone?

*Everyone is silent as Sydney moves behind the bar and pulls out a handle and solo cups.*

Jake: Kat, haven't seen you around in a while.

Kat is silent.

Eddie: Dude. Come on...

Monica: Well duh. It's called a “no-contact” policy. So, we haven’t been able to interact.

Jake: Yeah, I guess that's over. So, you want a drink? You want a tour? You forget what the place looks like? This is the pool table, this is—

Eddie: Stop being a dick just leave them—

Monica: God, you're such an asshole!
Sydney: Do not just come here and yell at them. Do not push your agenda on us.

Monica: My agenda? Where did that come from?

Jake: Yeah what she said. Syds cool. If you're gonna be a bitch, get the fuck out. Eddie, finish racking.

Sydney: Yeah. You two can leave.

Monica: No, it's no big deal. We're fine. Right Kat?

Kat: Uh... yeah.

Jake turns around and grabs a pool cue. Eddie doesn't move. Silence.

Sydney: So…

Jake: Hey! The balls aren't gonna rack themselves.

Eddie: Yeah, got it.

Eddie starts racking.

Jake: Syd, how's… uh… school?

Sydney: Oh, ya know it's same old same. Just getting ready for break coming up…

Monica: Are you okay?

Kat: Yeah…

Monica: This can be therapeutic for you. For your recovery.

Jake (laughs): Wait… What did you just say?

Sydney: Me?

Jake: No, not you. Recovery from what?

Monica: Oh you know.

Jake: From a lie?

Monica: Oh my god. No, you can't just get off so easily! Both of you!

Eddie: Hey! I didn't want put you through any of this stuff…

Jake: Do you wanna say that again to my face?

Sydney: Whoa whoa… everyone relax. Stop it!

Kat: We shouldn't be here. This is not…

Monica: Yeah, I do. You're a rapist.
Jake: Me!? Or Eddie?

Eddie: I realize you're upset, but the council—

Monica (getting in Jake’s face): No. I'm talking to you. What you do on a regular basis. All the women you've gotten wasted just so you could sleep with them. / Who knows how many you've taken advantage of!

Jake: Alright that’s it. If you aren't gonna leave, I’ll make you.

Sydney: Stop!

Sydney grabs Jake’s arm, but he pushes her away. Jake grabs Monica by the shoulders and begins pushing her stage left. She struggles. Kat moves out of the way and behind the pool table.

Monica: Do not touch me! Let me go!

Sydney (not moving): Stop it! Jake!

Eddie pushes towards Jake. He pushes himself between Monica and Jake. He pushes Jake back.

Eddie: Get off of her! You're making everything worse!

Jake: Come into my house and insult me?! This is my / house. Get the fuck out! You don't belong here!

Monica: I’m not insulting you! It's who you are! It's what you do!

Jake: I'm not a rapist!

Eddie: Back the fuck up man.

Jake: Get out of my way, or I'll… I’ll fuck you up.

Jake pushes Eddie.

Sydney: Jake, come here. Let's go talk somewhere.

Jake: Everyone shut up! This is between me and her!

Eddie: Dude!

Jake: Move!

Eddie pushes Jake back. Jake yells and swings at Eddie. He ducks and tackles Jack.


Kat grabs a pool cue from the table. Eddie is on top of Jake.

Eddie: Calm down. You're drunk--

Jake: Get off me, piece of shit!
Jake flips Eddie over onto his back. Jake hovers over him. Kat moves around the table and gets between Monica and the fighting Jake and Eddie. She holds the pool cue in front of her.

**Jake:** You asked for it!

*Jake punches Eddie in the face. Sydney screams. He gets up and turns around. Eddie moans in pain on the ground. Jake starts advancing towards Monica, but Kat’s in the way. He advances on Kat*

**Monica:** Oh my God…

**Jake:** You better fucking move or—

*Kat swings the cue and clubs Jake in the head with the butt of the stick. Jake falls on the pool table and slides on to the floor.*

*Short silence.*

**Sydney (in disgust):** Holt shit. I can’t believe you did that.  
**Monica (in adoration):** Holy shit. I can’t believe you did that.

**Eddie (rising up):** Did you knock him out?  
*He moves to Jake and examines him.*

**Sydney:** I’m gonna go find some ice… Kat, I swear…

*She exits stage right.*

**Monica (approaching Kat):** I love you. That was amazing. But let’s get out of here. Before he wakes up and everything gets worse.

*She turns to exit stage left.*

**Kat:** Yeah, right behind you.

*Eddie looks up from Jake’s limp body. He stares at Kat. A silence passes between them.*

**Eddie:** Um… Jake shouldn’t have done that… hey, do you wanna go to my room? We can talk about this and I think—

**Kat:** No. I don’t need your help or anything else from you.

*Kat tosses him the stick. Eddie catches it. Kat turns and exits stage left. Eddie stands with Jake’s body. Jake begins to murmur. Eddie looks down. He puts the cue on the table. He rolls Jake to face the audience on his side, in case of vomiting. He exits stage right.*

*Curtain*
Eddie's Prayer

Scene 9.

Kat sits on her couch in her apartment. She is bundled up in the blanket staring out into the audience. She holds a remote in her hand as if she is watching Netflix and the back of the theatre is the TV. The soft murmuring of a television show can be heard. Lights flash on her face like the flickering of a television screen. She stares. In her head, she relives the night with Eddie, and the audience can read it on her face. Her phone rings. Kat looks at her phone and ignores the call.

Kat (to herself): Please. Just leave me alone.

Kat sits in silence. Five seconds pass. Her phone rings again. She groans.

Kat (answering): Hi… Yeah sorry… I’m… yeah. Just watching Netflix. Uh… Parks and Rec. I don’t know what episode. Whatever the next one was… (beat). Monica. I gotta go. I can’t… No. I don’t want to talk about this… I know your opinion. (beat). I went to Title IX like you said. Please… Isn’t that enough for right now? I’m okay. I know you want to be here for me and all… but… thanks for checking up on me, but I really just… need some time to myself. No big deal. Alright… Yeah, talk to you soon. Thanks. Love you too.

Kat hangs up. She sighs and falls to her side on the couch. She covers her face with the blanket. A moment passes. She pokes her head from under the blanket and stares at the TV/back of the space. Sydney walks through the door and flicks on the lights. She is drunk and dressed for a night going out.

Sydney (singing Closer by Chainsmokers): “So baby hold me closer in the back seat of your Rover. That I know you can’t afford. Bite that tattoo on your…” Oh shit. Hey Kat.

Kat: Hi.

Sydney: Why are you sitting all alone on the couch at… (checks her phone) at… 8:22 on a Wednesday night?

Kat: Why are you drunk at 8:22 on a Wednesday night?

Sydney: Oooh… someone’s catty. And it’s Kat. (laughs).

Kat: Funny.

Sydney tosses her purse lazily on the ground. She jumps on the couch.

Sydney: Don’t be boring! Come out with us! Me and the girls are celebrating / Becca’s 21st birthday, she’s going to be so fucked up…


Sydney: What’d you say?

Kat: I want to be left alone!
Sydney: Sorryyy… You can’t sit in here forever. (grabbing Kat’s hand, trying to pull her off the couch). Get uppp… Come out, get drunk, kiss a hot boy…

Kat (pulling back): Stop! That’s the last thing I want…

Sydney: What! You have been… been sitting in here in the dark since I left at like 5:00 and / I’m trying to help you have a good time…

Kat: And you’re already drunk / and I didn’t think you were coming back.

Sydney: Yeah, well I forgot my ID. I / can’t get into Wine Wednesday without it.

Kat: Please get it and leave.

Sydney: I will… I will… but I’ll be here for a hot minute. I’m waiting to get picked up.

Kat: Oh, who’s coming to get you?

Sydney: Just some SAEs.

Kat: Are you serious?

Sydney: What… I’m like basically their sweetheart already… Well, almost. Elections next week! Soooo excited!

Kat: After what happened to me last week at their party, you still want to be friends with them.

Sydney: Oh shut up Kat. That’s bullshit. Stop listening to Monica.

Kat: You don’t mean that / after everything that I have been through, you say something…

Sydney: You wouldn’t be in this mess if Monica hadn’t blabbed to the school about it.

Kat: She stood up for me and supported me. Which you haven’t done.

Sydney: Oh please! I’m here for you. I’m trying to get you off your ass. Our whole pledge class is going out for Becca except you. Last week. It happened. Take a shot, get over it, move on.

Kat sits and stares at her. She begins to softly cry.

Sydney (moving to comfort Kat): Sh… sh… I’m sorry… I… I can’t… We cope differently. I… They sit in silence for a moment.

Kat: I went to the Title IX office today.

Sydney: You did what?

Kat: I told you this morning. I filed a complaint.

Sydney: Oh my god. You fucking didn’t!

Kat: Were you not listening? When you / were eating breakfast I told you…

Sydney: Yeah, but… but I don’t know what I thought you were doing, but not this.

Kat: Well. You’re a witness.
Sydney: Huh?

Kat: Check your email.

*Sydney pulls out her phone to check her email. She reads aloud.*

**Sydney:** “Ms. Sydney Leake, I am contacting you in regards to Ms. Kat Simmons… blah, blah, blah… Come to my office and give a statement as a witness…” What? Kat? Are you fucking kidding me? You dragged me into this! (continues reading). “… in order to properly and thoroughly understand… blah, blah, blah… Best, Matthew Williams.” Who the fuck’s this guy? I’m so… so… ugh!

**Kat:** Syd… I know this makes you mad, / but I need you to do this for me.

**Sydney:** Mad? You think I’m mad? Oh… I’m furious.

**Kat:** This isn’t about you!

**Sydney:** Now it is! Eddie and Jake are going to / hate me forever.

**Kat:** Oh, you care about them more than me?

**Sydney:** No! But this is… is insane. What if he gets arrested? What if Eddie goes to jail because you turned a one night stand into a crime?

**Kat:** I didn’t / do that at all.

**Sydney:** Then, what did you do?

**Kat (she hits a breaking point):** I didn’t do anything except lay there in his bed! I can’t remember the whole thing… Just flashes… but waking up, coming back to consciousness with… with him on top of me! I could feel him inside of me and… and it hurt. Because I wasn’t ready to… or anything because I didn’t want to do that with him. I didn’t. And I… I blacked out again and that’s the last thing I remember. Him. Inside me. On top of me. Taking advantage of me. And I woke up confused and a little scared… and really embarrassed. That morning. He was totally normal. Like nothing had ever happened. Which made me so confused because I thought I was crazy… He was calm and cool, you know how Eddie is. Just normal. And I was freaking out… He smiled at me and tried to kiss me… I let him, but not for long. Because I thought I was going to throw up. I wanted to know what happened. So, when Monica told me I was raped, I… it helped to have someone else tell me what was happening.

*Silence.*

**Sydney:** Wow… that’s… it sounds like too much alcohol and shitty sex too me. If you want to know what I think happened.

**Kat:** I. I don’t know. But it’s too late. I went to Title IX, and you have to be a witness.

**Sydney:** Fine. I’ll talk to him, but I’m worried.

**Kat:** About talking to Mr. Williams?
Sydney: No, I’m worried you’ll be the girl who cried rape.

Silence.

Kat: I can’t think of anything worse than this…

Sydney: Yeah…

Kat: If this doesn’t go my way, my life will be over. It’ll be destroyed.

Eddie: If this doesn’t go my way, my life will be over. It’ll be destroyed.

_Eddie sits in his bedroom on his bed facing the audience. He talks on his cellphone._

Eddie: Yeah… I don’t know, Dad… I went in there and told them truth. That’s what I did… He has to investigate some more. Like talk to witnesses and stuff… Jake was there… He saw the whole thing so he will get called in to testify. I guess that’s what he is doing. Testifying? Yeah… I’m mad because I didn’t do anything wrong… Well, I mean I didn’t do anything illegal. I don’t think… (beat). She said “Yes!” Dad, that’s all I’ve ever been told. That’s what you taught me in high school. “Make sure she says ‘Okay.’ Be respectful.” I was. I promise… As long as she says “Yes.” (beat). No, I don’t think that… no doesn’t mean yes… She told me to. How many times do I have to tell you? I’m sick of having to defend myself! Have I ever done anything like this before?! (beat). Sorry… I didn’t mean… Yes sir. Okay. (beat). Yeah I think so… she didn’t seem drunk… It’s… Gahhh (falls back on the bed). I’m… I’m… I’ll let you know what happens. That’s all that I can do… Okay… Yeah, put her on… (beat). Hey Mom… I’m okay… Thanks. I know I shouldn’t… (beat). Uh… What? Oh yeah, it’s on my shelf. _The Bible_ that you gave me after graduation? I have it… (beat). Jeremiah 29:11? I’ll read it… Okay… I’ll read it when we hang up… Thank you… Thanks for the prayers… I’ll talk to you later… Love you, too. Tell Dad I said “Thanks.” I’ll call you soon… Okay… Bye…

_Eddie hangs up and tosses his phone on the pillow. He sits for a moment staring straight ahead. He falls back on the bed with exasperation. Silence. Then, he gets up and looks on his shelf for a moment. He turns around facing the audience looking confused. Then, he has a realization. He reaches under his bed and pulls out a cardboard box. He places the box on the bed and begins digging through it. He pulls out a barely used copy of _The Bible_. He flips through it and reads the verse silently to himself. He smirks then reads aloud._

_Eddie: “For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.””_

_Eddie stares at _The Bible_. His expression changes to show pure contempt. He closes it and throws it across the room with frustration._

_Eddie (to himself):_ Is that supposed to comfort me? What the… Oh yeah, Mom, being a convicted rapist will help me prosper and have hope and… and a future. My future is… is… nothing if I… and this… I don’t know… (looking up). God, why are you doing this? Why? You think this is funny. (laughs). You love doing this shit! You enjoy punishing us and putting us through shit. Like Job. You messed him up. You let Satan ruin his life. And so many other
people along the way. Is this your plan for me? To get kicked out of college because I had premarital sex? Huh? (beat). Answer me damnit! (beat). I’m talking to a brick wall. Nothing. It’s just nothing. Silence. I “pray” to thin air or to… to… I’m looking to something for salvation from my sadness. To save me from this pile of shit. That’s what we are all doing. All people. Praying to the great, almighty thing of your preference that’ll make your life better. Science, Santa Claus, the Republican Party. But Mom says you’re the answer, God. (beat). So give me a fucking answer! (beat). I’m sorry… I… God, I know I messed up. I lost my virginity to someone who wasn’t my wife, but I didn’t rape her… At least I don’t think I did. (beat). What do I do? Please say something, or do something. Or… I dunno. (beat). Okay, God. If you’re not gonna do anything… why do you think people don’t believe in you? If you’re not gonna speak to me, I’ll make you.

Eddie picks up The Bible from where he threw it. He begins flipping through the pages.

Eddie: I’m gonna open The Bible and point to a random verse. That’ll be your advice.

He closes his eyes, flips through the pages, and finally stops. He points his finger and reads.

Eddie: James… what do you have to say, James. “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trails of many kinds…” (beat). You’ve got to be fucking kidding me!

Eddie looks up: Pure joy? Should I be happy that I’m going through this? Oh yay! Thank you! I’m so happy that I get to defend myself for something I didn’t fucking do! Because some… some slut had to go run and cry because she… she… Gahhh…

Eddie falls to his knees and begins to softly cry. He picks up The Bible and holds it in his lap as he sits on his knees at the foot of the bed.

Eddie: I don’t know what’s right and wrong or up and down. I don’t know what’s going on anymore.

Silence. Jake walks in the door.

Jake: Oh shit! Take that to the bathroom! Put that thing away!

Eddie (looking up): Wait what?

Jake: Oh. I thought you were beating off.

Eddie: No, dumbass.

Jake: Whoa, don’t be mad. It’s not like I assumed your gender or something. What are you doing?

Eddie (holding up The Bible): Just trying to / figure things out.

Jake: Oh, I see. Well, fuck that shit. Let’s get you up on your feet again. You’ve been moping around here. Let’s go to the movies or go to Taco Bell. A Baja Blast would be dank right now!
Eddie: I don’t want to do anything.

Eddie gets up and crawls in his bed.

Jake: Dude, you’ve got to stop. Get out of your head. Stop thinking about it. You didn’t do shit.

Eddie: But what if I did?

Jake: You didn’t.

Eddie: Well, tell me what rape is. Define it.

Jake: Uh… I’ve never really thought about it. But like… like… something off Law & Order, that dude who fucked that chick in his basement for like ever and tried to kill her and shit. Like against her will. That’s rape.

Eddie: Yeah, but Mr. Williams said that if someone does not give clear consent either verbally or physically then—

Jake: Yeah, physically. That’s the key word there, man. If she’s making out with you, giving you an OPTHJ, that’s like a flashing billboard saying, “Hey, stick it in!”

Eddie: But what if she doesn’t want you to do that? What if she just wants to go a little bit further than kissing, but not all the way?

Jake: You kidding me? Dude. Kat wanted it. She’s lying instead of owning up to being a slut. No offense. Not trying to trash the girl you lost it too.

Eddie: But… I can’t keep thinking that maybe… maybe I—

Jake: You’re not a rapist!

Eddie: How do you know!

Jake: Because… you’re not… violent or aggressive. You weren’t trying to… You’re not Buffalo Bill or Jeffrey Dahmer / and tying people up and drugging them

Eddie: That’s the most extreme example / I have ever heard.

Jake: But you get my point!

Eddie: But you don’t get mine.

Jake: Does that surprise you? I never know what the fuck is going on.

Eddie: Listen. You have to have a clear “Yes.” To use your words, “a flashing billboard,” but one that, actually says “Yes.” Not what you think it means or want it to mean. Also, if you’re incapacitated, you can’t actually give consent because you’re… I dunno… not in a normal state of mind… Honestly, Jake. You could be seen as… You’re a rapist.

Jake: What did you just call me? You want me to beat the shit out off because / I can kick your fucking ass in about two seconds.

Eddie: No… No… Think about it man! You sleep with drunk girls all the time.
Jake: But I’m fucked up too. Just because I’m not a pussy like you and don’t drink alcohol. That’s the difference between you and me. You were sober.

Eddie: Yeah, but she… she asked me to do it. That’s why I’m confused. I just… I dunno man.

Lights out.

Ending

Scene 11.

Matthew’s office. Matthew sits alone at his desk. He holds his recorder in hand and flips through his notes. A knock is heard at the door. Matthew shuffles some things around.

Matthew: Come in!

Eddie walks in the door wearing a suit.

Matthew: Oh, Eddie. I was not expecting you.

Eddie: Oh, I’m sorry. Is this a bad time?

Matthew: No, it’s fine. Can I help you with something?

Eddie: Uh, yeah… I’ve got a question.

Matthew: Yes?

Eddie: Uh… well… I’m about to go to my hearing. In like an hour. I was killing time and thought I’d stop by. Yeah. Uh… I’ve been thinking about this a lot. And… I… What’s gonna happen to me?

Matthew: I told you before. I do not have a say in the outcome. I only put together the case.

Eddie: Yeah, but you’ve done this before. You know what the outcomes can be. I’ve read some stuff online, and I’m worried that I’m going to end up in jail or something.

Matthew: I cannot tell you what will happen. I sent it to student conduct because sexual assault could have occurred. Within in the evidence compiled, a case can be made. If there were no grounds to assume an assault, the incident would have died in this office. However, based on the statements and some text messages I read, I could not come up reach that conclusion. Student conduct must decide.

Eddie: But, like what could happen?

Matthew: Well…

Eddie: Like, what’re some possibilities?

Matthew: They could administer a series of sanctions. They can’t send you to jail.

Eddie: What about other guys who have gone to jail?

Matthew: If Kat were to press criminal charges, then you could potentially go to jail. The university cannot do that. The university could… Say, if you are preventing her from being able
to continue her education, they could remove you from any classes that you have with her. Or maybe suspend you. Or potentially expel you. You could be put on social probation for your fraternity. You could have to do some sort of sexual assault and harassment training. Or… or nothing. They could decide that you did not do anything wrong. They could determine that she did indeed consent.

Eddie: Hmm. Or they could determine that I was a rapist.

Matthew: If it were to go that far, you would be expelled, but the crime of rape would not go on your permanent record.

Eddie: It doesn’t matter! You’re still labeling me a rapist! By saying that I sexually assaulted Kat, you are calling me a rapist. That has the same… effect as the police calling me that. You are giving me a title that will go with me for the rest of my life!

Matthew: Eddie… please relax. (beat). If you tried to apply to another school, then they would see that you were expelled from this institution without seeing the reason for expulsion.

Eddie: But what if the media writes about this? What if the school paper writes about what’s happened or some sorority chick puts me on blast on Facebook? What if an employer Googles my name and sees rapist next to it because of you?

Matthew: Fabricating hypotheticals will do nothing to ease your stress. (beat). Do you have any other questions?

Eddie: No.

_Eddie starts to leave. Then turns with a start._

Eddie: Ya know, good thing I want to be a lawyer because I have to go defend myself in there. The lawyer that my dad hired—who was expensive—can’t even talk in this hearing.

Matthew: He only gives you advice. You were allowed to choose anyone to give you counsel. It did not have to be an expensive attorney. It could have been a professor or—

Eddie: That’s not the point. The point is… this is a mini criminal justice system… essentially… where students have to defend themselves in front of the campus council! That’s intimidating and… and I don’t know what I’m doing in there.

Matthew: That is why you have an attorney. To help you you—

Eddie: Whatever, man. This whole thing… is… is my word against hers. Or Jake’s words and my words versus Sydney’s, Monica’s and Kat’s words. It’s just a bunch of he said, she said.

Matthew: Yes, you could put it that way, but the process is much more complicated than—

Eddie: No, it’s not. It’s 50.1% of the words spoken by the five of us will either fall in my favor or in hers. Words. No videos. No recordings. No fingerprints. No rape kits. No blood work. No bullets. No knifes. Nothing. Just words.
Matthew: Yes, I see what you are—

Eddie: And the cops aren’t even investigating this. Like the police aren’t calling me down to the station to play good cop bad cop with me in some dark room. Nobody cares about this. Nobody is trying to arrest me or hunt me down. But you… you could have stopped this right here in this office.

Matthew: Sexual violence is a huge problem on college campuses, and therefore, people like me exist to help stop these violations from happening to students.

Eddie: You could have stopped this… you can’t actually prove anything!

Matthew: The evidence—

Eddie: It’s not evidence! It’s people telling stories!

Silence.

Matthew: I know that you are upset, but this how the system works. This is the policy.

Eddie: Whatever man, fuck… have a good day, Mr. Williams.

_Eddie leaves and slams the door on his way out._

Scene 12.

_Eddie enters stage right. A light slowly rises up on him as he stands. He wears a coat and tie._

_Eddie addressed the audience like they are the campus council. As he speaks, Kat enters stage left and another spotlight shines on her as stands opposite of Eddie slightly stage left._

Eddie: I’m Eddie Hodges. Thank you for your patience throughout this hearing. I am grateful for your time, and thank you Mr. Williams for your hard work searching for all the facts. This process is a necessary component to our campus life, but I hate that I'm standing in this position instead of being a student on the council or something…

Eddie: This whole situation… it's caused me a lot of tension, and… and frustration. I… didn't want it to go this far… far enough to where I had to come speak and defend myself in front of the campus council. But I realize it's necessary… necessary for the truth to come out. What happened that night, is not what it seems. I’ve never been in his position before. Being told that what I did… that what happened in that bedroom was wrong. Because what has happened needs to stop… I'm being blamed…

Kat: This whole situation… it's caused me a lot of tension, and… and frustration. I… didn’t want it to go this far… far enough to where I had to come speak and defend myself in front of the campus council. But I realize it's necessary… necessary for the truth to come out. What happened that night, is not what it seems. I’ve never been in his position before. Being told that what I did… that what happened in that bedroom was wrong. Because what has happened needs to stop… I'm being blamed…

_Lights fade on Eddie and she stops speaking. Kat continues._
Kat (pointing to where Eddie stood): He is telling you that he didn’t know I was drunk, and that I wanted to be with him like that. But no… being quite honest, I had no idea how to handle this… these feelings of invasion and loss of control and… and manipulation. I didn’t know what they meant. But my friends have been supportive. They’ve helped me figure out what’s going on. What being in this situation means. That’s why I have the courage to say that Eddie Hodges didn’t have my consent. It is not okay. He raped me. I've never been taken advantage of before.

Kat: That was my first time. Eddie: That was my first time.

Lights fade on Kat. Eddie continues.

Eddie: Kat did most of it herself. (pointing to where Kat stood) She is telling you that I had sex with her without her consent. But no… She wanted to. She asked me to. Kat knew what she was doing. And so did I. It was consensual sex. She’s falsely accusing me.

Lights come back up on Kat.

Eddie: It's not okay that we can live in a community where people can do stuff like this and get away with it. Not take responsibility for their own actions. Not have the decency to respect other people. I'm not a liar. Dishonesty… it’s… it's not who I am. Dishonest. (Beat). Yeah. I hope that you will see where I'm coming from. I'm not responsible for what happened.

Kat: It's not okay that we can live in a community where people can do stuff like this and get away with it. Not take responsibility for their own actions. Not have the decency to respect other people. I'm not a liar. Dishonesty… it’s… it's not who I am. Dishonest. (Beat). Yeah. I hope that you will see where I'm coming from. I'm not responsible for what happened.

Lights fade on Eddie. He exists

Kat: Thank you for your time and patience during this hearing. Have a good evening.

She smiles feebly and exists. Lights out.

Scene 13.

Kat and Sydney’s apartment. Monica sits on the couch typing on her laptop. A moment passes. Kat walks in. Monica jumps up.

Monica: Hey! Did you win?

Silence.

Kat (trying to keep it together): It… It… No, I lost.

Monica: Oh my God…

Monica moves and grabs Kat lightly by the shoulders. She leads her to the couch.

Monica: What exactly did they say?
Kat: I’m trying to remember, but like I don’t remember all of the words. I was so… so… so shocked that those were the results. The council said something like… Because they couldn’t prove that I was drunk that they couldn’t prove that I was raped.

Monica: But you blacked out!

Kat: I know that. And I told Mr. Williams that.

Monica: I said the same thing.

Kat: But Eddie said he couldn’t tell that I was drunk. He thought I had been drinking, but knew what was going on. That I could still clearly say yes or no.

Monica: That’s such bullshit!

Kat: I know that. And I told Mr. Williams that.

Monica: I said the same thing.

Kat: But Eddie said he couldn’t tell that I was drunk. He thought I had been drinking, but knew what was going on. That I could still clearly say yes or no.

Monica: That’s such bullshit!

Kat: I don’t know.

Monica: No, their biased. They are victim blaming. This happens all the time. They probably asked you what you were wearing. Because somehow a woman’s clothing is like a signal to all the world how badly she wants to have sex. Which is so fucking stupid.

Kat: Yeah one of the faculty asked, he is like an old political science professor—

Monica: Fuck him… classic white male.

Kat: Yeah… I mean I guess it was a valid question. For like detail purposes, but…

Monica: It wasn’t… I’m surprised they didn’t ask if you had a boyfriend…

Kat: No, they didn’t… but five people are on the council. They said it takes a simple majority. It was three to two. Three for Eddie and two for me.

Monica: Wow. I thought for sure… That’s so close.

Kat: It just sucks to be raped and then told you weren’t raped.

Monica: Yeah. That… that… I’m so sorry. I should have never left that night.

Sydney enters.

Sydney: Hey hey hey.

Monica jumps up and rushes to Sydney.

Monica: Do not say anything to her.

Sydney: I’m not. I’m not heartless… Kat, do you need anything?

Kat: I’m just going to go to bed. I’ve had a long day. And honestly, I’m just. I don’t really know what to believe anymore. I… yeah… that’s pretty dramatic, but yeah. Eddie was right. And I was wrong. So. Yeah or that’s what the campus council thinks. Shitty. I’ll talk to you guys tomorrow.

Kat exits.
Sydney: Poor thing.
Monica: I can’t believe it turned out this way. Jake: I can’t believe it turned out this way.

Lights fade on the women and lights go up on Jake and Eddie who wears just a button down holds his tie in his hand.

Eddie: I’m grateful. Thank you God. You saved me.
Jake: This is fucking unreal. Dude, I thought you were fucked.
Eddie: Me too, but I guess someone’s watching over me.
Jake: Yeah… maybe. That cross necklace must be a good luck charm.
Eddie: But, dude, I’m so mad at Kat. Gah… I fucking hate her. I swear if I ever see her in this house again…
Jake: Yeah, fuck her. She’s a bitch.
Eddie: She put me through all that shit for nothing.
Jake: She learned her lesson. Don’t fuck with us.
Eddie: I mean… I learned a lot. Like don’t fuck a drunk chick.
Jake: Yeah… (singing I Love College by Asher Roth). “don’t have sex if she’s too gone.”
Eddie (smiling): “When it comes to condoms, put two on.”
Eddie: “Man, I love college! Hey!” Jake: “Man, I love college! Hey!”

Jake and Eddie laugh.

Jake: Now, I finally get what Asher Roth was saying.
Eddie: Speaking of, let’s celebrate.
Jake: Yeah, cause, “time isn’t wasted, when you’re getting wasted.”
Eddie: Grab the Jack…

Jake jumps up and moves to the minifridge. He starts making them a Jack and Coke. He mixes with two Solo cups.

Jake: Way ahead of you. Eddie’s a free man!
Eddie: Dude, I could have been expelled.
Jake: But you’re not! And you know what that means?
Eddie: What?
Jake: The Luau next week!
Eddie: I totally forgot with all of this going on…
**Jake:** I didn’t! I got this sweet Hawaiian shirt from Goodwill. And some old ass jeans, but I’m gonna make them into jorts.

**Eddie:** Nice…

_Jake brings him a mixed drink._

**Jake:** Here you go dude. Made by the best bartender in the house.

**Eddie (laughs):** Sure…

**Jake:** I think a toast is in order.

**Eddie:** Raise your Solo cup…

**Jake:** To… To Mr. Williams! The best damn Title IX Coordinator in America!

**Eddie:** Yeah… I’ll drink to that…

_The raise their cups and drink. Lights fade on them and lights go up on Sydney and Monica._

_Curtain._
Appendix 5: Draft Four of *She Asked for It*

*She Asked for It*

A play by John Brahan

Draft 4
Scene 1.

An office. A desk sits diagonally stage right. A computer monitor, papers, pencils, and a coffee mug sit on the desk. A clock and calendar hang on the wall behind the desk. The clock subtly ticks. A chair sits next to the desk stage left. It’s a comfortable chair, but not too comfortable. The chair faces the audience diagonally downstage right. Facing the audience, Matthew sits behind his desk writing in his notebook. A door stands next to the chair even further stage left. A small plant sits next to the table. A cold and gloomy light illuminates the grays of the office. The rest of the stage is dark. Matthew writes. A knock is heard at the door.

Matthew (jolting his head up): One second.

Matthew fiddles with the items on his desk. He arranges them neatly though the desk appears clean. He pulls out a digital recorder from his desk drawer. He lets out a breath.

Matthew (standing up): Come in!

Kat walks in the door.

Matthew: Katherine, I am glad you are here.

Kat (smiling feebly): Hey Mr. Williams, please call me Kat.

Matthew: Oh yes, Kat. How are you?

Kat: I’m okay. Tired. I haven’t slept much this week. This whole thing… it’s… it’s… it’s a lot. Ya know? Emotionally—I’m all over the place. And my friends. Monica won’t stop asking me so many questions.

Matthew: Monica will have her turn to speak to me again.

Kat: Yeah.

Matthew: Now, I need to ask, are you positive that you want to pursue this process?

Kat: What do you mean?

Matthew: Do you want to officially file a complaint with the Title IX office?

Short pause.

Kat: Yes. I… I—talking with friends, and hearing about other… other victims… And their situations. I want to speak out. For them... And for me.

Matthew moves back towards his desk.

Matthew: Very well. Katherine—Kat, please take a seat. I need to hear your statement.

Kat (sitting down in the chair): Yes.

Matthew nods. He flips through his notebook to a clean sheet of paper. A short pause.

Kat: Can we start? Please.
Matthew: Absolutely.
Kat: I’m sorry, Mr. Williams. That seemed rude, but I didn’t… yeah.
Matthew: It’s okay, I understand. Retelling the story can be like reliving the moment.
Kat: Thanks. I want to do this, but I’m ready to get it over with.
Matthew: Yes. To be as thorough as possible in my investigation, may I record your statement?
Kat (hesitant): Uh… Yeah.
Matthew (preparing recorder): The recordings allow me to cross reference my notes and help me reach a conclusion. Please do not leave anything significant out.
Kat: Yes.

Matthew turns on the recorder. He places it towards the front of the desk with the microphone facing Kat. He clears his throat.

Matthew (leaning over and talking in the recorder): Today is Monday, November 7th. Katherine Marie Simmons and I are in my office at 1:05 p.m. (leaning back to a sitting position) So, Katherine—Kat, I want you to be as detailed as you can be. I know this experience is difficult for you to recount, but please do not leave any details—people, or words spoken, or places—do not neglect the tiny details. Every little aspect is important for me to be as informed as possible to determine whether a case exists.

Kat: I understand.

Matthew: Well, first—a basic question—what happened between you and Eddie on Friday, October, 29th?

The lights change.
Kat: Uh. Well, we—like me, Monica, and Sydney. We were about to go to the fraternity house…

Short pause.
Kat (holding back tears): I can’t do this Mr. Williams.

Matthew cuts off the recorder, and the lights revert to the original lighting of the office. The clock ticks.

Kat (crying): It’s too hard. I was blackout. I don’t remember all of it. It’s hard. I… I can’t… remember the details. Just how I felt. How he made me feel. How what he did me so… so upset—that’s all I can remember…

Pause.

Matthew: Yes, I understand. But if you want to file a complaint, I need your statement.
Kat: The details. They’re… They’re fuzzy. I blacked out.
Matthew: That’s not uncommon.

Kat: Please…

Pause.

Matthew: Another person’s word and account of the evening—in this case, Monica’s statement—is not enough to file a complaint. You, as the complainant—the person who has potentially been sexually assaulted—must provide the foundation for a case, if an incident of harassment or assault has occurred.

Kat: If assault occurred?

Matthew: I will need to hear your statement and Eddie’s statement. I will talk to witnesses—maybe even examine texts and calls—to determine whether sexual harassment or an assault has occurred.

Kat: It did.

Pause.

Matthew: After thoroughly investigating, I will reach a conclusion, a conclusion based on evidence. May we start again?

Kat: I… I… Yes.

Matthew: Your statement begins the process. If you do not want to do this, you have the choice. You do not have to not make a statement… Or we can continue. I am here to help you. (Pause.) Kat?

Kat: Eddie raped me. I want to do this.

Matthew clicks on the recording.

Kat: I was doing homework before we—me, Monica, and Sydney—were gonna go to the frat house…

Scene 2.

The lights change. “Blame It” by Jamie Foxxx begins to play. Kat moves out of the office and into her apartment. She sits down at a small table stage left with an open book and notebook. She jots down notes. Her backpack sits under the table, and A solo cup with a pink bendy straw sits next to her book. A couch sits in the middle of the scene, and a counter sits stage right. Behind the counter stands a fridge. This area is the common living area of the women’s apartment. Even further stage left is the door to the apartment. A Bluetooth speaker sits on the counter, and the Spotify playlist “Ultimate White Girl Pregame” plays throughout this scene. Sydney enters from offstage holding a solo cup with a bendy straw.

Sydney: Seriously? It’s a Friday night, put the books away. You’re the only person I know who gets ready to go out and then studies.
Kat: Syd, you know I have a midterm on Monday. I probably shouldn’t even be going out tonight—

Sydney: No! You’re going out, and you’re gonna have fun. You’ve been stuck in those books literally every night for the past week. Practically in an exclusive relationship.

Kat: Well, organic chemistry is hard.

Sydney: Well, organic chemistry is lame.

Sydney walks over and grabs her text book.

Kat: Hey!

Sydney: No! Fuck all this (reads book) “Alk… cenes? alkens?” (throws book on the couch) I’m gonna stop there because I can’t even pronounce that.

Kat (saying the words correctly): Alkenes. Unsaturated hydrocarbons.

Sydney (laughs): Whatever… Marketing doesn’t give a shit about that… No. You make the drugs. I’ll sell them.

Kat gets up to grab her book.

Kat: Future pharmacist and future… drug dealer?

Sydney: Not exactly… but I mean, selling my Adderall during finals has been pretty successful.

Kat (laughs): So, a current drug dealer… Anyways I’m not done—

Sydney: Yes, you are.

Kat: I need—

Sydney blocks her from getting the book.


Sydney grabs Kat’s solo cup.

Kat: Okay fine. I did already get ready. I can just do it tomorrow.

Sydney: You’ve got all the time in the world.

Kat: Yeah until Monday.

Kat puts the book in her backpack. Then, sits on the couch and gets out her phone. She starts scrolling Instagram.

Sydney: Yay! Now that you’re done being boring, let’s drink.

Kat: Sure, I’ll take another Vodka OJ.

Kat raises her solo cup.

Sydney: Comin’ up… Ooh… I love this song.
Sydney walks to the counter. She turns up the music on the speaker and begins pouring a drink. She casually dances as she does this. As she speaks to Kat, she grabs some orange juice from the fridge and some vodka from under the counter.

**Sydney:** So... Tonight's gonna be fun.

**Kat:** Yeah, I guess...

**Sydney:** I can't believe they got DJ Victory!

**Kat:** Yeah, a local DJ... great.

**Sydney:** And Sig Gam has some 80's cover band or something. Ew... Another reason why GLA is the best frat on campus.

**Kat:** Yeah. I don't really care about the music though...

**Sydney:** Come on a DJ's way better than a band... Oh! And Eddie.

**Kat:** Oh my God... Why do you keep pushing the Eddie thing?

**Sydney:** Because he's a great guy.

**Kat:** He's a sophomore.

**Sydney:** Yeah, and you're a junior. My dad is like fifteen years older than my step mom. Age... it's not a thing anymore.

**Kat:** Yeah... but—

**Sydney:** And he's a Poli Sci major.

**Kat:** You know I'm not political.

**Sydney:** Whatever, he's gonna be like a big fucking deal when he's older. Congressman or something important like that...

*Sydney brings Kat her drink.*

**Kat:** But still it's... I dunno... Thanks.

**Sydney:** Drink up... I'm like two ahead of you.

**Kat:** Seems like we're always playing catch up.

**Sydney:** That's what shots are for.

*Sydney gets up and heads to the counter. She grabs the handle of vodka and two solo cups. She pours generous shots in the cups.*

**Kat:** Uh... I dunno.

**Sydney:** What's up with you? Trying to study on Friday and questioning a shot?
Kat: I’m stressed. With school and I’ve got cheer… the game next weekend. A paper in History. And… And I’m applying for a summer internship… A lot’s on my plate. Just stressed out, ya know?

Sydney brings the shots back to the couch. She extends the shot to Kat.

Sydney: This will help you. You know it always does. (beat). We love GLA parties. Remember Homecoming weekend? When you got on stage and sang… I don’t remember, but it was fun!

Kat takes the shot in hand.

Sydney: Have fun tonight. Okay?

Kat (smiles): Yeah—

Sydney: Like Daddy always says, “Don’t let your education get in the way of college.”

Kat (laughs): Great advice.

Sydney: To having higher BACs than GPAs!

Kat laughs. They knock back the shots. Monica walks in the door.

Monica: Hey Kat—

Sydney: Monica! You could at least knock?

Monica: Oh, sorry… you probably would not have been able to hear me over this loud… whatever this is.

Sydney: Yeah. Top 40’s are Top 40’s for a reason unlike that… that underground, alternative shit that you—and only you—listen to.

Kat: Okay! It doesn’t matter. Syd, please turn it down…

Sydney: Okay…

Sydney gets up and turns down the music on the speaker.

Kat: Monica, what do you want to drink?

Kat moves to the counter.

Monica: Vodka water. What are we doing tonight?

Kat nods and grabs a solo cup. She goes to the fridge and pulls out a pitcher of water. As she speaks, she makes Monica her drink.

Kat: Syd wants to go to the GLA party.

Monica: Why? You know what they say about GLA—what it stands for?

Sydney: Oh, wow. Yes, Monica tell us what your other dumb GDI friends say about GLA.
Monica (correcting Sydney): My non-Greek friends and I say—and it’s not just us, even in the Greek community—people say… “GLA. Even if you don’t want it, you’ll Get Laid Anyway.”

Sydney: Shut the fuck up. Don’t talk about the men of Gamma Lambda Alpha like that. We’re going. That’s what we’re doing.

Kat: She’s obsessed with them.

Monica: Whatever. I just want to do something outside of my apartment.

Sydney: Tonight, we’re getting drunk, dancing, and hooking up with cute boys.

Kat (laughs and hands Monica the drink).

Monica: Are you sure about that? Getting wasted around frat boys?

Sydney: Lord, Monica… Look, I have drunk sex all the time, and I’m still standing. I mean just last week after dollar beer night… I had some great sex. I don’t remember all of it because I was fucked up, but I remember that it was great, and—

Monica: Why did you do that?

Sydney: He was cute. And he bought all my drinks.

Monica: That doesn’t mean anything. Nothing substantial at least. It doesn’t mean you should go home with a random guy.

Kat (laughs): She was having fun. She likes the guy. You did like him, right?

Sydney: I mean, yeah. I guess. Like I said he’s cute. And he—

Monica and Kat: Bought all my drinks.

Sydney and Kat laugh. Monica sits quietly. Sydney’s phone vibrates. She looks at it as she begins her next line.

Sydney (laughs): But seriously, drunk sex is so much better than sober sex.

Monica: You’ve got to be kidding me. How?

Sydney: It is! It’s better because you—

Monica: It can’t be better if you are unwillingly submitting to—

Sydney: Shut up and listen to me. Not everyone is feminist as fuck like you.

Monica: It’s not about feminism! It’s / about consensual—

Kat: Monica.

Sydney: Shhhhh!!!!

Kat laughs. Kat sends a text message.
Sydney: Drunk sex is so much better because… One… you don’t have to worry about like looking at the person. You can’t think or see straight, so fuck all that eye contact. Sometimes it’s only sex.

Kat: I like the eye contact. It’s sweet.

Monica: No, it’s conscious.

Sydney (glaring at Monica): TWO, The sounds. Oh my God. The sounds. You know how uncomfortable a… a queef…

Kat: Syd!  

Monica: But isn’t it so liberating?

Sydney: What?

Kat: I hate that word.

Sydney: Whatever! You either forget they happen or you’re so gone that you don’t even notice them.

Kat: That’s a good point.

Monica rolls her eyes. She pulls out her phone.

Sydney: Three. The next morning. You’re… you’re…

Kat: Awkward?  

Monica: Disoriented?

Sydney: No, it’s over. Like you don’t have to kiss them back. You don’t have to eat breakfast or lunch with them or shower with them. I mean, if you don’t want to. It’s over.

Monica: How?

Kat: I actually agree with Sydney on that one. The night before seems like a dream. You wake up. You think…

Sydney: Where the fuck am I?

Kat: Exactly. You are yourself again. Not the… the promiscuous girl from the night before. You are yourself again, and the boy next to you is himself again.

Sydney: Yes! Since your drunk alter ego did it with that boy the night before, you—your sober self… your regular, normal self—technically didn’t hook up with him? My Hyde side is—

Monica and Kat: Deedee.

Sydney: Ha! You know me so well. Yes, Deedee, my drunk alter ego. When Deedee hooks up with a boy, that doesn’t mean Sydney hooks up with the boy. I sober up in my sleep—well, sometimes sober up—Deedee slips out. Then, there is Sydney. Me. In my full hungover glory. Lying in a stranger’s bed. If he tries to kiss me, I can be like, “Hell noooo. Last night, that was Deedee.”

Kat (laughing): That’s… That’s honestly, so true.
Monica: I can’t believe you two.
Sydney: What?
Monica: You’re acting like getting drunk is like this… this big transformation. Like a werewolf at a full moon. No.
Sydney: Ooh well Tequila let’s out Kat’s wild side.
Kat (laughs): Shut up.
Monica: No, both of you. Drunk sex is rape.
Sydney: Not this again. It’s not. Rape is rape. Drunk sex is drunk sex.
Monica: It’s the same thing!
Kat: Monica, please don’t get into this.
Monica: When you are drunk, legally, you cannot consent...
Sydney: No, no, no. If I am fucked up and want to have sex with a boy, who is also drunk. Or maybe even sober. I’ll let a boy sleep with me when I’m drunk. I’m gonna do it. It’s my body, and you can’t control it Monica.
Monica: That right there—what you just said, your mentality—
Sydney: What? Are you gonna say something about women being silent? And 80 something percent of women are raped and don’t speak out? Huh? I’ve heard this enough from you.
Kat: Syd…
Monica: The statistics aren’t—
Sydney gets a phone call.
Sydney (answering phone, holding it to her chest): Whatever. I don’t give a shit about your stats. They are probably made up anyway—alternative facts or something. I gotta get this. It’s Jake.
Monica (sarcastic): Oh Jake, so cool…
Sydney: (into cellphone) Hey hey hey!
Sydney exits. Kat gets out her cellphone. Pause. The music continues. She starts scrolling through Instagram.
Kat: Sorry about Syd.
Monica: It’s fine.
Pause. Kat types a text and sends it. She puts it down, letting out a sigh.
Monica: I don’t get why you are friends with her. Or why I’m friends with you two?
Kat: We have been best friends since like birth!
Monica: Yeah, but things are different now.
Kat: What does that mean?
Monica: You don’t really care about anything.
Kat: Yes I do. I’ve been studying like all night—
Monica: You drink so much, and constantly—
Kat: I go out like twice a week.
Monica: Boys, boys, boys. All the time. You think like her and act like her and hook up like her—ya know, drunk.
Kat: That’s not true. Are you slut shaming me?
Monica: NO. I don’t slut shame.
Kat: Yeah you have no room to talk.
Monica: Are you slut shaming me?
Kat: NO. You’ve been dating Brandon for like… what, a month now?
Monica: Yeah, a month.
Kat: You and Brandon do it all the time.
Monica: But I am not incapacitated, hooking up with strangers. Neither is he. I am choosing to do it with him. I have control over my vagina and choose to use it for sex.
Kat: That’s what she just said. She does too!
Monica: No, that’s completely different. I decide to have sex with my boyfriend. Sydney gets drunk, and… and on a whim after she can’t coherently think, a man sees that and takes advantage of it.
Kat: Let’s not get into this right now. Please?
Monica: Now we are talking about it…
Kat: But we are about to—
Monica: But what?
Kat: Uh…
Monica: I don’t see any “middle ground” on this.
Kat: No. What if, I don’t know what—
Monica: And honestly, you’ve been hanging out with Eddie. I don’t know how I feel about that. He has a reputation.
Kat: We hung out once! I barely know the guy.
**Monica:** Come on.

**Kat:** WHAT!

**Monica:** He has a reputation.

**Kat:** For what!?

**Monica:** For hooking up with drunk girls while he is sober.

**Kat:** That’s not true.

**Monica:** Well, does he drink?

**Kat:** No—

**Monica:** Does he hook up with girls?

**Kat:** He doesn’t sleep with them, but—

**Monica:** You know what I mean, past kissing.

**Kat:** Yeah… I guess.

**Monica:** Well then, that’s sexual assault.

**Kat:** But I… well—

*Sydney walks in with three drinks.*

**Sydney:** Hey, the Uber’s about to pull up.

**Kat (eagerly):** Great…

**Monica:** Wait. I’m not finished with what I’m saying.

**Sydney:** Oh my God. Every fucking time! Just take a drink and relax.

*Sydney gives Kat a drink and moves to give Sydney hers.*

**Kat:** Thanks.

**Monica:** I’m fine, I don’t want another drink.

**Sydney:** More for me then.

**Monica (ignoring Sydney):** Kat… I just want you to be careful.

**Kat:** Yeah, I got it.

**Sydney:** Also, Kat… you need one more shot before we go. Still behind.

*Sydney moves to the counter and pours Kat a vodka shot.*

**Kat:** Yeah, thanks.

**Monica:** How many have you had?

**Kat:** I’m fine. Just having fun. Don’t worry.
Sydney hands Kat the shot.

Sydney: Let her live! (phone vibrates). Oh! Our ride is here… he might leave us and I’m not getting the next one.

Kat (heading for the door): Let’s go.

Monica sighs. They exit.

Scene 3.

The women move towards the door as the sounds of a party—murmuring of people, laughter, etc.—crescendo. The Spotify playlist “Frat Party Playlist” plays in the background. The lights fade on apartment and illuminate a bar, a ping pong table sitting stage right with solo cups, and a couch stage left. Three barstools sit under the bar. The bar looks homemade. The women walk through the door out of the apartment into the set of the fraternity house. Jake and Eddie are playing beer pong. One of the barstools from under the bar sits in front of the pool table. The women holding solo cups approach the men. Kat and Sydney are feeling it. Monica seems pretty buzzed.

Monica: And as soon as we walk into the party, there they are.

Kat: Monica…

Sydney (interrupting): Look who it is!

Kat: Eddie! Jake!

Monica: Great. Just great.

Eddie: Hey Ka—

Sydney (whispering audibly, grabbing Eddie’s arm): Eddie, tonight’s the night.

Eddie: Hey, I hope. She’s older and, I don’t know her—

Sydney: She likes you. She kept talking and talking about you.

Eddie: Really? I haven’t texted her since last week or sometime, but—

Sydney: I know, I know. But, you’re not a fuck boy!

Eddie: Yeah. Thanks. Don’t freak me out.

Sydney (flirty): You’ll be fine.

Jake: What’s up?

Monica: Jake… Haven’t heard from you in a while, are you doing well?

Jake: Yeah, busy with stuff.

Kat: Ha! What’s up with you two?

Monica: I can’t help that we don’t like each other. We don’t see eye to eye, but…

Jake: Not true… I don’t think the things you believe are… all your—left, feminist, bull—

Monica: Okay, just because I won’t sleep with you?

Jake: You think that I want to fuck—
Sydney (noticing the squabble, grabbing Jake’s arm and pulling him away): Okay! / Why don’t we all take some shots?

Jake: What?

Kat: Good idea.

Jake: Hell yeah. Eddie, play me in beer bong again. I’ll set em.

Eddie: For sure.

Sydney: Bartender?

Eddie: I gotcha, what’re you drinking?

Jake goes to set the cups up. Eddie goes behind the bar and pulls out some handles.

Sydney: What do you have?

Eddie: Uh… Fireball, Malibu, Burnetts—

Sydney (interrupting): Fireball!

Jake: Fuck no.

Kat: Sure.

Monica: Ew?

Eddie: Coming up!

Eddie grabs some solo cups from behind the bar and pours generous shots for his friends.

Jake: Why do we only have shitty liquor in the house?

Sydney: I dunno, hold your nose if you’re gonna be a bitch.

Eddie: Because you buy shitty liquor.

Eddie comes back around from the bar and passes out drinks. Monica gets a text message.

Monica (looking at her phone, under her breath): Shit...

Jake and Sydney speak at the beer pong table. Monica is engrossed in her phone, and Eddie leads Kat away from the group. Jake tosses a ping pong ball at the cups.

Eddie: So how’s everything?

At this point in Kat’s statement, she is drunk. The alcohol is hitting her. The lights are dimming, and the music rises in volume.

Kat (giggling): I’m good. Just school and cheer. Ya know?

Kat spills her drink on Eddie’s shoes.

Kat: Shit, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean, to—


Kat (laughing): A little clumsy, but anyway, school. For you?

Eddie: It’s fine, but I don’t see how you do it. Pre-pharm. Wow.
Kat: But one day it’ll be… be. Worth it. *(smiling).* That’s what I’m telling myself. Sooo...

Eddie: Yeah, so… Sorry I haven’t texted you.

Kat: Don’t worry about it.

Eddie: *(lightly grabbing her arm)* Hey, wanna get out of here?

Kat is drunk. Lights start getting lower and lower. The music gets louder.

Sydney *(holding one of the handles)*: Shots!

Jake: Everybody!

Sydney: Shots!

Kat *(almost yelling, to Jake)*: What did you say? It’s really loud!

They take shots.

Eddie: Another round!

Eddie begins making another round of shots for them at the bar.

Sydney: Whew… I’m drunk.

Jake: Ha! You know what that means… the sorority girl mating call. “I’m drunk.”

Everyone but Monica laughs.

Monica: What did you just say?

Kat: Monica…

Sydney: Oh my God… it’s a fucking joke.

Monica: I’m uncomfortable… Kat, why don’t we go home?

Kat: What!

Eddie: Not until this next round!

Eddie brings the shots around to everyone.

Kat: Stay here. Toasts?

Jake: To hot moms!

Sydney: To rich dads!

Everyone takes their shots except Monica. She sets hers on the ping pong table.

Monica: You are pigs.

Kat: Monica…

Sydney: Oh my God… it’s a fucking joke.

Monica: I’m really not—

Sydney: It’s a joke!

Eddie: He didn’t mean anything by it.

Jake: I’m just kidding around.
**Sydney** (*to diffuse the tension once more*): Let’s play beer pong! / Me and Jake verses Kat and Eddie.

**Jake**: Great idea.

*They move to the table and begin setting up.*

**Kat**: You okay?

**Monica**: Yeah, it’s fine.

**Eddie**: Jake can be a little much sometimes. You gotta love him though.

**Kat** (*laughs*): Yeah, he’s great after you warm up to him a bit.

**Monica** *gets a phone call.*

**Monica** (*looking at the phone*): Hey—hold on. Shit. This is urgent. I gotta go. Kat. Text me tonight.

**Eddie**: But the party has barely started! **Kat**: What’s wrong?

**Monica**: Just call me later.

*Monica exits.*

**Sydney**: Byeeeee!

**Jake**: Thank God she’s gone. Why do you even hangout with her?

**Sydney**: She wants to *be* you. The way she’s / always trying to like… micro manage you.

**Kat**: I dunno… She’s known me my whole life.

**Eddie** (*flirty*): But I mean. Who wouldn’t want to be you?

**Kat** (*laughs*): Stop…

**Jake**: Are you gonna play us or not?

**Eddie**: Uh, I think we’re just gonna talk a little bit. (*grabbing Kat around the waist*): Let’s go to my room.

*The stage goes dark, and Eddie and Kat move to the bedroom.*

**Scene 4.**

*A small dimly lit bedroom. The muffled sounds of Wiz Khalifa, Future, and party life can be heard through the walls. A bed sits stage left, and a bedside table sits to the left of the bed. A desk lamp like the one at the beginning of a Pixar movie casts light on the bed. A tissue box sits on the table. Clothes are scattered over the floor. A rolling desk chair is pushed under the desk. A poster of Kate Upton hangs on the wall. A door stands stage right. Eddie and Kat enter the room.*
Kat (tripping as she enters): Oh shit. Am / I this drunk? I swear…
Eddie (grabbing her forearm): Whoa… (laughs) Watch your step. Should have had more Fireball, huh?
Kat (incoherent mumbling): Uh…
Eddie (tosses his keys on the bedside table): What?
Kat: I need to sit. Didn’t you drink?
Eddie: Just Coke.
Kat sits in the rolling chair. The lights cut out. Kat has blacked out. Blackout for three seconds. The muffled sounds of party life and trap music continue through the blackout. Lights cut back on. Kat sits in the chair still, but now facing the bed. Eddie sits on the bed.
Kat: So, why don’t you drink?
Eddie: Staying sober is a big deal. I DD for my friends. They think I’m a good guy. Sweet, right?
Kat (giggles): So cute.
Eddie: You seem nervous?
Kat: What is this… What do you like about me?
Eddie: What’s not to like? Come on. Sit. I know this isn’t your first time doing this. I’m not an idiot.
Eddie advances and helps her out of the chair and on to the bed. Kat is silent and sits with her feet hanging off the bed. Eddie, standing at the foot of the bed, spreads her legs, moves in between them and kisses her on the lips. Kat holds the kiss. Then she shifts out of his embrace.
Eddie: You look so… God, you’re hot.
Eddie aggressively and sexually pushes her down on the bed.
Kat: Stop it—
Lights cut out. Kat blacks out again. Blackout for five seconds with continued muffled party sounds and music. Then, only the light of the desk lamp illuminates the scene. The lamp shines on a shirtless Eddie and Kat wearing a red bra. Eddie is on top of Kat. She’s on her back.
Eddie (undoing his belt buckle): Gah… I want you…
Kat: No just—
Lights cut out. Blackout for two seconds with continued sounds. Then in the darkness, with a crescendo, Eddie breathes in a sexual manner.
Kat (mumbling): Fuck.
In the darkness, a calling tone is heard. Kat is calling Monica the next day. After a few tones, Monica answers.

**Monica’s voice:** Hey, what’s up?

**Kat’s voice** *(worried)*: Hey… uh… *(beat).*

**Monica’s voice:** Are you okay?

**Kat’s voice:** No. What’re you doing?

**Monica’s voice:** Just finished my morning workout. Driving home. What is it? What do you need?

**Kat’s voice:** Can you come pick me up?

**Monica’s voice:** Where are you?

**Kat’s voice** *(holding back tears)*: Uh, I’m… at The GLA house.

**Monica’s voice:** Did something happen?

**Kat’s voice:** I… I dunno. I think, I was… maybe—

**Monica’s voice:** Was it Eddie?

**Kat’s voice:** Yeah.

**Monica’s voice:** Oh my god. Fuck… I’ll be there in a second. Do not touch him.

**Kat’s voice:** He’s in the bathroom.

**Monica’s voice:** Get your stuff. Get ready. I’ll be there in two.

**Kat’s voice:** Thank you so much.

**Monica’s voice:** Just do not let him do anything else. Nothing. Honestly, get out of the house. I’m turning onto campus. Get out.

**Kat’s voice:** Okay, okay… I’m walking downstairs. *(beat).* I—

**Monica’s voice:** I’m so sorry. I’ll see you in a second.

*Monica hangs up the phone.*

Scene 5.

*Back in Matthew’s office. Kat sits in the same chair. Matthew sits at the desk and jots notes.*

*Pause except for the ticking of Matthew’s clock.*

**Kat** *(softly crying)*: I… I… *(sighs)*

*Pause. Matthew finishes his notes, looks up, and stares intently.*

**Kat** *(pulling herself together)*: I don’t even think he had a condom. But I’m on birth control, and took care of it.
Matthew: Is there anything else you want to tell me?
Kat: No that’s it.
Matthew: Alright then.
Kat: Thank you so much, Mr. Williams.
Matthew: You’re welcome.
Kat: I’m beyond grateful for you. Thank you.
Matthew: You are welcome. I will be contacting Edward and issuing the standard no-contact policy. The two of you communicating—or members of your parties communicating directly or indirectly—will be prohibited.
Kat: Thank you. I already blocked his number.
Matthew: I see. In addition, retaliation of any kind will not be tolerated.
Kat: Yes. I understand. Monica told me about that.
Matthew: Great. I will be in touch.
Kat: Yes.
Pause.
Matthew: If that’s all, you may go.
Kat: Okay.
Kat gets up and walks towards the door. She opens the door and turns around.
Kat: Seriously, thank you.
The lights go out.

Scene 6.

Eddie and Jake are hanging out in their bedroom. Eddie sits in his bed. Jake rolls around in the chair and tosses a football in the air.
Jake: You’re telling me this happened last Sunday?
Eddie: Yes! After church… you know he went to First Baptist when he was in college?
Jake: No, but cool. Did he just come down for the game or something?
Eddie: Yeah, probably. I saw him standing by the coffee and I knew I had to go speak to him. He’s like the most prestigious alum from the Gamma Phi chapter of GLA. I walked up to him—
Jake: Did you throw him the grip?
Eddie: Oh, hell yeah. I threw him the grip and I said like… “Mr. Cantrell. I’m Eddie Hodges, and I’m a huge fan of your work.”

Jake: Nice.

Eddie: “I appreciate all the work your firm does on behalf of farmers.”

Jake (laughs): If you’re into farming, I’m into farming!

Eddie: I told him that I wanted to talk to him sometime about lobbying, and he gave me his business card.

Jake: Nice. It’s the hands you shake. Not the grades you make.

Eddie: That’s not completely true. I need like over a 3.7 for like Ivy League after college.

Jake: Well… guess I’m fucked. Did you hit him up?

Eddie: Yeah, we’re getting lunch next Wednesday. Not sure where or what time. I need to check my email again.

Eddie pulls out his cellphone.

Jake: Hell yeah.

Eddie: And he signed his last email, “Ducere Exemplo.”

Jake: Brother Cantrell still signing with that GLA motto.

Eddie: Yeah man. I’m excited. I think this could really open some doors for me. Maybe an internship in D.C. or something.

Jake: Congrats man.

Eddie: Thanks.

As Eddie opens his email on his phone, Jake grabs the remote and points it at the audience as if it’s a TV. He clicks it on, and lights begin to flash on his face like the flickering of a screen. He flips the channel a couple of times.

Jake: Nothing is on.

He finally stops flipping channels and lands on something. Pause. Eddie looks up from his phone.

Eddie: Holy shit.

Jake: What?

Jake looks at Eddie. He hands him his phone.

Eddie: Read this email I just got.

Jake (reading): “Edward Hodges… After receiving a complaint from a student, we inform you that you are under investigation for potentially having violated Section II, Subsection C of the
Campus Code of Conduct which states, ‘The University prohibits sexual misconduct of any kind including assault, harassment, abuse, or discrimination.’ Your presence is requested November 9th…” That’s in two days!

**Eddie:** I know!

**Jake (continuing):** “To give your statement on a series of events that took place on October 21st.” Hold up… is this about you and Kat?

**Eddie:** I mean… I guess…

**Jake:** Are they saying you raped Kat?

**Eddie:** That’s what it looks like… sexual assault…

**Jake:** Oh come on!

**Eddie is silent. He is shaken up.**

**Eddie:** I'm… so confused. What do I do? I didn’t do anything wrong.

**Eddie:** I mean you didn’t do anything wrong.

**Eddie:** What… like, but… I… I can’t believe this!

**Jake:** Dude, you didn’t do shit.

**Eddie:** You’re right… she said she wanted to.

**Jake:** Yeah and rape is like… like… something off *Law & Order*.

**Eddie:** Yeah.

**Eddie:** Ya know, that episode where that dude trapped those two chicks in his basement for like a decade, and fucked them and beat them and shit… like… like against their will. That’s rape.

**Eddie:** And I definitely didn’t do that.

**Jake:** If she’s making out with you, giving you an over-the-pants-hand-job, that’s like a flashing billboard telling you that she wants your dick.

**Eddie:** She was all over me.

**Eddie:** Exactly. You’re not a rapist. This is stupid.

**Eddie (grabbing his phone):** But the school thinks I am!

**Jake:** But you’re not! You’re not violent or aggressive. You weren’t trying to… You’re not Ted Bundy raping and murdering a bunch of college girls.

**Eddie:** That’s the most extreme example I’ve ever heard.

**Jake:** But you get my point!
**Eddie:** But what if this... *(reading email to himself)* This coordinator? The Title IX coordinator—

**Jake:** Isn’t that the law that makes like women’s basketball important or something? The sports thing?

**Eddie:** And, apparently, “sexual misconduct” too. What if this Matthew Williams guy doesn’t believe me?

**Jake:** You didn’t do anything wrong!

**Eddie:** I know that I didn’t do anything wrong. And you know that I didn’t. *(beat)*. But like I saw something on Facebook the other day... saying that 1 in 5 women on college campuses are sexually assaulted.

**Jake:** You’re shitting me... You actually believe that stat? That’s like the biggest fake news I’ve ever heard. It’s a stupid witch hunt, man. The government and the liberal media are saying that universities are like hot beds... for like rape culture.

**Eddie:** Right, so what if they are trying to... to exploit me for their cause. And make me into something that I’m not.

**Jake:** It’s all bullshit! The whole like rapists-among-us thing is ridiculous.

*Eddie is silent.*

**Eddie:** I didn’t fucking do anything wrong!

**Jake:** Then, go to the Title IX office and tell him the exact same thing that you told me... about what happened with Kat.

**Eddie:** Yeah. You’re right.

**Jake:** Anyone who hears that story will know that both of you wanted it... and the she’s full of shit.

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**Scene 7.**

*Matthew sits again at his desk in his office. The scene begins the exact same way as the first scene. A knock on the door.*

**Matthew (standing up):** Come in!

*Eddie walks into the office. He has a backpack on.*

**Matthew (walking around the desk and extending his hand):** Hello, Edward—

**Eddie:** Eddie.

**Matthew:** Eddie. I am glad you could make it today. I’m Mr. Williams, the person facilitating and overseeing—

**Eddie (smug):** Yeah, great to see you. I remember from the email.
Matthew: Of course. (beat, turning towards his desk). I am glad that you could make it today. Would you like to start by—

Eddie: Uh, before we start, can you explain what exactly I’m doing here? I mean I know why I’m here, but what am I doing… because if this whole thing is what I think it is, then I’m… I’m pissed off.

Matthew: Absolutely. I have received a complaint from another student—Katherine Simmons—that you were potentially part of a sexual assault. So, you are the respondent to the complaint. To determine whether an assault occurred, I need to hear your statement from the night of—

Eddie (nervously): What? Am I under criminal investigation or something?

Matthew: No, well, not now.

Eddie: Not now?

Matthew: The campus police have been notified of the occurrence—which is strictly protocol. If—I’m not saying that it will—if something like this would occur again associating you, the university police should know, but they are not conducting a criminal investigation. Kat has not pressed charges. However, per university policies and by requests of the complainant, I will investigate to decide whether there is a case before Student Conduct can address the issue. If evidence is found supporting the incident, then the Office of Student Conduct will have a hearing to determine—

Eddie (boiling): Hey, look I didn’t rape her.

Matthew: I never said that.

Eddie: Then, why am I here?

Matthew: I am trying to determine if an incident occurred.

Eddie: (sarcastically cool) Right. Right. Innocent until proven guilty.

Matthew: A student has come to my office expressing concern. And as the Title IX coordinator, that’s my job, to investigate, and that is what I am doing.

Short pause.

Eddie: This whole situation has caused me and my family a lot of stress. I feel attacked and stressed out.

Matthew: I understand. You are entitled to feel that way.

Eddie: I want to get this straightened out. I’m coming in here to clear my name. I didn’t rape Kat. She… she wanted to… to do it. I mean… she asked for it.

Pause.

Matthew: How about you sit down, and we can get started?
Eddie: Yeah. Okay.

Matthew walks back around his desk and sits. He clears his throat. Eddie stands in the same spot.

Matthew: Will you take a seat please?

Eddie: Okay.

Eddie sets his backpack down and sits in the chair. Matthew picks up the recorder.

Matthew: Now, may I record your statement?

Eddie: Uh… I guess…

Matthew: Nobody else will hear this.

Eddie: Yeah. Sure.

Matthew turns on the recorder. He places it towards the front of the desk with the microphone facing Eddie. He clears his throat again.

Matthew (leaning over and talking in the recorder): Today is Wednesday, November 9th. I’m here with Edward Mitchell Hodges at 3:05 p.m. in my office. (leaning back to a sitting position). So, Eddie, I want you to be as detailed as possible. Do not leave any details—times, people who interacted with you both—do not leave the details out. Every little thing is important.

Eddie: Sure. Yeah.

Matthew: Well, then… what happened between you and Ms. Katherine Simmons on Friday, October 29th?

The lights begin to change.

Eddie: Well, it started at the frat house, Jake and I were playing beer pong…

Eddie stands up and moves towards the door. The guitar riff of “Simple Man” by Lynyrd Skynyrd begins to play as the sounds of party life crescendos. Eddie goes out the door. The lights fade on the office and illuminate the fraternity house.

Scene 8.

Eddie walks into the fraternity house. As “Simple Man” finishes, the Spotify playlist “Frat Party Playlist” plays in the background. Jake enters from stage right. He has a beer in hand. Jake is dressed as a typical dude. Eddie pats him on the back, and they approach the bar. Eddie grabs a solo cup sitting on the bar. As the scene switches, Eddie is suddenly cheery and charismatic. They head to the beer pong table and start a game.

Jake: Dude it fucking sucks going places with you.

Eddie: Ha! Why?

Jake: You can’t walk two feet without seeing someone you gotta say hey to.
Eddie: Not even man, these are our brothers

Jake: Not them. I know them. How do you know all these girls?

Jake grabs another beer and begins filling his solo cups.

Eddie: I don’t know all of them.

Jake: Yeah, but at least half of them at this party. Who was that chick who like tackled you when she saw you?

Jake gathers ping pong balls from behind the bar. Eddie checks his cell phone.

Eddie: Annie? She was in my Bio lab last year. Nice girl.

Jake: Yeah, everyone you know is a “nice girl.”

Eddie: Hey, I don’t like to have bad blood with people, so she’s good with me.

Eddie grabs a ping pong ball and tosses it at Jake’s cup.

Jake: Whatever. You want beer in your cup?

Eddie: No, water.

Jake: Water pong is for pussies.

Eddie: Or 21 year olds.

Jake: I’m gonna put beer in your cup, and if I make it, I’ll drink it too.

Eddie: Classic.

Jake fills Eddie’s ten solo cups.

Jake: Okay, so as I was saying, after we left the bar last night, I went back to her place.

Eddie (laughs): I remember you didn’t come home last night.

For the entirety of this scene, the actors will play beer pong. If they finish, they start over. The actors can ad lib to react to the game when winning or losing.

Jake (taking a swig of his beer): What do you expect? We were both fucked up.

Eddie: Most nights you are…

Jake: Get off your high horse man.

Eddie: I’m not on a “high horse.” Let he without sin cast the first stone.

Jake (laughs): Okay, cut the Jesus shit cause you’re judging me.

Eddie: I’m not judging you! I’m really not. I don’t care what you do with girls. It’s your life.

Jake: Yeah, but because you want to “wait” and all of that shit—which is great, but you know—you’re judging me.
Eddie: About that…

Jake: Phone vibrates. He checks it.

Eddie: Sorry, she’s blowing up my phone.

Eddie: It’s cool.

Jake (putting his phone away): Anyway… So, we get back to her place. I’m like barely walking at this point. So, I hit the couch. She comes over to me. Turns on Netflix—Clueless or something. And we start making out, and she starts grabbing my dick, right? And / I’m like holy shit.

Eddie: Right. So, lemme guess how did it end?

Jake: What?

Eddie: You went back to her room and you “banged” (mockingly).

Jake (laughs): Yeah dude. It’s like you’ve heard this before.

Eddie: Every weekend. Same old song, same dance, different partner.

Jake: Hey, you make me sound like a man whore. Sometimes it’s the same girl.

Eddie: Rarely. Did you invite the girl from last night to come to the party tonight?


Eddie: Nice.

Jake: Nice? Dude I know you’re digging her.

Eddie: Well, she’s… she’s hot, but I’ve talked to her once…

Jake: Hold up, lemme call Syd.

Jake gets out his phone and makes a phone call. They pause the game.


Eddie rolls his eyes. Jake puts his phone away.

Eddie: They coming?

Jake: Yeah, they’re waiting on their ride. Probably gonna hook up with Syd again. You jealous that I’m gettin some and you aren’t?

Eddie: No, you know I hook up.

Jake (laughs): Hook up?
Eddie: Everything but.

Jake: Butt stuff?

Eddie: What?

Jake: You know?

Eddie: No, like but.

Jake: You said butt. *(beat)* Dude, I’m fucking with you.

Eddie: Very funny.

Jake: But anyway, dude you don’t have sex, so stop saying you hook up. Nobody says hook up if they don’t mean sex.

Eddie: Not true.

Jake: Maybe in the JV football locker room.

Eddie: Good one… I dunno man. I’m just…

Jake: Just what? Are you not a virgin?

Eddie: I am, but—

Jake: Yeah. You’re totally still a virgin.

Eddie: I don’t know if I want to be anymore.

Jake: Huh?

Eddie: Yeah, I think I wanna lose it.

Jake: No I heard you, but why?

Eddie: Yeah, I’m tired of being one.

Jake: You’re like a monk when it comes to sex. Like you think your dick will fall off if you stick it in.

Eddie: No, I don’t—

Jake: But like your… your “morality” is like the biggest cock block.

Eddie: Uh…

Jake: It holds you back. You’re like chained to *The Bible*. Like handcuffs, but not in a S&M kinda way.

Eddie: No, I’m not. How?

Jake: Uh… You don’t drink. You go to church like every Sunday. *Jesus Calling* is sitting on your bedside table.

Eddie: Yeah, but why do I do that stuff?
Jake: Because you’re a Christian.
Eddie: Yeah, but you say you’re a Christian, and you sleep around.
Jake: Yeah, I’m Christian, but this is college. I’m taking a break.
Eddie: Not exactly sure if it works that way, but why are you a Christian?
Jake: What do you mean? Why are we / talking about this at a party?
Eddie: Why are you a Christian? Just answer the question.
Jake: I dunno. My parents are. I’ve been going to church. I got sprinkled as a baby. Uh…
Eddie: Did you choose to do any of that?
Jake: No.
Eddie: See? Your circumstances chose it for you.
Jake: Okay, are you trying to be a… a philosopher or something?
Eddie: No, but think about it. Did you choose Christianity or did your environment—society—pick it for you—
Jake: Hold up, hold up. You’re saying a lot of shit that’s too deep to get into right now. But let’s focus on what’s important. You’re ready to toss that v-card!
Eddie: I’m thinking about it. I haven’t decided, but—
Jake: That’s why you want to fuck now?
Eddie: What?
Jake: You know?
Eddie: Oh yeah I’m unsure about my faith. Yes.
Jake: No, no. Kat.
Eddie: Oh. Yeah I guess. Kat seems cool. I’m kinda into her.
Jake: Then, tonight get into her. We’re gonna get you laid!
Eddie: No. Please…
Jake: Why not? Kat’s totally down.
Eddie: Maybe it’s not the right time.
Jake: You think I thought that junior year of high school when I lost my virginity to Blair McKay in her dad’s pool house?
Eddie (smiling): I remember that.
Jake: Yeah, she threw that party just to get with me.
Eddie: Sure. Keep telling yourself that.

Jake: Dude, hear me out. There is never a “perfect time” to do it. You just gotta get it over with. The first time… it’s not supposed to be this magical moment. It’s like… like ripping off a Band-Aid. Just nut up and do it. The quicker you get it over with, the better it’ll be. Cause like… you don’t know what you’re doing. Or how long you’ll last. So, the first time is always awkward as shit. And you’ll never be a good fuck unless you practice—and I don’t mean in the bathroom with a box of tissues. You gotta get some real pussy. Besides. Don’t you want to be able to make your wife happy one day? Get all your shitty sex out of the way. That’s what my big bro told me. Best advice I’ve ever gotten… Tonight, Eddie, dude. It’s gonna happen. Take Kat back to our room, put on the moves, and boom. Fuck her.

Eddie: If she wants to, it’ll be hard for me to say no.

Jake: Syd makes it sound like she wants the Ed… D! Get it? Like Ed and D. The D.

Eddie: You’re an idiot.

Jake: Hey, I just call it like I see it.

From stage left, Sydney walks in with Monica and Kat. Each of them holds a solo cup like the ones Sydney had before. In Eddie’s retelling of the evening, Kat is sober and acting normal.

Sydney (interrupting): Look who it is!

Kat: Eddie! Jake!

Monica: Great. Just great.

Eddie, looking at Kat, jumps up. Sydney laughs and side hugs him.

Eddie: Hey, Ka—

Sydney (whispering audibly, grabbing Eddie’s arm): Kat’s here… Tonight’s the night.

Eddie: I see. Jake told me already. Don’t stress me out.

Sydney: I’m not! I’m here to help you out. She’s into you.

Eddie: Whatever, you say.

Jake (not moving): Sup Kat. Monica…

Monica: Jake…

Kat (laughing): Ha! You two…

Monica: What? I can’t help that we hate each other.

Jake: We just don’t see eye to eye—

Monica: I disagree with almost all / of your juvenile, misogynistic…

Jake: Here we go.

Sydney (noticing the squabble, grabbing Jake’s arm): Okay! / Why don’t we all take some shots?

Jake: What?
Jake: Hell yeah. Eddie, play me in beer pong again. I’ll set em.

Eddie: For sure.

Sydney: Bartender?

Eddie: I gotcha, what’re you drinking?

Like before, Jake goes to set the cups up. Eddie goes behind the bar and pulls out some handles.

Sydney: What do you have?

Eddie: Uh… Fireball, Malibu, Burnetts—

Sydney (interrupting): Fireball!

Jake: Fuck no. Kat: Sure. Monica: Ew?

Eddie: Coming up!

Eddie grabs some solo cups from behind the bar and pours generous shots for his friends.

Jake: Why do we only have shitty liquor in the house?

Sydney: I dunno, hold your nose if you’re gonna be a bitch.

Eddie: Because you buy shitty liquor.

Eddie comes back around from the bar and passes out drinks. Monica gets a text message.

Monica (looking at her phone, under her breath): Shit...

Like before, Jake and Sydney speak at the beer pong table. Monica is engrossed in her phone, and Eddie leads Kat away from the group. Jake tosses a ping pong ball at the cups.

Eddie: So, how’s life?

Kat: It’s good! School and cheer. Taking over my life.

Eddie: I get that, school sucks right now, but I don’t see how you do it. Pre-pharm? That sounds awful.

Kat: One day it’ll all be worth it. Or that’s what I keep telling myself. So.

Eddie: Sooo…

Kat: Why haven’t you texted me?

Eddie: I…

Kat: (smiling) Didn’t have any fun?

Eddie: No, I did. I enjoyed meeting you.

Kat: Me too. I really did.

Eddie (smiling): Listen, Kat. What do you say—
Sydney begins distributing the shots amongst her friends.

Sydney (to the tune of the LMFAO song): Shots, shots, shots, shots, shots, shots, shots!

Jake (excitedly): Everybody!

Kat: Thanks Syd.

Monica, Jake, Sydney, and Kat have their shots in the air.

Kat: Who wants to make a toast?

Jake: To rich dad’s! Sydney: To hot moms!

They take the shots except Eddie.

Monica: Pigs.

Sydney: Whew… I’m drunk.

Jake: Ha! You know what that means… the sorority girl mating call.

Everyone but Monica laughs.

Monica: What did you just say?

Kat: Monica… Sydney: Oh my God… it’s a fucking joke.

Monica: I’m uncomfortable… Kat / let’s go home.

Kat: Take a shot. Another toast. Stay!

Monica: I’m really not—

Sydney: It’s a joke! Eddie: He didn’t mean anything by it.

Jake: I’m just kidding around.

Sydney (to diffuse the tension once more): Let’s play beer pong! / Me and Jake verses Kat and Eddie.

Jake: Great idea.

They move to the table and begin setting up.

Kat: Are you okay?

Monica: Yeah, it’s fine.

Eddie: Jake can be a little much sometimes. You gotta love him though.

Kat (laughs): Yeah, he’s great after you warm up to him a bit.

Monica gets a phone call.

Monica: Hey Kat—hold on. (looking at the phone) Shit. This is urgent. I gotta go. Kat. Text me tonight.
Eddie: But the party has barely started! Kat: What’s wrong?

Monica: Just call me later.

Monica exits.

Sydney: Bye!

Jake: Thank God she’s gone. Why do you even hangout with her?

Kat: We’ve been friends forever.

Sydney: She wants to be you. The way she’s / always trying to like… micro manage you.

Kat: I dunno… She’s known me my whole life.

Jake: Yeah.

Eddie (flirty): But I mean. Who wouldn’t want to be you?

Kat (laughs): Stop…

Jake: Are you gonna play us or not?

Eddie: Uh, I think we’re just gonna talk a little bit.

Kat nods.

Sydney: Okay, just “talk a little bit.”

Kat: So…

Eddie: So… You wanna go to my room?

Kat (tripping as she enters): Oh shit.

Eddie (grabbing her forearm): Hey! Watch your step…

Kat: I’m not drunk… I swear…

Eddie (laughs): Nah its good, that Fireball will do it to ya…

Kat: (laughs) Maybe…

Kat sits in the rolling desk chair.

Scene 9.

Eddie’s small dimly lit bedroom. The same muffled sounds of Wiz Khalifa, Future, and party life can be heard through the walls. Eddie and Kat enter the room.

Kat (tripping as she enters): Oh shit.

Eddie (grabbing her forearm): Hey! Watch your step…

Kat: I’m not drunk… I swear…

Eddie (laughs): Nah its good, that Fireball will do it to ya…

Kat: (laughs) Maybe…

Kat sits in the rolling desk chair.
Eddie (tossing his keys in hand): Ha, no worries, I mean I could take you / back if you wanted me to.

Kat: No, no, you can’t. You drank too.

Eddie (smiles): Well, no.

Kat: What?

Eddie: I didn’t.

Kat: Ha! Yes you did!.

Eddie: No, I really…

Kat: At the party.

Eddie: Yeah… it…

Kat: You had Jack and Coke.

Eddie: No Jack.

Kat: What?

Eddie: Just Coke.

Kat: But you had a shot…

Eddie: No. Just you, Jake, and your friends.

Kat: But we all took one?

Eddie: I didn’t.

Kat: So, why don’t you drink?

Eddie: For one. It’s illegal. I’m not 21. Staying sober is kind of a big deal in my family. My grandad died of liver cancer. A couple years ago actually. I’m scared to abuse it. And I DD for my friends. It’s a good thing to do.

Kat: You’re sweet. I like that.

Eddie: You’re sweeter… That was so lame.

Kat (giggling): No, don’t. It’s cute.

Eddie: I’m sorry… it’s…

Eddie smiles and looks down at the floor. A brief pause passes between them. The muffled sounds of Wiz, Future, and the party continue.

Kat (smiling): I make you nervous.

She reaches her hand out and grabs his hand. She starts pulling him towards the bed.

Kat: Come. Sit.
**Eddie:** I’m not nervous! I know this isn’t your first time doing something like this. So, I guess I don’t want to look like an idiot.

_They both sit on the bed._

**Kat:** You don’t look like an idiot.

**Eddie:** Thanks…

**Kat:** No prob…

**Eddie:** You look so pretty tonight.

**Kat:** Eddie…

**Eddie:** Like I’m glad I you came to the party.

**Kat:** What do you like?

**Eddie:** What do you mean?

**Kat:** About me?

_She puts her hand on his thigh. With each compliment, Eddie moves closer and closer to her mouth. She begins to lean back slowly until she is lying on her back._

**Eddie:** What’s not to like?

**Kat:** Yeah.

**Eddie:** Your blue eyes.

**Kat:** Hmmm…

**Eddie:** Your laugh…

**Kat (giggles):** That’s sweet…

**Eddie:** You’re a cheerleader.

**Kat:** Go bears…

_Eddie laughs. Short pause._

**Eddie:** God… you’re so hot.

**Kat:** Stop it. Quit teasing me.

_Eddie now hovering over her, goes in for a kiss. After a short kiss, they launch into a make out. She starts grabbing the back of his head. She puts his hands on her thighs. He moves them up. The bass of the trap music can be heard over the other muffled sounds. The beat speeds up like a beating heart. Eddie pulls back. They stare at each other briefly. The bass slows down to a steady beat._

**Kat:** Get the lights.
Eddie hops up. He runs to hit the overhead light by the door. The stage goes dark. The desk lamp gives the only light and shines on Kat’s body on the bed.

Kat: Hurrrrrryy.

Eddie jumps back on the bed again. He and Kat start making out again. She moans. The bass of the trap music begins to speed up again as their pulses race. Kat takes off Eddie’s shirt. Eddie grabs a blanket from the bed to cover them. The blanket should rest around their waists. Their waists and below should not be seen, but their chests exposed. Eddie takes off her shirt. She wears a red bra. He kisses up her stomach.

Eddie (undoing his belt buckle): Gah… I want you…

Kat: No just let me do it. Let me take them off.

She undoes his belt buckle. He kisses her neck as she slides his pants off.

Kat (breathy): Eddie.

Eddie (breathy): Hey.

Kat: Fuck me.

Eddie: Uh…

Kat: Come on…

Eddie: Uh… okay.

Kat (whispers): You’re… a virgin.

Eddie: Yeah, but I want to… to do this with you

Kat: Then do it.

Eddie pulls of her red panties and tosses them towards the door. He pulls the blanket over them.

Eddie: Wait. I don’t have a condom.

Kat: I’m on birth control.

Eddie: Good, I’ll pull out. Just to make sure. If that’s cool.

Kat: Yeah… Just do it… Fuck me.

Lights fade out. Pause. In the darkness, the music and party noises fade into a phone rings for a second. Jake is calling Eddie for a ride the next day. Eddie answers.

Eddie’s voice: Sup.

Jake’s voice: Yo, can you come pick me up?

Eddie’s voice: You at Syd’s?
Jake’s voice: Nah. I’m not sure whose house right now. She’s in the bathroom. It was that time of the month for Syd, so I kinda bailed a little bit after you and Kat left.

Eddie’s voice (laughs): Classic. Yeah… I’ll come get you.

Jake’s voice: Did you get with Kat? Did you do it?

Eddie’s voice: Uh… I… (beat).

Jake’s voice: You sealed the fucking deal!

Eddie’s voice: I’ll tell you about it when I get you.

Jake’s voice: I’m so proud. The Virgin Eddie is a man now.

Eddie’s voice: Whatever. I’ll tell you about it in a minute.

Jake’s voice: Nice. McDonald’s breakfast on me man. Gotta try to cure this hangover.

Eddie’s voice: Great.

Eddie hangs up the phone.

Scene 10.

We are back in the office. Matthew jots in his notebook. Pause. Eddie coughs. Matthew looks up.

Matthew: Does that conclude your statement?

Eddie: Yeah, I guess so.

Matthew: Just to double check, you did not drink anything at all?

Eddie: Oh my God, how many times—I don’t drink. I’m waiting until 21. I was the only sober one out of Sydney, Monica, and Jake and Kat—I… I… Okay, Kat said she wasn’t drunk. I don’t know what she’s like when drunk. I barely know her. But it doesn’t matter. She said yes.

Matthew: Did you think she was drunk?

Eddie: No. She seemed fine to me. I wouldn’t have had done anything with her if she had been like passed out, unconscious. That’s not okay.

Matthew (writing): How many drinks did she have?

Eddie: I don’t know! Why do you keep asking me stuff like this?

Matthew: Eddie, legally, if a person is drunk, or incapacitated, he or she cannot give consent.

Eddie: She said, “Fuck me.” That sounds like consent to me.

Matthew: Consent is an affirmative agreement through clear—I want to reiterate that—through clear action and words to engage in sex.

Eddie: How is “Fuck me” unclear?
Matthew: Incapacitation—the inability to determine who, when, why, or what is going on—excludes a person from giving consent. If she was incapacitated, then, she cannot be clear.

Eddie: How can you prove that she was drunk then? Do you have her BAC?

Matthew: That is why I am investigating. In your statement, you did not mention her stumbling or throwing up or any outward sign of drunkenness. Besides, BAC would not matter because that is a subjective measurement.

Eddie: She seemed completely fine to me.

Matthew: Well, I will talk to Sydney, Jake, and Monica and hear their statements on the evening. Is there anything else you want to add?

Eddie: Uh… Yeah. I didn’t rape her.

Matthew: Once again, I am not accusing you of rape.

Eddie: Yeah you aren’t right now, but what about when I leave? Hey. I told you all of this to clear my name. To show you that I was innocent.

Matthew: Well, there is a process that—

Eddie (standing up in frustration): I don’t care about the process!

Pause.

Matthew: Eddie, thank you for your statement as the respondent. Once I have conducted a thorough investigation, I will determine if student conduct will have a hearing.

Pause.

Eddie: I should have had a lawyer.

Matthew: That is not completely necessary at this point in the process.

Eddie: So, what do you think?

Matthew: About what?

Eddie: Are you gonna say that I “assaulted” her?

Matthew: I am not going to “say” anything. I am going to decide by using acquired evidence whether a case—

Eddie: That’s not answering my question.

Matthew: Eddie—

Eddie: It’s all on tape now, so I guess I will “trust the process.”

Pause.

Matthew: I do not affirm whether a sexual assault occurred. I compile the information and deem the incident as having the potential to be an assault. That is what I do.
Eddie: The potential?

Matthew: If there is room to believe that an assault has happened, the report will be sent to Student Conduct who will have a hearing with the Campus Council who will ultimately decide.

Pause.

Eddie: Beyond a reasonable doubt, right?

Matthew: Well, no. Student Conduct uses the preponderance of evidence standard.

Eddie: What the hell is that?

Matthew: It is the burden of proof.

Eddie: By how much?

Matthew: It means, “More likely than not.” If 50.1% of the evidence falls in your favor, then you will have the preponderance of evidence, and you will win the case. But if the campus council thinks 50.1% of the evidence falls into Kat’s favor, then she wins the case.

Eddie: I got it. I got it. So, 50.1%... 50.1 verses 49.9. A 0.1% difference. A slim margin that I... .1% more likely that I raped her.

Matthew: Yes.

Eddie: You’ve got to be kidding me… Look, I’m innocent. I didn’t rape her. Who decides this? The burden of proof and stuff?

Matthew: The Department of Education dictates the burden of proof. In 2011, they sent a letter to all universities instructing them to change their burden of proof to the preponderance of evidence standard. Prior to the letter, each university selected its own standard. Now, other than the burden of proof, every university has the autonomy to create its own student conduct policy.

Eddie: So, the processes are different at every school.

Matthew: Yes.

Eddie: If this was happening at another university, I might not be getting in trouble. Or if this happened before 2011, I might not even be in trouble here.

Matthew: I cannot answer that, but each university is responsible for having a proper channel for members of its community to report sexual misconduct.

Eddie: The cops probably wouldn’t even have taken Kat seriously!

Matthew: I am not a cop.

Eddie: Then, maybe the policy is the problem.

Matthew: You will have to take that up with the Department of Education.

Pause.
**Eddie:** This is ridiculous… I’m innocent. And that’s the truth.

*Eddie gets up and heads for the door.*

**Matthew:** Wait, Eddie. Before you go—

*Eddie stops and turns slightly.*

**Eddie:** What?

**Matthew:** I need to go over one more thing, will you please take a seat?

**Eddie:** What is it?

**Matthew:** I want to talk about the retaliation policy. Would you mind? (*Matthew nods towards the seat).*

*Eddie plops back down in the chair.*

**Eddie:** Yeah?

**Matthew:** Retaliation against Kat, Monica, or Sydney, or anyone else associated with the filing of Kat’s complaint is strictly prohibited.

**Eddie:** What do you mean?

**Matthew:** Any adverse action like intimidation, stalking, or anything intended to harm Kat will not be tolerated. You cannot send her hateful messages or make a hateful post on social media. Your fraternity cannot prevent her from coming to any open events. If you think that it might be retaliation, do not do it. Also, your friends are held under are excepted to follow this as well.

*Pause.*

**Eddie:** Don’t worry. I’m not trying to get in anymore trouble.

*Eddie gets up and heads for the door.*

**Matthew:** Thank you. I will be in touch.

*Eddie exits. Matthew sighs. He begins to rearrange stuff. He looks at the clock on the wall. The clock ticking is the only sound heard. Eddie slams the door. Matthew looks around for a minute and flips through his notes. He lets out a sigh.*

**Matthew:** Well… this will be… interesting.

*Lights out.*

**ACT II**

**Scene 11.**

*Kat sits on her couch in her apartment. The lights are off in the apartment. She is bundled up in the blanket staring out into the audience. Like Jake earlier, she holds a remote in her hand as if she is watching Netflix and the back of the space is the TV. The soft murmuring of a television*
show can be heard. Lights flash on her face like the flickering of a television screen. She stares. In her head, she relives the night with Eddie, and the audience can read it on her face. Her phone rings. Kat looks at her phone and ignores the call.

Kat: Ugh…

Sydney walks in stage right and flicks on the lights. Kat flinches from the sudden brightness. She is dressed as if she is going out later.

Sydney: Hey, hey…

Kat: Hey.

Sydney sets her laptop on the table. As she speaks, she opens the fridge and gets out some orange juice. She grabs some solo cups and a fifth of vodka from under the counter and begins making herself a drink. She looks at Kat periodically.

Sydney: Do you think it’s tacky to smoke in public?

Kat: Uh…

Sydney: So, I might get sent to Standards because I blasted a cig driving by the house and Margaret saw me.

Kat: Oh.

Sydney: She texted and me and said, (mocking tone). “Real cute. Smoking cigarettes with your letters on the back of your Jeep. The women of Omega Kappa do not condone that behavior.” Well, I don’t condone the stick up your ass… Margaret.

Kat doesn’t respond. The sounds of the TV continue.

Sydney (noticing Kat’s pause): Ha! I would be the worst Standards Chair. That’s why you bitches elected me T-Shirt Chair. (beat). Speaking of… I need your help.

Pause as the sounds of the TV continue.

Sydney: Hey, Kat?

Kat: Yeah?

Sydney (in an attempt to connect): I need your opinion.

Kat: Okay.

Sydney sets her drink down and walks over with her laptop.

Sydney: So… the swap theme with Sig Gam is Rockstars and Groupies. And I’m struggling… What do you think about this design?

Kat looks at the laptop.
Sydney: So, I put our letters… like in the smoke coming of the back of the van… so like it's… uh, “billowy” and what not… That's the Omega… and that's the Kappa (points to screen)… Can you tell?

Kat: Yeah, I see that.

Sydney: But like can you read it? Like the Sigma and the Gamma are super obvious on the side of the van… I dunno. Ya know how everyone freaks out if they hate the design.

Kat: Yeah.

Sydney: Which is fucking annoying. They elected me to do this job. If you don't like my design, then why did you pick me? I just wanna stand up in chapter and be like, “Buy the shirt or… or try to impeach me.”

Kat: Yeah… it looks fine.

Sydney: Just fine?

Kat: Good. (Beat). It looks good.

Kat’s phone vibrates. She ignores it. She lets out a sigh. Sydney doesn't notice and continues.

Sydney: I love the van because that’s like… that's such an iconic symbol of… ya know, going home with the drummer. I think it really captures the… the vibes of the swap. Ya know?

Kat: Yeah… for sure.

Sydney stares at the screen. Kat stares at the TV. Kat's phone vibrates again. She ignores it.

Kat (to herself): Ugh… just leave me alone.

Sydney: Excuse me?

Kat: Oh, nothing. Monica… she's just texting me about—

Sydney: Yeah. I wouldn't wanna to talk to her either.

Pause as the sounds of TV. Sydney types on her laptop for a second.

Sydney: Is coral overdone? Or should it be like… purple or something more like... vibey?

Kat: Uh… I don't really care. Coral is nice.

Sydney: “I don't care” is like the least helpful thing you could say.

Kat: Okay… yeah, purple is cool.

Sydney: Hey, I mean half the reason we joined was for the shirts. This has gotta be a good one. So, like I’d appreciate your input.

Kat: Yeah. It’s good.

Another moment passes. Sydney looks at Kat with a look of worry.
Sydney: Kat?
Kat: Yeah… it’s a nice shirt. I’d wear it.
Sydney: Thank you.

*Sydney begins to type on her laptop.*

*Sydney (to herself): Just change this to purple and… done! If one more person complains about this, I swear… get over it or drop…*

*She closes her laptop and gets up from the couch. She moves to the counter to get her solo cup. Kat sits in pause. Her phone rings again. She groans and ignores the call. Sydney sits on the counter. She checks her phone.*

Sydney: What are you doing tonight?
Kat: Nothing. This. Homework.
Sydney: Don’t be boring! Come out with us! My ride’s about to be here. Me and the girls are celebrating / Becca’s 21st birthday, she’s going to be so fucked up…
Kat: I dunno… I’m kinda tired.
Sydney: What’d you say?
Kat: I’m tired.

*Sydney gets up and moves to the couch.*

*Sydney: Kat…. You can sit around when you’re 30. (grabbing Kat’s hand, trying to pull her off the couch). Get uppp… Come out, get drunk, kiss a hot boy…*

Kat (pulling back): Please. That’s the last thing I want…
Sydney: What! You have been… been sitting in here in the dark since I got home at like 5:00 and / I’m trying to help you have some fun…
Kat: I kinda just want to have some me time.

*Sydney: Everyone wants you to come with us. / They keep asking, “Where’s Kat?”*
Kat: I have a lot of homework.
Sydney: You can do it later!
Kat: I can’t, I’m falling behind. I did horribly on my midterm. But tell Becca I said, “Happy Birthday.”

*Sydney: Okay… whatever…*

*Sydney gets up and walks to get her drink. She sits on the counter and texts while sipping.*

Kat: Syd, when are you leaving?
Sydney: I’ll be here for a hot minute. I’m waiting to get picked up.
Kat: Oh okay.
Sydney: Jake’s like on his way.
Kat: Are you serious?
Sydney: What? We are pregaming at the GLA house.
Kat (confused): You’re going over there?
Sydney: What… I’m like basically their sweetheart already… Well, almost. Elections next week. Soooo excited!
Kat: After what happened to me last week, you still want to be friends with them?
Sydney: Oh, Kat. That’s bullshit. Stop listening to Monica.
Kat: You don’t mean that / after everything that I have been through, you say something…
Sydney: You wouldn’t be in this mess if Monica hadn’t blabbed to the school about it.
Kat: She stood up for me and supported me. I thought you would be doing the same.
Sydney: Oh please! I’m here for you.
Kat: We talked about it once, and you haven’t even asked—
Sydney: Yeah, men can be assholes sometimes. We went over that. Hey, I’m trying to get you off the couch and out into the world. Our whole pledge class is going out for Becca except you. Last week. It happened. Take a shot, get over it, move on.
Kat sits and stares at her. She begins to softly cry.
Sydney (moving to comfort Kat): Sh… sh… I’m sorry… I… I can’t… We cope differently. I…
Kat: It’s just… when I went to the Title IX office—
Sydney: You did what?
Kat: Check your email.
Sydney pulls out her phone to check her email. She reads aloud.
Sydney: “Ms. Sydney Leake, I am contacting you in regards… blah, blah, blah… Come to my office and give a statement as a witness…” What? Kat? Are you fucking kidding me? You dragged me into this! (continues reading). “… in order to properly and thoroughly understand… blah, blah, blah… Thank you, Matthew Williams.” Who is this guy?
Kat: Syd… I know this makes you mad, / but I need you to do this for me.
Sydney: Mad? You think I’m mad? Oh… I’m furious.
Kat: This isn’t about you!
Sydney: Now it is! Eddie and Jake are going to / hate me forever.
Kat: Oh, you care about them more than me?
Sydney: No! But this is… is insane. What if he gets arrested? What if Eddie goes to jail because you turned a one night stand into a crime?
Kat: I didn’t do / that at all.
Sydney: Then, what did you do?
Kat (she hits a breaking point): I didn’t do anything except lay there! And I feel insane! Because the next morning. He was totally normal. Which made me so confused because I… I felt violated… He was calm and cool, you know how Eddie is. Just normal. And I was freaking out… So, when Monica told me I was raped, I… it helped to have someone else tell me what was happening.

Pause as the sounds of the TV continue.
Sydney: Wow… that’s… well, that doesn’t sound like—
Kat: I don’t know. But it’s too late. I went to Title IX, and you’ve gotta be a witness.

Pause as Sydney’s phone vibrates. She checks it.
Sydney: Fine. I’ll talk to him, but I’m worried.
Kat: About talking to Mr. Williams?
Sydney: No, I’m worried you’ll be the girl who cried rape.
Kat: I can’t think of anything worse than this…
Sydney: Are you gonna be okay tonight?
Kat: I’ll be fine. Go out. Have fun.
Sydney gets up.
Sydney: Good… (beat). Well… my ride’s here. I’ll see ya.
Kat: Okay…
Sydney: Uh… Yeah, if you change your mind and wanna come out, just text me.
She exits. Kat stares at the TV. Her phone vibrates. She looks at it and puts it down. She stares.
Lights out.

Scene 12.

Lights up on Matthew’s office. Just like Act I, Matthew writes at his desk as the clock ticks behind him. A knock at the door.

Matthew: One second!

Matthew looks around at his desk. He lets out a breath and stands up.

Matthew: Come in!

Monica walks in the door.

Matthew: Hello Monica. It’s good to see you again.

Monica (extending her hand): Mr. Williams. Yes, you too.

Matthew: As you are familiar with this process—
Monica: Yes. I am.

Matthew: Kat has given her statement and acts as the official complainant—

Kat: I know.

Matthew (moving behind his desk): Anyway, it’s your turn. As a witness, I would like to ask you a few questions.

Monica (taking a seat): Absolutely. Do you want me to start at the beginning of the night or give some background details leading up to it?

Matthew (grabbing the recorder on his desk): Let me start my recording. (leaning over and talking in the recorder) Today is Monday, November 14th. Monica Jean Phillips and I are in my office at 1:03 p.m.

Monica nods.

Matthew: What compelled you to report this incident to the Title IX office?

Monica: Mr. Williams, as a Residential Assistant, I’m an employee of the university. So, I’m required to report sexual assault or sexual harassment that is shared with me or that I observe.

Matthew: I understand, but this duty normally pertains to the residents on your floor in your residence hall.

Monica: Yes, I know. You know this isn’t my first time acting as a witness, but I personally feel that reporting to the university extends past the dorms. I feel responsible to my friends and peers around me.

Matthew: Did Kat ask you to report this case on her behalf?

Monica: Well, no—not exactly. But it’s my responsibility as a woman too. And as a person. If I witness someone taking advantage of another human being, I’m not going to contribute to the bystander effect that cripples people at this school.

Matthew writes. Monica shifts in her seat.

Matthew: Did Kat ask you to report this case on her behalf?

Monica: Yes, Kat was drinking.

Matthew: Let me rephrase the question. How long have you known Kat?

Monica: Since high school. We became best friends when we were fifteen. Ninth grade Art.

Matthew: Have you seen Kat drunk?

Monica: Yes.

Matthew: Many times?
Monica: Yeah, I guess.

Matthew: Have you ever seen her throw up from drinking too much, or act uncharacteristically, or have trouble with her motor skills?

*Short pause.*

Monica: Yeah, I have. She got like that a lot back in high school. Falling at parties or drunk calling people and barely making any sense. Yeah, she’s gotten like that some too in college. Sydney brings that side out of her.

Matthew: On October 29th at the Gamma Lambda Alpha party, was she stumbling around or slurring her words?

Monica: Uh. Well, no, but she was drunk.

Matthew: Did you have a breathalyzer?

Monica: No, I didn’t. But she was drunk.

Matthew writes.

Matthew: But how do you know?

Monica: She had—well, probably three or four drinks.

Matthew: Did she throw up?

Monica: Uh. No, no she didn’t.

Matthew: Did she fall or anything?

Monica: Not that I know of.

Matthew writes.

Matthew: Back to my original question. In your opinion, did Kat seem drunk?

Monica: It doesn’t matter if she did that stuff at the house. I just know she was drunk because… I know her, Mr. Williams. She had a… a couple of drinks within the time that we went to the house and… Well, I—in my opinion, yes, she was drunk. And when a person is drunk, they cannot give consent—which you already know. But Eddie didn’t have her permission. Besides, she told me the next day that she blacked out. You don’t black out if you aren’t drunk. That’s like chemically impossible. Do you think it really mattered if she threw up or not when she was sobbing and… and I was driving her to get Plan B the next day?

*Short pause.*

Matthew: Okay. When you saw Kat and Eddie talking, did you try to intervene or stop her from talking to him?

Monica: Yes.

Matthew: Why did you do that?
Monica: What do you mean why? I wanted to be direct and tell her Eddie was a shitty guy and I
was trying to distract her from him, but I got a phone call... uh... I don’t really remember too
well about that part specifically.

Matthew: Were you drunk?

Monica: I mean no, not really.

Matthew: How much did you drink?

Monica: I don’t know like three or four drinks.

Short pause. Matthew writes.

Monica: I intervened because Eddie has a sketchy reputation. I’m surprised he hasn’t been
kicked off campus. I’ve heard some really messed up stuff.

Matthew: What have you heard?

Monica: Lots of stuff. Like... like one time... oh! One time he saw my friend’s friend walking
home. He offered her a ride, but he wouldn’t immediately take her home. He said, “Let’s get ice
cream.” And they did that. But then, he was like my house is closer... come home with me. She
was wasted and just wanted to go to sleep. But he wouldn’t let her do that either. And she said
she thinks she blew him, but was so drunk that she didn’t really know. But the next day they
were both naked in the bed.

Matthew: I see. You did not intervene because you thought Kat was drunk. Correct?

Monica (frustrated): Why do you keep asking me that?

Matthew: I want to be thorough.

Pause.

Monica: She needed to stay away from Eddie. He preys on drunk women. All of them do. They
target the drunkest ones, and... yeah.

Matthew: In both Kat and Eddie’s statement, you left the party after receiving a phone call.
Why?

Monica: Well another friend of mine from State, who is going through an incredibly difficult
time was calling me. She was upset and needed my help.

Matthew: I see... Are you in Omega Kappa too?

Monica: No, I dropped out of rush. That’s not really my scene.

Matthew: Do you go to Greek events often?

Monica: Only with Kat, but what does my not affiliating do with anything?

The lights go down on the office, and go up on Jake and Eddie in their bedroom.

Eddie: Dude, wear something a little nicer. Don’t just wear a t-shirt. Look like you give a shit.

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Jake: It doesn’t matter what I wear.
Eddie: Yeah it does. You want to at least look somewhat professional.
Jake: I dunno man. You know what they call a frat guy in a suit?
Eddie: What? Overdressed and unprepared?
Jake: No, the defendant.
Eddie: Well that’s pretty much what I am! They are calling me the “respondent.” But I feel like I’m like… like in court all the time.
Jake: Since I’m not in a court room, then it doesn’t matter. It’s just a conversation.
Eddie: I’m not asking you to wear a fucking coat and tie. I’m asking you to look like you care about this. Even the frat, if this doesn’t go our way, maybe the university will somehow hold the whole frat liable.
Jake: Good point.
Eddie: Everything has to be perfect.
Jake: I know your all like into always thinking about the future and all that—
Eddie: Yeah, I try to think two steps ahead.
Jake: Well calm down a little bit. You didn’t do anything wrong.
Eddie: I know that! But I don’t want to risk everything. I don’t want him to write you off and to think you’re an idiot and ignore your statement.
Jake: Fine, I’ll wear a polo.
Eddie: And put on some pants. No shorts.
Jake: Okay thanks, Mom. Want to come do my hair for me to?

Lights fade on their bedroom and go up on the office. Sydney sits in the chair, and Matthew writes at his desk.

Sydney: Kat was drinking, but she didn’t vomit or anything. Like she seemed fine when I was with her. But yeah. Kat likes to drink.
Matthew (writing): How much had you been drinking?
Sydney: Uh… I drank a bit. Not too much.
Matthew: How many drinks?
Sydney (shifting in her seat): Maybe four or five.
Matthew: What did you talk about?
Sydney: I dunno, school. I don’t really remember.
Matthew: Do you remember Monica trying to intervene?

Sydney: Ugh, yes. I wanted her to leave them alone. Look, Mr. Williams, our freshman year, Monica got cut from all the sororities. So, she dropped, and Kat pledged. Ever since then, they’ve had this weird relationship. Because Kat is like successful and stuff, and honestly Monica lives in her shadow. Which is why she came to you in the first place. To like… control Kat.

Matthew: I see… (beat). Does Eddie have a reputation of any kind?

Sydney: Not like a bad one. He’s pretty Christian, like goes to church and stuff. But he does make out with a lot of girls, if that’s what you mean. He’s a really sweet guy.

Matthew: When Kat left with Eddie, when did you next hear from her?

Sydney: Uh… she texted me the next morning.

Matthew: What did she say?

Sydney (pulling out a cell phone): Hold up lemme check.

Short pause as she scrolls in her phone for the messages.

Sydney: She says, “Omg, what happened?” Then I said, “lol, girl, where are you?” She said, “Eddie’s bed.” I was like blushing emoji, but then, “Wait. Are you still at the frat house?” And she says, “Ya.” And awkward smiley face emoji. That’s it. About an hour later she came home.

Matthew: Was she upset?

Sydney: I—kind of. More embarrassed than upset. She shacked at a frat house. She’s a junior. He’s a sophomore. Wouldn’t you be upset—or embarrassed?

Matthew: I’ll take that as a rhetorical question.

Short pause.

Sydney: Anyway, Monica got her from the GLA house. Kat had texted me that she thought they hooked up. But didn’t remember too much. But when Monica dropped her off, she was like really, really upset. But I think I know why cause I’m sitting here talking to you now.

Matthew: Did you try to help her or talk to her about it whenever she first came home?

Sydney: I didn’t think it was a big deal. Shacking isn’t uncommon in our house.

Matthew writes. Short pause.

Sydney: I hope nobody gets in trouble. It’s just a misunderstanding if you ask me.

Lights fade on the office and go up on Kat and Sydney’s apartment. Monica sits on the counter and Kat is on the couch.

Monica: Mr. Williams seemed really responsive.

Kat: Good.
Monica: Yeah. He can help make this right.
Kat: Okay… good.
Monica: Yeah. It will be fine. And Sydney agreed?
Kat: Yes.
Monica: Thank god…

Short pause.

Monica: So, how are your classes? (beat). I’m just trying to get your mind off of it.

Monica moves to the couch.
Kat: They’re not too hot right now.
Monica: That’s understandable. My grades have been slipping too.
Kat: Yeah.
Monica: It’s been stressful for me.
Kat: Why do you do that?
Monica: Do what?
Kat: Take on other people’s problems.
Monica: I don’t know. I feel responsible, I guess.
Kat: You’re not.
Monica: I know, but I just empathize with you.
Kat: You empathize with everyone. You’re like the shoulder to cry on.
Monica: I’ve been through a lot. (beat). Do you remember when my parents split up?
Kat: Yeah.
Monica: How I caught my dad having an affair?
Kat: Yeah… that was a lot for sixteen.
Monica: I experienced a lot of pain. Nobody around me really got it… I hated him. And that he wanted that dumb, young girl over my mom. I hated his primitive sexuality based on physical pleasure and not a lasting… emotional connection. I hated myself too because I was the bearer of bad news. I didn’t really have anyone who understood… I’ve been in a place like that—ya know a pit of… of sadness. So, I want to help others get out.
Kat: Yeah, thank you. And one day you’ll be a great counselor.
Monica: Maybe… Kat, you were really my only friend through all of that.
Kat: Yeah, we spent a lot of long nights… crying and yelling and… (smiles) eating.
Monica: So many M&Ms. I still crave them when I’m sad. *(beat).* Kat your life has been pretty much perfect. You’re beautiful and smart and talented. Great family. And I’ve always… I dunno… just glad that we’re friends. I hate that this is happening to you.

*Lights fade on the apartment and go back up on the office. Matthew writes. Jake wearing a polo and khakis sits in the chair.*

**Jake:** Like, I’m a witness. Like on NCIS?

**Matthew:** Not exactly, but yes, you are a witness. You were present and observed the event.

**Jake:** Yeah.

**Matthew:** Was Eddie sober?

**Jake:** Yeah, he doesn’t drink.

**Matthew:** Have you ever seen him drink?

**Jake:** Nah. He’s always sober. Like he thinks he can’t because he’s not 21 and something about *The Bible.*

**Matthew (writing):** Did Kat seem drunk to you?

**Jake:** Uh… honestly, I was black out. So. I don’t really remember anything.

**Matthew:** I see.

**Jake:** That’s why I’m confused. Like didn’t get why you asked me to come here.

**Matthew:** You’re his roommate and you were present. You know Eddie very well and can attest to his character.

**Jake:** Oh yeah, solid guy—I mean. He’s a really good guy. He respects women.

**Matthew:** What do you mean by that?

**Jake:** By what?

**Matthew:** You said “he respects women.”

**Jake:** Yeah.

*Short pause.*

**Matthew:** How?

**Jake:** All the girls love him. He can’t go anywhere in public without girls talking to him and hugging him and ya know? Like he’s just a nice guy, and people like him.

*Matthew writes.*

**Jake:** Look, he didn’t rape Kat. I know that her friends are gonna say some… some stuff. But he didn’t. He wouldn’t hurt a fly. I know the guy. And he’s like super religious.
Matthew: What do you mean?

Jake: He’s the most Christian dude I know. He’s saving himself for marriage. Or was, I dunno, honestly. Okay, yeah. Him and Kat did, yeah, they… But like she wanted to.

Matthew: Are Kat and Eddie friends?

Jake: No, he barely knows her. They talked like once last week. He knows who she is. But everybody knows her. And him too. But like they’ve only talked once. I think they follow each other on Instagram, but no. Strangers pretty much.

Matthew: Why did he ask her to go back to his room?

Jake: I don’t know. She’s hot and popular. I mean, she’s a good person to lose your virginity to. Uh… yeah, I meant that in a good way.

Matthew writes.

Matthew: Well, thank you for your input.

Sydney: (walking towards the door): So… Am I good to go?

Matthew: Yes.

Jake: Okay. Have a good day.

Jake exits. Matthew stares at the door. He lets out a sigh.

Matthew: These college kids… I swear, they are supposed to be adults.

Matthew moves back to his desk and picks up his note pad. He begins shuffling through the notes. He picks up the recorder, presses the button, a soft rewinding sound is heard. He presses play.

Kat’s voice: It’s too hard. I was blackout. I don’t remember all of it. It’s hard. I… I can’t remem—remember the details. Just how I felt. How he made me feel. What he did made me—that’s all I can remember…

Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Kat’s voice: Eddie raped me. I want to do this.

Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Eddie’s voice: She… she wanted to… to—do it. I mean… she asked for it.

Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Eddie’s voice: How is “Fuck me” unclear?

Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Monica’s voice: Do you think it really mattered if she threw up or not when she was sobbing and… and I was driving her to get Plan B the next day?
Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Sydney’s voice: It’s just a misunderstanding if you ask me.

Matthew fast-forwards the tape. Matthew pushes play.

Jake’s voice: Uh… honestly, I was blackout. So. I don’t really remember anything.

Matthew: Hmm.

Matthew rewinds and presses play.

Kat’s voice: Eddie raped me.

Pause.

Matthew: Well… I am sending this to Student Conduct.

Scene 11.

Kat’s and Sydney’s apartment. Monica and Kat sit on a couch talking. An empty chair sits next to them. On the other side of the stage, Jake and Eddie’s bedroom sits. Throughout this scene, the dialogue will hop back and forth between the women and the men. The lights will adjust with the focus of the scene.

Monica: Now we wait.

Kat: Yeah.

Monica: What are you thinking?

Kat: I dunno. At least he says there is a case.

Monica: Right.

Pause.

Kat: It’s in Student Conduct’s hands now. The Campus Council gets to decide.

Monica: I’m confident.

Kat: Really?

Monica: Yes, think about it. You were drunk. He was sober. You didn’t want to. He wanted to. It’s black and white. He took advantage of you. Anybody could see that.

Kat: But he doesn’t see that. And we have to go to a hearing and talk in front a panel or something.

Monica: Eddie only cares about himself. And don’t worry about that, I will support you and be here throughout the process.

Kat: He’s not a bad person. He doesn’t deserve to go through all of this trial shit. He’s a nice guy, or at least has always been nice to me… but—
Monica *(laughs)*: Listen to yourself. Don’t go all Stockholm Syndrome on me. / Yeah, you’re defending him.

Kat: I’m not. / But I’m not in love with him. This isn’t even the same situation.

Monica: But that’s how it starts. Just because he didn’t try to kill you or tie you up or something.

Kat: What the hell?

Monica: All I’m saying is don’t go falling for this dude or feel like you are hurting him because he hurt you. *(pause.)* Well, didn’t he? I remember how upset you were when I drove you to CVS.

Kat: I got upset because you started talking about rape and I couldn’t remember anything and—

Monica: Right! You can’t remember, but you remember him. The next day. What did he say to you?

Kat: I don’t want to go there—

Monica: No, what did he say to you when you woke up next to him?

Kat: He said…

*Kat begins to cry softly.*

Kat: He said, “You’re a great fuck.”

*Pause.*

Monica: Exactly. Did you expect him to say that? Were you even thinking about being with him in the most intimate physical way the night before?

Kat: No! I was trying to find out why I was naked in a strange bed in a strange room. Next to Eddie.

Monica: When I hear that, red flags are going up. He raped you.

Kat: Yeah, you’re right.

Monica: I’ve seen this happen a hundred times. Not literally, but it feels like that. Last semester, Rebekah—she goes to State. She called me while I was at the party. That’s why I left you with Eddie because I thought she needed me. Because a couple of Saturdays ago, she called me. I could barely understand her through her sobs. She woke up completely naked on the floor in a random football player’s house. They were having like a party and the whole team was there. She couldn’t remember anything. But her friend had sent her a video of two dudes fucking her. Like taking turns with her limp, unconscious body. And her friend—supposed friend because that’s shitty—texted her, “Someone had a wild night.” That type of shit happens. These athletes and… and “fraternity men” … and all the fucking entitled males at every university across America… they are not good people. They do not care about you. They care about getting your panties off and doing what they please. Don’t defend them.

Kat: Oh my god, was she the girl in the news?
Monica: Yes and one of my best friends from summer camp. You remember her?
Kat: Oh, she’s in that picture of you with the swimming caps.
Monica: Yes. Like I told her, I want you to know—
Kat: Know what?
Monica: This isn’t your fault. Jake: This isn’t you fault.

The lights fade on Kat and Sydney’s apartment and illuminate Jake and Eddie’s room.
Eddie: I know... I swear. She’s destroying my life!
Jake: Be mad, dude. She fucked you over.
Eddie: I am mad. I’m… I’m / pissed off, ya know?
Jake: Let it out dude.
Eddie: I just want to… to…
Jake: Punch something?
Eddie: Yeah.
Jake: I get it man. I mean you’ve seen me get mad and break shit.
Eddie: When you’re wasted.
Jake: Yeah.
Eddie: And dude, my parents… My mom keeps sending me Bible verses and shit. Like dude look at this… (pulling out his phone). My mom texted me this… James 1:2 “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds.”
Jake: Ha! That’s so fucking stupid.
Eddie: It’s bullshit! I’m supposed to be happy that I’m going through a real trial, like with actual consequences. For something I didn’t fucking do!
Jake: Yeah, man. You’re innocent.
Eddie: I shouldn’t have even talked to her. Gah… I can’t believe I’m having to go to a hearing. What the hell? What is a hearing? Like this is like real court or some shit. Is Judge Judy gonna be there? Like what’s going on! What if I get expelled? Then, she presses charges. And I get arrested and go to court. Then, jail.
Jake: You’re not. If she presses charges, sue her!
Eddie: For what?
Jake: I dunno! For telling lies. Or for being a bitch.
Eddie: Yeah, I should do something about this. I should call my dad, but you know what else is fucked up? My parents can’t know anything about this from the university. Like something about FARPA? Or something like that? Because of some other law, the school can’t like disclose information to my parents. So, they only know what I tell them, but if they knew the whole thing, shit. My dad would tear them up. He knows a bunch of lawyers. I should have had one when I talked to Mr. Williams. Gah, that asshole.

Jake: Yeah, but like you thought you could just tell him what happened and that you’re innocent. Which you did, but you’re being accused of rape.

Eddie: Don’t remind me.

Jake: Sorry man.

Eddie: Do you know what it feels like to be accused like this? To think that with that person that everything was cool. Kat made me feel comfortable. And I was a virgin, and I thought she wanted to get with me. And then, this? Like to go complain to the university about what I did with her in a bedroom.

Jake: I mean yeah. I’ve had girls say they didn’t want to fuck me after they fucked me.

Eddie: You don’t get it! That didn’t happen to me.

Kat: You don’t get it! That didn’t happen to me.

Lights fade on Eddie and Jake and go back on Kat and Monica.

Monica: It could have! What if Jake had come in the room? And they both took advantage of you? Just like my friend at State with the football players. Gang rape… it’s more common than you think. If more of those frat dudes had been in that room, I guarantee they would have all done whatever they wanted with you.

Sydney walks in the door with backpack on her shoulder and keys in hand.

Sydney: Hey, hey.

Kat: Hi.

Monica: Hey.

Sydney sits in the chair next to them. She pulls her laptop out of her backpack.

Sydney: I hate school. My professor sucks. You know? Like get this. The class only meets once a week. It’s Art Appreciation. And we had a test last Friday—which last Friday was the first baseball game, which I was not going to miss for anything. Well, I forgot about the online test we had due at midnight that night. I was too drunk to have taken it anyway, but I told him I was sick, and he won’t fucking let me retake it unless I show him a doctor’s note! I’m just gonna print one off the internet or something. I dunno. Whatever.

Pause. Sydney types.
Monica: I can’t believe you.

Sydney: Excuse me?

*Sydney stops typing.*

Monica: You’re so fucking selfish.

Kat: Hey—

Monica: No, do you even know what happened today?

Sydney: What? Did the inventor of birth control die or something?

Monica: Oh my god. No, your roommate and your friend just heard back from the Title IX office.

Sydney: Ohh yeah that thing that I had to go talk about. That Mr. What’s-his-face? Williams. He was weird.

Monica: There’s a case. Kat’s case is going to student conduct.

Sydney *(beginning to type):* Oh, great.

Monica *(to Kat):* Is she seriously not supporting you in this?

Kat: She doesn’t really think—

Sydney *(frustrated, closing laptop):* You want to know what I think about this?

*Pause. Sydney gets up and walks around the couch.*

Sydney: This—this whole thing, the “case” and, everything—it’s your fault.

Monica *(getting up):* What did you just say to me?

Kat: Syd…

*Monica moves behind the couch as well. Monica stands stage left of Kat, and Sydney stands stage right. Kat sits in the middle with Sydney and Monica at each shoulder.*

Sydney: Kat, did you regret what happened with Eddie?

Kat: Yes.

Monica: It’s not about—

Sydney: Shut up, Monica, and let me fucking speak. Kat, do you remember that one time with… uh… you know what—this is perfect for the situation—you remember that one time I went home with Jake.

Kat: Yes.

Sydney: You remember when you came and got me? You remember how embarrassed I was? Because I got drunk and let Jake fuck me. In the moment, I didn’t want to, but I went back to his
room with him. He smoked me out. He looked kinda cute. Ya know drunk goggles. I was so cross-faded, I couldn’t even. Yeah. I was fucked up. But we made out, which was gross, but I was fine. Then, he got out a condom. My panties were on at this point, but just the panties. And he pulled them off and, and it happened. I laid there and stared at the ceiling. Just waiting for it to be over. I don’t remember much, but I remember his breath smelling like Natty Light, and he lasted like 10 seconds. Then, I passed out.

*Pause.*

**Kat:** I remember.

**Sydney:** Monica here would say that I was raped—

**Monica:** Technically, yes.

**Sydney:** SHUT UP with this “technically” bull shit! People like you have two… two things. That’s it. It’s either consensual, like sex, or it’s rape. What about the in-between?

**Monica:** Your situation is different. You remember most of it. Kat was raped. You physically consented—

**Sydney:** Do *not* tell me that I was not raped! Do *not* try to… to tell me what happened to me. I felt uncomfortable and I regretted the situation immediately. But I didn’t turn my regret into rape. Kat, what happened to Kat, is the same exact thing that happened to me. She drank too much. She passed out. But she fucked a dude first. She’s not a virgin. She’s slept with random guys before. You made her think it was—

**Monica:** No, I helped her! That’s what I did. You didn’t pick her up… You didn’t hold her hand as she swallowed that goddamn pill. You laughed at her.

**Sydney:** I would have picked her up! But it wasn’t a big deal! The amount of times that this… this shacking with random boys.

**Monica:** Shacking and raping are two different—

**Sydney:** Being raped and crying wolf are two different things! You made Kat go to the Title IX office. You reported it. You convinced her. You made her get help. You forced her to make a statement. She wouldn’t have done that on her own. I know her. She would have been like the countless other girls who have unwanted sex. The girls who sleep with guys in their Finance classes when they are fucked up. The girls who take responsibility for their choices and don’t say they were raped whenever they regret fucking someone. And Kat. I talked to Jake about this too.

**Kat:** Oh shit. What did he say?

**Monica:** It doesn’t matter.

**Sydney:** Yeah, it does. She got drunk. She got blackout apparently. And took his virginity. That seems like the definition of rape to me. To have your way with someone while you’re drunk. Did he want his first time to be with someone who claims to not know what she was doing? Probably
not, but you fucked that up for him. Jake says that you told Eddie… You know what she said, Monica?

**Monica** (angry): I don’t know, what?

**Sydney**: Fuck me.  
**Eddie**: Fuck me.

*The lights fade on the women and go back up on Eddie and Jake.*

**Jake**: What?

**Eddie**: My life is ruined. No law school. No grad school. I’m going to be labeled as a rapist for the rest of my life. I’ll probably have to sign up for those websites that notify neighborhoods if sketchy people move in next to them. Life fucked me.

**Jake**: Yeah, we should get back at her.

**Eddie**: I want to. I want her to know what this feels like.

**Jake**: Let’s do it.

**Eddie**: That would make everything worse. Retaliation… None of that… But I… I… I hate her. So much.

**Jake**: Yeah, I understand man. I hate her too.

*Lights go up on Sydney, Monica, and Kat. Lights illuminate both parties for the following discussion.*

**Eddie**: She’s not who she says she is.  
**Monica**: She’s not who she says she is.  
**Kat**: What do you mean?

**Eddie**: She acts one way and then acts another. She goes back and forth. She seems cool, but will just mess you up in the end.  
**Monica**: She acts one way and then acts another. She goes back and forth. She seems cool, but will just mess you up in the end.  
**Kat**: No, you didn’t!

**Jake**: Hey, I tried to warn you about her.  
**Sydney**: Hey, I tried to warn you about her.  
**Kat**: No, you didn’t!

**Eddie**: No, you didn’t!  
**Monica**: She’s just trying to ruin everything for you.  
**Kat**: Well, mission accomplished because I hate myself.

**Sydney**: She’s just trying to ruin everything for you.  
**Kat**: Well, mission accomplished because I hate myself.

*Lights go out over Jake and Eddie. The women continue.*

**Monica**: And who’s fault is that?

**Sydney**: YOURS!

**Kat**: BOTH OF YOU SHUT UP!
Kat: Were you in the room with me?

Monica: I tried—

Kat: You were not there! Just me and Eddie were in that room. And I don’t remember anything. He was sober. And some might say… that… that he is the only one who might actually know what really happened. But… I did not want to sleep with him. I didn’t, and I... The next morning I felt violated and like I had no control. And… and I… I was so sad. So, so sad. And the two of you… my two closest friends are… are trying to tell me what happened. The two of you! (beat) Both of you were drunk, and you weren’t in the room! Monica, you always talk about this… You always say, “It’s your body; you’re the only one who can define your sexual experiences.” But you didn’t treat me that way. You immediately said I was raped. And Sydney, telling me to stop being a bitch about it? How is that even supportive? And the worst thing about it all. Is… is that I don’t know which one of you is right, or maybe both of you are wrong. (beat) You know how shitty this is? To feel like, like you are maybe fucking someone over? Ruining their life? All because you drank too much. I made that choice. I made that decision. To drink way too much. I did those shots. Eddie didn’t force me to drink. (beat) This is what I want—because neither of you seem to care about that… I’m asking you… to I want this to be over. I want resolution. I’m asking for resolution. I just… I can’t… Whatever. I’m… I gotta go.

Kat heads towards the door.

Monica: Hey, where are you going?

Kat: Just leave me alone, both of you.

She exits.

Sydney: Shit.

Monica scoffs and exits after Kat. The lights fade and go up on Eddie and Jake.

Jake: Dude, don’t hate yourself. You’re Eddie Fucking Hodges! The man! Women are always all over you all the time. You’re the fucking king. I know that you got this. You’ll go into that hearing and blow the Campus Council away. They won’t even know who came in the room. They’ll be like, “Holy shit, who’s this great guy? Why is he getting accused of rape? He is harmless!” You were the only sober person. If that Mr. Williams guy was saying that she was too drunk to say yes to sex, then how could she be sober enough to correctly tell him what happened to her? You know what happened. You’re gonna win this.

Eddie: Thanks man. Sorry for getting pissed, but I’m going through a lot right now. And… and I’m scared. .1% of the evidence has to be in her favor. I’m freaking out. That’s like. Such a slim chance. I’m so scared.

Jake: I would be too.
Eddie: Yeah. I’m… I’m terrified.
Jake: Just hit em with the charm. And ya know.
Eddie: Yeah. I gotta win this. Yeah…
Jake: Now we wait.
Lights fade out.

Scene 12.
Matthew’s office. Matthew sits alone at his desk. He holds his recorder in hand and flips through his notes. A knock is heard at the door. Matthew shuffles some things around.
Matthew: Come in!
Eddie walks in the door wearing a suit.
Matthew: Oh, Eddie. I was not expecting you.
Eddie: Oh, I’m sorry. Is this a bad time?
Matthew: No, it’s fine. Can I help you with something?
Eddie: Uh, yeah… I’ve got a question.
Matthew: Yes?
Eddie: Uh… well… I’m about to go to my hearing. In like an hour. I was killing time and thought I’d stop by. Yeah. Uh… I’ve been thinking about this a lot. And… I… What’s gonna happen to me?
Matthew: I told you before. I do not have a say in the outcome. I only put together the case.
Eddie: Yeah, but you’ve done this before. You know what the outcomes can be. I’ve read some stuff online, and I’m worried that I’m going to end up in jail or something.
Matthew: I cannot tell you what will happen. I sent it to Student Conduct because I did not know the answer. If I knew based on the evidence I gathered that you did not assault Kat, the incident would have died in this office. However, based on the statements and some text messages I read, I could not come up with a conclusion. Student Conduct must decide.
Eddie: But, like what could happen?
Matthew: Well…
Eddie: Like, what’re some possibilities?
Matthew: They could administer a series of sanctions. If you are preventing her from being able to continue her education, they could remove you from any classes that you have with her. Or maybe suspend you. Or potentially expel you. You could be put on social probation for your fraternity. You could have to do some sort of sexual assault and harassment training. Or… or
nothing. They could decide that you did not do anything wrong. They could determine that she
did indeed consent.

**Eddie:** Hmm.

**Matthew:** Yes. They will decide. *(beat)* Do you have any other questions?

**Eddie:** Good thing I want to be a lawyer because I have to go defend myself in there. The lawyer
that my dad hired—who was expensive by the way—can’t even talk in this hearing.

**Matthew:** No. He gives you advice. You were allowed to choose anyone to give you counsel. It
did not have to be an expensive attorney. It could have been a professor or—

**Eddie:** That’s not the point. The point is… this is a mini criminal justice system… essentially…
but students have to defend themselves in front of the campus council! That’s intimidating and…
and I don’t know what I’m doing in there. You’re throwing us to the dogs.

**Matthew:** That is why you have an attorney. To help you—

**Eddie:** Whatever, man. This whole thing… is… is my word against hers. Or Jake’s words and
my words versus Sydney’s, Monica’s and Kat’s words. It’s just a bunch of he said, she said.

**Matthew:** Yes, you could put it that way, but the process is much more complicated than—

**Eddie:** No, it’s not. It’s 50.1% of the words spoken by the five of us will either fall in my favor
or in hers. Words. No videos. No recordings. No fingerprints. No rape kits. No blood work. No

**Matthew:** Yes, I see what you are—

**Eddie:** And the cops aren’t even investigating this. Nobody cares about this. Nobody is trying to
arrest me or hunt me down. But you… you could have stopped this right here in this office.

**Matthew:** Sexual violence is a huge problem on college campuses, and therefore, people like me
exist to help stop these violations from happening to students.

**Eddie:** You could have stopped this

**Matthew:** In your mind, you had sex, but in her mind, you raped her.

**Eddie:** But you can’t actually prove that!

**Matthew:** The evidence—

**Eddie:** It’s not evidence! It’s people telling stories!

*Pause.*

**Matthew:** I know that you are upset, but this is how the system works. This is the policy.

**Eddie:** Whatever man, fuck… have a good day, Mr. Williams.

*Eddie leaves and slams the door on his way out. Matthew stares at the door and shakes a head.*
Matthew: Always a pleasure talking with him…

Scene 13.

Eddie enters stage right. A light slowly rises up on him as he stands. Eddie addresses the audience like they are the Campus Council. As he speaks, Kat enters stage left and another spotlight shines on her as stands opposite of Eddie slightly stage left.

Eddie: I’m Eddie Hodges. Thank you for your patience throughout this hearing. I am grateful for your time, and thank you Mr. Williams for your hard work searching for all the facts. This process is a necessary component to our campus life, but I hate that I'm standing in this position instead of being a student on the council…

Eddie: This whole situation… it's caused me a lot of tension, and… and frustration. I… didn't want it to go this far… far enough to where I had to come speak and defend myself in front of the Campus Council. But I realize it's necessary… necessary for the truth to come out. What happened that night, is not what it seems. I’ve never been in this position before. Being told that what I did… that what happened in that bedroom was wrong. Because what has happened needs to stop… I'm being blamed…

Kat: This whole situation… it's caused me a lot of tension, and… and frustration. I… didn’t want it to go this far… far enough to where I had to come speak and defend myself in front of the Campus Council. But I realize it's necessary… necessary for the truth to come out. What happened that night, is not what it seems. I’ve never been in this position before. Being told that what I did…

Lights fade on Eddie and he stops speaking. Kat continues.

Kat (pointing to where Eddie stood): He is telling you that he didn’t know I was drunk, and that I wanted to be with him like that. But no… being quite honest, I had no idea how to handle this… these feelings of invasion and loss of control and… and manipulation. I didn't know what they meant. But my friends have been supportive. They've helped me figure out what's going on. What being in this situation means. That's why I have the courage to say that Eddie Hodges didn’t have my consent. It is not okay. He raped me. I've never been taken advantage of before. That was my first time.

Lights fade on Kat. Eddie continues.

Eddie (overlapping with Kat): That was my first time. Kat did most of it herself. (pointing to where Kat stood) She is telling you that I had sex with her without her consent. But no… She wanted to. She asked me to. Kat knew what she was doing. And so did I. It was consensual sex. She’s falsely accusing me.

Lights come back up on Kat.
**Eddie:** It's not okay that we can live in a community where people can do stuff like this and get away with it. Not take responsibility for their own actions. Not have the decency to respect other people. I'm not a liar. Dishonesty… it’s… it's not who I am. Dishonest. *(beat)*. Yeah. I hope that you will see where I'm coming from. I'm not responsible for what happened.

**Kat:** It's not okay that we can live in a community where people can do stuff like this and get away with it. Not take responsibility for their own actions. Not have the decency to respect other people. I'm not a liar. Dishonesty… it’s… it's not who I am. Dishonest. *(beat)*. Yeah. I hope that you will see where I'm coming from. I'm not responsible for what happened.

*Lights fade on Eddie. He exists*

**Kat:** Thank you for your time and patience during this hearing. Have a good evening.

*She smiles feebly and exists. Lights out.*

Scene 14.

*Kat and Sydney’s apartment. Monica sits on the couch typing on her laptop. Pause. Kat walks in. Monica jumps up.*

**Monica:** Hey! Did you win?

*Pause.*

**Kat (trying to keep it together):** It… it… No, I lost.

**Monica:** Oh my God…

*Monica moves and grabs Kat lightly by the shoulders. She leads her to the couch.*

**Monica:** What exactly did they say?

**Kat:** I’m trying to remember, but like I don’t remember all of the words. I was so… so shocked that those were the results. The council said something like… Because they couldn’t prove that I was drunk that they couldn’t prove that I was raped.

**Monica:** But you blacked out!

**Kat:** I know that. And I told Mr. Williams that.

**Monica:** I said the same thing.

**Kat:** But Eddie said he couldn’t tell that I was drunk. He thought I had been drinking, but knew what was going on. That I could still clearly say yes or no.

**Monica:** That’s such bullshit! You can’t trust the school anymore. They just want to keep the number of assaults low, so they can brag to prospective students about how safe they are.

**Kat:** I don’t know.
Monica: No, their biased. They are victim blaming. This happens all the time. They probably asked you what you were wearing.

Kat: Yeah one of the faculty asked, he is like an old accounting professor—

Monica: Fuck him… classic male thinking clothes indicate whether a woman wants to have sex or not.

Kat: Yeah… I mean I guess it was a valid question. For like detail purposes, but…

Monica: It wasn’t… I’m surprised they didn’t ask if you had a boyfriend…

Kat: No, they didn’t… but five people are on the council. They said it takes a simple majority. It was three to two. Three for Eddie and two for me.

Monica: Wow. I thought for sure… That’s so close. If a different person had been on… Who was the swing vote?

Kat: I dunno… probably the Sig Gam who sat on the council.

Monica: You’re shitting me. If a student that’s a woman or… or if I had been on there… god. Eddie would be kicked out of here so fast—

Kat: I know.

Monica: It’s biased, but that doesn’t change what happened.

Kat: I dunno. It just sucks to be raped and then told you weren’t raped.

Monica: Yeah. That… that… I’m so sorry. I should have never left that night.

Kat: It’s okay.

Monica: Fraternities are the worst… (beat). This is the university’s fault. Ya know? They support rape culture by allowing Greek life. They just need to get rid of it all together.

Kat: That’s a little extreme.

Monica: No. It’s not. It is a good idea that—

Kat: Monica! I don’t want to hear it right now. Just stop. You don’t have to get on your soap box every five seconds.

Pause.

Monica: I’m sorry.

Kat: If I had just stayed at home and done my homework. Or not taken as many shots.

Monica: Don’t beat yourself up over what you can’t change.

Kat: If I hadn’t of gone to Title IX, then it would have ended. I’ve been dealing with this for months now. It honestly made it worse.

Monica: It was the right thing to do.
Kat: Yeah… I dunno… I’m more confused.

Sydney enters.

Sydney: Hey hey hey.

Monica jumps up and rushes to Sydney.

Monica: Do not say anything to her.

Sydney (under her breath to Monica): I’m not. I’m not heartless… Kat, do you need anything?

Kat stands up.

Kat: No, I’m just going to go to bed. I’ve had a long day. And honestly, I’m just. I don’t really know what to believe anymore. I… yeah… that’s pretty dramatic, but yeah. Eddie was right. And I was wrong. So. Yeah or that’s what the campus council thinks. Shitty. I’ll talk to you guys tomorrow.

Kat exits.

Sydney: Poor thing.

Monica: They can’t get away with this that easily.

Sydney: Don’t be stupid…

Monica: I can’t believe it turned out this way. Jake: I can’t believe it turned out this way.

Lights fade on the women, and lights go up on Jake and Eddie..

Eddie: I’m grateful. Thank you God. You saved me.

Jake: This is fucking unreal. Dude, I thought you were fucked.

Eddie: Me too, but I guess someone’s watching over me.

Jake: Yeah… maybe.

Eddie: But, dude, Kat—Fuck her. She’s a bitch.

Curtain.
Appendix 6: Feedback Forms from Second Table Read

She Asked for It Table Read Questionnaire
May 5th, 2017

1. Was she raped? Why do you think so?

   No, I think the play makes Eddie’s case much more strongly and follows his experiences more sympathetically.

2. Were the character voices consistent and distinguishable from one another?

   Yes.

3. Did certain points feel like a lecture? If so, which ones?

   Everything Monica said. She had very little character, backstory, or intention beyond making broad blanket statements about the topic. I agree with Jake; I don’t know why Kat hangs out.

4. Do you feel like the characters are well developed? Why or why not?

   Yes
   Not Eddy
   No
   Monica
   Mr. Williams
   I think he could be more formal.
   Jake
   Sydney

5. Do you feel certain points were exhausted? Like a dead horse was being beaten. If so, which points?

   For me, Monica was repetitive, as was Kat. Their experiences and points of view were often reiterated instead of elaborated about or nuanced. Some of the action is redundant and could be streamlined. I wonder about all the scene changes. Twenty scene shifts across five locations — some scenes are only a minute or two long and necessitate a whole shift.

Feel free to add additional comments on the back.

I have a personal aesthetic pet peeve about titles that are full sentences.
She Asked for It Table Read Questionnaire
May 5th, 2017

1. Was she raped? Why do you think so?
   Yes

2. Were the character voices consistent and distinguishable from one another?
   On yes

3. Did certain points feel like a lecture? If so, which ones?
   No

4. Do you feel like the characters are well developed? Why or why not?
   Yes. Everyone displays their different walks in different ways. Brilliant

5. Do you feel certain points were exhausted? Like a dead horse was being beaten. If so, which points?
   No, not at all

Feel free to add additional comments on the back.
She Asked for It Table Read Questionnaire
May 5th, 2017

1. Was she raped? Why do you think so?
   I honestly don't know

2. Were the character voices consistent and distinguishable from one another?
   Yes

3. Did certain points feel like a lecture? If so, which ones?
   There were parts of Monika's lines that felt lecture-y but justifiable so give the character.

4. Do you feel like the characters are well developed? Why or why not?
   I feel that Monika was a strawman feminist, though I do know people who believe those things that she said.
   Overall, yes.

5. Do you feel certain points were exhausted? Like a dead horse was being beaten. If so, which points?
   No

Feel free to add additional comments on the back.
1. Was she raped? Why do you think so?
   
   No. A more reliable source claimed no.

2. Were the character voices consistent and distinguishable from one another?
   
   Yes.

3. Did certain points feel like a lecture? If so, which ones?
   
   Yes - points where Monica was talking about rape and women being victims.

4. Do you feel like the characters are well developed? Why or why not?
   
   Yes. The men start out as the bad guys, and Monica was the "good guy", but pretty much everyone's character developed into much more than that.

5. Do you feel certain points were exhausted? Like a dead horse was being beaten. If so, which points?
   
   Monica got annoying with the title and shit, but I understand how it ties into the plot development.

Feel free to add additional comments on the back.
She Asked for It Table Read Questionnaire
May 5th, 2017

1. Was she raped? Why do you think so?
   IDK \[\rightarrow\] Good Job

2. Were the character voices consistent and distinguishable from one another?
   Yes \[\rightarrow\] Eddie sometimes sounds intellectual \[\rightarrow\] sometimes not

3. Did certain points feel like a lecture? If so, which ones?
   \[\rightarrow\] Monica

4. Do you feel like the characters are well developed? Why or why not?
   Yes \[\rightarrow\] Syndieg

5. Do you feel certain points were exhausted? Like a dead horse was being beaten. If so, which points?

Feel free to add additional comments on the back.
I feel like the characters are well developed. Why or why not?

5. Do you feel like the characters are well developed? Why or why not?

I feel like there's a little too much in the wrong way. Bug's words weren't properly developed. I didn't really get her personality. Leave the phone game.

I feel like Kat could use a little less development. I don't really get her personality. Leave the phone game.

Did certain points feel like a lecture? If so, which ones?

I don't really get her personality. Leave the phone game.

I feel like there's a little too much in the wrong way. Bug's words weren't properly developed. I didn't really get her personality. Leave the phone game.

I don't really get her personality. Leave the phone game.

2. Were the character voices consistent and distinguishable from one another?

Yes. Good job!

1. Was she raped? Why do you think so?

Uh-huh. Yeah.

I got a say, Syd & Call it first. I would to using "rape." Someone you talk from home & try again.

She asked for it. Table Read Questionnaire. May 5th, 2017

It's me, Caroline. Abide lol.
- Kat/Car's argument w/ Syd was good dialogue

I like it's a bit of a stretch for Monica to suggest that Kat would automatically get gang raped

* caroline
1. Was she raped? Why do you think so?

2. Were the character voices consistent and distinguishable from one another?

3. Did certain points feel like a lecture? If so, which ones?

4. Do you feel like the characters are well developed? Why or why not?

5. I think the points being beaten in over are made by if Monica is annoying, just be that way, then she has no story, no purpose, nothing.

I think Eddie's name is too close to the real person's name.

I think Monica's name is too close to the real person's name.

Feeling like this is a lil specific talk.

I can't think of anything worse than this.

"VIBES"
She Asked for It Table Read Questionnaire
May 5th, 2017

1. Was she raped? Why do you think so?
   I don't think so, but it's definitely a gray area.

2. Were the character voices consistent and distinguishable from one another?
   Yes

3. Did certain points feel like a lecture? If so, which ones?
   No. Yes. Little bit of Monica.

4. Do you feel like the characters are well developed? Why or why not?
   Yes. I especially liked how it turned out that both Sydney and
   Monica had their own biases based on their own experiences
   that come out at different points in the play.

5. Do you feel certain points were exhausted? Like a dead horse was being beaten. If so,
   which points?
   I don't think so. I thought the topics were handled
   with enough variety to keep things flowing and fresh.

Feel free to add additional comments on the back.
Appendix 7: Final Draft of IX

IX
Scene 1

Lights up. A bar. Carter and Tripp sit at a high table with high chairs in the back of the bar. Three chairs sit at the table. The distant sounds of bar life—murmuring, clinking bottles, etc.—mix with the shuffling playlist of rap, pop, and rock. Carter is drinking an IPA, and Tripp has a plastic cup with Coke in it. Their cellphones sit on the table.

**Carter:** It's not that big of / a deal.

**Tripp:** Yeah, it is.

**Carter:** You’re making it more important / than it really is.

**Tripp:** Dude, an entire summer spent on the Hill working with Senator Hinton.

**Carter:** Thanks Tripp. But when you’re a senior, you're gonna be even more successful. Guarantee it.

**Tripp (**smiles**): I dunno. I, uh—

**Carter (**interrupting**): Don't sell yourself short, man. You’re a sophomore, and you know more people in this bar than I do.

**Tripp:** Nah.

**Carter (**overlapping**): And you’re philanthropy chair for the fraternity. And didn't you get like something for like SGA this week?

**Tripp:** Yeah, I’m a Campus Senator.
Carter: You're on the way.

Tripp: I’m trying.

Carter: What's the end goal? You want my job?

Tripp: Well… uh… being GLA president would be cool—
Carter: Nah, you're meant for more than just fraternity president. How bout… student body president?

Tripp: I mean, I’ve thought about it.

Carter: That's what I'm talking about.

Tripp (overlapping): But like everything I do can't be a stepping stone for student body pres.

Carter: Why not?

Tripp: Well—

Carter: Like my old man says… “If you’re wanna get ahead, get started.” Plan it out. Start now. Figure out the next moves.

Tripp: Is that what you did?

Carter: Oh yeah, I’ve got a ten-year plan… even twenty years. But when I started college, I had that four-year plan. I wanted to be GLA president like my dad.

Tripp: Hmm…

Carter (overlapping): And I did what I needed to do to get there. Pledge class pres. Philanthropy chair—like you now. Then, I did rush for IFC, and then Pres.

Tripp: And all the honors societies you're in and all that—

Carter: Yeah, yeah, point is… Pick what you want in life and start making the steps now—today even—to get there. You're smart, respected… popular. But you gotta make it happen.

Tripp: Thanks. That… uh… really means a lot coming from you.

Jake enters holding a beer. He has a toothpaste stain by the neckline of his shirt.

Jake (while entering): Dude, Tripp. / (noticing Carter) Oh, hey Carter.

Tripp: Hey man.
Carter (nods): Jake.

Jake (overlapping): Get ready cause Claire’s about to come over here.

Tripp: Oh okay. Cool.

Carter: She’s hot.
Tripp: Yeah, she is. Jake: Oh wait, didn’t you fuck her?

Carter: We hooked up a couple times.

Jake (to Tripp): You hear that? Another reason to worship him.

Tripp: Shut up.

Carter: Is that a toothpaste stain on your shirt?

Jake (looks down): Yeah, I guess. What about it?

Carter: Nothing.

Carter laughs to himself as he drinks his beer.

Jake: What?

Carter: It's… uh. Hygienic. Let's the girls know you brushed your teeth.

Jake (sarcastic): Oh wow… didn't think about that. Worthy President, you're so wise.

Carter: Don't be an asshole.

Jake: I wasn't—

Carter starts getting up.

Carter: Alright boys. Looks like the bar is filling up with underclassmen. I'm gonna close my tab. / See ya. Tripp, eye on the prize.

Tripp: Good talking with you man.

Carter exits.

Jake: What a fucking douche! While you were busy jerking Carter off over here, / I ran into Sydney and Claire.

Tripp: God… he was giving me advice about the frat and—
Jake: Whoa, don’t call it a frat. It’s a fraternity.

Tripp: Sorry.

Jake: You wouldn’t call your country a cunt. Would you?

Tripp: Uh… no. (sarcastic) Can’t argue with that logic.

Jake: Good. Anyway, did you hear me? / Claire-fucking-Fitzpatrick.

Tripp: What?

Tripp: Oh yeah. I’ve been wanting to meet her, man. Think I got a shot?

Jake: You’re about to find out.

Tripp: Great. At least I don’t have stains on my shirt.

Jake: Ha good one. I’ve already fucked Sydney. / So, it doesn’t matter.

Tripp: Aren’t you special? You and the rest of the fraternity.

Jake: Except you.

Tripp: Eh… you might wanna get that shit / checked out.

Jake: Ya know, Claire isn’t a Saint either.

Tripp: Yeah, but Claire is Claire.

Jake: She’s pure enough for you?

Tripp: That’s not… uh… everyone knows her. I dunno. She's a cheerleader—

Jake: Yeah for the worst football team in America.

Tripp: Hey, show some loyalty—

Jake: When five of the best players are suspended and will probably get expelled, then the whole team’s / gone to shit.

Tripp: Gone to shit. I know… I know we've been over this.

Jake: Yeah, well it pisses me off.

Tripp: Right. Probably shouldn't mention it to Claire.
**Jake:** Eh... okay.

**Tripp:** Don't wanna bring up anything too touchy.

**Jake:** Awww... look at you. So thoughtful.

**Tripp:** Dude.

**Jake:** Hey maybe she will like you... you two.... power couple for sure.

**Tripp:** Maybe, I guess / we'll find out.

*Sydney and Claire enter with drinks in their hands. They wear colorful rompers with high heels. Sydney’s romper is strapless, and Claire’s has a v-neck. They are tipsy.*

**Sydney:** Hey hey hey!

**Jake:** Ayyy, there they are. **Tripp:** What's up?

**Sydney:** Sorry drinks took / a minute.

**Jake:** No big / deal.

**Claire:** Hey, you’re Tripp right?

**Tripp:** Yeah.

*Claire goes in for a hug.*

*He hugs her back.*

**Tripp (laughing):** Me too.

**Jake:** Since when?

*Sydney hits Jake’s arm. Claire laughs.*

**Claire:** Good to meet you. I mean I've heard your name before. **Sydney:** Don’t ruin / this.

**Tripp (ignoring Jake):** Yeah... I know who you are. Just never met. **Jake:** Yeah. Fine.

**Claire:** Mmmmm.
Tripp: Pretty sure we follow each other on like—

Claire: You’re… um… @u_must_b_trippin?

Jake: Oh my / God. I told you that's the gayest fucking name.

Tripp: Yeah.

Sydney (to Jake): So? He gets more likes than you.

Tripp (laughing): That’s not important.

Jake: Yeah, it’s not. It’s / about quality over… Never mind.

Sydney: The important thing is that you two finally met. I'm Sydney by the way. I feel like we know each other because of Jake—

Tripp: We’ve met.

Sydney: You sure?

Tripp: Yeah. At the… uh… at the late night last weekend.

Sydney (laughing): I don't remember. Last weekend is less than a blur. So, you met Deedee, my drunk alter ego. I'm sorry for anything she said or did to you.

Tripp (smiling): She seemed fine to me.

Claire: Oh, she's a great time / for sure.

Jake: Yeah, wish she was here.

*Sydney downs her drink.*

Sydney: Buy me a couple more and she'll show up.

Jake (smiles): Vodka cranberry?

Sydney: Absolutely.

They exit. Claire starts to follow them.

Claire (as they exit): You want anything? I know like all the / bartenders. So… free drinks!

Tripp: Nah, I’m good. Thanks though.
Claire: You sure? Stella? Budweiser?

Tripp: I’m good. Wanna sit down?

Claire: Sure.

*They sit down. Their conversation is very flirty.*

Tripp: So… *(Beat)* / Tell me abou—

Claire: Why are you—

Tripp: Oh / sorry my bad.

Claire: Yeah, no you go first.

Tripp: What?

Claire: What were you gonna ask?

Tripp *(laughs)*: Uh… tell me about yourself.

Claire: That’s not really a question.

Tripp: Well, what was yours?

Claire: Why are you sitting in the back of the bar?

Tripp: Uh… it’s quieter. You ever try having a conversation up front?

Claire: Lots of times.

Tripp: Yeah, you’re yelling, and it’s like… so loud. Ya know, this is more… we can actually talk back here.

Claire: Ah, yes.

Tripp: A real conversation. Not being antisocial or anything.

Claire: No for sure. Well then… what do you wanna know?

Tripp: Uh… I’ll start with something easy.

Claire: My favorite.

Tripp: What’s your major?
Claire (smiling): That’s the best you’ve got?

Tripp: I mean, no. But like, it’s why you’re here.

Claire: Oh right. I’m here to get my MRS.

Tripp: Oh… uh, okay… Cool.

Claire (touches his arm): I’m kidding.

Tripp: Ya got me.

Claire: Well, I’m Pre-pharm.

Tripp: Wow, nice.

Claire: My parents own a pharmacy.

Tripp: Oh cool. You like it?

Claire: Now, that’s a hard question.

Tripp: I see.

Claire: It’s okay.

Tripp: Then, why are you doing it?

Claire: Somebody has to take over the pharmacy. And it won’t be my little sister.

Tripp: So, it has to be you.

Claire: Exactly. Over the summer, I worked with Dad for a month, and he started teaching me the business side of things. He was really happy. He kept telling me how proud he was of me… and how I’m “catching on so fast” … and I’m… yeah. I’m happy cause he’s happy. Yeah. What about you?

Tripp: Poli Sci.

Claire: Ah… I figured something like that.

Tripp: I enjoy it.

Claire: I’m not really into politics. But! I did vote for you.

Tripp: Oh yeah?
Clair (sipping her drink): Yeah. You’re one of the only names I recognized on the ballot. Did you get it?

Tripp: Yeah.

Claire: Congrats.

Tripp: Senate should be fun.

Claire: What does Senate even do?

Tripp: Now, that’s a really hard question.

They laugh.

Tripp: Uh… we like write bills and resolutions and stuff. Make suggestions to the university / … stuff like that.

Claire: Sounds really important.

Tripp: Yeah. I mean, the work we do could have a significant impact—

Claire: Um… that’s another joke.

Tripp: Oh. You’re not very good at those.

Claire: I dunno, I think it’s your sense of humor.

Tripp: Oh, definitely not… Uh… knock-knock.

Claire: Seriously?

Tripp: Yeah. It’s a good one. I promise I’m funny. Knock-knock.

Claire: Who’s there?

Tripp: Doris.

Claire: Doris who?

Tripp: Doris locked, that’s why I knocked!

Silence. Then, Claire starts laughing.

Tripp: Told you I’m funny.
Claire: Does that normally work for you?

Tripp: I’ve never told that joke to anyone the first time I met them.

Claire: I’m honored.

Tripp: I break out the dad jokes a couple months in.

Claire: Oh, you’re really putting yourself out there. I like it.

Tripp: Really?

Claire: Yes.

Tripp: Huh. In that case… can I have your number?

Claire (taking his phone): I think I could give you that. (looking at phone). Code?

Tripp: I dunno if we’re ready for that.

Claire: We could be.

Tripp: Yeah?

Claire: Mmmhmm.

Tripp (smiling): 0325.

Claire (typing in his phone): Is that your birthday?

Tripp: Yeah.

Claire (handing his phone back): My sister’s is in March too. / Here you go.

Tripp: Oh nice.

Claire: And I actually gave you my real number.

Tripp: Do you have a fake number?

Claire: No, sometimes if it’s a boy I think is creepy or weird, I just put my number in with like a 4 instead of a 2. So, if they ever ask, I can just be like… Oh, I was drunk… sorry, I must have typed it wrong.

Tripp (smiling): Ah, I’m glad I get the / real thing.
Claire: You’re lucky.  

Sydney (offstage): Yeah… you’re right.

Jake (while entering): I know I am…

Jake and Sydney enter with drinks in hand.

Jake (while entering): The season is gonna be fucked.

Sydney: Yeah, I might not / even get tickets.

Jake: It’s all bullshit anyway. The players got a little out of hand, maybe—

Tripp: Dude, drop it.

Claire checks her phone.

Sydney: It’s kinda hard to when it’s all over the news.

Tripp: He’s been talking about it all day.

Claire (getting out of her seat): The football team investigation?

Tripp: Yeah.

Jake: I know Caroline. She probably was, ya know…

Tripp (rising, to Claire): You know those players from the team, right?  

Sydney: Totally.

Jake gets a text and checks his phone.

Claire: I know them pretty well.

Sydney: Yeah, she knows them really well…

Claire: Shut up, Syd. The whole cheer team loves them, but what the news and the school is saying they did… I dunno. I can’t imagine. They’re nice guys.

Tripp: Let’s just drop it.

Sydney: Yes, let’s.  

Claire: Good idea.

Jake: Alright, cool.

They stand awkwardly for a moment.
Sydney: Besides, we said we’d meet Shelby at Rooftops.

Claire: Oh shit. I forgot.

Tripp: You need a ride?

Jake: Damn.

Claire: No, we can walk. / Thanks.

Sydney: Yeah, but I’m glad we all met. / We should do this again.

Tripp: Me too.

Jake: What’re you getting into next weekend?

Tripp: Ah, yeah. Claire: No plans. Why?

Jake: We got a party at the house next Friday night. GLA’s Annual Back to School Rager. You guys should swing by.

Sydney: Gamma Lambda Alpha, babyyyy. Oh, you know I’ll be there.

Tripp: Claire?

Claire: I’d love to.

Tripp: Great.

Sydney: Thanks for the drinks, Jake.

Claire and Sydney hug Jake and Tripp goodbye.

Jake: Anytime.

Claire: Really nice meeting you.

Tripp: You too.

Sydney: Bye!


Claire waves as she and Sydney exit. Jake checks his phone as he sits down.

Tripp: I got her number.
Jake: Nice. You gonna text her?

Tripp: Yeah, but when?

Jake: Hit her up next Friday.

Tripp (takes a seat): Is that too long?

Jake: Nah. She’ll wonder all week why you didn’t text her.

Tripp: Maybe she’ll think I’m not interested.

Jake: Here’s an ancient Chinese parable for you… The one who cares the least has the most power.

Tripp: That’s not a parable. I think you meant proverb.

Jake: You’re not a parable.

Tripp: What the hell? That doesn’t make any sense.

Jake: Whatever. Don’t be like fucking weird and blow up her phone. Give it time. You already laid the groundwork.

Tripp: Yeah.

Jake: Make your move next Friday. But… she might wanna—

Tripp: I know.

Jake: You know what I’d do, and I respect your “Christian values.”

Tripp: Yeah, you wouldn’t hesitate.

Jake: Hey, do whatever you want, man.

Tripp: Yeah. I mean I’d do everything but.

Jake: Butt stuff?

Tripp: What?

Jake: You said butt.

Tripp: No, I meant / like but, the conjunction.
Jake: I’m just fucking with you.

Tripp: Good one.

Jake: She’s curvy as fuck.

Tripp (sarcastic): What about the curve that really matters?

Jake: Her ass?

Tripp (smartass): No, her smile.

They laugh.

Jake: Shut the fuck up, man.

Scene 2

Claire’s and Sydney’s apartment. A kitchen counter stands stage left. A couch sits next to the door stage right. Sydney enters stage left and texts as she speaks. Claire follows. She sets her phone on the kitchen counter.

Sydney: I’m already like thirty minutes late. But I / mean what’s new.

Claire: Can you please just—

Sydney: It’s been three days.

Claire: Yeah, but—

Sydney: Moral hangovers should / last as long as the regular ones.

Claire: It’s not a moral hangover! I’m trying to figure out what happened to me.

Silence.

Sydney: Okay… I get where you’re coming from. Trust me. But… look on the bright side. At least you didn’t have to deal with some awkward sex with a rando… Gah, the worst. It was just drunk sex.

Claire: I, uh—

Sydney: Hear me out, okay?

Claire (sighs): Okay.
Sydney: Like almost always, drunk sex is so much better than sober sex. For one… you don’t have to deal with the sounds. Like you know how uncomfy a… a queef can be?

Claire: I hate that word.

Sydney: Whatever. Weird sounds coming out of your… your (motions to her crotch) ya know… it can totally ruin the moment. And two… you don’t have to make eye contact with the person. I mean… fuck all that romance bullshit. Sometimes it’s just sex. And… and, uh… three! Like the next day… you’re sober and… and it’s like you didn’t even have sex with them the night before. There you are in… in your full hungover glory, lying in a stranger’s bed. And you don’t have to kiss them! Or shower with them. I mean… not unless you want to. It’s over. Done… you didn’t do anything with him that morning, right?

Claire: No. I got out of there.

Sydney: See? (Beat) Every year GLA’s Back to School party always ends in shambles. Not sure what I did myself.

Sydney’s phone rings.

Claire: It… I dunno. It was different. That party… I shouldn’t have gone.

Sydney: No, you’re just being extra hard on yourself. (answering) Hey, I’m walking out the door. Be there in five. (Beat) K… see you soon! (sighs) I gotta go. It’s Dollar Beer Night.

Claire: Right.

Sydney goes to Claire and gives her a hug. Claire sits in it for a moment then returns the hug.

Sydney: You’re amazing. Boys suck. Tomorrow, I don’t want to see you pouting, okay?

Claire: Okay.

Sydney: Yay!

As Sydney walks to the door, she texts on her phone. Monica comes through the door with a backpack and grocery bags.

Sydney: Monica! We’ve discussed this. Knock! At least!

Monica (sarcastic): I am so sorry.

Sydney (to Monica): It’s fine. Love on her for me, okay? / Bye! Claire, you’re the best!

Monica: Okay.
Sydney absently slams the door behind her. Monica puts the bag on the kitchen counter.

Monica: She still goes out on a Monday night. Wow. Living with her has got to be… I couldn’t handle it. (looks at Claire). How are you?

As Monica speaks, Claire sits down on the couch.

Claire: I’m okay. Just still sorting it out.

Monica: It takes time.

Claire: Yeah.

Monica: But! I got the notes from our English discussion. And I texted Tim, and he gave me some notes from your Organic Chem lab. He said you can use them for the online portion, but you probably shouldn’t miss class tomorrow. If you need to though then… uh... yeah. I also picked up some Oreos. I know this is your comfort food.

Claire (gratefully): You didn’t have to do all of that.

Monica (bringing the Oreos to the couch): It’s the least I could do.

Claire: Did you get any milk?

Monica: Shit (gets up). I can run down to / Whole Foods and get some.

Claire: It’s not a big deal. Please, stay.

Monica: Yes, of course.

Claire (grabbing an Oreo): I only really like the filling anyways.

Monica: Me too.

A brief silence as they eat their cookies. Monica subtly smiles and laughs to herself.

Claire: What?

Monica: Do you remember the first time we did this?

Claire: Ate cookies and felt sorry for ourselves?

Monica: Yes.

Claire (thinking): Uh… years ago. High school? Something tragic must’ve happened.
Monica: It was sophomore year. After I caught my dad cheating on my mom with that twenty-year-old, Mom kicked him out.

Claire: Yeah, I remember now.

Monica: On the night he left, you came over and brought a pack of these. You said, “I eat these when I’m sad.”

Claire: Then, your mom joined us. We ate the whole pack.

Monica: Yeah. (Beat) Fuck him. Wherever he is. I still cannot get over him. Following his… his lust after that… God, she was a child. He is so fucking… primitive. He chose sex over the loving relationship he had with my mother… I don’t know. (Beat) Sorry, this is… yeah. / Not important.

Claire: It’s fine.

Silence. Monica smiles.

Monica (remembering): Oh, Dr. Gibson sent us an article to read before class Wednesday.

Claire (sarcastic): Great.

Claire gets up and goes to the kitchen counter and grabs her cell phone to check her email.

Monica (while eating an Oreo): The article has something to do with transcendentalism and… and the impact on American literature. And we have to read some Whitman poems. He sent the links to them. I thought this class would be… be effortless, but I guess not. It’s fucking hard for a Gen Ed.

Claire: Shit. Gah, / shit… fuck.

Monica: What is it?

Claire (anxious): I got this email—

Monica: From whom?

Claire (growing more agitated): Here. Read it. It’s… it’s from some guy at the school. Williams or something. The Title IX… whatever.

Monica: Coordinator.

Monica silently reads the email.
Claire (losing her cool): Yes! He knows what happened with Tripp. (Beat) What the hell?! I haven’t told anybody! How does the fucking university know about it? / Oh my God…

Monica: I reported the incident.

Silence.

Claire: What?

Claire moves to the couch and snatches her phone from Monica. She reads again.

Monica: You know I had to report the incident.

Claire: No, you didn’t!

Monica (overlapping): Yes, I did. I told you. I am a Responsible Employee. I am required by the university to report any sexual harassment or violence that I either observe or directly hear about.

Claire: I’m not one of the freshmen that lives in your dorm!

Monica: My duty to report extends beyond my position as an RA.

Claire (pointing at her phone): I can’t believe you… GAH! Now, this guy wants me to come into his office and… and talk with him about it?

Monica: You should—

Claire: But I don’t even—

Monica: Listen to me. / You need to go to his office.

Claire (to herself): I can’t believe this is happening. This shouldn’t be happening to me.

Monica: Claire!

Claire: What the fuck Monica!?

Monica: What? Do not get mad / at me for doing my job!

Claire: Oh my God, you fucking… What the hell!

Monica: Listen—

Claire: You just had to go and make me a part / of your… your whatever…

Monica: Listen… LISTEN TO ME!
Silence.

Claire: What.

Monica: When I picked you up from the fraternity house the next day, you did not want to go to the clinic to get a rape kit. All you wanted was a shower and to feel clean again. I respected that, even though you should have gone to the clinic. But this… reporting to Title IX… I could not ignore. (Beat) Tripp took advantage of you. You were drunk, and he saw that and did what he pleased without having your consent.

Claire: But I didn’t want this getting out!

Monica: Sydney knows. I know. And Mr. Williams knows. Nobody else. And as the Title IX Coordinator… his job is investigating sexual assaults that occur on campus. He is bound by confidentiality, and he will get to the bottom of this.

Claire: I don’t know.

Monica: What don’t you know? You skipped class today. Your experience with Tripp is clearly affecting you. You know, Title IX prevents sex based discrimination, and rape… that is the worst form.

Claire: I’m trying to put the pieces together—

Monica: It is harming your mental health. If you keep skipping class, they can help you be able to retake the class.

Claire: I’m still trying to figure this whole thing out!

Monica: Mr. Williams will help you do that.

Silence.

Claire: I don’t know.

Monica: You keep saying you don’t know but… you have to go. Think about how many other women this has happened to on this campus. Tripp has a reputation—

Claire: He doesn’t.

Monica: I’ve heard he picks up drunk women and offers them a ride, but insists the GLA house is closer, and then, they wake up in his bed the next day.

Claire: He doesn’t… well—
Monica: I know for a fact he has done way more than kissing with drunk women. And that’s assault.

Claire: Why haven’t you reported those then?

Monica: Because those accounts are just rumors.

Claire: Hmm.

Monica: Think about all the others who could fall victim to Tripp. You could stop this. (Beat) And oh my god, everything with the football team. You saw the video of those players gang raping that woman. They just took their turns with her while she was unconscious. What if more of his fraternity brothers walked in at the party?

Claire: GLA isn’t like that.

Monica: You know what they say GLA stands for. “Even if you don’t want it, ya Get Laid Anyway.”

Silence.

Monica: Tripp could get expelled just like those football players. Fraternity “men” and athletes are entitled assholes. You can show him that he cannot act like that around here and get away with it, but only if you go to Title IX.

Silence.

Monica: What are your hesitations?

Claire: I’m just going back and forth between… I dunno.

Monica: What are you thinking?

Claire: I… uh… (Beat) Well, I mean… Tripp… he didn’t make me drink, ya know. I chose to take those shots. I made that choice. So, it’s my fault that / I drank too much.

Monica: No. No, men cannot… You should be able to drink as much as you want and know that you will be safe… that nothing will happen to you. Just like Jake and Carter do.

Claire: But still / I made…

Monica: Your drunkenness does not give someone the right to have sex with you!

Claire: I know! But! I’m confused. Because… cause I… I made the choice to get fucked up and I don’t wanna like… blame him for a decision that I made—
**Monica:** You did not make the conscious decision to have sex with him. That is the only decision that matters.

_Silence._

**Monica:** Hey, what is it? / Talk to me.

**Claire:** Look, I feel like I’m losing control of this entire situation. And… and I want to feel in charge of my own fucking life.

**Monica:** Then talk to Mr. Williams.

---

**Scene 3.1**

_An office. Mr. Williams sits at his desk and writes. He has pens, a legal pad, and other office supplies on his desk. A semi-comfortable chair sits in front of the desk. A clock and a calendar hang on the wall. The clock ticks. A knock is heard at the door which faces the audience._

**Mr. Williams** _(_jolting his head up_)_: One second.

_He arranges the items on his desk neatly though the desk appears clean. He lets out a breath._

**Mr. Williams** _(_standing up_)_: Come in!

_Claire enters. She wears a sweatshirt over her outfit._

**Mr. Williams:** Lillian Claire—

**Claire** _(_smiling feebly_)_: Hi… um, it’s just Claire.

**Mr. Williams:** Oh yes, Claire. How are you?

**Claire:** I’m okay. Tired. Haven’t really slept that much.

**Mr. Williams:** I understand. _(Beat) As you know I have received a report—_

**Claire:** Yes.

**Mr. Williams:** Before we start, I need to ask… do you want to pursue the formal process?

**Claire:** What do you mean?

**Mr. Williams:** Do you want to officially file a complaint with the Title IX office?

_Short silence._
Claire: I uh... yes, I want to talk about what happened. Hearing about other... other victims... I want to speak out. For them. (Beat) And for me.

Mr. Williams moves back towards his desk.

Mr. Williams: Very well. Lilli (sighs)... Claire, please take a seat. I need to hear your statement.

Claire (sitting down in the chair): Yes.

Mr. Williams nods. He grabs his legal pad and settles in his seat and begins to write.

Mr. Williams: I need to make some quick notes.

Claire: Okay.

Short silence as he finishes writing.

Mr. Williams: Claire, I want you to be as detailed as you can be. I am the fact-finder for the investigations, so please do not leave any details—people, or words spoken, or places—please do not neglect the details.

Claire: I understand.

Mr. Williams: Well, first, a basic question, what happened between you and Edward Butler—

Claire: Who?

Silence as Mr. Williams looks at a note on his desk.

Mr. Williams: Ah, yes, I see. (pointing to note). His file said... “goes by Tripp.” Well then, what happened between you and Tripp on Friday, September 2nd?

Claire: Uh. Well, we—like me, Monica, and Sydney. We were about to go to the fraternity house...

Silence.

Claire (holding back tears): I can’t do this Mr. Williams.

Mr. Williams sets his pen down.

Claire: It’s too hard. I blacked out. I don’t remember all of it. I... I can’t... remember the details. Just how I felt. How he made me feel. How what he did me made so... so... upset. That’s all I can remember...

Silence.
Mr. Williams: Yes, I understand. This can be difficult. But if you want to file a complaint, I need your statement.

Claire: The details. They’re… They’re fuzzy. I mean… I blacked out.

Mr. Williams: That is not uncommon.

Silence.

Mr. Williams: Another person’s word and account of the evening—in this case, Monica’s statement—is not enough to file a complaint. You, as the complainant, the person who has potentially been sexually assaulted, must provide the foundation for a case. That is if an incident of harassment or assault has occurred.

Claire: If assault occurred?

Mr. Williams: I will need to hear your statement and Tripp’s statement. I will talk to witnesses… maybe even examine texts and calls… to determine whether sexual harassment or an assault has occurred.

Claire: But I think it might of.

Silence.

Mr. Williams: After thoroughly investigating, I will reach a conclusion… a conclusion based on evidence. If a Title IX violation may have occurred, then the campus council, the decision-makers, will determine the sanctions, if any. (Beat) May we start again?

Claire: I… uh… yes.

Mr. Williams: Your statement begins the process. If you do not want to do this, you have the choice. You do not have to not make a statement… Or we can continue. I am here to help you. (Beat) Claire?

Claire: I felt violated and manipulated… and… and I want to figure everything out.

Mr. Williams picks up his pen.

Claire: I was studying before we… me, Monica, and Sydney… we were gonna go to the fraternity house…

Scene 3.2

The lights change as Claire gets up from her chair and moves from the office and into the apartment. Party music begins to crescendo. Claire removes her sweatshirt to reveal a cami or other top a woman would wear to go out. Sydney who is dressed to go out enters from the stage.
left entrance holding flash cards and a red Solo cup with a bendy straw. She reaches the kitchen counter and sits on its edge. Claire reaches under the kitchen counter and pulls out a handle of vodka and two solo cups. She moves in front of Sydney sitting on the counter. Sydney reads the flash cards. They are already tipsy.

Sydney: Compounds with different molec… molecu—

Claire: Molecular.

Sydney: That. (laughs) Structures, but the same formula.

Claire: Isomers.

Sydney (flipping card over): Right.

Claire: Next.

Sydney shuffles to the next card.

Sydney (reading the card): In a chemical reaction, a substance—

Claire: Inhibitor!

Sydney (overlapping): That speeds up / the reaction.

Claire: Dammit! Catalyst.

Sydney: You didn’t even let me finish. You know what that means?

Claire: Shot. Sydney: Shot.

They laugh as Claire pours the shots.

Claire: We might wanna slow down. I haven’t eaten since… I dunno. 11:00.

Sydney: Save the calories for alcohol. To science and shit!

They take the shots.

Sydney: As long as you keep getting these wrong… best drinking game ever.

Sydney pulls out her phone and begins to text.

Claire: Yeah… I’m startin’ to feel it. No more.

Sydney: Fine. You’re the only person I know who studies on a Friday night anyway.
Claire: I have a quiz.

Sydney: I can’t believe you have a quiz already on like… what? The third week of school?

Claire: Yep.

Sydney: My marketing professors haven’t given us shit.

Claire: Lucky.

Sydney: Yeah. You make the drugs, and I’ll sell ‘em.

Claire: You gonna be a drug dealer?

Sydney: I mean… selling my Adderall during finals week… definitely a skill.

Claire (laughing): You’re not wrong. (Beat) Where’d you put the mixers?

Sydney: Mini-fridge.

Claire: Gotcha.

_During the following conversation, Claire moves behind the kitchen counter and reaches down to open the mini fridge. She pulls out some orange juice and sets it down. She grabs some ice, drops it in her Solo cup, and makes herself a drink._

Sydney: Where’s Monica?

Claire (checking her phone): She said, “On my way,” like ten minutes ago. So, soon-ish.

Sydney: Gah. Why does she have to come with us?

Claire: Because. I double booked. I said I’d hang out with her, and I said I’d go to the GLA party.

Sydney: Right. And you can’t miss the party.

Claire: Yeah.

Sydney: So, she’s gonna ruin it for everyone.

Claire: No.

Sydney: I dunno.
Claire: Be nice.

Sydney: She’s different. Did you read her article?

Claire: Yeah, that’s just her. Investigative journalism, as she calls is. She’s trying to point out a problem on campus.

Sydney: But makes people like us look bad.

Claire: I guess.

Sydney: You could just drink wine and listen to vinyl or whatever the / fuck she does instead.

Claire: No, I wanna go. It’ll be fine.

Sydney: And I know why! Has Tripp texted you?

Claire: No.

Sydney: Shut up, you’re lying.

Claire: He hasn’t. I don’t care though.

Sydney: Damn, that boy needs to make his move. (Beat) Carter will probably be there.

Claire: Fuck Carter.

Sydney: He’s… I dunno… not again.

Claire: Not after last time.

*Monica opens the door and enters.*

Monica: Hey—

Sydney: Whoa, Monica. Knock at least?

Monica: Sorry.

*Claire crosses to Monica and gives her a hug.*

Claire: Hi sweet friend!

Monica: Hi!

Sydney: Okay, we’re all here. Lemme call a ride.
Sydney uses the Uber app on her phone.

Claire: (to Monica) Do you want anything to drink?

Claire moves to the mini-fridge.

Monica: Yes. Do you have any Cab?

Short silence. Sydney laughs.

Claire (looking under the kitchen counter): Probably not. I have Coke Zero… OJ. Uh… Some Bacardi. And—

Monica: Rum and coke is fine.

Claire: Great.

Claire pulls out two Solo cups with the Bacardi and Coke Zero. During the next conversation, she makes Monica a drink.

Sydney: Okay, last check. How do I look?

Sydney does a little spin.

Claire: You look hot.

Sydney: Should I wear this? Or maybe my new top, ya know / the black one.

Claire: That top’s cute.

Sydney: I know!

Monica: Well, how do you feel?

Sydney: I feel… like I look… pretty fucking good.

Monica: You’re still talking about how you look. Do you feel confident or empowered?

Sydney: I’m already confident. / How many heads can I turn? That’s the real question.

Claire: She is.

Monica: Dressing yourself for yourself is important. You shouldn’t dress for the approval of others. Clothes aren’t an outward indication of your desire to be noticed.

Silence. Sydney glares at Monica.
Claire: You look really great Sydney. I like your outfit. Very uh… bold… choices.

Sydney: Thank you.

*Sydney’s phone rings.*

Sydney: Ah. It’s Jake. I gotta take this. *(answering phone)* Hi, hi! Yes, we’re waiting for our ride.

*She exits.*

Claire: Thank you so much for agreeing to go.

Monica: You’re welcome.

Claire: I didn’t mean to make both plans.

Monica: I understand. I’m going because I love you.

Claire: Aw, love you too! Next weekend, just us. I promise.

Monica: Yeah, I would like that.

Claire: But you used to always come to parties with me. So, it shouldn’t be—

Monica: That was first semester of freshman year. Now, we are juniors… not really my scene.

Claire: Some last year too.

Monica: I guess. *(Beat)* You and Sydney are sorority sisters, so I get that this is your thing with her.

Claire: And our thing is… talking shit in coffee shops.

Monica: When was the last time we did that?

Claire: Uh… I see you all the time.

Monica: In the one class, we have together.

Claire: I’m sorry. I—

Monica: It’s okay! I’m not angry.

Claire: Thank you.
Monica: I get it. People change. You’re more like Sydney now, and—

Claire: What’s that mean?

Monica: You like to go out, and drink… go home with strangers.

Claire: Whoa, are you slut shaming me?

Monica: NO. I do not slut shame. / That’s how you spend your weekends.

Claire: Well, you and Brandon have been dating for like a month and you do it all the time—

Monica: Are you slut shaming me?

Claire: No. I’m just saying. / You spend all your time with him.

Monica: Okay, thank you.

Sydney enters. An awkward silence between Claire and Monica. Sydney goes to the counter and begins pouring generous shots.

Sydney: Our ride’s here. One last shot everybody.

Monica: I’m not finished with my—

Sydney: Chug it.

Claire: I need another for the road.

Claire starts mixing herself a drink

Monica: Maybe I should… well, I have some work that I need to do.

Claire: No. Please, we want you to come.

Monica: I—I don’t know if—

Claire: We can leave after a bit and go to Rooftops and just talk.

Monica: I would like that.

Sydney passes out the shots.

Sydney: Here. Bottoms up bitches!

They knock back the shots.
The women exit out of their apartment with cups in hand.

Scene 3.3

Lights go up on the fraternity house as they move from the apartment into the fraternity house. Party music shifts to rap music. Tripp and Jake, play cornhole on the back deck. Christmas lights hang overhead. A makeshift bar sits stage left. Claire is drunk at this point in her account.

Sydney: Hey boys!

Jake: Ay! Wassup? Welcome to / the Rager of all Ragers.

Tripp: Hey, Claire. (to Monica as he extends his hand) And you are?

Monica: Tripp, we’ve met at least five times.


Monica: Monica.

Tripp: Right.

Jake: You ladies need a drink?

Sydney (snapping fingers): Uh, bartender? Claire: That’d be great.

Tripp: I gotcha.

Tripp moves behind the bar.

Monica: What do you have?

Tripp (looking under the bar): Uh… Burnett’s, Fireball, Malibu, uh…

Jake: Why do we have shitty liquor?

Monica: Yeah, not my favorites. Tripp: Because you buy shitty liquor.
Sydney: Fireball shots!

Jake: Sure. Monica: No. Claire: Okay!

Tripp: Coming right up!

Monica: Fine.

Carter enters.

Tripp: Carter!

Carter: Hey, what up, what up?

*Carter and Tripp throw each other the GLA secret handshake. Tripp finishes the shots.*


Claire: Yeah.

Carter: You guys having a good time?


Carter: DJ’s pretty badass. / Tripp, lemme grab you for a second.

Monica: Cool.

Tripp: Yeah. For sure. Lemme pass these out.

*Tripp comes around the bar and hands Jake, Sydney, Claire, and Monica their shots.*

Jake: My man. Monica: Thanks.

Claire: Cheers.

Sydney: Where’s yours?

Jake: Against his religion. Tripp: I’m good.

Claire: Very respectful.

Carter: Hey, buddy, a word?

Tripp: Right, sorry.
Tripp and Carter talk quietly upstage.

Claire: Toasts?

Sydney: To rich dads!

Jake: To hot moms!

Claire (laughs): Okay! Monica: Oh my god.

They knock back the shots.

Jake (to Monica): You got a problem with that?

Monica: The toast? / Kind of juvenile. But…

Jake: Yeah.

Claire: Hey—

Jake: Ha! You’d probably toast to what… women’s rights?

Sydney: She would. Monica: You don’t even know me.

Jake: Yeah, I do. Monica Leake. I read the school paper.

Monica: Oh. You do?

Jake: Every morning while I eat my Frosted Flakes.

Monica: Impressive. Sydney: I’m a Froot Loops kinda girl.

Jake: Your article on the football players this week… that was… something else. I tell you what.

Monica: What? Does the truth bother you?

Jake: I wouldn’t call that the truth. That’s why it’s in the opinion column.

Claire: Hey, guys. Monica, he’s / drunk.

Monica: I can—

Tripp and Carter finish. Carter moves to Claire. Tripp moves in to diffuse the conversation.
Jake: You said... that there is an, an epidemic. I think that’s what you said. A problem on this campus... “Plaguing” everyone. 1 in 5 college women? Bullshit.

Monica: Yes. 1 in 5 are victims—

Tripp: What’s she saying? Don’t mind it.

Monica: I mind—

Jake: I don’t need / you to defend me.

Tripp: Dude, chill. Ignore her.

Jake: Whatever.

Monica: No, I want to discuss—

Tripp: Hey, don’t cause any trouble, okay?

Monica: Okay, fine. I... I was not trying to start anything.

Silence.

Jake: Looks like Carter’s trying to steal your girl.

Tripp turns.

Claire: Maybe another time.

Carter: Suit yourself.

Tripp: Hey Carter, don’t you need to go work the door or something?

Carter: Yeah, yeah. Don’t burn the place down.

Sydney (passing Claire a drink): Here. Take this.

Claire: Please.

Carter stumbles out, and Claire takes the drink. Now, Claire is very drunk. The lights begin to dim.
Sydney: I’m drunk.

Jake: Ha! There it is. The sorority girl mating call.

*Tripp, Claire, Sydney, and Jake laugh.*

Sydney: If you’re lucky.

Monica: Okay, Claire. I am… eh, really uncomfortable. I want to leave. Can we leave?

Claire: What’s wrong?  
Jake: Good.

Tripp: Don’t mind him.  
Sydney: Claire’s staying.

Monica: No, I… do not, yeah… I—

Claire: What’s wrong?

Monica (to Claire): Just call me later.

*Monica exits.*

Claire (calling after her): But we just got here and—

Sydney (grabbing Claire by the arm): Let her leave. Please.

Jake: Yeah, why are you even friends with her?

Sydney: Be glad she’s gone.

Claire: We’ve been friends forever.  
Tripp: Guys leave her alone.

Jake: Yeah, yeah. Let’s finish the game. You ladies know how to play cornhole?

Sydney: Don’t you just try to get the thing in the hole?  
Claire: Not really.

Tripp: Basically.

Jake (laughs to himself): The thing in the hole. I’ll help you…

Sydney: You sure about that?

*Jake leads Sydney over to his cornhole board. He grabs a bean bag and begins to instruct Sydney how to toss the bean bag.*
Tripp (to Claire): How ya been?

Claire: Good.

Tripp: Yeah. Sorry, I haven’t texted you. Just… been really busy.

Claire: It’s cool, no big—

Tripp: Yeah, thanks. Hey, why don’t we get outta here? Go someplace quiet to talk?

Claire: I… kinda… maybe we could play the… the game…

Tripp: I suck at cornhole.

Claire: Oh.

Tripp (grabs Claire’s drink hand): We could go somewhere else—

Claire spills her drink on his shoes.

Claire: Oh shit. I / didn’t mean to. Accident.

Tripp: No worries. Just my New Balances.

Claire: Sorry.

Tripp: I can change. My room’s upstairs.

Sydney tosses the bean bag and it lands short of the opposite cornhole board.

Sydney: I’m wayyy too fucked up for this shit.

Jake: Wanna check out the DJ? Tripp: Come to my room.

Sydney: You know it. Claire: I, uh… well.

Jake: You guys coming?

Tripp: Nah, we’re good.

Jake: K.

Sydney (as they exit): Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do!

Tripp: Come on.
Tripp grabs her by the arm and leads her to his bedroom. Lights fade on the fraternity house and light up his room. There’s a bed with a small bedside table downstage of the bed. Cheap, plastic drawers are under the bed. A desk lamp sits on the table. Muffled sounds of party life can be heard, especially the drowned-out bass of the rap music.

Claire (tripping as she enters and slurring): Oh shit. Am / I this drunk? I swear…

Tripp (grabbing her forearm): Whoa… (laughs) Watch your step. That Fireball will do it to ya, huh?

Claire (incoherent mumbling): Uh…

Tripp (puts his keys on the bedside table): What?

Claire: I need to sit. Didn’t you drink?

Tripp: Just Coke.

Claire sits on the bed. The lights cut out. Claire has blacked out. Blackout for three seconds. The muffled sounds of party life and rap music continue through the blackout. Lights cut back on. Claire’s shoes sit on the floor below the bed. She is sitting on the bed still, but Tripp stands right in front of her and holds her hands.

Claire: So, why don’t you drink?

Tripp: Staying sober is a big deal. I DD for my friends. Sweet, right?

Claire (giggles): So… uh.

Tripp: You seem nervous?

Claire: What’s this—

Tripp: Come on. I know this isn’t your first time doing this. I’m not an idiot.

Tripp, still standing at the foot of the bed, spreads her legs, moves in between them and kisses her on the lips. She holds the kiss. Then, she shifts out of his embrace.

Tripp: You look so… God, you’re hot.

Tripp aggressively pushes her down on the bed.

Claire: Stop it—
Lights cut out. Claire blacks out again. Blackout for five seconds with continued muffled party sounds and music. Then, only the light of the desk lamp illuminates the scene. The lamp shines on a shirtless Tripp. Tripp is on top of Claire. She’s on her back.

**Tripp (undoing his belt buckle):** Gah… I want you…

**Claire:** No just—

Lights cut out. Blackout with continued sounds. Then in the darkness, with a crescendo, Tripp breathes in a sexual manner.

**Claire (mumbling):** Fuck.

Scene 3.5

Lights cut back on. It’s morning. Tripp is gone. Claire wakes up. She’s groggy. She’s only wearing a bra. She looks around.

**Claire:** Oh my God. What even… Shit.

Claire reaches under the covers. She pulls her pants back up. She hops out of the bed. She finds her phone in her pocket still.

**Claire (sighs):** Good.

She grabs her shoes on the floor at the foot of the bed. She starts texting. She finds her shirt on the floor by the bed. She doesn’t want to wear the same shirt out the next day. She moves to the plastic drawers and grabs a pocket tee. She throws it on. She paces. She makes a phone call.

**Claire:** Pick up… pick up… (Beat) Goddammit Syd.

She paces the room. She starts to cry.

**Claire:** Oh my God… Oh my God…

She dials another number. She waits as it rings.


She hangs up, takes a moment, and moves to the door. Lights fade on the bedroom.

Scene 3.6
She enters the office and sits back down, now in the same outfit she had on before she left the office.

Claire (softly crying): I… I… (sighs)

Silence. Mr. Williams finishes his notes, looks up, and stares intently.

Claire (pulling herself together): I don’t even think he had a condom. But I’m on birth control, and… I… took care of it.

Silence. Mr. Williams writes.

Mr. Williams: How many drinks did you have?

Claire: I don’t know maybe six… seven?

Mr. Williams: Do you recall giving Tripp clear consent to engage in sexual activity?

Claire: (long pause): No.

Mr. Williams: Is there anything else you want to tell me?

Claire: No that’s it.

Mr. Williams: Alright then. Who would you like to be the witnesses for your statement?

Claire: Monica and Sydney. That’s it.

Mr. Williams (as he writes): Thank you. I will be contacting Tripp and issuing the standard no-contact policy. The two of you communicating—or members of your parties communicating directly or indirectly—will be prohibited.

Claire: Thank you. I already blocked his number.

Mr. Williams: In addition, retaliation of any kind will not be tolerated.

Claire: I understand. Monica explained it to me.

Mr. Williams: Then, in the meantime, I encourage you to contact the Counseling Center. The cost is covered in your tuition… (writing on the back of a business card) here is their information… if you want to contact them. And… (handing her the card) I put it on the back of my business card.

Claire: Thank you.
Mr. Williams: And you may also report to the authorities, if you wish to seek a criminal investigation.

Claire: Whoa… okay. Slow down. This is a lot. Uh… I don’t… I don’t want to send him to… to jail. Just… yeah.

Mr. Williams: I understand.

Claire: Uh… yeah. (Beat) What’s gonna happen to Tripp?

Mr. Williams: I will need to hear his statement—

Claire (overlapping): Like if he gets in trouble.

Mr. Williams: Oh. The Campus Council chooses the sanctions which range from community service to suspension or even expulsion, and if expelled, the reasoning will not go on his transcript.

Claire: Oh… gotcha.

Silence.

Mr. Williams (standing): Well, if you do not have any further questions, you may go.

Claire: Okay.

He walks with her towards the door.

Mr. Williams: I will contact you as we progress in your investigation.

Claire: Thank you.

Claire gets up and walks towards the door. She exits. Mr. Williams closes the door. He lets out a sigh. He stares at the floor for a moment. He sits back at his desk and begins to write. The lights go out.

Scene 4.1

This scene takes place between the bedroom and then the apartment. Lights up. Tripp sits in his bed on his laptop. Tripp’s phone dings and he checks it. He is a little let down as he replies. He goes back to typing. Carter pops his head in.

Carter: Hey, you got a minute?

Tripp: Uh… yeah.
Carter: Gotta cancel our philanthropy meeting tomorrow. Some stuff came up with class. I got a project due.

Tripp: Oh, damn.

Carter: Just swinging by and figured we could talk about it now, if that's cool.

Tripp: Yeah, man.

Carter: You good? Is this a bad time?

Tripp: Nah, I'm fine. It’s cool.

_Carter comes in and sits on the trunk. Tripp texts._

Carter: Great. I got class at 1:00 anyways, so gotta be quick. What do you have planned for me?

Tripp: This is what I'm working on now.

Carter: Oh, then why did you want to meet?

Tripp: Just to like talk about the event and stuff. I mean… we got time. It's in the spring.

Carter: Yeah, but it's the biggest event of the year man. GLA duking it out with another fraternity on the football field with… ya know, the sororities on the sidelines cheering us on… and all for charity. One of our biggest traditions that takes outreach and coordination with different groups… all that stuff. Ya gotta start planning now.

Tripp: Right.

_Tripp’s phone dings twice._

Carter: Someone’s popular.

Tripp: Nah, just expecting something. Sorry.

Carter: Ohhh nice. Who is it?

Tripp: It's not a big deal. So, I figured our first plan of action is sponsors. So, here’s a list of the one’s I found. And—

_Phone dings again._

Tripp: Sorry, lemme put it on silent.

Carter: Dude, who is it?
Tripp: It's Jake.

Carter: That's who's making you so nervous?

Tripp: No.

Carter: I know. I'm just messing with you. Who is she?

Tripp: It's not a… uh… she isn't texting me.

Carter: Oh… you can talk about it with me if you want.

Silence.

Tripp: I'm uh… I dunno. Like I thought she would reply to me. But she did once and now won't. And she isn't replying to anything else I've sent. And I'm worried that… I dunno, maybe, she doesn't like me. Or something's weird. She's being weird. Like avoiding me.

Carter: What did you do?

Tripp: Nothing. Everything was… cool. It seemed like normal and… and the feelings were mutual. I dunno.

Carter: Hmmm…

Tripp: I feel kinda bad… like not that I did something wrong. Just… um, kinda strange… about the… yeah, uh… Can I ask you something?

Carter: Sure. Shoot.

Tripp: Do you ever feel guilty after you hook up with a girl?

Carter: That's just your Catholic guilt.

Tripp: I'm not Catholic.

Carter: Never mind. What are you?

Tripp: Non-denominational.

Carter: Ah, should have known. Wait, what do you mean by hook up?

Tripp: Like sex.
Carter: You never know. You have to clarify these days. Well… uh, depends on who it is. And how hungover I am. \(\text{laughs}\) I mean I don't feel great about it sometimes, but for the most part, I like it. It’s casual. Do you not like it or something?

Tripp: No, I don't really know how I feel about it. It’s uh… just—

Carter: I used to be like you… beating myself up over every single thing that—

Tripp: I’m not beating myself up.

Carter: Yeah, you are. I see it in your face. Sometimes you have to live life on your own terms. No offense to your faith, but… you gotta… define what’s good and bad for yourself. You hooked up with a girl? So?

Tripp: Yeah. I mean I’m not as upset about what happened as much as I thought I might be… but like… she’s ignoring me. That’s what’s so frustrating. Like… did she just use me? For one night for some reason? \(\text{Beat}\) It kinda meant something to me… because I’m… it doesn’t matter.

Carter: Well, fuck her… whoever she is. \(\text{Beat}\) You didn’t do anything wrong. She just isn’t that into you… uh, yeah. I hope that helps.

Tripp: Yeah… yeah… I'm sorry I didn't mean to like get into this with you. I know you've got shit to do and… yeah. We can talk about the event planning and all that stuff later.

Carter \(\text{checks watch}\): Yeah, I gotta get to class. But dude. Don't worry about that. I've hooked up with people and then haven't spoken to them the next day. Or week. Or ever again. It's not that big of a deal.

Silence. Carter gets up to leave.

Tripp: She blocked me on all her social media.

Carter: Damn… that's uh… damn.

Tripp: I like her. And I thought she did too, but I guess not. I'm kinda… I don't mean to unload this on you.

Carter: It's no big deal, but we really gotta put a pin in this.

Tripp: Right.

Carter: Wait, you never told me who she was?

Tripp: It's not big deal. Get to class. Hey, thanks for talking with me.

Carter: No prob, but I could be a better help if you tell me who it is.
Tripp: She’s younger than you, so I dunno.

Carter: This happened at the Back to School party?

Tripp: Uh, yeah.

Silence.

Carter: Is it Claire? I mean you were hanging with her when I came in. (Beat) Isn't it?

Tripp: Uh… yeah, but, I dunno...

Carter: What?

Tripp: I thought that you didn’t really talk as much. I heard that it wasn’t a thing anymore.

Carter: It's cool. Don't sweat it. She's not my girlfriend. Never was. Never will be. So, I can't say shit to you.

Tripp: I guess.

Carter: I heard some guys downstairs talking about it, but I didn't really pay attention.

Tripp: Are you mad?

Carter: No, dude. It's not a big deal. You’ve got my blessing. But uh… watch out for Claire. She likes to play games. And it sounds like you're pretty attached. I got some stories about her that would make you… damn, you wouldn’t believe some of the shit. Anyways, see ya round.

Carter exits. Tripp gets his phone and begins to look at his messages. A puzzled look crosses his face.

Tripp: Holy shit…

Tripp calls Jake.

Tripp: Jake… I just got an email from the Title IX office.

Scene 4.2

Lights go up on Claire’s apartment. Claire enters from the stage left entrance. She goes to the kitchen counter to set her phone down. She reaches under the counter and pulls out a cereal box and a bowl. The phone begins to ring. She ignores the call.

Claire (to herself): Ugh…
She sets her phone down stage left of the bowl. She begins to pour the cereal and sets the box stage right of the bowl on the edge of the counter. She reaches under the counter to grab some milk from the mini fridge. When she comes back up, her phone rings again. She grabs her phone.

Claire (to herself): Not now, Monica.

While looking at the phone, she sharply turns to go towards the couch. She knocks the cereal box over, and it spills all over the floor.

Claire: Fuck!

She screams and begins to break down. She goes to her hands and knees. She’s crying as she picks up the cereal. Sydney enters.

Sydney: Do you think smoking in public is tacky?

Short silence.

Sydney: Claire? I / asked you… wait, what are you doing on the floor?

Claire (trying to compose herself): Yeah? Sorry, what?

Sydney: You’re on the floor. Why?

Claire: Oh, I spilt / the cereal.

Sydney: Oh, pick it all up. Anyway, do you think smoking in public is tacky?

Claire: I… uh, I dunno.

Sydney (overlapping): Because Margaret saw hanging one out the window while driving down Sorority Row. And she texted me and said… uh, “I do not condone that behavior in my sorority.” Well, I don’t condone the stick up your ass… Margaret.

Silence. Sydney gives Claire a questioning side glance.

Sydney: Whatever. I might get sent to Standards. So… yeah. (Beat) I would make the worst Standards Chair… That’s why you bitches elected me T-shirt Chair.

Sydney laughs. Silence. Sydney walks over to her on the floor.

Sydney: Claire? Hey. Earth to Claire.

She snaps her fingers.

Claire: Sorry. I’m just… tired.
Sydney: You’ve been off for the past couple weeks.

Claire: Like I said / I’m pretty tired.

Sydney: You’re going out for Becca’s 21st? Right?

Claire: No. I’m—

Sydney: Come on! The whole pledge class is going! *(she begins pulling her up)* Come on. Get dressed, get drunk… kiss a cute boy.

*Claire jerks her arm away.*

Claire: That’s the last thing I want to do.

Sydney: Okay… I’m just trying to help you get your mind off things… Hey, it’s been long enough. It’s time to take a shot and move on.

Claire: This isn’t over yet.

*Claire gets up from the floor and puts the cereal in a bowl.*

Sydney: You went to the Title… whatever… like what? Two weeks ago?

Claire: But you haven’t gone. / And I don’t think—

Sydney: Wait, why would I have to go?

Claire: Syd, you’re a witness.

Sydney: Excuse me?

Claire: You have to give your testimony.

Sydney *(suppressing anger)*: You sure about that?

Claire: When was the last time you checked your email?

Sydney *(pulling out her phone)*: I dunno, earlier this… maybe, hold on.

*Silence as she reads.*

Sydney: Now, you’ve dragged me into this.

Claire: I didn’t mean / too, but I need your help.
Sydney (reading): “Ms. Sydney Hartford, I am contacting you in regards... blah, blah, blah... Please report to my office and give a statement as a witness...” What? Are you fucking kidding me? (continues reading). “… to properly and thoroughly understand... blah, blah, blah...” Oh my God!

Claire: I need you to do this for me.

Sydney: I supported you when you went. I did... But! I didn’t agree with it because... uh, I know you only went because Monica... God... if she hadn’t of blabbed to the school about it. (Beat). Jake and Tripp are gonna kill me.

Claire: You care about them more than me?

Sydney: No! I just... I... I didn’t want to have to deal with this!

Claire (sarcastic): Thanks for being such a good friend.

Claire gets up.

Sydney (overlapping): Hey. I’m worried. I’m worried that you’ll be the girl who cried rape.

Claire: Why would you say that?

Sydney: Because you’re acting like you didn’t know what happened to you!

Claire: Well, I don’t remember—

Sydney: So, you’re saying you were raped, / but you don’t remember what happened?

Claire: I’m saying... that what happened to me wasn’t okay.

Sydney: How can you say anything if you don’t know what—

Claire: I talked to Mr. Williams. I’m trying to figure out—

Sydney: But still! If you don’t know what happened, you can’t say / something happened.

Claire: You can’t say... that—

Sydney: What can’t I say—

Claire: OKAY! Fine. Stop! (Beat) I may not remember all the details... between us in his room... but... I do... I do remember the next morning. That’s what I keep going back to. I tried calling you.

Sydney: Well, it was like 7:00 or something. So still asleep.
Claire: It’s fine… But I was sad… so sad… I woke up with that… that soreness. (Beat) It’s… there’s nothing else like it… the next day when your uh… the feeling something has… has … that the night before someone had sex with you. And this time… God, it fucking hurt. Syd… do you know what’s that like? Huh?

Sydney: I mean… uh…

Claire (overlapping): The feeling when you… wake up the next morning in a stranger’s bed, and the first thing you notice is the pain… and… and you immediately know what caused it. But you’re not sure who caused it. Or… or why? Because you know you didn't want to. (Beat) It's the pain that I remember… and knowing that someone was inside my body… that I didn't let in… or… or want in. (Beat) That’s what I remember. Oh God… (sighs) It wasn’t until later I realized what Tripp might have done.

Silence.

Sydney: Okay… I’ll be a witness.

Lights go down on the apartment.

Act II.

Scene 5.1

Mr. Williams writes at his desk in his office. A knock on the door. He checks the neatness of the items on his desk.

Mr. Williams (standing up): Come in!

Tripp walks into the office carrying his backpack.

Mr. Williams (walking around the desk and extending his hand): Hello, Edward—

Tripp: Tripp

Mr. Williams: Yes, Tripp. I am glad you could make it today. I am Mr. Williams, the person facilitating and overseeing—

Tripp: Yeah, yeah, I know. I remember the email.

Mr. Williams: Of course. (turning towards his desk).

Tripp (overlapping): Uh, before we start, what exactly am I doing here? Like… I mean I know why I’m here, but… but… because if this whole thing is what I think it is, then yeah. I’m confused.
Mr. Williams: I have received a complaint from another student—Claire Fitzpatrick—that you have potentially violated Section II, Subsection C of the Campus Code of Conduct which states… that “The University prohibits sexual misconduct of any kind including assault, harassment, abuse, or discrimination.” So, you are the Respondent to the complaint, and to determine whether an assault occurred, I need to hear your statement from the night of—

Tripp (nervously): Wait? Am I under criminal investigation or something?

Mr. Williams: No, well, not now.

Tripp: Not now?

Mr. Williams: The Campus Police have been notified of the occurrence, which is strictly protocol. If—I’m not saying that it will—if something like this would occur again associating you, the University Police should know, but Claire has not pressed charges. However, per university policies and by requests of the Complainant, I will investigate to decide whether there is a case before Student Conduct can address the issue. If evidence is found supporting the incident, then the Office of Student Conduct will have a hearing to determine who—

Tripp: Like if I’m guilty.

Mr. Williams: No, if you’re responsible. Guilt is determined in a court of law, not here.

Tripp: Hmmmm. And do you already think I’m responsible?

Mr. Williams: I am trying to determine if an incident occurred, and you have the right to an impartial investigation.

Tripp: (sarcastically cool) Right. Right. Innocent until proven guilty. I mean… responsible until proven irresponsible. Wait… Never mind. (Beat) This whole situation is… it’s caused me and my family a lot of stress. I feel attacked.

Mr. Williams: You are entitled to feel that way.

Tripp: I’m coming in here to clear my name. To straighten this thing out. Look, she… she wanted to… to do it. I mean… she asked for it.

Silence.

Mr. Williams: We should get started. You can take a seat.

Tripp: Okay.

Mr. Williams walks back around his desk and sits. He clears his throat. Tripp sets his backpack down and sits in the chair. Mr. Williams picks up his pen and begins to write.
Mr. Williams: I need to take some notes before we start.

Tripp: Aren’t you going to record this or something?

Mr. Williams: I will take notes and type a report later.

Tripp: Okay.

Mr. Williams: (leaning back to a sitting position). Tripp, I want you to be as detailed as possible. Do not leave any details—times, people who interacted with you both—do not leave the details out.

Tripp: Sure. Yeah.

Mr. Williams: Well, then… what happened between you and Ms. Claire Fitzpatrick on Friday, September 2nd?

The lights begin to change.

Tripp: Jake and I were playing cornhole at the fraternity house…

Tripp stands up and moves towards the door.

Scene 5.2

Rap music begins to play. He untucks his polo. The lights fade on the office and illuminate the fraternity house. Jake stands holding a Natty Light in one hand and tossing a bean bag up and down in the other. Tripp grabs a drink from the bar and stands opposite of Jake at his cornhole board.

Jake: And that’s when she’s like—

Tripp: When are they getting here?

Jake: (sigh) I dunno, I’ll call Syd. (Beat) Ay. What’s up? (Beat) You guys comin still? Nice. (Beat) Yeah, Tripp’s here… Oh, right… He is dying to see her too. (to Tripp) Claire wants to see you. (to the phone) Anyways, yeah… we’re outside, ya know where the cornhole—yeah you do. You basically live here… Great. Alright. Bye. (Beat) They’re waiting for their ride.

Tripp: Nice.

Jake: Like I was saying before you interrupted me—

Tripp: Sorry.
Jake: That’s when she’s like, “Hey, let’s go back to my place.” And I was like, “Fuck yeah.” We leave the bar, and we’re like… barely walking. I’m so fucked up… (Beat) Hey, dude, your turn.

Tripp: Oh yeah.

Tripp picks up his bean bags and tosses all four as Jake speaks. He misses them.

Jake: So, we get a cab and are like making out and shit. And… like, uh, the driver was feeling uncomfortable. Ya know how they like… awkwardly try not to look, but they probably are checking you out in the rearview… Ha! You’re sober and still suck.

Tripp: Shit. Just finish your story.

Jake: We’re making out. We go to her room. She starts like grabbing my dick and shit—


Jake: It’s like you’ve heard this before.

Tripp: Same song, same dance, different partner.

Jake: Eh… this one was a little different.

Tripp: Oh yeah?

Jake: Like straight porn star shit… dude she was… like straight out of… Hot Blonde Coed Needs Big Cock In Her Mouth.

Tripp: Sounds real special.

Jake: And they say that shit is fake!

Tripp: I mean, it’s not like… animated.

Jake: Unless you’re into that.

Tripp: Yeah. Well, she sounds like a real winner.

Jake: You judging me?

Tripp: No, let he without sin cast the first stone.

Jake: Seriously? Cut the Jesus shit.

Tripp: I’m not! It’s your life do what you want / or who you want.
**Jake:** And that’s exactly what I’m gonna do.

*Slight silence.*

**Tripp:** You said they’re on the way?

**Jake:** Yeah, they should be… What’s up with you?

**Tripp:** I dunno… Just nervous.

**Jake (laughs):** You’re such a pussy sometimes. Isn’t it my turn? What’s the score?

**Tripp:** 5 to 20.

**Jake:** Damn. That bad?

**Tripp:** Have I ever won?

**Jake:** True. Lemme get another beer before I beat you.

**Tripp:** Can’t wait.

*Tripp picks up his bean bags. Jake moves to the bar to get a beer.*

** Jake:** You text her?

**Tripp:** Nope.

**Jake:** Atta boy!

**Tripp:** I’m playing it cool.

**Jake:** Good. Tonight… what’s your plan?

**Tripp:** I’m gonna talk to her.

**Jake:** Well, duh. I mean, like take the walk to first base, or go all the way for home?

**Tripp:** Honestly, if she wants to… It’ll be hard for me to say no.

**Jake:** Holy shit! You serious?

**Tripp:** I’m just saying… the temptation… is, yeah. I’d be lying if I said I didn’t want to.

*Jake pats him on the back. Tripp shoves him off.*
**Jake:** What! This is huge! In my two years of knowing you, you’ve only said you were going to save it for your wife. To do the good Christian thing.

**Tripp:** That’s it though. I dunno… I’m kinda / questioning everything right now.

**Jake:** Just take a break from church. That’s what I’m doing.

**Tripp:** I don’t think it works that way.

**Jake:** Dude, it’s college. It’s not the time for… ya know, thou shalt not fuck random bitches. I mean I haven’t been struck by lightning. When you’re out of college and married with kids and shit, you can do the church thing again.

**Tripp:** But… I dunno if it’s right… or, or even… the right time.

**Jake:** You think I thought that at 15 when I lost it in a pool house?

**Tripp** (*laughs*): Hell no.

**Jake:** Blair threw that party just to get with me!

**Tripp:** Sure, keep telling yourself that.

**Jake:** Hear me out. There’s never a “perfect time” to do it. You just gotta get it over with. The first time… it’s not supposed to be this magical moment. It’s like… like ripping off a Band-Aid. Just nut up and do it. The quicker you get it over with, the better it’ll be. Cause like… you don’t know what you’re doing. Or how long you’ll last. So, the first time is always awkward as shit. And you’ll never be a good fuck unless you practice… and I don’t mean in the bathroom with a box of tissues. You gotta get some real pussy. (*Beat*) Tonight, Tripp… dude. It’s gonna happen. Take Claire back to your room, put on the moves, and boom. Fuck her.

*Short silence.*

**Tripp:** I dunno.

**Jake:** Let’s get you laid, dude.

**Tripp:** I’m just gonna let what happens… happen, I guess.

**Jake:** I can tell you this… your dick won’t fall off.

**Tripp:** I know that!

**Jake:** Fucking somebody isn’t going to ruin your life.

**Tripp:** Yeah, I guess you’re right.
Jake: Yeah, I know. Oh, last piece of advice.

Tripp: Yeah?

Jake: No means yes. And yes means anal.

Tripp: You’re such an idiot.

*The women enter. In Tripp’s account, Sydney and Monica have Solo cups and appear tipsy. Claire doesn’t have a Solo cup and appears sober.*

Sydney: Hey boys!

Claire: Hi. Jake: Ay! Wassup?

Tripp: Hey, Claire. / (to Monica) I’m Tripp, I think we’ve met before… You’re Mon—

Jake: Welcome to the Rager of all Ragers.

Monica (*she extends her hand*): Monica. Yeah, once or twice.

Tripp: Good to see you again. Jake: Who’s that?

Sydney: She just said.

Tripp: That’s Jake.

Jake: What’s up? / You ladies need a drink?

Monica: Monica.

Sydney (*snapping fingers*): Uh, bartender? Claire: Sure… why not?

Tripp: I gotcha.

*Tripp moves behind the bar.*

Monica: What do you have?

Tripp (*looking under the bar*): Uh… Malibu, Fireball, Burnettts, uh…

Jake: Why do we have shitty liquor?

Monica: Yeah, not my favorites. Tripp: Because you buy shitty liquor.

Sydney: Fireball shots!
Jake: Sure.          Monica: No.          Claire: Okay!

Tripp: Coming right up!

Monica: Fine.

_Carter enters._

Tripp: Carter!

Carter: Hey, what up, what up?

_Carter and Tripp throw each other the GLA secret handshake. Tripp finishes the shots._


Claire (quietly): Yes.

Carter: You guys having a good time?


Carter: DJ’s pretty badass. Tripp, lemme grab you for a second.

Monica: Cool.

Tripp: Yeah. For sure. Lemme pass these out.

_Tripp comes around the bar and hands Jake, Sydney, Claire, and Monica their shots._

Jake: My man. Monica: Thanks.

Claire: Cheers.

Sydney: Where’s yours?

Jake: Against his religion. Tripp: I’m good.

Claire: Very respectful.

Carter: Hey, buddy, a word?

Tripp: Right, sorry.
Tripp and Carter move downstage. Jake, Claire, Sydney, and Monica discuss upstage by the bar. They have their conversation from Scene 3.3

**Tripp:** What’s up?

**Carter:** Not much. You sober?

**Tripp:** Yeah.

**Carter:** Dumb question.

**Tripp:** You good?

**Carter:** Eh… You know this is my last house party.

**Tripp:** Yeah, last house party as pres?

**Carter:** Yep.

**Tripp:** Damn. I didn’t realize that.

**Carter:** Senior year sucks.

**Tripp:** Well, we have formal and date parties—

**Carter:** I’m supposed to be sober and making sure nobody fucks anything up too bad. *(laughs)* Well, I’m not.

**Tripp:** Oh.

**Carter:** People started passing me handles… and saying… saying “It’s your last party.”

**Tripp:** Going out with a bang.

**Carter:** I need to work the door… or I dunno, something. *(Beat)* Can you keep an eye on things?

**Tripp:** Absolutely.

**Carter:** I really can’t have… God. / My last… fuck. No.

**Tripp:** No. Yeah, I get it. I’ll keep a look out.

**Carter:** You’re the fucking man.

*Tripp and Carter finish and move towards them at the bar. Carter moves to Claire. Tripp moves in to diffuse the conversation.*
Jake: You said... that there is an, an epidemic. I think that’s what you said. A problem on this campus... Plaguing everyone. 1 in 5 college women? Bullshit.

Monica: Yes. 1 in 5 are victims—

Tripp: Don’t mind Jake. He’s being an ass.

Monica: No, I do mind.

Jake: I don’t need / you to defend me.

Tripp: Dude, chill. Lay off the drinks.

Jake: Whatever.

Monica: No, I want to discuss—

Tripp: I understand, maybe not now though.

Monica: Okay, fine. I... I was not trying to start anything.

Silence.

Jake: Looks like Carter’s trying to steal your girl.

Tripp turns.

Claire: I’m not interested.

Carter: Suit yourself.

Tripp: Hey Carter, aren’t you going to work the door or something?

Carter: Yeah, yeah. Don’t burn the place down.

Carter stumbles out. During the squabble, Sydney has drank a lot more. Claire appears sober.

Sydney: I’m drunk.

Jake: Ha! There it is. The sorority girl mating call.

Tripp, Claire, Sydney, and Jake laugh.
**Sydney:** If you’re lucky, Jake.

**Monica:** Okay, Claire. I am… eh, really uncomfortable. I want to leave. Can we leave?

**Claire:** What’s wrong? **Jake:** Good.

**Tripp:** Don’t mind him. He’s drunk. **Sydney:** Claire’s staying.

**Monica:** No, I… do not, yeah. It’s…

**Claire:** What’s wrong?

**Monica (to Claire):** Just call me later.

*Monica exits.*

**Claire (calling after her):** But we just got here and—

**Sydney (grabbing Claire by the arm):** Let her leave. Please.

**Jake:** Yeah, why are you even friends with her?

**Sydney:** Be glad she’s gone.

**Claire:** Sometimes she’s…. never mind. **Tripp:** Guys leave her alone.

**Jake:** Yeah, yeah. Let’s finish the game. You ladies know how to play cornhole?

**Sydney:** Don’t you just try to get the thing in the hole?

**Claire:** Not really.

**Tripp:** Basically.

**Jake (laughs to himself):** The thing in the hole. I’ll help you.

**Sydney:** You sure about that?

*Jake leads Sydney over to his cornhole board. He grabs a bean bag and begins to instruct Sydney how to toss the bean bag.*

**Claire:** Hey.

**Tripp:** What’s up?

**Claire:** Nothing. Um. How ya been?
Tripp: Uh… Good. How bout you?

Claire: Pretty great.

Tripp: Yeah. Good.

Claire: Good. Haven’t heard from you lately, or—

Tripp: Sorry, I haven’t texted you. Just been… just been really busy.

Claire: It’s cool, no big deal. I get it.

Tripp: I’m sure you’ve been busy too.

Claire: Like you wouldn’t believe.

*Short silence.*

Claire: Nice shoes.

Tripp: Oh yeah?

Claire: Hey, um… you live in the house, right?

Tripp: Yeah.

Claire: Let’s go to your room.

*Sydney tosses the bean bag and it lands short of the opposite cornhole board.*

Sydney: I’m wayyy too fucked up for this. Tripp: Uh… Yeah, sure.

Jake: Wanna check out the DJ? Claire: I’d like that.

Sydney: You know it.

Jake: You guys coming?

Claire: Nah, we’re good.

Jake: K.

Sydney (as they exit): Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do!

Claire: Come on.
Scene 5.3.

Tripp’s small dimly lit bedroom. The same muffled sounds of party music and party life can be heard through the walls. Tripp and Claire enter the room.

**Tripp** (*tripping as he enters*): Oh shit.

**Claire** (*grabbing his forearm*): Watch out

**Tripp**: Yeah, there’s a step up there, / I always miss it.

**Claire** (*laughs*): That Fireball will do it to ya, huh?

**Tripp** (*tossing his keys on the bedside table*): Well, no.

**Claire**: What?

**Tripp**: I didn’t drink.

**Claire**: Oh, sure.

**Tripp**: No, I really—

**Claire**: When I got here—

**Tripp**: No, it—

**Claire**: You had Jack and Coke, right?

**Tripp**: No Jack.

**Claire**: What?

**Tripp**: Just Coke.

**Claire**: Oh, I just assumed / that was in your cup.

**Tripp**: No. Just plain, regular Coke.

**Claire**: So, why don’t you drink?

**Tripp**: For one, it’s illegal. I’m not 21.

**Claire**: I guess.
Tripp: Staying sober is kind of a big deal in my family. This might be like too much... but, yeah. I’m open about it... My grandad died of liver cancer. A couple years ago actually. So... like kinda scared to abuse it... And I DD for my friends. It’s a good thing to do.

Claire: You’re sweet. I like that.

Tripp: You’re sweeter. (Beat) Damn... That was so lame.

Claire (laughs): No, don’t. It’s cute.

Tripp: I’m sorry... it’s...

Tripp smiles and looks down at the floor. A brief pause passes between them. The muffled sounds of the party continue.

Claire (smiling): I make you nervous.

She reaches her hand out and grabs his hand. She starts pulling him towards the bed.

Tripp: I’m not nervous! (Beat) I know this isn’t your first time doing something like this. So, I guess I don’t want to look like an idiot.

They both sit on the bed.

Claire: You don’t look like an idiot.

Tripp: Thanks.

Claire: No problem.

Tripp: You look so... uh—

Claire: Tripp—

Tripp: Like I’m glad you came to the party.

Claire: What do you like?

Tripp: What do you mean?

Claire: About me?

She puts her hand on his thigh. With each compliment, Tripp moves closer and closer to her mouth. She begins to lean back slowly until she is lying on her back.

Tripp: What’s not to like?
Claire: Yeah.

Tripp: Your blue eyes.

Claire: Hmmm…

Tripp: Your laugh.

Claire (giggles): That’s sweet.

Tripp: You’re a cheerleader.

Claire: Go team.

Tripp laughs. Short pause.

Tripp: God… you’re so hot.

Claire: Stop it. Quit teasing me.

Tripp now hovering over her, goes in for a kiss. After a short kiss, they launch into a make out. She starts grabbing the back of his head. She puts his hands on her thighs. He moves them up. The bass of the music can be heard over the other muffled sounds like a beating heart. Tripp pulls back. They stare at each other briefly.

Claire: Get the lights.

Tripp gets up. He goes to turn out the overhead light by the door. The stage goes dark. The desk lamp gives the only light and shines on Claire’s body on the bed.

Claire: Hurrrrryyyy.

Tripp jumps back on the bed again. They make out again. She moans. Claire takes off Tripp’s shirt. Tripp grabs a blanket from the bed to cover them. The blanket should rest around their waists. Their waists and below should not be seen, but their chests exposed. Tripp takes off her cami. She wears a strapless bra. He kisses up her stomach.

Tripp (undoing his belt buckle): Gah… I want you…

Claire: No just let me do it. Let me take them off.

She undoes his belt buckle. He kisses her neck as she slides his pants off.

Claire (breathy): Hey.

Tripp (breathy): Hey.
Claire: Fuck me.

Short silence.

Claire: Come on…

Tripp: Uh… okay.

Claire: You’re a virgin. (Beat) Aren’t you?

Tripp: Yeah, but I want to… to do this with you

Claire: Then do it.

He pulls the blanket over them.

Tripp: Wait. Shit. I don’t have a condom.

Claire: I’m on the pill.

Tripp: Good, I’ll pull out. Just to make sure. If that’s cool.

Claire: Yeah… Just do it… Fuck me.

Lights fade out.

Scene 5.4.

In the darkness, the music and party noises fade as the lights fade back up. Tripp rests propped up on his arm staring at her. It’s early the next morning. Claire doesn’t move.

Tripp (whispers): Hey… (Beat) Claire?

Silence. He gets out of bed wearing his boxers. He finds his pants and polo from the night before and pulls them on. Claire stays sleeping.

Tripp: Claire?

She doesn’t respond. He stands over her and kisses her on the cheek. He smiles and exits.

Scene 5.5.

The lights fade on the bedroom and fade back up on the office. As Tripp moves, he tucks his polo back in. Tripp enters and sits down in the chair across from Mr. Williams.

Tripp: When I came back, she was gone… and I’m pretty sure she took one of my shirts.
Mr. Williams: Where did you go?

Tripp: I went to get coffee from the kitchen.

Mr. Williams: Why do you think she left?

Tripp: I had no idea. Didn’t want it to be awkward… I dunno. I texted her the next day. (pulling out his phone and reading the messages). I said, “Hey. Had fun last night. Sorry I missed you this morning.” She replied and said, “Hey! So, so sorry. I made breakfast plans and was running really late. I had a good time too!” Then, I said, “What are you up to later? Maybe we could hang.” And she didn’t reply. Now I think I know why.

Silence.

Mr. Williams: Would you mind turning in those messages for evidence?

Tripp: Sure. Those are the only texts between us.

Silence.

Mr. Williams: Does that conclude your statement?

Tripp: Yeah, I guess so.

Mathew: Just to be sure, you did not drink anything at all?

Tripp: How many times do I have to… sorry, yes, like I already said… I was the only sober one out of Sydney, Monica, and Carter… Jake and Claire. I… I… Okay, Claire said she wasn’t drunk. I don’t know what she’s like when drunk. I barely know her. But it doesn’t matter. She said yes.

Mr. Williams: Did you think she was drunk?

Short silence.

Tripp: No. She seemed completely fine to me.

Mr. Williams (writing): How many drinks did she have?

Tripp: I don’t know. Why do you keep asking me stuff like this?

Mr. Williams: Tripp, legally, if a person is incapacitated due to alcohol or drugs, he or she cannot give consent.

Tripp: She said, “Fuck me.” That sounds like consent to me.
Mr. Williams: Consent is an affirmative agreement through clear—I want to reiterate that—through clear action and words to engage in sex.

Tripp: How is “Fuck me” unclear?

Mr. Williams: Incapacitation—the inability to determine who, when, why, or what is going on—excludes a person from giving consent. If she was incapacitated, then, she cannot be clear.

Tripp: How can you prove that she was… was incapacitated then? Do you have her BAC?

Mr. Williams: That is why I am investigating. Besides, blood alcohol content is a subjective measurement. Did you see her stumble or any other sign of outward drunkenness?

Tripp: No, she wasn’t drunk.

Short silence as Mr. Williams writes. Tripp stands up.

Tripp: So, am I good?

Mr. Williams: Well, I will talk to Sydney, Jake, Carter, and Monica and hear their statements on the evening.


Mr. Williams: I have to investigate.

Tripp (angrily): How long is this going to go on? I didn’t do anything… look, I didn’t rape her!

Mr. Williams: Once again, I am not accusing you of rape—

Tripp: Yeah you aren’t right now, but what about when I leave? Hey. I told you all of this to clear my name. To show you that I was innocent.

Mr. Williams: Well, there is a process that—

Tripp (in frustration): I don’t care about the process!

Silence.

Mr. Williams: Tripp, thank you for your statement as the Respondent. Once I have conducted a thorough investigation, I will determine if student conduct will have a hearing.

Silence.

Tripp: I should have had a lawyer.
Mr. Williams: Well, a lawyer could only advise you. You are allowed to have an advisor, but they cannot speak on your behalf.

Tripp: So… what’s the point?

Mr. Williams: To advise.

Tripp: Are you gonna say that I “assaulted” her?

Mr. Williams: I am not going to “say” anything. I am the fact-finder, so I am going to decide by using acquired evidence whether a case—

Tripp: That’s not answering my question.

Silence.

Mr. Williams: I do not affirm whether a sexual assault occurred. I compile the information and deem the incident as having the potential to be an assault.

Tripp: The potential?

Mr. Williams: If there is room to believe that an assault has happened, I will present it to Student Conduct and the Campus Council who will ultimately decide.

Tripp: Beyond a reasonable doubt, right?

Mr. Williams: Well, no. Student Conduct uses the preponderance of evidence standard.

Tripp: What is that?

Mr. Williams: It is the burden of proof.

Tripp: By how much?

Mr. Williams: It means, “More likely than not.” If 50.1% of the evidence falls in your favor, then you will have the preponderance of evidence—

Tripp: I got it. I got it. So, 50.1%... 50.1 versus 49.9. A 0.2% difference. A slim margin that I… it’s 0.2% more likely that I raped her?

Mr. Williams: Yes.

Tripp: You’ve got to be kidding me… are you serious? That’s so unfair. Did you or Student Conduct decide that?

Mr. Williams: Based on standards from the Department of Education, our institution dictates the burden of proof. We have used preponderance of evidence since 2011.
Tripp: If this happened before 2011, I might not even be in trouble. Is that what that means?

Mr. Williams: I cannot answer that, but regardless, the university is responsible for having a proper channel for members of its community to report sexual misconduct.

Tripp: Report it… *(laughs)* You’re trying to be like the police or something! The cops probably wouldn’t even have taken Claire seriously!

Mr. Williams: I am not a cop.

Tripp: You’re acting like it… investigating as if I committed a crime.

Mr. Williams: No, if you violated the Student Conduct Code—

Tripp: Rape is a crime! How do you even have the power to do this?

Mr. Williams: The Department of Education.

Silence.

Tripp: This is ridiculous… I’m innocent. And that’s the truth.

*Tripp gets up and heads for the door.*

Mr. Williams: Wait, Tripp. Before you go—

*Tripp stops and turns slightly.*

Tripp: What?

Mr. Williams: I need to go over one more thing, will you please take a seat?

Tripp: What is it?

Mr. Williams: I want to talk about the retaliation policy. Would you mind? *(Mr. Williams nods towards the seat).*

*Tripp sits back down in the chair.*

Tripp: Yeah?

Mr. Williams: Retaliation against Claire, Monica, or Sydney, or anyone else associated with the filing of Claire’s complaint is strictly prohibited.

Tripp: What do you mean?
Mr. Williams: Any adverse action like intimidation, stalking, or anything intended to harm Claire will not be tolerated. You cannot send her hateful messages or make a hateful post on social media. Your fraternity cannot prevent her from coming to any open events. If you think that it might be retaliation, do not do it. Your friends are expected to follow this as well.

Tripp: Don’t worry. I’m not trying to get in anymore trouble.

Tripp gets up and heads for the door.

Mr. Williams: Thank you. I will be in touch.

Tripp: Alright… uh, have a good day.

Tripp exits. Mr. Williams sighs. He begins to rearrange stuff. He looks at the clock on the wall. The clock ticking is the only sound heard. Tripp slams the door. Mr. Williams looks around for a minute and flips through his notes. He lets out a sigh.

Scene 6.1

This scene will occupy three spaces on the stage at one time. Mr. Williams’ office, the fraternity house, and Claire’s and Sydney’s apartment. First, the fraternity house. Jake is playing cornhole by himself. Carter enters.

Carter: Have you seen Tripp anywhere?

Jake: No.

Carter: Damn.

Jake: Why?

Carter (interrupting): Hey, you’re pretty good friends with him.

Jake: Yeah.

Carter: I need to figure out what the fuck is going on.

Jake: About?

Carter: Apparently some shit went down at our Back to School Party.

Jake: Oh yeah.

Carter: You were there.

Jake: You too.
Carter: Tripp’s been wanting to meet up, but I haven’t had time.

Jake: He probably wants your advice.

Carter: Okay… so, Claire is an OKP.

Jake: Right.

Carter: Her chapter advisor called our chapter advisor who just called me. Claire was uh… harassed, maybe. Some of her sisters have been talking about it… I dunno, I asked some other OKPs if they’ve heard anything other than Sydney talking about it. What exactly went down with Claire and Tripp?

Jake: I figured you talked to him already.

Carter: No. Like I said… I haven’t had time. Last time we talked… like had a real conversation… was like maybe… two-ish weeks ago? He said everything was cool with her, but she was ignoring him… which didn’t seem like a big deal.

Jake: Yeah… it’s big deal now. He said we might have to go talk to the school.

Carter: For what?

Jake: Like for Title IX.

Carter: Fuck.

Jake: Ya know, the thing that makes women’s basketball important. / The sports thing.

Carter: I know what it is. Sexual assault too.

Jake: Yeah, I figured that out.

Carter: I haven’t gotten an email.

Jake: I did, you’ll probably get it soon.

Carter: An investigation isn’t good. Ya know, I don’t know the guy that well, now that I think about it. I just know about him. Would he do something like this?

Jake: Hell no. Tripps a good guy.

Short silence.

Carter: I’ll just go vouch for his character, I guess.
Jake: That was my plan too. Vouch... for... yeah. Tripp’s a good guy.

Carter: This is just like the normal basic bitch making up shit cause she feels bad about drinking too much.

Jake: For real.

Carter: And I know Claire. There’s a reason I quit texting her.

Lights go down on the fraternity house and up on the office.

Scene 6.2

Monica sits across from Mr. Williams.

Monica: We grew up together. She lived next door. I mean we’ve drifted, but... she is my... my, well, oldest friend.

Mr. Williams: So, you have obviously been to a party with her before?

Monica: I have. Yes.

Silence. Mr. Williams writes.

Mr. Williams: Have you seen Claire drunk before?

Monica: Many times.

Mr. Williams: On September 2nd, did Claire seem drunk to you?

Monica: Yes, she was drinking.

Mr. Williams: How many drinks did she have?

Monica: She had... well, probably three or four drinks.

Mr. Williams: Did she throw up?

Monica: Uh... not to my knowledge.

Mr. Williams: Did she fall or anything?

Monica: Not that I know of. But I did leave early.

Mr. Williams: How are you determining her drunkenness?
Monica: I know where you’re going with this… It does not matter if she fell or threw up at the house. I just know she was drunk because… I know her, Mr. Williams. She had a… a couple of drinks within the time that we went to the house and… well, I… in my opinion, yes, she was drunk. And when a person is drunk, they cannot give consent, which you already know. But Tripp did not have her permission. Besides, she told me the next day that she blacked out. You don’t black out if you aren’t drunk. That’s like chemically impossible. Do you think it really mattered if she threw up or not when she was sobbing and… and I was driving her to get Plan B the next day?

*Short silence.*

Mr. Williams: Why did you leave early?

Monica: It was awful. They are awful. They were sexually harassing Sydney and… Carter was there who… who treated Claire like shit at one point in time. And… Jake started harassing me and insulting my journalistic integrity. It was awful. I was not welcome and I needed to leave.

Mr. Williams: Were you drunk?

Monica: No, not really.

Mr. Williams: How much did you drink?

Monica: I don’t know like three or four drinks.

*Mr. Williams writes. Lights go down on the office and up on the apartment.*

**Scene 6.3**

The apartment. Sydney lies on the couch on her laptop wearing earphones. Claire enters from stage left and stands at the counter.

Claire: Syd?

Silence. Claire moves around to the couch.

Claire: Sydney… Hey.


Claire: What’re you up to?

Sydney: Netflix.

Claire: Oh.
Silence.

Sydney: Do you need something?

Claire: No. I’m… I can’t focus on my homework. This fucking English class. I have to read like fifteen pages of some 19th century… Margaret Fuller shit.

Sydney: Gotcha.

Claire sits on the couch.

Claire: Okay. Um… are you okay?

Sydney: Yeah. I’m fine. Are you okay?

Claire: I mean…

Sydney: If you want to talk about it, then / go ahead and say it.

Claire: I’m not trying… I just want to have a normal conversation with you.

Sydney: We are.

Claire: What?

Sydney: We are. I’m just pretty invested in Gossip Girl right now. So…

Claire: Isn’t this like your fifth time watching it?

Sydney: Six and a half.

Claire: Half?

Sydney: When I had mono, I binged like the whole first three seasons. Then, started over.

Claire (laughs): Oh yeah. (Beat) Do you want to maybe go get food… I dunno, fries or something?

Sydney: I would but… I’m kinda… I’ve got some stuff to do later. Homework.

Claire: Right.

Sydney: Need anything else?

Claire: Uh… no.
Sydney: Okay.

*She puts her headphones back in. Claire sits next to her a moment. Then, she puts her hand on hers.*

Claire: Hey. How did it go?

Sydney: Huh?

Claire: You know… um. going to the—

Sydney: Something came up.

Claire: Wait. Why? What… you have to go.

*Sydney gets up from the couch and starts walking to her bedroom.*

Sydney: I rescheduled. Calm down. I’m gonna fucking go. Okay?

Claire: Okay.

*Sydney exits. Lights fade on the apartment and go up on the office.*

Scene 6.4

*Carter sits across from Mr. Williams.*

Carter: I’ve known Tripp for… uh… he’s a sophomore, and I met him at a party before his freshman year. So, I guess like… like two and a half years… about.

Mr. Williams: Would you say you know him well?

Carter: Yeah. He’s a really good guy. Real involved too. He goes to church a good bit and the… all the campus ministries. And stuff like that. Philanthropy chair for us. Good guy.

Mr. Williams: What is your relationship with Claire?

Carter: We went out a couple of times. That’s about it.

Mr. Williams: Why did you stop?

Carter: That’s… uh… kinda weird, uh… it didn’t work out.

*Mr. Williams writes.*

Mr. Williams writes.

Carter: Like nothing happened like… like bad or anything.
Mr. Williams: You are the President of Gamma Lambda Alpha. Correct?

Carter (with pride): Yes, I am.

Mr. Williams: Where were you during the party?

Carter: I worked the door mainly.

Mr. Williams (looking at his notes): A witness has said that you asked Tripp for help keeping an eye on things because you had too much to drink.

Carter: Wait, like I didn’t black out or anything. I could still handle anything that came up.

Mr. Williams: Then, why did you ask him to help you?

Carter (nervously laughs): I mean… I’m 21. It’s not like… I can have a beer or two. (Beat) Just to be safe I guess. More eyes the better.

Mr. Williams: As the president, you are responsible for the fraternity.

Carter: Yeah.

Mr. Williams: And in a court of law—

Carter: Whoa, is she pressing charges against us?

Mr. Williams: No, but she still has the right to pursue a criminal investigation.

Carter: I mean, I would want a little heads up.

Mr. Williams (writes): Did Claire willingly go to Tripp’s room?

Carter: I… uh, well… I… I didn’t see, but probably.

Mr. Williams: Where were you?

Carter: Hey, look, I saw them for a couple of seconds.

Mr. Williams: Did you think Claire was drunk?

Carter: No way.

Mr. Williams: Did you ask Claire to talk with you later?

Mr. Williams: Why?

Carter: Because… like a friendly thing. I was trying to be nice. And not to be awkward. I thought this was about Tripp.

Mr. Williams: It is.

Carter (nervously laughs): Then, why’re you grilling me?

Mr. Williams: I just want to be thorough.

Short silence.

Carter: I’m not saying he is… at all… but, what if Tripp is guilty?

Mr. Williams: You mean responsible.

Carter: Sure.

Mr. Williams: Well, one sexual assault is enough to create a hostile environment. I will work to prevent its recurrence.

Carter: In what ways?

Mr. Williams: It depends. Finding the source is usually a good place to start.

The lights fade on the office and go up on the fraternity house.

Scene 6.5

Tripp nervously paces while Jake sits on the bar.

Tripp: Dude, don’t just wear a t-shirt. Look like you give a shit.

Jake: It doesn’t matter what I wear.

Tripp: You want to at least look somewhat professional.

Jake: I dunno man. You know what they call a frat guy in a suit?

Tripp: What?

Jake: The defendant.

Tripp: Well that’s pretty much what I am! I feel like I’m like… like in court all the time.
Jake: Since I’m not in court, then it doesn’t matter what I have on. It’s just a conversation.

Tripp: I’m not asking you to wear a coat and tie. I’m asking you to look like you care about this. Everything has to be perfect.

Jake: Well calm down a little bit. You didn’t do anything wrong.

Tripp: I know that! But I don’t want to risk anything.

Jake: Dude, you’re not a rapist. You’re not aggressive or popping out of bushes. That’s like... like something off *Law and Order*. Like trapping chicks in a basement and shit... Ted Bundy murdering all those sorority girls.

Tripp: That’s the most extreme example. Sometimes... Dammit. I swear.

Jake: What?

Tripp: This is what worries me about you going in there. I don’t want him to write you off and think you’re an idiot and ignore your statement.

Jake: Wow, that’s a little harsh.

Tripp: Sorry. Just... don’t screw this up. Please.

Jake: I won’t.

Tripp: And put on some pants. No shorts.

Jake: Okay thanks, Mom. Want to come do my hair too?

*Lights fade on the fraternity house and go up on the office.*

Scene 6.6

*Sydney sits in the chair, and Mr. Williams writes at his desk.*

Sydney: Claire was drinking, but she didn’t vomit or anything. She seemed fine when I was with her. But yeah. Claire likes to drink.

Mr. Williams *(writing)*: How much had you been drinking?

Sydney: Uh... A bit... but not that much.

Mr. Williams: How many drinks?

Sydney *(shifting in her seat)*: Maybe five or six.
Mr. Williams: What was everyone doing?

Sydney: I dunno, talking about school? I don’t really remember.

Mr. Williams: Why did Monica leave?

Sydney: She doesn’t fit in really.

Mr. Williams: Did you feel harassed?

Sydney: Hell no… sorry, I mean no… Wait, did Monica say I was?

Mr. Williams: A comment was said to have been made—

Sydney: Look, Mr. Williams, our freshman year, Monica got cut from all the sororities. So, she dropped, and Claire pledged OKP with me. Ever since then, they’ve had this weird relationship. Because Claire is like… like successful and stuff, and honestly Monica lives in her shadow. Which is why she came to you in the first place. To like… control Claire.

Mr. Williams: What is Tripp’s reputation on campus?

Sydney: Not like a bad one. He’s pretty Christian. But he does make out with a lot of girls, if that’s what you mean. He’s a really sweet guy.

Mr. Williams: After you and Claire separated at the party, when did you hear from her next?

Sydney: Whenever she came home… well, she tried calling me in the morning, but Monica got her from the GLA house. And when she dropped her off, Claire was like really, really upset.

Mr. Williams: Did you try to help her or talk to her about it when she first came home?

Sydney: I didn’t think it was a big deal. Shacking isn’t uncommon in our house. I thought she was just being weird about it.

Mr. Williams: Why would she have been being weird about it?

Sydney: Uh… well, Tripp’s… he’s younger than us. And her whatever… fling with Carter. That’s just… going from the President to a sophomore. That’s kinda… I mean, Tripp’s a total catch, but like that’s kinda embarrassing.

Mr. Williams (writes): I see. (Beat) Why did she ask Tripp to go back to his room?

Sydney: I dunno. She probably wanted to… you know. Honestly, I can’t remember them leaving.

Mr. Williams: Why do you think she took one of Tripp’s shirts?
Sydney: I mean, if you don’t get a shirt, did you even shack?

Mr. Williams: I will take that as a rhetorical question.

Mr. Williams writes. Short pause.

Sydney: I hope nobody gets in trouble. It’s just a misunderstanding if you ask me.

Lights fade on the office and go up on the apartment.

Scene 6.7

Monica sits on the counter and reads flashcards. Claire sits on the couch.

Monica: Who wrote… “But true to the backbone, unto itself alone.”

Claire: Uh… Emerson.

Monica: No, Thoreau.

Silence

Monica: Do you know the poem?

Claire: Uh… no, maybe. No… I don’t.

Monica: Conscience.

Claire: Right.

Monica: Uh… who wrote Nirvana?

Silence

Monica: Nirvana? Claire?

Claire: What? The band?

Monica: What? No, the Chadwick poem.

Claire: Gah… I don’t even know who that is. Fuck. Can we stop please and take a break?

Monica: Of course… but we do have that test on Wednesday.

Claire looks at her phone.

Claire: Yeah.
Monica: Do you want to talk about—

Claire: I quit the cheer team.

Monica: Why didn’t you tell me?

Claire: I did it this morning. I couldn’t take my teammates telling me that I made us and the football team look worse… ruined our reputation even more.

Monica: Ignore them. You’re amazing and are… handling this beautifully. Regardless of what the other cheerleaders think, it’s really brave of you.

Claire: Thanks.

Monica: Anything I can do for you?

Claire: No.

Monica: I’m sorry.

Claire: For what?

Monica: I shouldn’t have left you at the party.

Lights fade on the apartment and go back up on the office.

Scene 6.8

Mr. Williams writes. Jake wearing a polo and khakis sits in the chair.

Jake: So, I’m a witness. Like on NCIS?

Mr. Williams: Not exactly, but yes, you are a witness. You were present and observed the event.

Jake: Yeah.

Mr. Williams: Was Tripp sober?
Jake: Yeah, he doesn’t drink.

Mr. Williams: Have you ever seen him drink?

Jake: Nah. He’s always sober. Like he thinks he can’t because he’s not 21 and something about The Bible.

Mr. Williams (writing): Did Claire seem drunk to you?

Jake: Uh… honestly, I blacked out. So. I don’t really remember anything.

Mr. Williams: Okay.

Jake: That’s why I’m confused. Like I didn’t get why you asked me to come here.

Mr. Williams: You live in the fraternity house with Tripp, and you were present. You know Tripp very well and can attest to his character.

Jake: Oh yeah, solid guy—I mean. He’s a really good guy. He respects women.

Mr. Williams: What do you mean by that?

Jake: By what?

Mr. Williams: You said, “He respects women.”

Jake: Yeah.

Short pause.

Mr. Williams: How?

Jake: All the girls love him. He can’t go anywhere in public without girls talking to him and hugging him and ya know? Like he’s just a nice guy, and people like him.

Mr. Williams writes.

Jake: Look, he didn’t rape Claire. I know that her friends are gonna say some… some stuff. But he didn’t. He wouldn’t hurt a fly. I know the guy. And he’s like super religious.

Mr. Williams: What do you mean?

Jake: He’s the most Christian dude I know. He’s saving himself for marriage. Or was, I dunno, honestly. Okay, yeah. Him and Claire did, yeah, they… But like she wanted to.

Mr. Williams: Are Claire and Tripp friends?
Jake: No, he barely knows her. They talked once… like the first week of school. Gah… then all this stuff happened. He knows who she is. I think they are like Facebook friends or something. But strangers pretty much.

Mr. Williams: Why did he ask her to go back to his room?

Jake: I don’t know. She’s hot and popular. I mean, she’s a good person to lose your virginity to. Uh… yeah, I meant that in a good way.

Mr. Williams writes.

Mr. Williams: Well, thank you for your input.

Jake: (walking towards the door): So… Am I good to go?

Mr. Williams: Yes.

Jake: Alright. Have a good day.

Jake exits. Mr. Williams stares at the door. He lets out a sigh.

Scene 7.1

This scene goes back and forth between the apartment and Tripp’s bedroom. Lights up on the women’s apartment.

Monica: Now we wait.

Claire: Yeah.

Monica: What are you thinking?

Claire: I dunno. At least he says there’s a case.

Monica: Right.

Silence.

Claire: It’s in Student Conduct’s hands now. The Campus Council gets to decide.

Monica: And for a sexual assault hearing, the panel will consist of three members. I’m confident.

Claire: Really?

Monica: Yes, think about it. You were drunk. He was sober. You didn’t want to. He wanted to. It’s clear. (Beat) He took advantage of you. Anybody could see that.
Claire: But he doesn’t see that. And we have to go to a hearing and talk in front of the panel.

Monica: Yes, but majority rule is the standard. You have to get two of the three in your favor. You can do that, and besides, most of the time these cases are unanimous. Then Tripp will get expelled.

*Short silence.*

Claire: He’s not a bad person. He doesn’t deserve to go through all this trial shit. He’s a nice guy, or at least he has been nice … but—

Monica (*laughs*): Listen to yourself. Don’t go all Stockholm Syndrome on me.

Claire: I’m not. Good people sometimes do bad stuff.

Monica: Yeah, you’re defending / him. Where is this coming from?

Claire: But I’m not in love with him. This isn’t even / the same situation.

Monica: But that is how it starts. Just because he didn’t try to kill you or tie you up or something.

Claire: What the hell?

Monica: All I’m saying is don’t go falling for him or feel like you are hurting him because he hurt you. (*Beat*) Well, didn’t he? I remember how upset you were the next day.

Claire: I got upset because you started talking about rape and I couldn’t remember anything and—

Monica: That’s the whole point! Do you remember saying yes?

Claire: No.

Monica: Stop blaming yourself.

*Lights go out on the apartment and go up on Tripp’s bedroom.*

Scene 7.2

*Jake and Carter are waiting for him. Jake sits on the bed. Carter paces.*

Jake: This isn't your fault.

Carter: I know it's not. But I'm the President.
Jake: So?

Carter: My name is on this place. If we get sued, I'm going to court. Not you.

Jake: Oh.

Carter: If we get kicked off, it’s on me. Even if I didn't do shit. My dad was GLA President, so was my grandad. You don’t get it. The pressure… this can’t get blamed on me.

Jake: But… like, don't you think… I dunno.

Carter: What?

Jake: Maybe you're uh… ya know, jumping the gun on this one.

Carter: Did you talk to the same dude I did?

Jake: Mr. Williams… fucking douche.

Carter: He's out for blood.

Jake: You're being paranoid.

Carter: No, / I'm not. He wants to stop all of this.

Jake: The guys just investigating. He's not like a bounty hunter or anything.

Carter: He said his job is to prevent its recurrence. You know what that means? Make sure this doesn't happen again. This whole thing happened here… at the house. They can link this situation directly to us.

Silence.

Jake: He didn't tell me that.

Carter: Okay then. We're not the football team. I'm not letting our brotherhood go down because of one dude.

Jake: Tripp’s uh… ya know, he said he didn't do it. I believe him. He's… he’s our brother.

Carter: Do you wanna lose the fraternity?

Jake: No. I—

Carter: Do you wanna spend the rest of college without parties?
Jake: No. But—

Carter: Do you wanna be under investigation? Like as the accused.

Silence.

Jake: No. I don't. But it’s Tripp!

Carter: I asked you here because you’re his best friend. Now you have to make a choice. You’re either with GLA or against us. Make your decision.

Lights down on the bedroom and up on the apartment.

Scene 7.3

Claire and Monica continue.

Claire: I don’t but… it’s hard. I feel like… like there’s a… a… tug of war in my head between two sides. This whole situation seemed gray, but now, it has to be black and white. And I have to say what happened to this… this Council.

Monica: Wait what? Why are you doubting now?

Claire: Because… holy shit, I mean we’ve been at this for like 55 days now, but it seems so… so fast. One second, I was crying in your car and then all of a sudden, I have to go defend myself. You know that lawyer I got… He can only advise me. I have to speak for myself in the hearing. That’s… that’s crazy. I don’t know what I’m doing.

Monica: Tough, but… not a good reason to question what is right.

Claire: I dunno… isn’t it okay to at least question it?

Sydney walks in the door with backpack on her shoulder and keys in hand. She sits on the couch and pulls her laptop out of her backpack.

Sydney: Hey, hey.

Claire: Hi.

Monica: Hey. I’m just saying—

Sydney: I hate school. My professor sucks. You know? Like get this. The class only meets once a week. It’s Art Appreciation, and I forgot about the online test we had due at midnight last Friday. And… I was too drunk to have taken it anyway, but I told him I was sick, and he won’t fucking let me retake it unless I show him a doctor’s note! I’m just gonna print one off the internet or something. I dunno. Whatever.

Pause. Sydney types.
Monica: I cannot believe you.

Sydney: Excuse me?

*Sydney stops typing.*

Monica: You’re so fucking selfish.

Claire: Hey—

Monica: No, do you even know what happened today?

Sydney: What? Did the inventor of birth control die or something?

Monica: Oh my god. No, your roommate and your friend just heard back from the Title IX office.

Sydney: Ohh yeah that thing. That Mr. What’s-his-face? Williams. He was weird.

Monica: There’s a case. Claire’s case is going to student conduct.

*Sydney (beginning to type): Oh, great.*

Monica (to Claire): Is she seriously not supporting you in this?

Claire: She doesn’t really think—

Sydney (frustrated, closing laptop): You want to know what I think about this?

*Silence. Sydney gets up and walks around the couch.*

Sydney: This… this whole thing, the “case” and, everything… it’s your fault.

Monica (getting up): What did you say?

Claire: Syd—

Monica moves behind the couch as well. Monica stands stage left of Claire, and Sydney stands stage right. Claire sits in the middle with Sydney and Monica at each shoulder.

Sydney: Claire, did you regret what happened with Tripp?

Claire: Yes.

Monica: It’s not about—
Sydney: Shut up, Monica, and let me fucking speak. Claire, do you remember that one time with... uh... you know what—this is perfect for the situation—you remember that one time I went home with Jake.

Claire: Yes.

Sydney: You remember when you came and got me? You remember how embarrassed I was? Because I got drunk and let Jake fuck me. (with frustration and regret) In the moment, I didn’t want to, but I went back to his room with him. He smoked me out. I was so cross-faded... I couldn’t even... yeah. I was fucked up. But we made out, which was gross, but I was fine. Then, he got out a condom. And... I laid there and stared at the ceiling. Just waiting for it to be over. I don’t remember much, but I remember his breath smelling like Natty Light... and he lasted like 10 seconds. Then, I passed out.

Silence.

Claire: I remember.

Sydney: Monica here would say that I was raped—

Monica: Technically, yes.

Sydney: SHUT UP with this “technically” bull shit! People like you have two... two things. That’s it. It’s either consensual, like sex, or it’s rape. What about the in-between?

Monica (to Claire): Now, I understand why your doubting this... because of her! (to Sydney) Your situation is different. You remember most of it. Claire was raped. You physically consented—

Sydney: Do not tell me that I wasn’t raped! Do not try to... to tell me what happened to me. I felt uncomfortable and I regretted the situation immediately. But I didn’t turn my regret into rape. Claire, what happened to Claire, is the same exact thing that happened to me. She drank too much. She passed out. But she fucked a dude first. She’s not a virgin. She’s slept with random guys before. You made her think—

Monica: No, I helped her! That’s what I did. You didn’t pick her up... You didn’t hold her hand as she swallowed that fucking pill. You laughed at her.

Sydney: I would’ve picked her up! But it wasn’t a big deal! The amount of times that this... this shacking with random boys.

Monica: Shacking and raping are two different—

Sydney: Being raped and crying wolf are two different things! You made Claire go to the Title IX office. You reported it. You convinced her. She wouldn’t have done that on her own. I know her. She would have been like the countless other girls who have unwanted sex. The girls who
sleep with guys in their Finance classes when they are fucked up. The girls who take responsibility for their choices and don’t say they were raped whenever they regret fucking someone. And Claire, I talked to Jake about this too.

**Claire:** Oh shit. What did he say?

**Monica:** It does not matter.

**Sydney:** Yeah, it does. She got drunk. She blacked out apparently. And took his virginity. Did he want his first time to be with someone who claims to not know what she was doing? Probably not, but you fucked that up for him. Jake told me what you texted Tripp the next day… do you know Monica?

**Monica (angry):** I don’t know, what?

**Sydney:** She said she had a good time.

*Lights fade on the apartment and up on the bedroom.*

**Scene 7.4**

*Jake sits on his bed and Carter standing in front of the bed. Carter and Jake continue.*

**Jake:** Fuck… yeah.

**Carter:** I don’t need this in my life right now and you don’t either.

*Tripp, with his button-down sleeves rolled up, backpack, and coat over his shoulder, storms in.*

**Tripp:** Gah… shit. I can’t believe this.

**Jake:** What’s up?

**Tripp:** I just got back from Senate and one of the other Senators… she’s an OKP with Claire. She told me that if she were me she would lay low until all of this… shit is sorted out.

**Jake:** Damn.

**Tripp:** I’m going to be labeled as a rapist for the rest of my life. All because of one… stupid… shit. *(Beat)* I HATE HER! She’s ruining my life! I slipped up. I was waiting and… dammit. I don’t know what to do… I’m being thrown to the dogs.

*Silence.*

**Jake:** Yeah. That, uh… sucks.
Carter: Why don't you take a seat for a minute Tripp?

*Carter motions to the trunk at the foot of his bed.*

Tripp: Okay? Did something happen?

Carter: Well, er… uh… so, *(coughs).*

Tripp *(sitting)*: What?

*Lights down on the bedroom and up on the apartment.*

Scene 7.5

Monica: She probably was just trying to be nice and didn’t know how to respond! Right, Claire?

Claire: Honestly, I don’t remember. Why is that even important?

Sydney: Bullshit! Real convenient to just be able to blame—

Monica: She’s am not blaming—

Sydney: You’re avoiding resp—

Claire: BOTH OF YOU SHUT UP!

*Silence.*

Claire: Were you in the room with me?

*Silence.*

Monica: I shouldn’t—

Claire: You were not there! Just me and Tripp were in that room. And… and he was sober. And some might say… that… that he is the only one who might actually know what really happened. And… and the two of you… my two closest friends are… are trying to tell me what happened. The two of you! *(Beat)* Both of you were drunk, and you weren’t in the room! Monica, you always talk about this… You always say, “It’s your body; you’re the only one who can define your sexual experiences.” But you didn’t treat me that way. You immediately said I was raped. And Sydney, telling me to stop being a bitch about it? How is that even supportive? And the worst thing about it all. Is… is that I don’t know which one of you is right, or maybe both of you are wrong. *(Beat)* You know how shitty this is? *(Beat)* This is what I want… because neither of you seem to care about that… I want resolution. I’m asking for resolution. I wanted control. And… and I’ll be defending myself in front of the Campus Council, so I guess I got it… That’s why I’m all over the place. I’m nervous… I’m… I’m… scared… BECAUSE I DON’T KNOW WHAT THE FUCK I’M DOING! I thought I was having a conversation with Mr. Williams, not
all this legal shit. (Beat) My doubt doesn’t matter. What matters… is… is… I keep going back to it. The pain and the hurt. What I do remember. That’s what we’re going to we stick to. I… just… whatever. (sighs) I gotta go.

*Claire heads towards the door.*

**Monica:** Hey, where are you going?

**Claire:** Just leave me alone, both of you.

*She exits. The lights fade and go up on the bedroom.*

**Scene 7.6**

**Tripp sits on the trunk and Carter and Jake stand in front of him.**

**Carter:** Our GLA motto… it's… what we stand for, Ducere Exemplo… to lead by example. That's what we do here. You know… I mean you remember from pledgeship. The creed. We believe and strive to… to… Unite men in bonds as strong as justice is impartial. And… to exemplify the modern gentlemen now, tomorrow, and forever.

**Tripp:** Where are you going with this?

*Silence.*

**Tripp:** Jake.

**Jake:** Uh. My hands are tied dude.

**Tripp:** Hm.

**Carter:** There's no easy way to say this. But I had a meeting with Standards.

**Tripp (laughing):** You gotta be kidding me.

**Carter:** Okay. Hey, this wasn't easy or wanted.

**Tripp:** What about due process?

**Carter:** What about it?

**Tripp (standing up):** I deserve a hearing! Put me in front of judicial! Let them hear me… for God’s sake. Cromwell and Jennings… Allen. Those guys would never kick me out. You better—

**Carter:** Okay. Sit down. This can either go really easy or really fucking hard. Your choice, man.
Tripp: It sounds like you've already made your decision.

Carter: We met and it… it wasn't—

Tripp: This is private. This isn't a public incident. Nobody knows—

Carter: Bullshit! You believe that confidentiality crap the university tells you? Huh? Wake up Tripp. The whole campus knows.

Silence.

Carter: All the OKP girls are saying, “Claire got raped at GLA,” and “I just can't believe Tripp Butler would do a thing like that.”

Tripp: The verdict isn't even out. The hearing is next week! Nothing's going to happen. I'll get off.

Carter: You don't know that!

Tripp (Overlapping): It's just people telling stories. No videos, no rape kits, no fingerprints, no… no weapons, just words!

Carter: It doesn't matter! What matters is that you're under investigation. Shit is happening whether you think you did anything or not.

Tripp: I can't believe this.

Carter: Yeah. Well. I've got advisors breathing down my neck. Telling me that if I don't do something heads will roll. And—

Tripp: You aren't even going to wait and see.

Carter: I can't.

Tripp: Yes, you can!

Carter: No, if you lose, then they are coming after us. The whole chapter. You want to see that happen?

Silence.

Carter: You want me to put 90 guy’s asses on the line for yours? What about Jake? And me? (Beat) Man, if you cared about the place, you would quit. Walk away. I'm not going to be a respondent because of your mistakes.

Carter: I'm sorry.

Tripp: Please, just wait / one more week.

Carter: I can't, it's too risky.

Tripp: Yes, if… if I / lose I'll drop.

Carter: No… no, we can’t—

Tripp: Only a couple more days—

Carter: It was unanimously decided! For publicly violating the values of Gamma Lambda Alpha... you're out.

Silence.

Tripp: Fuck you Carter. And you too Jake. Fuck both of you.

Jake (getting off the bed): Take it easy.

Tripp: Oh bullshit. You're using me as the scapegoat. The sacrificial lamb for your fucking slaughter.

Jake: Fraternity life, / dude... it's not the same

Carter: Universities / want us out.

Tripp: To cover your asses, so you can party for a couple more semesters. So, you can have a… a… another… Back to School Rager. And invite all the girls to shove alcohol down their throats just to make it easier for you. You're just as guilty as I am! Both of you!

Carter: This isn't about us. / This is about you.

Jake: You're the one in trouble.

Tripp (to Jake): You told me to do it!

Carter: Whoa. / You made your choice when you took her to your room!

Jake: I didn't make you do shit! / Stop pushing this off.

Tripp: I'm not. I'm being honest. You're getting me in trouble for the exact same shit that you do every / weekend.

Jake: Fuck off man!
Tripp: And Carter, / the shit between you and Claire.

Carter: What? What was that? Enlighten me.

Tripp: I did exactly what you did! With the same Goddamn girl.

Carter: And what did you do?

Tripp: I fucked a drunk chick!

Silence.

Jake: Wait… I thought you said—

Tripp: I mean… uh… I… I don't know exactly if—

Carter: I want your shit out in two weeks. And you can forget about me being a witness in the hearing.

Tripp: I didn't mean—

Carter: Save it for the Campus Council.

Silence. Carter starts to leave.

Carter: You wanna know the difference between you and me? We aren't the same. Claire actually wanted it from me.

Carter exits.

Jake: Shit.

Silence.

Tripp: I've gotta win.

Scene 8

Claire, Tripp, and Mr. Williams come center stage. Tripp wears a suit and tie, and Claire dresses business casual. They address the audience as if they were the Campus Council. Lights will illuminate each of them as they speak and fade on them as they finish.

Claire: Good afternoon… um… I’m Claire Fitzpatrick. And… and thank you for your time and patience today through this hearing. I… didn’t want it to go this far… far enough to where I had to come speak and defend myself in front of the Campus Council. But I realize it's necessary… necessary for the truth to come out. But… but being just… just being honest, I had no idea how
to handle this… these feelings of invasion and… and I didn't know what they meant. But my friends have been supportive. (Beat) They've helped me figure out what's going on. That's why I have the courage to say that Tripp Butler didn’t have my consent. (Beat) He raped me.

**Mr. Williams:** I come here today to present to you the facts.

**Claire:** He is telling you that he didn't know I was drunk, and that I wanted to be with him like that.

**Tripp:** She consented. I wouldn’t have done it otherwise.

**Mr. Williams:** The university’s Sexual Misconduct Policy, Appendix I, Section II, Subsection E… page 25, gives the parameters used to indicate incapacitation which include examining the individual’s speech patterns… I look for slurred speech and… impaired motor skills or … unconsciousness.

**Claire:** I blacked out. I don’t remember everything that happened in the bedroom. I drank a lot… Too much.

**Tripp:** I was sober, but I didn’t know what I was doing. It was my first time. I didn’t even have proper protection prepared. It was… uh… was a knee jerk decision, but I wouldn’t have made it if… if… if she hadn’t of initiated it.

**Mr. Williams:** Though the Complainant describes incapacitation, no other witnesses can confirm her outward behavior that would suggest it. The presence of alcohol is not enough, per the policy. None of the witnesses observed sickness due to alcohol or even impaired communication.

**Claire:** What I’m trying to say… is… that it's… it’s not okay that we can live in a community where people can do stuff like this and get away with it. Not take responsibility for their own actions.

**Tripp:** I'm not a liar. She is. And I have proof.

**Claire:** Dishonesty… it’s… it's not who I am. Dishonest.

**Mr. Williams:** None of the witnesses have provided a consistent conclusion as to who initiated the action. Furthermore, the Respondent’s witnesses who were both drunk claim that she was not even drunk, let alone incapacitated. On the other hand, the Complainant’s witnesses, who also had been drinking, attest to her consuming anywhere between four and seven drinks while the Respondent only said one. I do not have much external evidence. No videos and no extensive text messaging. I only acquired one exchange between the Respondent and the Complainant from the following morning. Both said they had a positive experience the night before.

**Claire:** Honestly, I deleted the texts. Why does it matter? Because like… I wanted him to leave me alone. I didn’t want to talk with him anymore. If I had said, like… uh, you did this to me…
he wouldn’t have left me alone. He would have insisted… like forced me to meet with him, and I’m sorry. I couldn’t do that.

**Tripp:** At 9:03 on Saturday, September 3rd, Claire Fitzpatrick said… quote… “I had a good time too!” End quote. *(Beat)* Now, who says that… if she really felt like I raped her, she wouldn’t have. Honestly! To me, this is proof that I’m right.

**Claire:** I hope that you will see where I’m coming from. I’m not responsible for what happened.

**Tripp:** In all of this… I keep coming back to… to my mom’s favorite Bible verse. James 1:2… It says… uh… “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds.” I’m not saying this has been a positive experience, but I know this trial is shaping me for the better. I appreciate your patience throughout this hearing. And I’m grateful for Mr. Williams and… and his hard work finding the facts. I hope that you will see that I’m not responsible for what happened. Uh… Have a good rest of the evening.

*Lights out.*

**Scene 9.1**

*This scene starts in the apartment and switches to the bedroom. Claire enters her apartment and Monica follows behind her.*

**Monica:** I can’t believe this.

**Claire:** Yeah. I can’t either.

**Monica:** Incapacitation and drunkenness are not two different things! Goddammit. Ya know, I bet that one male student who sat on the panel. I bet the vote was one to one and then he voted in Tripp’s favor. If I had been up there I swear… Tripp would have been expelled so—

**Claire:** Monica. Shut up.

**Monica:** I’m sorry—

**Claire:** SHUT UP.

*Silence.*

**Claire:** I’m going to bed. That’s all I want right now.

*She turns to exit. Lights fade on the apartment and go up on the bedroom.*

**Scene 9.2**

*Tripp is alone. He is pulling clothes out of his plastic drawers from under his bed. He packs it in a gym bag. Jake enters.*
Jake: Dude! Shit, man. That Bible verse at the end was nice! Icing on the fucking cake.

Tripp: Thanks.

Jake: I thought you were fucked. Can’t believe you won.

Tripp: Did I?

Jake: What? Yeah… you weren’t found guilty or whatever

Silence. Tripp grabs his bag and heads for the door.

Tripp: I’ll be back for the rest of my stuff tonight. See ya round.

Appendix 8: Audience Feedback

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 21
What is your gender? Male

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Lecture Format

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, thorough and a bit nerve wracking

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, she was not able to give clear consent

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 22
What is your gender? M

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Lecture Format

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, students recognize the significance I think

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, Tapp himself even admitted as much

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

How drastically different these experiences are

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 32
What is your gender? Male

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

through University of Ms training.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, very true to form.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, according to UM policy.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Please make additional comments on the back.

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Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 21
What is your gender? Male

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

N/A

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, It was the whole reason I came.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Can't answer.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes, The world isn't one way or another.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 19
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
Campus clarity

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
Yes! Roman numerals are exciting & mysterious

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes - the violation/invasion she felt the next morning

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
Learned a lot about the gray areas that come along with alcohol & sexual assault

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 20
What is your gender? M
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Powerpoint presentation.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
Yes cuz Title IX

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes. No consent she was drunk he wasn't.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
Yes. More perspectives.

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 19
What is your gender? F
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
Yes, campus clarity, freshman online thing.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
Oh, not much.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes. She said no.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
Yes to be more open with title 9.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 18
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
During Freshman Orientation

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
I like the title, but I found the She Asked For It title a lot more engaging!

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes, If she couldn't remember giving consent & felt dirty about it, then she was raped.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
I think so, I feel like I've learned that sometimes friends don't always know what's best for you, like when Monica & Sydney gave their opinions on Claire's situation.
Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 20
What is your gender? Female
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
I have never.
Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
Yes, I think so. I honestly don't know what else you'd call it.
Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Honestly, hard to say. But anyone who feels like she's been violated has a right to feel that way.
Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
It was just really good. Very powerful. Great job, John.
This is a hard thing to represent, and I thought it was wonderfully done.

Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 18
What is your gender? Male
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
I have, and I was assaulted in the bathroom.
Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
Yes, it invokes curiosity in the play and it's clever.
Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
I think so, because she was too drunk to comprehend.
Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
I learned both parties have their own sides and can both be in pain from the situation.
Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 20
What is your gender? Female

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Yes, through a freshman education program.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes! Ambiguous but descriptive.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, she was unable to give consent.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

The difficulty of a situation like that and how problematic hookup culture is.

Please make additional comments on the back.

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Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 56
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

No

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

did not know what title I meant

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

yes - now I know what title it is.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 20
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Conversations w/ complainants + presentations by Title IX and RASA

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

I think it is - IF you are readily able to associate it with the sexual assault policies in Title IX

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

I still think it's unclear

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

I already knew most of the policy displayed in this play

Please put a towel on that hook on the kitchen counter - worried about it.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 19
What is your gender? M

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Online presentation or speech

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 19
What is your gender? Male

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
Email, Text alert

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
Yes

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes, it showed how it shone both ways, it showed her emotions

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
Both people felt guilty

Please make additional comments on the back.

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Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 18
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
Briefly at orientation

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
Yes because it doesn't give anything about the play

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes because the emotional toll was very real

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
The Title IX system is not as just as the University makes it out to be

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 18
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

[Handwritten text: Presentation by Title IX office at orientation]

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes. I liked the subtle reference to the Title IX office.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, because she was drunk and couldn't consent.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

I learned about the complexities involved in a Title IX case.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 18
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

No

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Somewhat

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes. She was drunk & he knew.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Somewhat

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 19

What is your gender? Female

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Yes, in Edhe

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes, more info about Title IX is very gray, not black & white

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 22

What is your gender? Female

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Clearly about the implications of an allegation. Honesty issue, care to my son, etc.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, anyone with knowledge of Title IX will get the reference

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?


Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

I appreciate how it wasn't cleanly presented or tied up. These conflicts are messy and the play embraces the mess.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 19
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
Yes, online and through EDHE

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
Yes, it makes you think of something that could be serious or not

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes, if she does not remember the event, she didn't give consent.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
Yes, that the Title IX system doesn't work well enough if guys can still get away with this and others only care when it could hurt them.

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 22
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
No formal education, just info about Title IX through conversations

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
I do. I love it. O Be it let's you know what the play is about but is still intriguing.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes, I believe she was drunk and unable to consent.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
Yes, I learned a little more about the process of how Title IX proceedings go.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 51
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

No

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Opinions differ

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 19
What is your gender? M

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

No

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Too much what you feel is right, not what your friends say

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 22
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
Yes, it was presented during freshmen orientation.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
I think it is, because it makes the viewer wonder what it is about.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes, because she didn't give clear consent.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
I've learned that sexual assault can happen to anyone and that people should take responsibility for their actions.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 21
What is your gender? Female
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you? Not a whole lot
Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not? Yes! It's minimal and the roman numerals catch your eye.
Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not? Yes but it's not black and white. She wasn't in a state to consent but she may have indicated it.
Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn? Makes you think about how complicated these situations are.
Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 21
What is your gender? Female
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you? Not a whole lot
Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not? Yes! It's minimal and the roman numerals catch your eye.
Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not? Not clear
Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn? Alcohol & drugs are the real culprits.
Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 20
What is your gender? M

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Good, still a little gray

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, simple & shows the subject

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

No, consent

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes, don't have sex

Please make additional comments on the back.

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Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 18
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

No, I haven't until today.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, it made me want to know what the single number meant.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, because she didn't give consent

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes, how title nine works.

Please make additional comments on the back.

Very good play. I really enjoyed it.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 19

What is your gender? M

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Yes, middle school through pp and through Title IX res.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, it was very direct and clear.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, she never gave clear consent.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes, I feel that some people can get out of it even when they are guilty. It is hard to find clear evidence.

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 78

What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

From my police dept. when I was a staff member here.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, it had made me research Title IX.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, probably but her version was more first.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

How complex the issue is and the lack of meaning.

Self responsibility that underlies the whole thing.

Please make additional comments on the back. in today's youth behaviors.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? _16_
What is your gender? _Male_
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

_I had it presented online through Greek life_
Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

_Yes I did because it sparked my curiosity_
Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

_Yes because of her side and feelings. She also did not give consent._
Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

_I learned much more about Title IX and to be aware of surroundings and how to treat people._

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? _16_
What is your gender? _Male_
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

_Yes, it approached a very relevant issue that is very directly approached_
Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

_Yes, she was intoxicated and typically girls are very weak._
Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

_Yes, Title IX is very unnoticeable._

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 21
What is your gender? M

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 18
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

The Hunting Ground Documentary

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 41
What is your gender? Female

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

No

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes -

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

I don't know. I would say it was uncensored

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes - there's a lot more

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 19
What is your gender? Male

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Yes, Campus Clarity and greeklife.edu

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, Presenting title in Roman numerals, for me, brought to mind the most notable use of IX in that context, which is Title IX.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, Although the facts of the case were not conclusive, Tripp's admission of Claire's drunkenness points to a situation of rape.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes. I have learned that the complexity of Title IX cases leaves much room for speculation. Seeking justice in these cases is hard, but it is something that must be done.

Please make additional comments on the back.

Very powerful. Every student on campus should be required to see this.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 24
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Yes - Training for OR.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Not particularly - at first didn't connect IX to Title IX

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes - she was unaware of giving consent

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 38
What is your gender? Male

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

As occupational training (with a compulsory quiz)

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Engaging, sure, but not informative

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes. Tripp's version of events is too self-serving to be believed

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

No.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 40
What is your gender? M

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

ONLINE THROUGH MANDATORY TRAINING

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

NOT REALLY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

ACCORDING TO TITLE IX, CONSENT, YES.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

I learned that any inhibition cancels consent

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 20
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

YES! THROUGH SORORITIES & RASA (NOT HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT THOUGH)

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes! SHE WAS INHIBITED

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

I LEARNED THAT ANY INHIBITION CANCELS CONSENT

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 20
What is your gender? Female

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

No

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes

Please make additional comments on the back.

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Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 18
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Yes, in class

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, it was well written

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, she was drunk

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 23

What is your gender? M

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Limited education at orientation; that Title IX allowed for reporting sexual assault

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes; it clearly evokes both the subject & discussion of it, which is the goal

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes; if you black out, you can't give consent, no matter what you say

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes; that 'committees use outward signs of drunkenness to determine intoxication, which is unfair. I know people who can take our 'yes' external signs

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 16

What is your gender? M

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Yes, very

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes, listen to both sides

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 20
What is your gender? F
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
Yes, I have received education on sexual assault. I was told the answer is No. It means No.
Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
Yes, because it is based on what the play is about, which is student issues.
Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes, because she did not have consent before having sex.
Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
Yes, a lot. You should never let someone forcefully have sex with you. That is absolutely against the law and it should be reported immediately.
Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 18
What is your gender? M
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?
Yes, online program, presentation in art center, and a small presentation.
Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
It is very creative, but I think the layout of the front page made me dislike the title and it is kind of unconventional, so it did not strike me really. And...Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes, I think it may be because our culture now might have predisposed me to say so. Everything she does not remember, she does not feel like the same consent others say they would not.
Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
Yes, Title IX cases are not as easy as there are so many factors involved. No matter what, one party will feel slighted.
Please make additional comments on the back.
I really think that this play was engaging and had a lot to say. Just because girls are having fun does not mean she should be victim of rape. Every girl should know about her rights and never feel entitled to report something that is against her right.

Women Empowerment!!

Very good play. Actors were great! (Especially Claire - very emotive). Loved the argument scenes. Very realistic. Very thought provoking. It took a while to decide & I don't think I explained or talked about everything fully.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 22
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Yes, in a presentation from the Center for Violence Prevention to the ASK.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes if you are familiar with Title IX, no if not. I think most people on campus are familiar.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes. She could not give consent b/c she was incapacitated.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes - I feel more aware of the depth of the issue, particularly on an emotional level. As someone who cares about the values that IX upholds, I've never had personal experience or vicarious experience with the process through someone close to me. This was enlightening.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 19
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Yes, lectures against sexual assault

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, we all (well most students) know about

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes - her feelings I don't know

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes - how confusing it was

Please make additional comments on the back.

Plot twist - the president raped her actually

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 19
What is your gender? girl

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

I don't think I have, formally

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, love it

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

I don't know !!!!!!!! I am so confused !!!

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes I learned more about Title IX situations
Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 18
What is your gender? F
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

______________________________

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

______________________________

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes

______________________________

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

______________________________

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey
How old are you? 16
What is your gender? F
If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Very

______________________________

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

______________________________

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes - she also couldn't consent.

______________________________

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

______________________________

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 22
What is your gender? Female

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

through class. Peer Education

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes - it appeals to the logical mentality after sexual assault on campus. Not just the affective parts

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

yes. the slight temporal guilt or a one night stand drunkenly (Catholic guilt lol) is very different from the mindset of depression post sexual assault.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

I knew a lot of true things from class education, but it was great and empowering

Please make additional comments on the back.
#1) I think it was incredibly traumatizing for her to lose control when her friend reported the incident without consulting or warning her.

#2) There is no end to the insufferable reek of white male:

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**Quest for Society**

What if violent rape/assault was the felony

And non-violent rape or possible rape (like tonight's) was just a misdemeanor or an small infraction?

Food for thought
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 61
What is your gender? M

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

No

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

No, not aware of Title IX

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, all men are pigs

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Yes, meaning of Title IX

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 50+
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, importance, timely, education, knowledge is power, for males & females & not enough past present

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Affirmation & need for more education on this subject; sexuality, relationships, intentions, differences between males & females etc.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 22
What is your gender? M

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Yes. External university mandated

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
Yes. Leaves no room for ambiguity

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
Yes. Issues of consent present in her and the defendant's stories

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
Yes. That both consent, situation, and perspective matter throughout the process. And conversation yields results/conclusions for all
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 20
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

[Student's response]

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes. I am intrigued.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, because she blacked out and obviously had too much to drink.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

I learned a lot about the process and how badly it can get out of hand.

Please make additional comments on the back.

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Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 19
What is your gender? NB

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Online class at beginning of year.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, to the point & brings focus where it needs to be from the beginning.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes, Tripp said she was drunk, & Claire consistently said she blacked out & talked to him near the beginning of the show. No one forgot things. She clearly could not have consented.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

I laughed unintentionally when Carter said Tripp could talk to him near the beginning of the show. No one forgot things. She clearly could not have consented.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 21
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Powerpoint, session by Lindsey Bartlett

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?
Yes, makes clear the subject and perspective

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?
I have no idea. I feel like rape is guilt but I'm not sure.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?
Absolutely. Every piece of dialogue felt so familiar. It was haunting. I feel like the story feels so

Please make additional comments on the back.
Amazing, well thought out and researched + a complete experience. I think it should be shown at all universities because I think I have seen exact variations of some of the conversations. It's important to talk about it.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 21

What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

Online quiz, in person by Honey Ussery

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

Yes, it shows the subject of the play and the single syllable word is striking, like the topic

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

Yes. Based on comments made by Trip, Claire, etc. it was obvious she was unable to consent to any sexual activity.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

Nothing new learned, but it was a great demonstration of the perspectives involved in these situations.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 21
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

- Online quiz/ppt, in person by Honey Ussery

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

- Yes, it shows the subject of the play and the single syllable word is striking, like the topic

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

- Yes, based on comments made by Tripp, Claire, etc., it was obvious she was unable to consent to any sexual activity.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

- Nothing new learned, but it was a great demonstration of the perspectives involved in these situations.

Please make additional comments on the back.

Optional Anonymous Survey

How old are you? 19
What is your gender? F

If you have received education on sexual assault and Title IX, how was the information presented to you?

- EASA has spoken to multiple organizations I am involved in.

Do you think the title of the play is engaging? Why or why not?

- Yes, I think it indicates the focus on the actual Title IX policy.

Do you think Claire was raped? Why or why not?

- Yes, I believe she was unsure to give consent; it would never put herself through that kind of trouble for nothing.

Do you feel that you have learned anything from watching the show? If so, what did you learn?

- Yes, I think I've learned more about how sexual assault dialogue among guys goes.

Please make additional comments on the back.
Phenomenally heartbreaking and a true depiction of the sexual misconduct within the Greek and campus community.

10/10.

I thought Greek communities were so close to very realistically being portrayed. Also, I think showing repercussions on both sides was so interesting and super accurate.
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