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dilemma: A Magazine About Sexual Assault ft. Me

Emma Rees

DePauw University

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dilemma:
A Magazine About
Sexual Assault ft. Me

Emma Rees

Sponsor: Marnie McInnes

Committee Members: Sarah Ryan, John Berry, Joe Heithaus

DePauw University (Class of 2021)

Honor Scholar Program

Acknowledgments & Dedication

To my amazing committee, thank you. I could not have finished this thesis without your support. Thank you, Marnie McInnes, for your wonderful ideas, meetings, and feedback. You gently pushed me across this journey and was always considerate of my wellbeing. Thank you, Sarah Ryan, for the unconditional encouragement and cheer you've bestowed on me. Thank you, John Berry, for helping build my artist's immune system. Thank you, Joe Heithaus, for allowing me to break the rules.

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To the people who contributed to the magazine, thank you. Thank you to Emma Mazurek and Victoria de Dios for letting me use your short film posters as advertisements. Thank you to Isis St. James and Re'Nae Dillard for letting me create advertisements of your lovely faces. Thank you to the 15 people who responded to my anonymous Google survey with their opinions about people, men, and problems. I may not know who you are, but I appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts. Thank you, Abi Smith, for drawing a gorgeous jellyfish and being a wonderful roommate. From Hogate Hall to an apartment, you're my favorite roommate. Thank you, Michael Aikin, for taking photos of me in the cold and filling your iPhone with awkward poses and smiles. Your unwavering love and reassurance will not be forgotten.

To the people who believe me, thank you. I thank my family for doing their best to support me and the Women's Support Group for creating a safe space for me and other women. No more apologizing. Thank you to my counselor for helping me find breakthroughs in my experiences and gently digging into wounds. Thank you to my friends and everyone who listened to my story without judgment.

...

I dedicate my magazine to the people who are private about intimacy or who feel bad about a sexual experience. To the ones who were exploited and the ones who had people turn their backs on them, please know your feelings are valid. I believe you.

Introduction

Though she's not my favorite Disney Princess, I couldn't help loving Ariel from *The Little Mermaid* (1989) as a child. Her bouncy bangs and voluminous hair often popped into my fantasies (especially when visiting the hair salon). When Ariel grows human legs and goes on land to find her prince charming, she soon realizes she doesn't have a voice. Back then the trope seemed romantic. Now, I find the story terrifying. What if Prince Eric was not charming at all and took advantage of her? What if she couldn't say no to his advances because she literally had no voice? Would she find sky blue eyes haunting after the incident?

I have a voice, but I rarely use it to defend myself or to say no. Something awful happened the fall semester of my junior year as a result of my inability to utter the simple word "no." Afterwards, I couldn't stop writing about what happened. My Creative Non-Fiction class forced me to acknowledge that fact. Over and over again, I kept scrutinizing what had occurred and the aftermath. I thought about trauma and how it manifests in different ways: painting, singing, writing, dancing, screaming. Thus, my thesis was born. I wanted to discuss the junior year incident as well as other instances where I believe I was a victim of sexual violence. However, the thesis needed shape and structure that didn't solely revolve around the men in my life. It was time for me to be selfish. It's my thesis and it's about me: my trauma, my recovery, and everything me. My advisor helpfully came up with the idea of a magazine. The idea excited me. This format would be a fun way to incorporate artwork, poems, stories, and allow me to be creative. Below, you will find information detailing the different elements that make up the magazine. After that, you will find the anticipated *dilemma* magazine and an annotated bibliography to round out my thesis.

Art

This section was the hardest for me to produce. I didn't want any of the artwork to feel superficial or look dumb. Of course, those fears accompany every artist or writer when they present their work. Here are some preliminary paintings (*ember* and *feelsies*):



ember



feelsies

ember featured prefixes to 'ember' thrown over a blue splattered page with a rusty orange droplet. The other painting (*feelsies*) was a stick figure with bright colors standing out from the darkness. Neither *ember* nor *feelsies* made the magazine because I felt they weren't strong enough. The messy strokes looked amateur and shallow, not deep or thought-provoking. Finger painting some practice pieces greatly helped me get the art factory to start running.

The finished art pieces that did end up in the magazine were artwork submitted from readers (aka me) along with artist statements. *Trophy* is probably the most vulnerable, honest, and direct painting in the magazine with its lavender legs, sapphire background, and gold blood. It's much easier to share an experience of someone else hurting my body than it is to share a time of self-

harm. As mentioned in the artist's statement, this painting doesn't celebrate self-harm in any way. Instead, the painting represents a period of time that was dark. Despite that dark place, the artist was able to survive and continues to live. The gold lines spelling 'vile' may not be easy for a person to see, but it was very cathartic for me to paint.

A lifelike body with a rainbow of finger painting on a six foot canvas was one of my first ideas for a multimedia thesis. Emma Krenzer's *Touches* inspired me. She took a photo of a naked woman's body and used different colors to fingerpaint the body. A key next to the body explained each color. Yellow represented a friend, orange symbolized a lover, and red was reserved for someone she said no to. I wanted to create my own lifelike version of her *Touches* but the body would be full of handprints instead of a painted layer on top of a photo. However, my dad, a carpenter, was slow to give me the canvas, so I thought of a backup plan. Instead of a lifelike body, I used some broken blinds to replace my original idea. With the blinds, I created an abstract body that every person could relate to regardless of their size, gender, or physical disability. The blinds (titled *The Body Remembers*) replaced my original idea for the six-foot canvas and were originally more broken, but I accidentally tugged too hard on a cord. So I improvised and added a scrambled word to fill in the blank space. The word "unfair" echoed my most recent meeting womxn's support group I attend weekly. I chose the placement of the letters to remind someone of the word r*pe, but the words spell out unfair. The colors represent different men who have touched me (with or without consent). The men get the privilege of forgetting what happened, but I will always remember them and their fingers all over me.

Since the blinds replaced my original idea for the six-foot canvas, I started thinking of other ideas. The end result was a six-foot canvas that has three different looks when presented under certain lights. The canvas (titled *bunny.me*) uses daylight, UV light, and no light to show a

different image in three ways. Under daylight, *bunny.me* looks simple with a few stray words (LOVE, HELP, HATE, LEAVE) and a bunny stick figure in the middle. Under UV light, the canvas comes alive with different symbols (e.g., a fox) and colors (e.g., aqua). Complete darkness is the last way to look at the canvas. Some colors and symbols are still seen, but not as clearly compared to the canvas under UV light. When creating *bunny.me*, I had been thinking about how context, stories, and details humanize people. That's why this painting has three different looks. The version of *bunny.me* in daylight represents first impressions and appearances. The guy I almost hit on the highway who threw his middle finger at me doesn't know anything about me except that I didn't see him when trying to change lanes. I wonder about him (*does he hate me?*) and I still feel bad. The UV light tells the whole picture and story. If I told this man my whole life story (the good, the bad, and the awful), I wonder if he wouldn't be mad at me anymore. Would my trauma make up for the time I almost hit his car? The canvas in the dark represents what people will take away from my story. They'll have their own interpretation of what happened and they'll create their own opinion. Maybe that man would forgive me or maybe he would shrug off the experience. If he still doesn't like me, that's fair. I did almost hit him on the freeway. I just wished he hadn't thrown the middle finger in my direction.

A painting featured in the artist's corner was not given an artist statement. There wasn't enough space for an artist statement on the page, so I let the painting stand on its own. Titled *Made in China*, this painting features a naked East Asian woman drifting in a red sea with the USA flag taking up the sky. The red and white parallel each other (a chaotic sea vs perfect lines in the sky). Though I created this image before the 2021 Atlanta spa shootings, I feel like this painting suits the horror that took place. For starters, the color red can be interpreted as blood.

Then, there's the naked woman who represents hypersexualization and vulnerability. She's turned her back and her face is expressionless. I painted her to be a china doll about to be swallowed by the United States as a metaphor for assimilation. When I moved from California to Indiana, I was suddenly surrounded by lots of white people. I asked my mother to stop calling me by my Chinese name after getting bullied by my fellow elementary peers.

Poetry

Back when I was in the midst of processing part of my trauma from the junior year incident, I was in two writing workshops: Creative Non-Fiction and Poetry. A few of the poems written for the poetry class discussed this traumatic experience, but most of the poems in the magazine were written on my own time outside of class.

Here is one poem I wrote for the poetry class, but decided to not include in the magazine.:

“evidence”

1. You're on medical leave and I'm not mad about that. In fact, I'm quite glad about that and then, oh no, the guilt.
2. You unfollowed me on Instagram, and I am mad mad mad about that because I could have blocked you.
3. I can't stand the way citrus permeates my fingertips, and I prefer onion's rotting stench above my lip. You are both. And I am too.
4. Maybe it's about growth. If former Republican Warren can run for the blues, then maybe you can shake off the lens of taking drunken silence as affirmation. I already know I can't forget, and so, *I won't grow.*
5. I wrote a list of facts and I'm so numb, so full from awe.
6. Sometimes, it's not about holding it in. No matter how hard I try, you make my insides cry and then I'm suddenly bleeding from down under, unable to staunch the flow.

This poem came from an exercise in class where we were instructed to list five facts. There are six facts because I had been thinking about menstrual cycles. The last addition of blood and pain felt appropriate with my emotions at the time. I couldn't stop thinking about the guy from junior year because I kept receiving news about him. Despite its relation to other parts of the magazine, I chose to not include this poem because it's so old. Instead, I included the

sister poem to “evidence” (titled “more evidence”) in the artist’s corner (featured at the end of the interview). The poem, “more evidence,” directly gets to the point of Guo Weiwei’s feelings. She’s guilty and can’t help obsessing over people she can’t control.

Quizzes

In all the teen magazines (*Cosmopolitan*, *Tiger Beat*, *17*), the quizzes were strangely specific and yet completely generalized. For example, a quiz about my dream guy would include a question about an item you always took when you left the house (Chapstick, phone, earbuds). Based on your answers, your final dream guy answer might have been ‘The Cute Sportie’ and the description might sound like ‘this guy will sweep you off your feet with his charm and good looks.’ Despite all the shallowness, I’m still in love with personality quizzes. I created two quizzes for the magazine. The first one is most typical of a personality quiz: What Kind of DePauw Man is He? I originally wanted to create an infographic or an ad about ‘The DePauw Man,’ but it’s hard to generalize and demonize men (even though people villainize women all the time). There are the good, the bad, and the ugly (personality-wise) men on campus and it’s unfair of me to label them all bad. I think about my partner and how I had him take the quiz. Thankfully, he received the best answer, “The Guy.” Though he does make mistakes, he learns from them and keeps an open mind. In other words, I call him out on his actions and he willingly takes full responsibility. So, the men get three labels. The eight questions may feel silly upon first reading, but they were carefully crafted. The answers are true. On campus, there are men who are more preoccupied with when the next pregame is going to take place. Then, there are other men who recognize their privilege in this world and actively try to do better.

The second quiz takes a more poetic approach. The answers are meant to validate a survivor (though the title says victim) and their experience. Each question comes from people who seek to poke holes through a survivor's story. However, validating statements end the quiz. Even if a person drank or wore revealing clothing, that person does not deserve to be sexually assaulted. At the bottom of the page, there's a short list of steps and self-care tips for survivors. There's also a list for people supporting survivors. This quiz contrasts well with the DePauw Man quiz because the focus shifts from men to people who have been affected by sexual violence.

Playlists

Music is wonderful, music is light, and music is terribly triggering. I hated listening to the radio after a sexual assault incident my freshman year. The songs that played during the incident still echo in my head sometimes and I'm always afraid to hear a dreaded song at frat parties. For the magazine, I created two playlists. The first playlist (The Skip List) is full of songs that make me feel bad about myself and my experiences. They're bitter and get harder to listen to as the list goes on. Some I listen to (like #2 *Into You* by Julia Michaels) because the song is catchy, relatable, and so much fun to sing alone. However, I don't listen to all the tunes. I refuse to listen to the notes or the catchy bridge to song #10 (*Mine* by Bazzi) since an incident my freshman year. Annotations help describe why each song is there and the warning at the bottom gives a hint of the playlist's purpose and intention but in a fun, upbeat way.

The second playlist represents the recovery process. It's inevitable that when things get bad, I'll go back and listen to "The Skip List." This second list is designed to help me move up from rock bottom. This playlist was the hardest to create. The songs constantly changed. I kept

thinking about how the songs shouldn't solely focus on the person who wrongfully touched me. Though that person does play a role in recovery, they are not the whole story. I finally chose Laura Mvula's *Sing to the Moon* as the last song because of the encouraging lyrics ("Sing to the moon and the stars will shine /Over you, lead you to the other side") and calm melody.

Advertisements

Ads are a crucial part of magazines and I had a lot of joy in creating them. I did not create the poster for 98 Seconds (the contemporary dance show) or the *Magnolia* movie poster. I selected the 98 Seconds poster as an ad because I participated in the show my freshman year. The show interwove Rupi Kaur's "I'm Taking My Body Back" poem with songs (like #8 on The Skip List) to demonstrate the aftermath of sexual assault. Since the show focused on sexual assault, the dancers and audience were left completely vulnerable. A friend of mine attended the show and she's famous for not crying. She ended up in tears when the show finished. A recording of the performance is on YouTube and I often find myself returning to the video and all the women I met my freshman year. *Magnolia*, a short film directed by one of my friends, focuses on your "The 'Better' Frat Guy" (one of the answers from the DePauw Man Quiz). This guy thinks he's so high and mighty above the people partying, but finds himself attracted to someone, Magnolia. She fits your typical manic pixie dream girl on the outside, but when he refuses to let her leave, she grows a grotesque mouth and kills him. This film felt fitting for its flip of the controversial manic pixie dream girl archetype and punishment of a narcissistic man. For the three short films focusing on sexual assault (*fight, flight, freeze*), I took the posters (with the director's permission) and created an ad layout for the three films. I made up the production name (HoScho Senior Studios) and the layout of the three photos on the page. The pictures were submitted by the director.

The other ads were more lighthearted. Theradye was created since “The Interview” focuses on hair dye and I created a perfume ad because I wanted something that looked high fashion. The French perfume is called *désespoir*, a direct English translation to ‘desperation.’ For the other ads, I wanted to support and highlight a couple of my friends. One friend has been trying to grow her fashion business ever since I met her. Her hard work and passion inspired me then and continues to inspire me today. She was the first person I reached out to in creating ads. The gym ad features my other friend who has always been committed to working out. I also included the gym ad because I’ve been told that exercise will make the depression go away.

Other Content & Designs

To design most of the content (Missy’s Advice, quizzes, playlists, advertisements), I used Canva. The software for the magazine could be buggy and finicky to use at times. Using an anonymous survey, I gathered thoughts from 15 people about ‘the other woman,’ the ‘DePauw man,’ and a dilemma they may be having. Some dilemmas were serious and some were light-hearted (the struggle to not eat Chromatica Oreos while on a diet). For the question about the other woman (or third person), there were a couple of funny responses. Two responses thought the other woman referred to the third person in a polyamorous relationship or threesome. They responded with wholesome answers about how the situation is fine if everyone understands each other’s boundaries. Using the anonymous survey, I was able to use real-life problems and voices of other people to add variety to the magazine. I also wanted to see people’s thoughts on the other woman and the ‘DePauw man.’ I picked two responses for the advice page and picked other responses about the other woman for the magazine.

Coming up with the features was sort of easy. I knew I wanted to have an interview with myself and a 'how-to' article, but I didn't know anything beyond that. When I tested positive for COVID-19, I felt shame and found myself comparing that shame to the shame felt after the junior year incident. My positive test became my first article and feature for the magazine. For my how-to article, I chose "How To Get Over a Breakup." This article has advice for romantic breakups, platonic breakups, and other kinds of breakups. I wanted to discuss the importance of learning from friendship breakups because no one warns you that there are friends who will walk out of your life for one reason or another.

Personas

In order for me to channel different voices, I created different names for the magazine. Emma Wei (a mix of my English and Chinese name) serves as the editor. Emma Rees (full English name) interviews Guo Weiwei for the second feature. For the interview, I tried to make Emma confident and slightly cold (she's a journalist and wants to collect all the hot gossip) while Weiwei became more vulnerable. I chose the name Missy for the advice column and tried to channel a messy voice who means well, but has decided to stop giving any f*cks in life. The COVID-19 article's voice was meant to be very matter-of-fact (like Missy), but more poetic and serene. For that reason, I chose Chanel R. as the author's name. Chanel Miller, a woman who was sexually assaulted by Brock Turner at Stanford University, was a strong influence on my thesis. As homage, I used her name and my last initial. The 'librarian' in the book review article combines the names of two friends who work in libraries: Abi St. James. The featured author in the review, however, references a pen name created in the 5th grade. My friend and I swore we were going to be authors when we grew up, so we chose Lily Seriese as our fake name. Cameron Mann comes from Cameron Diaz and Leslie Mann who starred in the movie *The Other Woman*

(2014). I wanted to write about that film for the opinion piece because it featured a friendship between the wife and two mistresses. It was completely satisfying to see the women take their revenge on the man that three-timed them. However, I decided to focus on *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009) instead as it didn't outwardly villainize the man, wife, or third woman. I used part of my mother's name for the how-to article because mothers are supposed to give the best advice, right?

Speaking of mothers, I asked mine to write the "Letter-to-the-Editor." She gave me a letter full of facts because she's not as emotional as me. I had to gently push her and explain that I wanted a touch of personal information included in the letter (her position as a white mother to two Chinese daughters, for example). Her letter with all its facts and information helps prove the importance of sexual assault awareness. This thesis is important because sexual assault is an issue for women, especially on college campuses. I chose a magazine format for a few reasons. First, the magazine format allowed me to create a cohesive thesis even though it had different mediums (poems, creative nonfiction, and paintings). Second, a magazine is easy for people to consume and isn't usually taken seriously (unless it's academic and smart-sounding like *The New Yorker*). Third, sexual violence is a heavy topic and it can make people uncomfortable. It makes me uncomfortable sometimes. Sexual violence is a serious topic and magazines are usually fun and upbeat. Combine the two, and you get a magazine brimming with tension.

Let me use the cover as an example. The cover has the typical magazine cover features: a person posing in the middle, the title, and a few article names. The magazine's name (*dilemma*) has a pink, curly font. Upon first glance, there's nothing out of the ordinary about the cover until you notice two things. The word dilemma has a negative connotation and indicates a problem

(something you don't want to see in a magazine). Additionally, the article headlines at the bottom of the cover look normal at first. There's an interview and a how-to article (typical magazine stuff). One article brings up COVID-19 and sexual assault. With the phrase 'sexual assault,' tension rises. This magazine isn't your ordinary magazine if sexual assault is on the table for discussion. It won't have the usual beauty tips and hot gossip. Instead, the magazine will raise awareness about sexual violence and encourage people to then take action. Sexual violence is an issue many people (mostly women) face and people rarely talk about sexual violence. Hopefully, this magazine will help people discuss the issue at hand and learn to listen to survivors instead of poking holes in their stories.

Creating this magazine helped me process my traumatic experiences and work on my recovery. Similar to the process of painting *Trophy*, writing articles and creating content for a magazine about the worst parts of myself has been very difficult. There were multiple times when I thought about giving up on the whole thing. Who wants to hear what I have to say? Now, I realize I don't give a damn about what other people have to say (at least I don't at this moment). I can't control them, their reactions, or their thoughts. Instead, I'm choosing to take care of myself. I want to send the burdens to bed.

dilemma

APRIL 2021 | VOL. NO. 98



MEET GUO WEIWEI

She's a hot mess,
what about it?

TESTING POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Comparing her test
result with a sexual
assault experience and
feeling shame

GETTING OVER A BREAKUP

Learn how to move on:
romantic, platonic, and
everything in between

THE RECOVERY ISSUE

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PHOTO BY MICHAEL AIKIN

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pg. **30**

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PHOTO BY MICHAEL AIKIN

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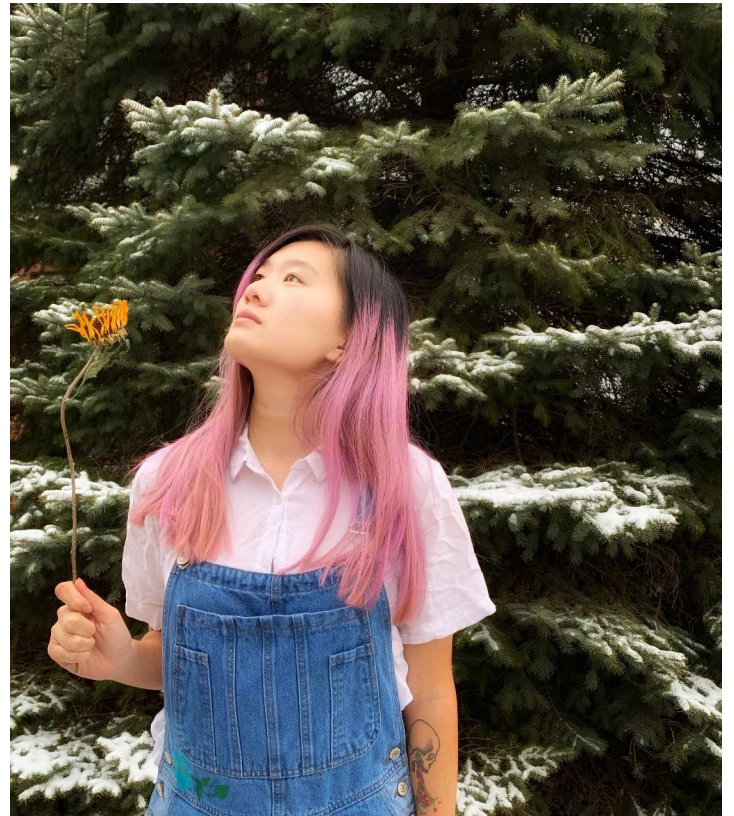


PHOTO BY MICHAEL AIKIN

EXTRAS

Masthead

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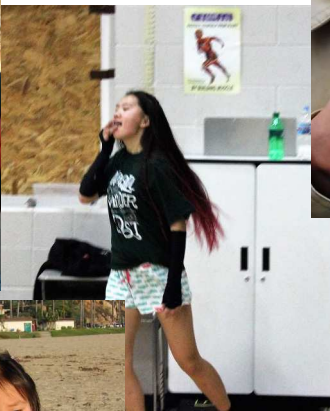
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PHOTO BY MICHAEL AIKIN



Food for Thought

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and sets the focus for this month's issue.

For that reason, please proceed with caution when taking in the contents of this issue. There are stories, images, and a lot of emotion that can be difficult to process all at once. Take your time. Feel free to put your reading aside until you can re-engage. Or feel free to skip around and look at whatever catches your interest.

I remember when an anonymous group of women released two maps of our college campus filled with numbers. These numbers indicated how many sexual assault incidents occurred in each area. People could submit the incident using a Google form. The first map came out in 2019 and had 82 participants. The incidents collected went from April 2013 to February 2018. The second map came out in 2020. The data collected focused on years from March 2018 to May 2020. There were 45 participants. I was a participant and submitted three separate incidents. Hardly anyone talked about the maps when they came out. It was disappointing.

Sexual violence on college campuses are far too frequent. Each story is different and the same. They all carry a suffocating weight that comes and goes when it pleases. I'm glad that I had my college campus's support group to help me in my time of need. At my first meeting, we painted mini succulent pots and peeled clementines. Though I hate the lingering scent of citrus, the fruit had never tasted so sweet.

Then, there are the people who do and don't believe in survivors of sexual assault. It's terrifying. Who can you trust to hold your vulnerability in the palms of their hands? Who will stand beside you? Who will take the effort to hold your hand so you don't break down in a department store?

And that's why this magazine was created. It can be difficult to reach out and make people understand. Sometimes there's no one around available to talk at 3 am on a Tuesday morning. Hopefully, this magazine will help soothe the reader and inform others on how to help survivors.

EDITOR'S NAME
Emma Wei

Artwork

The Body Remembers

These blinds are broken, perfect for an abstract body canvas. Black is smeared first over the blinds with handprints running over the canvas in different colors. Neon Orange is the only color that doesn't have direct handprints. Instead, delicate orange fingerprints run up and down the blinds. The neon orange stands apart from the blues, greens, and yellows. Each color represents a different person and reminds you how a touch will be both similar and different to everyone else. The white words spell out the artist's feeling: unfair. Why must you remember everyone's lingering touch when they can simply forget?



The Body Remembers



Trophy

Trophy

They say the gods dripped gold blood. Though these scars run gold, they aren't meant to romanticize or idealize self-harm. The legs are also in a provocative position and the gold color provides a layer of discomfort. This painting is a celebration of the person's continuing existence. Despite all the hurt and hatred spent in a blue place, it's possible to recover and survive.



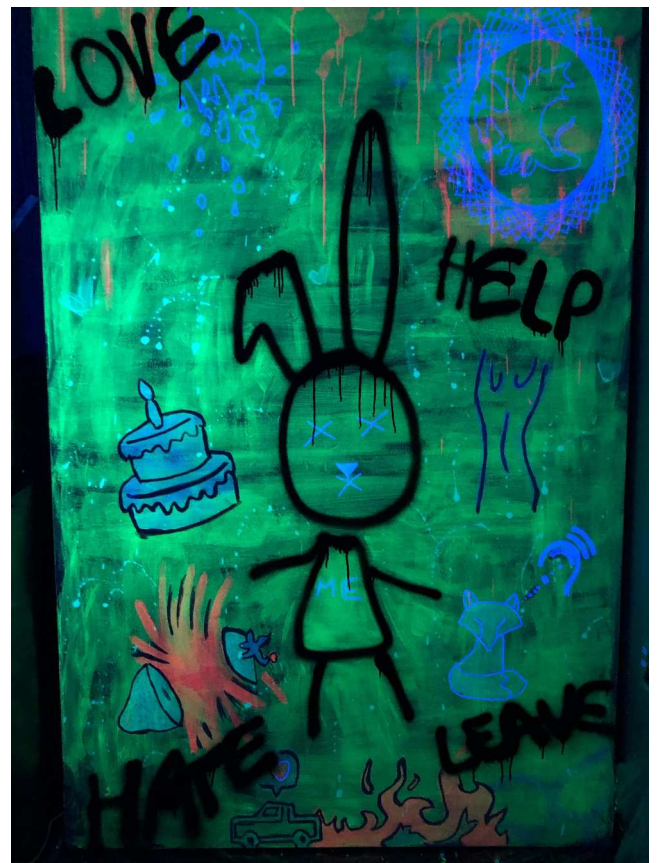
bunny.me in the dark (no light)



bunny.me in the daylight with the artist for scale

bunny.me

By day, this canvas is a six foot painting of a black bunny stick figure with a drooping ear. The words HELP, LEAVE, and HATE contrast the one positive word, LOVE. The words match the single drooping ear, dripping paint, and dark tone. The canvas's size makes everything more lifelike and directly in your face. Under different lighting, the painting comes alive. UV light shows different things: a broken light bulb, a dragon trapped in a circle of squares, and an ear. In complete darkness, the painting loses its bright background in favor of making other objects pop out: a flower, a couple of hearts, and more splatters. Other symbols seen in both lightings includes fire, a truck, a fox, a cake, a bursting strawberry, and a naked back body. The lone bunny gets an expression full of Xs under UV light. With the color, the bunny is lost and dead. Without the color, it is completely alone.



bunny.me under UV Light

THE RADY

meet your best self

colors and boxes available at select stores, shops, and counseling offices

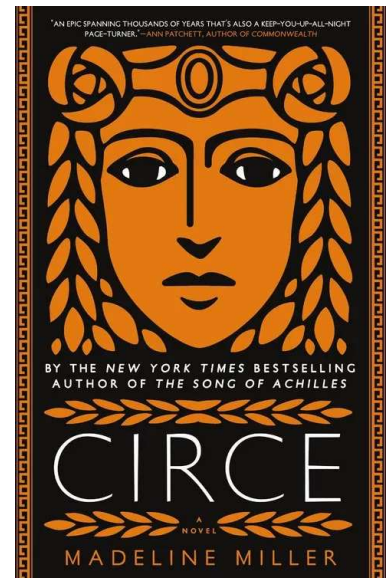
Take Action Now

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, so here's a list of action items you can take to educate yourself and others.

Read

Circe by Madeline Miller

If you ask anyone about Circe, they would tell you she was a man-hater who turned men into pigs or they wouldn't know who she was at all. This book is more than simple Greek mythology. Yes, famous characters like Daedalus and Odysseus make appearances, but it is the titular character that takes the spotlight and forces you to hear her story. When you're a woman living all alone on an island, you must be wary of visitors and all the men that could potentially threaten you. A particular scene demonstrates the book's themes such as how anger presents itself in different genders, power, and the troubling notion of self-pity. Banished to an island, Circe is somewhat content at first until she leaves to help her sister, Pasiphae, deliver a child. Their relationship had always been cruel with Pasiphae acting as a constant tormentor. The sisters argue, laying all of their faults to bare. Pasiphae is cruel, but she truly understands the power dynamics and knows how far to push people. Circe, on the other hand, was always living underfoot to her father and others, never pushing back or fighting for herself.



Circe Book Cover

"Public Safety" Essay by Paul Rousseau

What do you do when someone you loved hurts you, unintentionally at first? When do you draw the line until you can no longer make an excuse for that one person you hold dear? Putting romantic love on the side, there's platonic love between best friends who are supposed to have each other's backs. So you can imagine Paul's surprise when his friend, Mark, shot him in the head through the wall and tried to cover up the shooting. Paul's road of recovery and trying to remember what happened takes an impossibly long time. He only wants to read the report from that night, but a series of complications with the school makes things unnecessarily difficult. When Paul finally returns to campus to read the report, he recognizes Mark's car on the way over. He contemplates what his old room looks like and remembers that Mark was planning to visit Home Depot to fix the hole in the wall. Once Paul finds out what his friend did to help himself rather than Paul's bleeding head injury, you think about the awfulness of it all. The school that made things difficult for a disabled person to simply read what happened to him, the friend that was more focused on saving his own skin, and the similarities between an institution, perpetrator, and victim that parallels sexual assault cases.

Watch

Unbelievable (2019)

There's nothing more frustrating than knowing that you're telling the truth only for no one to listen or believe you. The dramatic irony in this Netflix Original is heartbreaking for it's not up for debate whether the audience believes her. The scenes of Marie (played by Kaitlyn Dever) and her r*pe are intense and painfully intimate. So it's infuriating when one of her foster mothers speaks to the police and tells the head detective about Marie's history of acting out for attention. The mother also notes how she has been sexually assaulted in the past and Marie has not been acting how a typical sexual assault survivor should. Newsflash: no survivor will act the same way in the aftermath. The foster mother cares, but she's wary. Her confession snowballs into the police (two men) pressuring Marie to take back her story and everyone in Marie's life turning their backs on her. Based on a true story, this is a show that's difficult to watch at times, but well worth your time and energy.

27 Dresses (2008)

Though this movie can be pegged as a silly rom-com and reflection of many tropes (women and their instant connection to weddings and the cynical man who hates weddings), this movie has an important lesson that everyone should learn. At one point the wedding-lover woman (Jane played by Katherine Heigl) and the wedding-hater man (Kevin played by James Marsden), get drinks at a bar. She's lamenting over how she has to plan her sister's wedding which makes him ask the most obvious question: why doesn't she say no? She protests that it's her sister's, but he's not convinced. He then makes her practice saying the word no by asking her to give him money.

Here's the scene below:

Kevin: Jane, give me fifty bucks.

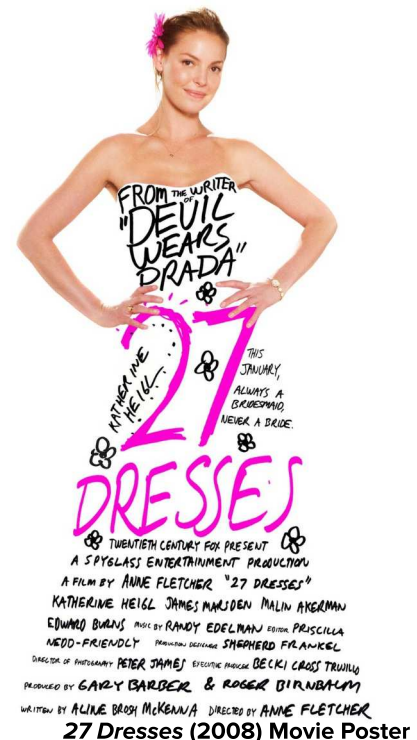
Jane: No!

Kevin: [takes Jane's hand] Jane...I need you to give me fifty bucks.

Jane: [hesitantly] No?

Kevin: Eh...not bad. Can I have your drink?

Her immediate "Sure" is quickly followed by a series of "Nos". It's too late. He finishes the drink. I'll admit the slut-shaming in this movie is disappointing. However, it spotlights an important issue in women and their inability to say no.



Listen

X (2019) by Daniel Sloss

You might think here's another cis, straight, white guy with some dark jokes, that might be offensive. You're right but he means well. His comedy shows tend to have a certain routine. He opens up with a real wise-cracker and goes onto some longer bits. Then, he hits you with some sort of truth or lesson as if you were attending a Ted Talk. His most recent recorded show on HBO Max is no outlier. Usually, when comedians (mostly men) bring up r*pe or sexual assault up as part of their routines, the jokes are crass, hurtful, and hard to hear. Sloss's show is the first routine (that I've heard anyway) to discuss the #MeToo movement in a gentle, firm, and funny way. He brings up an incident where one of his friends r*ped another one of his friends and the aftermath of what happened. It's a typical story. Sloss confronts his ex-friend who confesses that he's a sexual assailant. Sloss ends their friendship. Two months later, the ex-friend changes his mind and accuses the woman of lying. But Sloss and his friend wrote this part of the comedy show together. She said it was important he tell the story from his perspective "cause men will listen to you." And the design of the comedy act is just perfect because the structure plays on a stereotypical man's thoughts: pedophilia jokes, drinking, and the confusing territory of vaginas. He gets all the men on his side and then whips out this sexual assault story to educate his audience in a very important manner.



I May Destroy You Poster

Support

Michaela Coel

This woman created two of my favorite TV shows and has talents for artistry and honesty. *Chewing Gum* (2015-2017) is goofy and follows her protagonist (Tracey) trying to lose her virginity while *I May Destroy You* (2020) features her protagonist (Arabella) navigating the aftermath of sexual assault. The awkwardness of sex proves itself as one of the commonalities between the shows. Since the media often glamorizes the intricacies of sex (the process, the preparation, the positions), Coel's shows become enjoyable to watch (though you receive a lot of second-hand embarrassment). *Chewing Gum* brings religion into the sexual conversation while *I May Destroy You* discusses the power of social media and what it means to find justice. It also has the first media portrayal of period sex when Arabella's partner takes out a bloody tampon and picks up a blood clot. Fascinated, he picks up the clot and rubs it between his fingers. The moment is hilarious, honest, and much needed for media that also tend to inaccurately portray menstrual cycles. It's also important to note that elements from *I May Destroy You* are lifted from Coel's life. While working on *Chewing Gum*, Coel went out to a bar with a friend. She was drugged and sexually assaulted that night. That experience led her to create *I May Destroy You* which took 191 drafts before she was satisfied. In an interview with *Vulture*, Coel mentioned, "It's been therapeutic to write about it, and actively twist a narrative of pain into something with more hope, and even humor."

Reflect

Joe Caputo from *Orange is the New Black* (2013-2019)

Do you want to talk about men? Let's talk about men. Cause it's "not all men," but it is every man until he learns to not only be better but do better in his treatment and attitude towards women. Joe Caputo's your self-deprecating man who thinks the world has done wrong to him and his niceness. His first scene in the entire season sets up everything you need to know about his character: he lets the new inmate use the phone and promptly masturbates in his office after she leaves. It takes time (and about four or five seasons) for him to go through a series of challenges and changes that makes him more empathetic. You may even find yourself thinking more highly of him and forget his problematic first season behavior. When he's finally doing well for himself and helping contribute to bettering the lives of the incarcerated women through a restorative justice class, he's accused of sexual harassment. Oh right, he fired Susan Fischer (Lauren Lapkus), the nicest prison guard, in the first season because she didn't like him back. Yes, she wasn't the best at her job, but she was one of the few officers who humanized the women.

Initially, Caputo is upset and angry. He did not do those things and it's all a misunderstanding. He visits with friends and discusses the situation with his partner. He even visits Fischer at her house and tries to tell her how she misunderstood the whole situation. The visit makes matters worse and leads to a restraining order. His "Me Too" arc spans four episodes and concludes in Caputo's class when he stands in as a victim of one of the inmates during an exercise during his class. He sits on the chair and the tension is high. He's already agitated, but the exercise allows him to finally understand what the woman he hurt went through. Caputo learned that he should've listened to Fischer instead of trying to change her mind. It wasn't his place to correct what she was thinking or feeling but to listen. By the end of the episode, he admits that Fischer was right and confesses to the prison's warden. In the end, you're conflicted. You know Caputo is right because he can't volunteer at a prison full of women when he treated Fisher so poorly. But his leave of absence also means a lost opportunity for all the women who wanted to participate in the program.



Still of Joe Caputo (Nick Sandow) from the Season 4 finale of *OITNB*

NOTE: This list represents only a fraction of things you can do and consume. There are so many other pieces of media you can engage with through watching, listening, reading, and what not. Don't stop here.

Continue the Conversation

Research Statistics

Find reliable resources to inform yourself about sexual violence. The RAINN organization has plenty of information about anti-sexual violence. Other groups include the NSVRC (National Sexual Violence Resource Center), EROC (Ending Rape on Campus), The Consensual Project, and SCESA (Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault).

Understand Where the Fault Lies

The blame never lies with the victim (or survivor). It does not matter what they were wearing, how they acted, or how far they went before changing their mind. No means no.

Forms of Sexual Violence

- Having sex without a condom and not letting the other person aware that there is no condom
- Sexual Coercion: One person keeps pressuring the other until they give in
- Sexual Harassment: Inappropriate talking or suggestive jokes that are unwanted

Be an Advocate

- Continue the conversation (but don't overpower what's being said).
- Attend seminars, lectures, and keep educating yourself. You can find resources and events online, through social media, or in local areas. Of course, always make sure to take a break when you need to.

Prepare Yourself

- What will you do if someone comes to you with a sexual assault experience?
- What will you do if you know the perpetrator or are good friends with the perpetrator?
- What will you do if you are sexually assaulted?



RAINN stands for the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network. This organization focuses on anti-sexual violence.

Here are some statistics from their site verbatim:

- An American is sexually assaulted every 73 seconds.
- 1 out of every 6 American women have been victims of an attempted or completed rape in her life.
- 1 in 33 American men have been victims of an attempted or completed rape in his life.
- 8 out of 10 rapes are committed by someone the victim knows.
- American Indians are twice as likely to experience sexual assault compared to all races.

The Skip List



SECOND CASUALTY

RELATABLE

DRAMATIC AF

I DONT EVEN KNOW

FIRST CASUALTY

SECOND CASUALTY

1. God's Plan by - Drake
2. Into You - Julia Michaels
3. Start a War - Klergy
4. you broke me first - tate mcrae
5. One Day The Only Butterflies Left Will Be In Your Chest As You March Towards Your Death - Bring Me The Horizon
6. Everybody Loves You - Charlotte Lawrence
7. Fooled Around and Fell in Love - Elvin Bishop
8. Till it Happens to You - Lady Gaga
9. All You Wanna Do (Live) - SIX the Musical
10. Mine by Bazzi

BORDERLINE BAD

FACTS

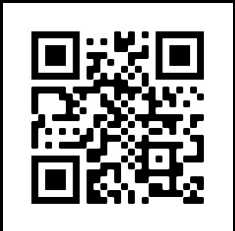
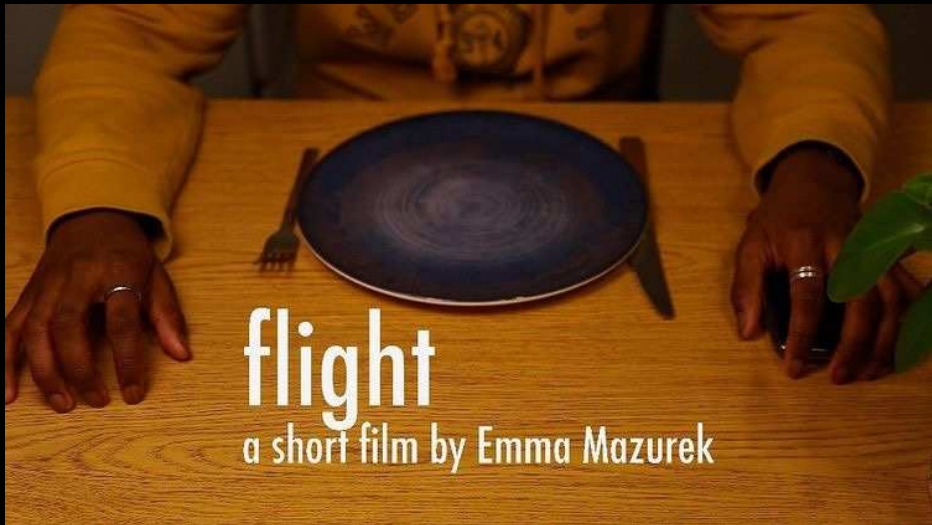
WARNING:
DON'T GO FARTHER

RELATABLE BUT IT HURTS



WARNING: This playlist is specifically designed for someone who blames themselves for everything they've ever done (as they should). Each song will push you farther and farther down a path of ruin. You may think you're strong enough to listen, but you're not.

a series of short films on sexual assault



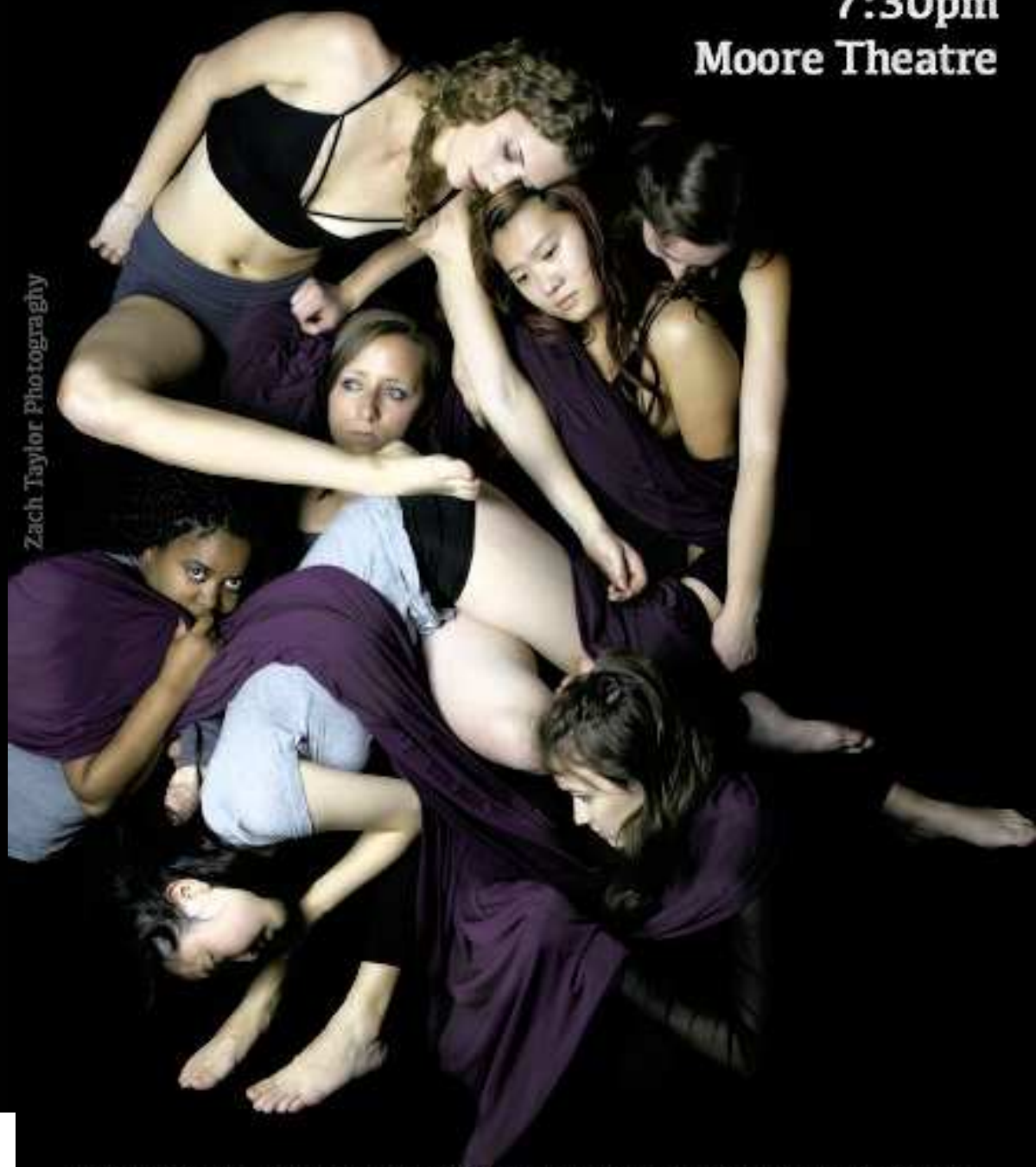
Company Unspoken presents

98 Seconds

December 9 & 10

7:30pm

Moore Theatre



Zach Taylor Photography



Exploring recovery paths of sexual assault survivors through dance

directions to revival

COMMIT THE MANTRA TO MEMORY AS YOU
LISTEN

mantra

REMEMBER THAT IT'S OVER
LET THE SHOCK SETTLE
AND SETTLE
AND SINK
YOU'LL SOON TIRE OF
TAKING THE BLAME.
REMEMBER THEY DON'T MATTER
FORGET WHAT YOU OWE
REMEMBER SKINNED STORIES ARE DELICATE
PROTECT THEM AND STAY ALIVE



listen

1. Case Closed - Little Mix
2. AhHa - Nate Ruess
3. Serotonin - girl in red
4. pity party - lovelytheband
5. Rabbit Hole - blink-182
6. Forgive Me - Chloe x Halle
7. Yours & Mine - Lucy Dacus
8. Closure - Taylor Swift
9. porcelain - mxmtoon
10. Sing to the Moon - Laura Mvula



WARNING: This playlist does not guarantee any return of sanity and safety. Be sure to reach out to the appropriate resources and personal connections if things get really bad.

COVID-19 & Sexual Assault

Comparing my sexual assault experience
with testing positive for COVID-19



AUTHOR: CHANEL R.

When I told him I thought he sexually assaulted me, his eyebrows furrowed, and he sighed. He turned his phone back over on the table and looked to my right, not meeting my eye.

He said:

“I’m not comfortable with using that label. People will hear that, and that’s all they’ll see me as, through this...lens.”

His response confused me, and I could feel something awful starting to crawl under my skin. I asked him to elaborate. He (let's call him Parker) explained that he didn't really see what happened between us as sexual assault because I never said no on the night we were drunk or the night we were sober. Parker didn't want people to see him through this lens because he was afraid they would never hear his side of the story and that he was so much more than someone who sexually assaulted me. He supports women and the #MeToo movement, and he wasn't like all those other men.

That was a year ago, a pre-COVID era where my junior year of college was filled with parties, care-free get-togethers, and mask-



Isolation can last up to 10 days depending on symptoms

PHOTO BY: MICHAEL AIKIN

free people. And approximately eight hours ago, my sister texted my COVID-19 test result to the family group chat. I spent that time making my room a bigger mess, crying, calling friends, watching Netflix, eating syrup-soaked spaghetti, and wiping down the bathroom after a much-needed shower. The result said positive, nothing else. No information to pinpoint the exact moment when I had contracted the virus in the two weeks before symptoms started. Was it that one time I ate inside, or was it from the eight-year-old who only understood she wanted a hug?

“ *...I never said no on the night we were drunk or the night we were sober.* ”

Shame was quick to find me after the shock wore off. I ensured no family member would make a social media post and felt nauseous after hearing my grandma talk about it on the phone. I was not new to this feeling. Guilt had sewn a pocket for itself in my skin as soon as I was born, and shame was birthed last year with Parker. He was also ashamed. Not for touching me, but for cheating on his fiancée of five years.

We sat across from each other many times after the incident to get to the bottom of things. They were futile attempts to salvage our friendship. It wasn't for either of our sakes; it was for our friend group. To complicate the matter, I had a crush on one of his fraternity brothers. The time I told Parker about my sexual assault conclusion, we were at a restaurant. Bruno Mars' "When I Was Your Man" played, and we both laughed bitterly at the timing. I was too nervous to say the words aloud, so I texted him. His response infuriated me, and his excuses afterward were not much better:

"I hope you would know me better to know I would never do something like that".

When his fiancée found out what happened a month later, she blamed me for the incident — accused me of manipulating him. Her words filled me with shame. Sometimes they still do. Now, a new rush of shame surrounds me after my new (but not uncommon) diagnosis. I notified my



An important piece of the puzzle

partner and former roommate immediately. Though we had all moved out for the semester and had gone to our different Hoosier areas, they were still on my contact tracing list.

My immuno-compromised roommate was due to travel to Florida to take care of her grandmother in a few weeks. She took a 15-minute test, and it came back as negative. Relief dripped down on my head before I realized it could be a false negative. She developed symptoms the next day and was tested on Thanksgiving day. Another negative.

My family (mom, dad, sister, and grandma) were all scheduled for another testing. Luckily, they all came back negative. None of my family members either know or believe I was sexually assaulted. Not from what happened last year with Parker or my freshman year with a senior. My mum believes I believe it was sexual assault, but that's it. When it looked like Parker was going to go to trial within his fraternity for what happened, my mum advised me to put a stop to it.



PHOTO BY: anonymous

“I’m afraid you’re going to break no matter the outcome. If they find him guilty, you’ll feel bad and beat yourself up. If they find him innocent, you’re going to be worse.”

I understood what she meant. She wasn’t wrong. No matter the verdict of the trial, I would still beat myself up about it. However, I felt a trial would help solidify the validity of my feelings and what happened with Parker. If the trial found Parker guilty, then I would feel some sort of relief. That no, I wasn’t crazy or silly for feeling the way I do. After Parker found out about the possibility of a trial (the beginning of the school year), he told me we had to talk.

“Why do you think it’s sexual assault? What are you basing it off of?”

When I answered it might’ve been my feelings, he asked:

“Does that mean I was sexually assaulted?”

His response stopped my heart. My logic of the situation had been: he made me uncomfortable, he initiated everything, I was sexually assaulted. His thoughts were something different: he was uncomfortable, I initiated everything, therefore he was had been sexually assaulted. I believed him until I called the campus SASA advocate later that night. She told me perpetrators often flip the narrative on the people they’ve hurt.

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Symptoms aren’t always severe. I awoke Sunday morning (the day after moving back home) with a throat so sore, I couldn’t fall back asleep. Admittedly, I crossed it off as nothing at first — dry air or thin pillows that made my neck sore. The next day, I kept spitting up mucus, and it all felt fine, normal. Not COVID-19. Just a cold, I told myself. Symptoms after a sexual assault are

subtle as well until they someday cross the severity line. Sometimes flashbacks only make brief surprise visits during your day. Sometimes they keep you on the ground, under your bed, shaking from all the spilled blood.

The COVID-19 lens brings masks, social distancing, and death to mind. Disdain for those who don't care and strong wishes for essential workers. Why is it so hard for people to understand they shouldn't attend big gatherings and put themselves at risk? I say that now fully recognizing my hypocrisy. The last week before I returned home, I went to a mostly empty restaurant, and I went to a Diwali celebration. I wanted to support my friends and their culture. There weren't more than 20 people. However, the health department said it could've been anywhere up to two weeks before symptoms started. I had to film with a group of people for a class project. I had to help close housing down at the end of

the semester with a different group. It could've been anyone from anywhere.

Sexual assault can happen to anyone at any time. It's what happens when you don't teach people not to harm another being. However, sexual assault isn't a lens like Parker says. Sexual assault is like a giant arrow pointing piercing your skin. Some people see victims. Others see survivors. Many see liars or overreactors. When they looked at Parker, many of my friends saw scumbag and sexual assailant. Or maybe it's something else. All the different parts that make us up (good, bad, funny, quirky) are written on our bodies. You don't see it all at once. You have to get to know the person first. If I pinpoint the situation as sexual assault, it feels like I have a giant paint bomb in my hands. If I throw it at him, the paint will explode and cover all of his skin. People will only see the sticky paint color. They won't see how hardworking he is or how much he loves to play Dungeons and Dragons. No one will see how he bought his friend a

dinosaur piñata for their birthday or how he helps make sure drunk female friends drink enough water. I think that's why he keeps reacting the way he does. He's scared no one will see the other parts of him too. Our last parting conversation (from the beginning of the school year) ended with a plan formed by him. If anyone were to come to either one of us about what happened, we were to give a neutral side of the story and direct them to the other person for more information. Or, more importantly, their side of the story.



The night it happened

SELFIE BY: MAN IN RED SHIRT

I'm intentionally leaving out information about what happened that night. That's for a different time, a different writing. I want to emphasize reactions, arrows, paint bombs, and how he reacted when I told him my feelings. He accused me of not taking responsibility for my actions in the matter. It hurt and angered me. I have trouble blaming people (I like to keep that for myself). I told him whenever my friends rose to anger. I reminded them of my role in the matter. When Parker reached out to me about the trial, he emphasized that he felt like I still hadn't taken responsibility. I hadn't apologized to him for what happened or acknowledged how hard things had been for him. I was baffled. When had he ever done that for me? He said he felt like he had done that many times, but it was now my turn to do the same for him. I'm not sure why, but I did. I gave him a very fake and unenthusiastic apology.

I understand shame. I had COVID-19, and I am familiar with all forms of sexual violence. I'm not trying to place COVID-19 and sexual assault on the same level, but there are similar feelings, symptoms, and opinions. A couple of people have told me it was not my fault regarding both my experience with Parker and contracting COVID. I'm far more inclined to believe it is not my fault with Parker, but I take full responsibility for catching COVID. Quarantine, social-distancing, and isolation while other people (admittedly ignorant, selfish people) throw parties and look like they're having the time of their life. I made some mistakes, but I'm taking responsibility for my actions, just like my experience with Parker. Unfortunately, my story is not unique. Many people have been sexually assaulted and many people test positive for COVID even if they took all



Shame is all too familiarPHOTO BY: MICHAEL AIKIN

the precautions.

One of my friends recently tested positive for COVID-19. Like me, she followed all CDC guidelines and was very careful in her interactions. Now, she's ashamed, like me. She has no reason to be ashamed, this sort of thing can happen to anyone, in fact it has happened to many many people who take precautions. I realize that I say this while still feeling a little shame for myself. What can I say? I'm particularly hard on myself. However, no one has looked at me differently or treated me with disgust. Seeing my friend go through the same situation and knowing she did nothing wrong, I think I can treat myself with the same care that I would give her. Maybe I'll finally stop letting the memory of Parker build my guilt.

ADAM JOHN STRASSER | HAYDEN TURITTO | DA'JEAL
WILLABY-PARTEE | SOPHIA GOETTKE

A FILM BY
VICTORIA DE DIOS

MAGNOLIA



DIRECTOR/SCREENWRITER **VICTORIA DE DIOS** CAMERA ASSISTANT/SCRIPT SUPERVISOR **SALMA ALLAM** ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR/ASSOCIATE PRODUCER/CASTING **YUSNAVI MACHADO** ART DEPARTMENT HEAD **KARLA GUERRERO**
CINEMATOGRAPHER **REYNA WILSON** SOUND/PRODUCER **MATT WILSON** AND **HENRY ARSLANIAN**

Confessions

missed work because i couldn't process the night before. now my boss hates me

now that i have pixie cut hair, the catcalling has gotten worse

after my first time at third base, he told me there was definitely room for improvement

i've never been catcalled and it makes me jealous/insecure

he said if i was pregnant, i'd have to go alone to get an abortion since we were long distance by 2 hours

told my sexual assailant that i was sorry. it was a lie

made out in a truck with him (and then some) cause i thought we were an item

i used to think poorly of the third woman...and now that i'm her, i feel even worse

found faith in lines on wrists and thighs that make my mother cry

my crush said he liked my scarf so i went through a scarf phase for two months

Missy's Advice

DEAR MISSY,
I USED TO BE SO IN LOVE WITH MY PARTNER, BUT AFTER A TERRIBLE INCIDENT ABOUT A YEAR AGO THAT SHATTERED MY TRUST, WE ENDED THINGS FOR A FEW MONTHS TO REFLECT AND REGROUP. A FEW MONTHS LATER, WE GOT BACK TOGETHER TO TRY THINGS AGAIN, AND WE'RE STILL TOGETHER NOW. BUT I DON'T FEEL THE SAME SPARK THAT I USED TO FEEL IN THE PAST WHEN WE SPENT TIME TOGETHER. THE PANDEMIC IS MAKING THINGS EVEN WORSE BECAUSE WE CAN'T SEE EACH OTHER IN PERSON, AND I FEEL LIKE I'M CONSTANTLY FIGHTING A FEELING OF INDIFFERENCE AND FEELING LIKE NOTHING I DO CAN SAVE THIS RELATIONSHIP. BASICALLY, MY DILEMMA IS THAT I'M WONDERING IF I EVEN STILL LOVE THIS PERSON, OR IF I'M JUST HOPING THAT THE FEELING I FELT A FEW YEARS AGO WILL COME BACK IF I JUST PUT IN SOME MORE WORK.

- THE CLASH 1981 SONG

Dear The Clash 1981 Song,

Contrary to popular belief, hate is not the opposite of love. That's indifference. Tyra Banks taught me that on America's Next Top Model All-Stars Cycle. If you're not feeling the vibes anymore, then go, leave, sprint your way out as fast as you can. Cause no one is benefitting from this situation, especially you. What you had was good at the time, but no one will blame you for not being able to work it out. And by no one, I realize there will be people who won't like it (like the partner or family), but they're not you. Your family and friends aren't the people who had to date the person. If they say 'why did you break up with this person, they were so great,' respond with 'why don't you date them?'

Ever watch Glee? Rachel and Finn went through several ups and downs on that show and they both did things to the other person that was despicable (not to mention toxic AF). That's an amped-up version of what your relationship could be. Now, ever watch Schitt's Creek? Alexis and Ted have a couple of ups and downs, but they finally get together. Then, Ted takes a 3-year job in the Galapagos. They try long-distance for a while, but amicably break up. It's for the best given their current situation. Watch these two shows and compare them. Yes, I want you to binge-watch two shows, but it'll be worth it, I swear.

Now if you're in a situation where you can't leave, that's different. I don't know what your partner did to make you lose your trust, but it sounds serious. And you're a wonderful person for giving them a second chance because that's what society has conditioned us to do. But remember the saying, "Fool me once, shame on you, but fool me twice, shame on me"? Then, there we go. Maybe you still love them, maybe you don't. Just leave. It's better to leave things on as best of a note you can.

Relationships don't have to be about second chances (in fact, to hell with second chances) because yes people grow and people change, but you don't owe them a second chance in a relationship. Say hi, say bye, then leave. You can always come back and revisit in the future.

Set yourself free, babe.

—Missy

DEAR MISSY,
I'VE BEEN IN LOVE WITH A GIRL FOR THREE AND A HALF YEARS NOW, BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW TO TELL HER. PART OF ME IS AWARE THAT, REALISTICALLY, SHE MUST KNOW AND OUR RELATIONSHIP HAS NOT CHANGED. THE OTHER PART OF ME IS DEATHLY AFRAID TO BE SEEN AND TO BE KNOWN WITH CERTAINTY. IF SHE DOESN'T RECIPROCATE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WILL DO. WILL IT RUIN OUR FRIENDSHIP? AND WHAT IF SHE DOES? WHAT IF WE BOTH LOVE EACH OTHER IN THE SAME WAY BUT ULTIMATELY HAVE A RELATIONSHIP THAT NATURALLY RUNS ITS COURSE OR EVEN ENDS BADLY? WHAT HAPPENS IF WHAT I SAY NOW RUINS OUR FRIENDSHIP SOMEWHERE DOWN ALONG THE LINE? I DON'T FEEL LIKE I CAN LIVE WITHOUT HER, BUT THE CURRENT STATE OF THINGS IS ALSO MAKING ME FEEL INSANE. SO, FOR NOW, I'M STUCK IN LOVE AND IN PAIN.

- PAINFULLY IN LOVE

Dear Painfully in Love,

This is where I'm supposed to tell you that if you tell her, it will all be okay and you'll both be better off after. I mean it will, but I'm not going to just tell you that. Why? Cause it's dumb and how else are you going to learn your lesson? No matter what I say, you know what you actually want to do. You're just looking for extra reassurance or validation so you can have the courage to confess. Truth is, you need to do that by yourself. There may be no reason other than do what you already know and stop being such a whiner about it.

Still don't want to confess? Fine, then do some homework while you're at it. Get all up in the best friend falling for their best friend trope. Not just the typical kind that has a happy ending. Cause that's not always accurate. Start with *Pretty in Pink* (1986), *Love & Basketball* (2000), and *One Day* (2011). *Pretty in Pink* is an excellent example where the best friend doesn't get with the girl. *Love and Basketball* is a good tale of childhood friends to adult people. There are elements of toxic masculinity and a lot of emphasis on the selves and how they grow as people. *One Day* is a film adaptation of a book and you should definitely read and watch both works. The complicated relationship between these two friends lasts years and they go through all sorts of obstacles together.

The reason why I'm being so tough is that there's no way of beating around the bush. You know what you have to do, either tell her or don't. By keeping it a secret, you're holding the both of you back. I had a friend in love with her best friend for all of high school. Everyone knew she liked him. Even their parents were rooting for the two of them to get together. But no one asked the best friend what he wanted. He didn't reciprocate but there was a lot of pressure for him. Not only that, but it ended up becoming a problem in his relationships. I'm not even sure if they still talk to each other the way they used to anymore.

I also want to ensure that you're actually her friend or if you're just her friend because you like her. There's a difference. What will you do if she says she doesn't feel the same? Will you be able to accept her feelings honestly and willingly? Or will you get upset that she won't like you and feel as if you wasted all your time? Whether she knows of your feelings or not, you need to decide what you want. Regardless, the choice will lead you in a new direction.

Set yourself free, babe.

— Missy

The Interview

Grab some tea and get the rundown on Guo Weiwei



Article by Emma Rees
Photography by Michael Aikin

Emma: Hi, thank you for meeting and sitting down with me.

Weiwei: Hello! No problem, thanks for having me.

E: Of course, I'm glad we were able to connect. How are you? How are you feeling?

W: I'm good, tired, but good. How are you?

E: I'm good, thank you for asking. I just wanted to get this interview going. I love your hair color by the way. It's like a mauve.

W: Thank you!

E: Did you get it professionally done?

W: No, no, no. This is a box dye. I used to get it done in a salon, but it's sooo expensive. Asian hair is dark which makes it difficult to lighten. At home, you either use the harshest chemicals and risk your hair falling out or you risk having a terrible tangerine shade with softer chemicals.

E: How long have you dyed your hair?

W: Technically, I started dying it back in high school during my junior year. It was a birthday present and I was so nervous the first time. It took about eight hours to do the lightening and coloring. When it was over, I fell in love and never looked back. But, my fondness for unusual hair color started back in elementary school. I had a couple of clip on hair extensions that I kept delicately wrapped in a box. One was an aquamarine and the other was dark purple. I felt so fancy whenever I clipped them in. Then, In fifth grade, I got actual hair extensions put in. Six different colors: red, orange, yellow on one side (the warms) and blue, green, purple

on the other (the cools). I loved the unnatural colors so much and I felt like the main character of a story. I always looked up to Ariel from *The Little Mermaid*. Her fluffy bangs and rose red hair was gorgeous.

E: Wow, that's young! Did your school approve?

W: Yes and no. My middle school was fine with the hair extensions until some boys wore temporary hair color to school for some basketball team. Later that day, there was an announcement saying that unnatural hair color was not allowed though I don't remember hearing that announcement. I was too busy tracing my finger up and down the lines on my chair. I do remember everyone staring at me as my teacher's footsteps marching across the classroom towards me. She grabbed my hair, inspecting the different colors carefully. Then, she asked how soon I could get them taken out. My mum and I went to talk to the vice principal the next day. We were hoping that I could still keep my extensions. The vice principal said the announcement wasn't even about me, but that my hair did unfortunately still go against the dress code.

High school was better because I saw a few people with green or blue hair on my first day. So I figured my pink hair was fine and even welcome. Then, it was time for senior photos. I had just gotten my hair freshly dyed and I was excited to take my senior headshot for the yearbook. I felt good about myself that day for once. It all went well until the photographer said we'd have to retake the photos. He said I had to hide my long pink hair behind my shoulders.

I was devastated. And then I was angry when I saw the yearbook and a girl with short pink hair was allowed to have her hair color put on display. For a school that promotes itself on diversity, they really *really* do not. They want clean cut kids, not rebellious colors.

E: No kidding. It sounds like your hair is very special to you. Can I ask why coloring your hair is so satisfying?

W: Hmmm, I'm not sure. I think it started off as an aesthetic. Like there's all those amazing cartoon characters with different colored hair like *Sailor Moon*. The high schoolers who could transform into magical superheroes with special abilities were the coolest girls ever. Sailor Neptune, or Michiru, was my favorite. She had the prettiest wavy teal hair and could control the sea. Then I think my need to dye my hair morphed itself as a way for me to differentiate myself from other East Asians. When I was young, kids on the playground would run up to me with an eager smile. "Did you know that all Asians look alike?" they asked. Pink hair meant I could be someone that stood out. Except one time I was in an interview and the candidate mistook me for another East Asian woman on campus who also happened to have pink hair. So there goes that plan.

E: So they confused you with someone else during their interview?

W: Yeah, it was pretty awkward and I could see the embarrassment in their eyes. I knew exactly who they were talking about. I don't think we look alike at all. Even with the hair, she had a rosy pink and mine was more magenta.

E: What about dying your hair, you said you do that at home?

W: Yes! There's the money issue and then there's something personal and soothing about touching my own hair. With my body, I have little control over how wide my eyes can look and how immediate I can see results. That's translation for consistently going to the gym is way too much effort. And I simply don't have the time and energy for that kind of change. So with hair, I have control and I can see immediate results. I don't need to wait at all to see something change.

E: I see. You mentioned school, but did anyone else disapprove of your wild color?

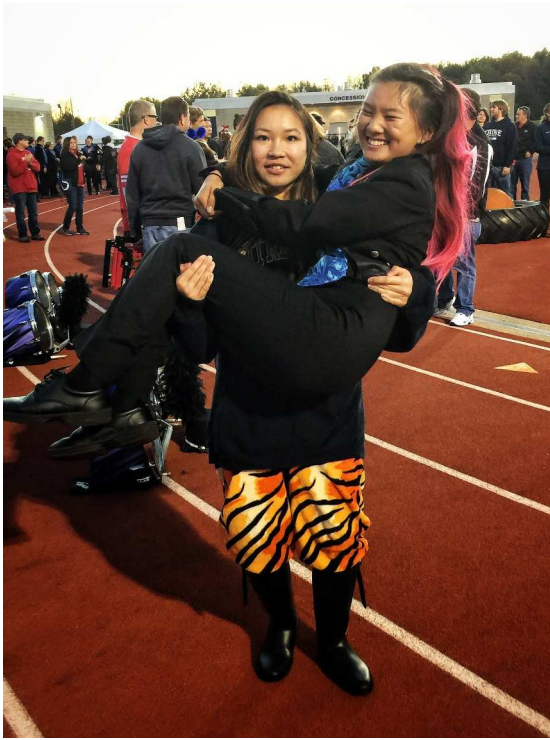
W: I used to play percussion and at competitions, I'd have to hide my hair color because it was distracting. I never wanted to hear that I had to cut my hair off or dye it back, so I took precautions before they could tell me. A bun every performance with a black covering on top.

E: Percussion, that's the drums thing, right? How long did you play?

W: Yes, the drums thing! Though I was pretty awful at the drums. I could sort of play the bass drum, but snare was way out of my league. I usually played mallets. They're instruments like the xylophone, marimba, and the vibe. Or the bells, I'm not sure how far your knowledge goes.

E: Far enough, I think. What were your competitions like?

W: There were the normal band ones that were



Guo Weiwei with her sister, Guo Ming Bo, after learning the marching band will be moving to finals for the first time.



Guo Weiwei with her sister Guo Ming Bo after winning a winter percussion competition.

formal, but I also played marching band and indoor percussion ensembles. It was an all-year kind of thing. Marching band in the fall and indoor percussion in the winter and spring. Over the four years, I played vibe, marimba, bass drum, and cymbals. I almost thought about quitting several times though because of the money, time commitment, and all the drama.

E: Drama?

W: Oh yes. First there was the kind of band drama you'd see in the movies where the underdog sports team wins despite all odds. Like *McFarland, USA* where a cross country team won the state championship for the first time. Our band was similar. We were the underdog at state competitions. Every year our marching band would make past prelims and to semi-finals but we could never make it to state finals. My senior year, we finally made it and won sixth place at state with our

rendition of *Bohemian Rhapsody*! Winter percussion was kind of similar. We kept coming in last for a couple of years. Senior year was both dramatic and successful because we managed to win first place and even go to nationals using Shane Koyczan's poem, "This is My Voice"! Then there was the romantic drama. That's what happens in high school, right? Sometimes it involved me and sometimes it didn't. I blame the media and Disney princess endings for making me so lovesick.

E: What was your romantic drama?

W: Um, I dated a few guys. A couple drummers and a synth player. I was very awkward and very much wanting a boyfriend, but I didn't know what relationships were like. I only knew what I saw in the movies and shows (which happened to include *Glee* and several rom-coms). I also let people get into my head which is super hard to not do. One

time my percussion coach caught my first boyfriend and I making out in a hallway by the doors. It was super awkward. We were waiting for our parents to pick us up. I was very nervous someone was going to catch us and I was right. Our coach kept it a secret for about a week and then he brought it up in front of everyone towards the end of practice. I was so embarrassed. Everyone was making fun of mainly me cause no one expected me to have someone else's tongue down my throat. After it happened, I ran outside in the hallway to cry. I was a sophomore and this senior friend came out in the hallway to comfort me. She said it was going to be okay and that our coach had done the same to her when she dated someone.

E: That was nice of her. Did your boyfriend come out too?

W: Maybe? I can't remember too much because I spent a lot of time blocking out that memory. I know a lot of people kept coming up to tease me about it for weeks. So it was because of that moment where I started letting people into my head and influence my decisions. I'm always thinking about how people perceive me and whether they like me. It's

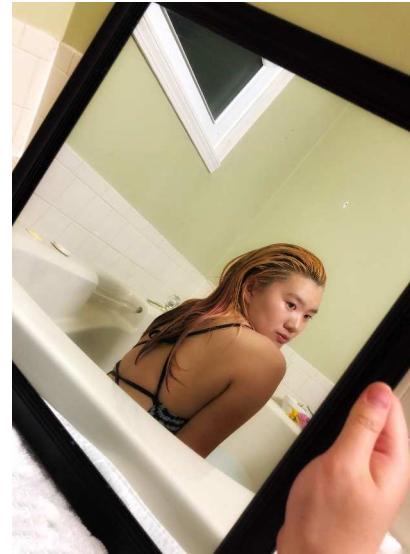
something I've been working on because I know I have no control over other people's thoughts and opinions, but then I do have control over how I talk and how I behave. So if I talk and say the right thing, then surely people will like me. But that's not the case, no matter how I wish it.

E: How do you want people to perceive you?

W: I'm pretty sure that's a question on a Hogwarts sorting quiz. Kind, I guess. Though the problem with that is that everyone thinks you're nice and you don't have problems or substance underneath. It wasn't until

“*Everyone was making fun of mainly me cause no one expected me to have someone else's tongue down my throat.*”

my senior year in high school that I started trying to be myself and talk more. It also doesn't help that I am not used to talking in public. I'm a pretty private and quiet person, but the dinner table is where I would release all of my thoughts from the school day. At a very loud volume, I'd vent my anger about a test in class or share excitement about whatever crush I had going on at the time. No matter what I had to say, I was always loud. Being quiet all day at school forced me to release all of my tension and emotion over mashed potatoes and warm noodle soup. But my family always protested that I was too loud and “didn't need to shout.”



Asian hair is difficult and expensive to lighten due to its darkness

E: Makes sense why you'd act differently. How'd that translate to college?

W: High school me had a very high and very quiet voice. Like balloon squeaky high. People often thought I was faking it, even I thought I was faking it! Cause when I went home or was with my close friends, my voice was NOT that high. Then I went to college and my voice got lower, and more normal as time went on. I attribute my voice change to not being in high school which is an anxiety warzone. Percussion was super stressful and super anxiety inducing for multiple reasons.

E: Such as?

W: Well, kind of what I said before. Trying to make sure people liked me, the guys I dated and all that

drama, navigating friendships with people who weren't the nicest, and trying to play the music correctly so I didn't get publicly scolded.

E: Publicly scolded? By who, your percussion coach?

W: Yeah. We called him Coach for short cause it was easier and made us feel like a sports team I guess. He's your typical problematic white guy. Slightly racist, sexist, homophobic, ableist and transphobic. Super into the church. I always thought he looked like a mouse. His brown eyes were terrifying. They're so big that you can see every emotion he's feeling. That's why his anger was so awful, you'd see it in his pupils. Even if he was smiling, his words would be hurtful and cruel. He's known for his anger and humor. He'd



Weiwei's obsession with dying her hair started when she was in middle school.

yell at us on the marching field and then call us a “silly goose” with an empty tone. Sometimes he knew when he made the wrong comments, but often he didn’t. Like my name is Weiwei, pronounced way-way. My coach (like my childhood bullies) mocked me and called me wee-wee because he thought it was funny. When he called me that, I ignored him. Even though it was my freshman year where I was the most timid and shy, I refused to acknowledge his poor joke. He apologized later that day.

Fast forward to my senior year, where we were standing in a group with some other students talking about heights and he looked across the circle at me and said that he and I were the perfect height for one another. Then he proceeded to talk about how all the Asian girls in his high school wanted him except for his best friend and he wanted her. Which is strange cause he loves his wife and God very much. Or one time, I was crying in his office because I was cut from auditions. It was a new room and there was a giant window facing the band lockers so no privacy. He had to leave when I kept crying and couldn’t control myself. When he left, I started having some sort of attack and had to put my feet on a chair while my body rested on the floor to calm down. He came in through the door, saw me, closed the door, and said that I would never be able to do this in the real adult world. I sputtered my apologies and left to go cry in a bathroom down the hallway.

E: Sounds like a fun guy. And he’s a teacher?

W: Yes, he’s very charming and fun on the surface level, but a bit problematic underneath. I know he’s had a tough time though. His parents passed away when he was 18 I think. It’s not an excuse for his behavior, but perhaps an explanation.

E: That’s a fair point. You mentioned a lot about the romance and drama and dating. You also talked about your first boyfriend. Were there more?

W: Well, technically my first relationship was in kindergarten, then another in first grade, and another in second grade. That relationship has technically been my longest and my most healthy breakup. When I moved from California to Indiana, we kind of knew it wouldn’t work, but we were very mature about it for seven year olds. If we’re talking about “real” then, yeah high school had my first real one. Middle school was mainly me hung up on a guy with freckles for four years, so not much to say there. But yes, I dated three guys (two drummers and a synth player). It was odd. There was drama and there was me making a mountain out of a molehill and there were things I just didn’t understand.



Weiwei once used a box dye to bleach her hair. The end result was brown, honey blonde, and pink. She deems that time was the worst her hair ever looked.

E: Can you tell me more? What were your breakups like?

W: Not as healthy as second grade. Next question, please.

E: Playing hard to catch, I see. Well what about the other two relationships? Besides the breakups.

W: The second guy was very nice if condescending at times. I still feel like I need to apologize to him.

E: For what?

W: After the slut-shaming in the first relationship, I had problems with intimacy and I was immature. I still couldn't get people out of my head. It was my second relationship and I still had nothing to go off of besides Disney movies like *Rapunzel* and my previous relationship. I'd like to apologize, but I'm



Weiwei's hair was rarely cut short. After 9 years, she made the big chop.

the only one who wants closure.

E: And the third guy?

W: Oh, that happened senior year. I thought I had it all under control and I understood things about relationships. I thought I was finally ready. I wasn't.

E: So what can you tell me about college? Dated anyone there?

W: I dated a guy who worked with me in the Post Office that didn't last long. Three weeks, I think. It wasn't good at all because he was a senior and it was honestly pretty awful. I should've noticed when he switched into my class the day after I told him my schedule. After that, I went on a couple of dates here and there, but that's about it.

E: What about that relationship made it awful?

W: Well, as I said. He was a senior. And I think it moved way too fast and when he was drunk he was very good at pressuring me. I wasn't new to someone pressuring me into doing things I didn't want to do, but it was different with him. We were often drunk, it was his birthday, he kept asking, I didn't have time to say no... When I broke it off, I had to still see him in class and at work. It was terribly awkward and uncomfortable. One time we brushed hands at our jobs and I had an anxiety attack for the next half hour until I could leave. I was thankful he graduated so I didn't have to see him again.

E: And when you say things, you mean...?

W: Sexual things. I don't really like talking about it. Can we move on?

E: Of course, so there's dating, right? And then there's the dates, the hookups, the ghostings, the flings. You mentioned some dates but what about the rest?

W: Um, intimacy is something I'm quite private about. Even in high school when people wanted to share how far they went or what stage they were at, I was extremely uncomfortable sharing that part of my relationship. I don't like people talking about me and I know I had this sort of "innocent vibe" going on.

E: Innocent vibe?

W: Yeah, the high voice and trying to be nice did not help. And there was a lot of slut-shaming going on. There was when everyone was teasing me about getting caught by our percussion coach and there were friends who would whisper about other girls. They'd say things like, "Ew, she's wearing a thong and you can see it, she's so gross." Then if you understood a sexual joke or pun, you were pegged as dirty. So, I tried to just be nice, sweet, and likable.

E: You've talked about niceness a lot, but let me ask you, do you think you're a nice person?

W: Honestly? No. I think I'm a

pretty awful and terrible person who manipulates people. Part of that is because my Myers Briggs type says I'm a manipulator and part of that is because I have no idea what's real or not real anymore. I've done some pretty terrible things too and no matter what I do, I don't think I can fix that. Like when I was a camp counselor, I definitely read some of the kids' diaries at the end of summer with my co-counselors.

E: Were they at least any good?

W: *Laugh* No. It wasn't my idea, but I couldn't resist. Turns out, I didn't need to read them to see what they thought about me. The girls all wrote letters to each counselor in the bunk at the end of camp. Mine were very standard and basic while the others had these super heartfelt notes. I wasn't anyone's favorite because I made them clean the bunk all the time. We had to have a clean bunk or we weren't allowed to do certain activities! But it was pretty damaging to hear one girl write to a co-counselor that she "changed her whole life" while the note I received from the same girl said "You made me clean. Thanks."

E: Wow. Some kid. What were you like when you were younger?





Weiwei's high school was like many other schools: slut-shaming, rude teachers, and lots of drama.



Even at high school graduation, Weiwei made sure to prioritize snacks

W: Oh, I used to be pretty awful. I'd have these terrible, raging moods and tantrums that my parents couldn't understand. When they went to the doctor's, they found out I have low blood sugar and simply needed to eat. I think things got better after that, but I'm not sure.

E: Are you a foodie then?

W: Ooo, yes. I love eating and trying new things. Like strawberries as a hamburger topping is delicious and avocado blueberry muffins are AMAZING. I'm not the best baker (one time, I forgot to add sugar to a batch of cookies), but I'm not too bad at cooking. Sometimes I feel bad about how much I love food. I had a friend who always joked that she couldn't wait for my metabolism to catch up with my appetite.

E: Hm, doesn't sound like a friend to me. What made you a foodie?

W: Besides having low blood sugar? I like to joke sometimes that it stems from my birth parents. They left me in front of a dumpling shop down the street of a police station. It's strange. I don't think I'll ever meet them and yet they have had such an impact on my life. Cause I keep thinking if they didn't want me and they left me, it's hard to believe other people won't do the same. Like I'll never be good enough no matter how hard I try.

E: It sounds like you're talking about something specific.

W: Is it that obvious?

E: No, I'm just very perceptive. That's why I'm such a great interviewer after all.

W: Lucky me. Well, as I mentioned before, I do have a history of sexual violence. The most recent one involved a guy in a serious relationship who left his fingerprints on my skin a couple of nights. That resulted in a huge mess. Partly because he didn't tell her when it happened and partly because when his partner found out, I didn't know

who to talk to. I ended up talking to him and then her. He got mad at me after and said I wasn't taking responsibility for my actions. I just, I feel so guilty and there are days when I believe I am right and there are days when I know I'm wrong. My friends reassure me that it's not my fault, but I can't help and think differently.

E: This next question, it's not meant to minimize your feelings or what you've gone through. I just want to know, do you want to hand the rest of your life over to this guy and his partner?

W: No.

E: Then why not let it go?

W: I can't.

E: Why not?

W: Because.

E: Because why?

W: Because they think they're right and i'm wrong.

E: And if you're wrong?

W: And if I'm wrong, then I must be crazy. And if I'm crazy then no one will believe me because they think I'm overreacting.

E: Do you think you're overreacting?

W: Definitely. My therapist tells me to notice my body, but I feel like my body is acting for me and it's scary. I feel like my body's faking it. Like I can't even walk near the house where it took place. I take as many detours as I can and stay twenty feet

away. It's so silly because I should just be able to walk down the street next to the place without freezing up.

E: Women often have to work hard to get others to believe them. They often think that as long as they articulate their words correctly, people will listen. Instead people pluck what they want to hear and poke at her story instead of listening and validating her experience.

W: True. No one ask a woman what she's thinking or of her opinion. Black women and other women of color especially have no voice. They have to work twice as hard as everyone else and they're still ignored and dismissed. I also think of the Atlanta spa shootings that occurred because the shooter fetishized Asian women. It's incredibly frightening.

E: Once we started talking about other people, you get more passionate and sure of yourself. How come?

W: I'm pretty hard on myself and I blame myself for everything. Sometimes, I hate myself so much that I don't know what it would look like if I actually liked myself. Why did I do the things I did? Why was I so stupid? Why couldn't I be better? Why didn't I communicate more? It's like there's two sides of me. One tells me that I'm not to blame but the other is screaming and beating myself up. So there's three parts. The last one is just lying on the ground. Unresponsive to words, to touch, to healing.

E: With blaming comes fear. Because it's so much easier to direct and deflect the anger away. Do you blame anyone else?

W: Blame is for me and me alone. If I blame other people then that doesn't make me any better. I can blame all the men who wrongly touched me for what they did. For their words that hurt me. Devastated me. Knocked me off my feet and plunged my head in a fish tank. And I'm always questioning myself. Am I a good student. A good daughter. A good ally. A good Chinese American. A good adoptee. A good woman. A good partner. I try. I try and try and sometimes I don't. It's not a secret I can't. Or I just choose not to. I don't know which is real. Or a good friend. I need to be better. How do I be better. Because being better means no more blaming. Right?

E: I'm not sure that's how it works. A lot of people will talk about letting it go. Maybe it's about letting it be.

W: Letting it be?

E: Yes, letting it be instead of letting it go. You should know that what you went through isn't happening anymore. It's over. You may relive that memory, but you aren't at that house, you're not under his touch. You're here for an interview that sounds more like a conversation if we're being honest. And you're going to be okay.

W: Am I?

E: Yes.

W: If you say so.



Weiwei believes blame is for her, and her
alone.

artist's corner

Inside Guo Weiwei's mind



more “evidence”

I need to stop Instagram stalking
your fiancée who blames me.
I met her once.
I wish you stopped at the red light.

My head keeps ringing-
the guilt, the shame, her accusatory song.
No one understands why I shake-
You bedded my emotions in her carbon copy sheets!

Your fiancée, who blames me,
she posted a selfie on her bed last month.
I wish you stopped at the red light.
You didn't even slow at the yellow.

The guilt, the shame, her accusatory song-
I *met* her once.
You bedded my emotions in her carbon copy sheets.
I need to stop Instagram stalking.

She posted a selfie on her bed last month.
My neck burned at the photo's details.
You didn't even slow at the yellow.
I noticed her patterned comforter.



My neck burned at the photo's details,
coral carving into cyan, an ultramarine splash.
I noticed her patterned comforter.
You hesitated at the green.



Coral carving into cyan, an ultramarine splash,
knowledge is shattering.
You hesitated at the green,
but nothing discouraged you.

Knowledge is shattering.
You knew she had the same duvet,
but nothing discouraged you.
I still feel your frostbitten embrace.

You knew she had the same duvet.
My head keeps ringing.
I still feel your frostbitten embrace.
No one understands why I shake.



Opinion: The Other Woman

The unofficial third person in a relationship.



Author: Cameron Mann

PHOTO BY MICHAEL AIKIN

When you get into a new relationship, jealousy may come around if you notice a certain person hanging around your partner. If you're falling for the trope of sexual tension between a secretary and the boss or between two best friends, it's time we discussed "The Other Woman" (or OW). She's often demonized and hated for breaking up the OTP (One True Pair), but should she really be holding all of the blame? Of course, cheating people come in all genders, so for the sake of writing, I will

also use "The Other Person."

Most often, people put the blame on the third person who enters a relationship. If it's a man and two women, then the women end up fighting even though it was the man's fault for cheating. For example, Harrison Ford wasn't ever blamed for cheating in his relationship in *Working Girl* (1988). In fact, he was rewarded because his partner was

“*Most often, people put the blame on the third person who enters a relationship.*”

villainized. Rarely is the third person punished. If the situation has a woman and two men, she is often objectified or blamed (unlike her male counterpart). *Anna Karenina* and *Madame Bovary* are examples of women in literature who've died as punishment for their affairs. Both of these women crave passion and wonder in their lives. Their marriages are a result of politics and family deals that don't care to listen to what they want. When they each find a lover of their own (who's not their husband), they can't help but be consumed by the familiar fire of love and lust. Of course, drama and complications lead

to broken hearts. Anna Karenina throws herself under a train while Madam Bovary eats arsenic.

Then there are the complications with the third person. Did this person know they were The Other Person? If so, then most people would definitely say that third person was at fault for disrupting a relationship. But what if the affair was a silly mistake? What if that person was in love or desperate? Our society also has a tendency to say 'get what you want.' In the movie, *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009), Scarlett Johannsson's character is the OW. She's getting a pedicure with Drew Barrymore and contemplates pursuing Bradley Cooper's character ("What's wrong with me?"). Barrymore tells ScarJo about her dad's coworker who left his wife of 15 years for a woman he met at some church event. Now that new couple had been together for 22 years. Barrymore uses this story as advice for ScarJo and ends with "What if you meet the love of your life, but you already married somebody else, are you supposed to let them pass you by?". It's a troubling moment. Luckily, both ScarJo and the wife (Jennifer Connelly) realize Cooper's grossness and leave him by the end. This film depicts one of the few portrayals of infidelity where neither the wife nor the mistress are demonized.

What do you think? Who should be blamed for infidelity in a relationship? What do you think of "The Other Person" and the partner who cheated?

Survey Comments & Opinions

- Media isn't open enough to polyamory and I'm sick of love triangles pitting women against each other.
- The one who cheats is the homewrecker.
- It depends, if it's in like novels I am so hyped for it, but if it's real life it kinda sucks. There's always one person that's going to be unhappy.
- We don't blame the rain for leaking through the roof, we blame the people who haven't maintained the home.
- I think there is a huge lack of communication. This should never happen. Whoever doesn't want to be in the relationship needs to be upfront about that. Communication is key.

(Note: answers may have been edited for clarification or length)



he's just *not*
that into you

He's Just Not That Into You (2009) Movie Poster



November 13, 2015



Tonight, we're celebrating Elinor's 21st birthday. Time to have fun with some H2WFOA and drink like sailors until we see the sky hum pink again. It should be pretty safe. Not everyone will drink and they're all pretty chill. I trust them. I'm surprised at how fast we were all able to become friends, but I'm glad. If only I could tell high school me this story. It feels just like the movies. Harrison will be there. I hope we get time to talk together. I promised Lena I'd confess to him before winter break. I can't wait till she gets back from Peru. Derek and I still have to go pick up the piñata. We have to make sure that Elinor doesn't know it's a surprise party. I almost slipped up and told her today at lunch. It's so easy to spill. I'm much better at keeping promises than secrets.

January 8, 2016

Although Derek should have told Paige, he shouldn't have touched me in the first place. At least, that's what my counselor says. I'm glad I see someone weekly. Danger lurks if I do not have a visit with someone to keep me accountable. We talked about what I'd do if I saw Derek again. If I keep in contact with him, I will always feel like I owe him my time and energy. It's hard not to focus on what's right and wrong. My counselor says it's important to focus on how the decision will impact me. I wonder if I have to say goodbye to Harrison. He's nice, but I think I might end up resenting him for staying friends with Derek. What if he thinks I was overreacting? And that's why they're still friends? Does that mean I'm wrong? I must be.

February 14, 2016

I cried at the Valentine's Day party. Like a shuddering rabbit about to take its final breath. It's not because I miss Harrison and I'm not dealing with that sick, cliché thing called love. Panic is climbing my shoulders because the guy who wronged me stood less than six feet away. Why was he there? Derek, who scarred my eyes, easily snatches my soul with a cruel grip with his mere presence. Paige didn't notice me. For once, Derek and I were on the same side. If she saw me...I had to bid my date an early goodnight. But I knew it was dangerous for me to be alone. So, I called up Elinor. She ushered me through the door and lent me her green dinosaur. I noticed its toddler-like size as my arms squeezed faux fur. Who was the toddler? I couldn't tell.

February 15, 2016

I woke up with a crowbar launched in my heart and bitter sand clogged in my throat. I didn't want to go to work today, but I tried anyway. I'm glad Elinor lent me the dinosaur. Her gift allowed me to carry him around for strength as I walked to the office. What a terrible time to carry around a giant stuffed animal. Everyone thinks it's cute and a gift from a lover. I tried to put on a smile, perform my duties, but I couldn't when I saw my boss. Her eyes lit up at my green companion and she immediately asked me for the name. I felt kindness seeping into her words and that's all it took for the dam to break, crashing waters into collateral damage. I blamed it on the flu and she, a loving mother, sent me home. I'm a miserable excuse for a woman.

October 3, 2016

Today's the day we call. I'm glad it's Friday. If the call goes awful, then I'll have the weekend to stitch love back into my skin. I want to back out. Can I do that five hours before? I don't think I can stand to hear his voice full of ick and gas. What if he threatens me? What if he slides violence and criticism into my thighs again? I'm nervous. I miss Harrison. Lena went home for the weekend. She won't be back till Monday. I'm all alone again. Just like January. No more blood.
No more.
No more.
No more.
No more.



Featured Author, Lily Seriese

Pictured Above: Excerpts from Seriese's book



Breakups suck. Especially when you're dumped.

How to Get Over a Breakup

Just about everyone will inevitably leave.

In breakups, there is the dumper and the dumpee. This article is primarily for all the dumpees who had a friend, lover, partner, or family say goodbye. Cause let's face it, it sucks when people leave. The first time my partner dumped me, I was distraught. For a week, I didn't eat until I took a visit to the local Womxn's Center. I finally ate a handful of strawberries with the help of some guilt-tripping by friends who meant well. It didn't take long for me to go through the initial stages of a breakup (shock, denial, anger) in the first month. Then came the later stages (bargaining, depression, and acceptance) after many more months.

If I'm being honest, being dumped in a romantic relationship was sort of easy. All the movies, TV shows, songs, and books had prepared me for my first inevitable breakup as the dumpee. I wasn't prepared for a friend breakup. When the girl and boy break up, the girl's friend is always there to pick her up. Friendships between women were strong and iconic. The Bratz girls would never break up or let each other down. Those four girls would always be there for each other. So when my friend said she didn't want to be friends with me anymore, I was even more gutted than when my ex dumped me.

Turn the page for my guide to accepting a breakup (romantic, platonic, etc.) in three steps.

WRITTEN BY Ann Buddenbaum
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL AIKIN

1. Cry

This step's pretty easy. Cry as much as you want. I took a day off and cried pretty much the whole day when my partner dumped me. To be fair, I was on my period so that didn't help things. I cried so loudly that someone from my dorm hall slid a Hershey's chocolate bar under my door with a note. It was a small act of kindness and I still treasure the lime green Post-it note today. So this is the time for you to get all your grief out there to bear. Hermit yourself up and waste away. Do NOT go onto any sort of social media outlet and stalk the person who let you go. Don't do it. Don't contact them or look at photos. Any interaction (direct or indirect) makes things worse. In fact, you should lock up your phone and block their number and Snapchat. Really feel the pain, okay?



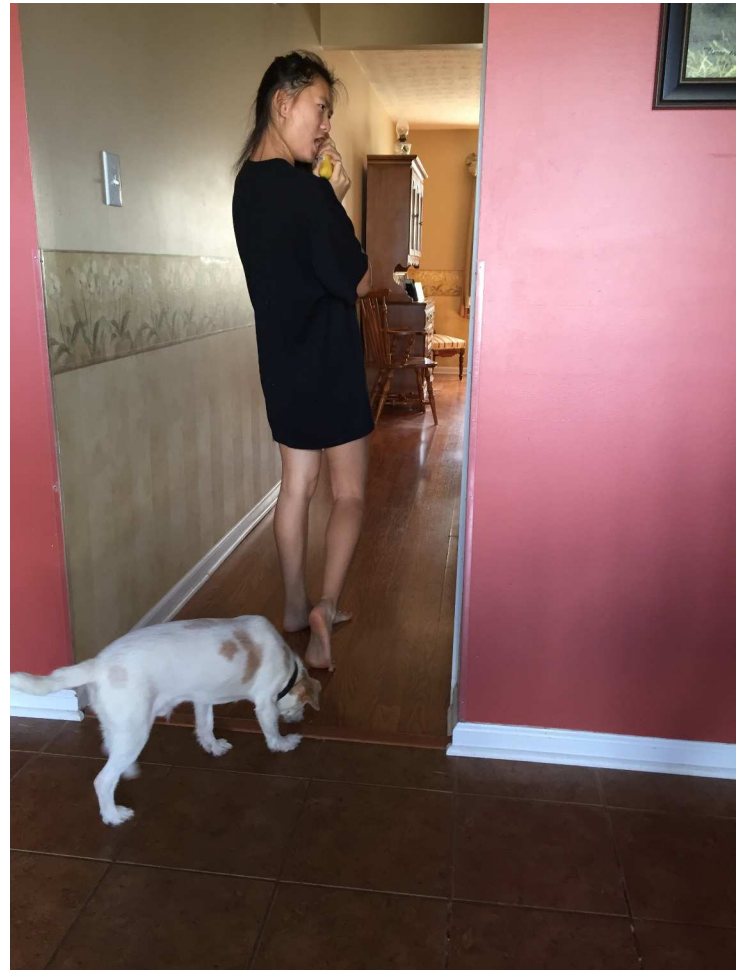
Left to Right: Consider dying your hair color using Theradye's hair products.

2. Focus

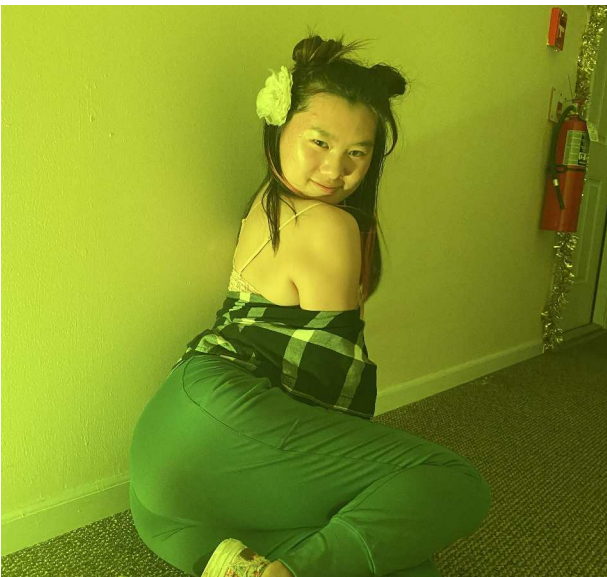
My roommate found me wailing on the floor while Katy Perry's *One That Got Away* filled the air. She took immediate action: turned off the music, shooed me on the bed, and made me some cream of wheat. Even though the mush tasted of bland grief, I ate the whole bowl. Her kindness reminded me that someone still cared for me. I should warn you that this step takes the longest. Cause not being able to cry is hard, but not impossible. This is the time for you to pick yourself back up. Remember all the people who are still in your life and choose to help you when you're down. As time goes on, delete the photos you have of the other person, or move the photos to a separate area. I once moved all my romantic photos to a drafted email. The photos stayed in that drafted email in case my ex and I ever got back together. When I was ready to move on (and I realized my worth), I deleted all of our digital memories. You may also even feel anger during this stage, but do not retaliate. My ex has a severe peanut allergy. After he dumped me, I often thought about sending him a box full of peanut butter smeared on the insides so it would be a giant PB bomb when he opened it. Truth is, you won't really feel better. Your actions (both good and bad) are a reflection of you and your character. Shipping costs too much anyway.

3. Reflect

Now that you've taken time to take care of yourself and get to a place of careful stability take the time to think about what happened. Talk or write about what went down. Find someone you trust as you don't want to be accused of looking for attention and airing your business to the world. People who love drama can be cruel. Ask yourself what you're holding onto and why. Take responsibility for your actions, but don't carry all of the blame. For example, I recognize my faults after being dumped, but I'm not the one who sexted a previous ex. My dad got fired from work which is a breakup in itself. What did he do wrong? Why was he fired and not furloughed like other people? He's learning that he may never get those answers and accepting that it's time to move forward in a new direction with his family by his side.



You may hit a low point, but you'll pull yourself back up in no time.



I call this the "I broke up with my boyfriend" pose.

So, closure doesn't actually exist. It's a myth. Every person is different. Some people may be able to forget, but some won't. Perhaps you'll see something that reminds you of the person who left. Or someone will bring their name up in conversation. You'll never be able to change the past, but you can change how you behave and think from here on out. There's no use stirring up old drama. Let yourself breathe life into your soul by moving at your own pace and remembering the people by your side.

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Queendom

extras



54 Poetry Contest

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68 Submit

Poetry Contest

prompt: think of *them*. write instinctively.

Fork

I broke my fingers
 I wanted to stop writing about you
I started with a rock, clutched in my palm
 A child begging her mother to stay
A smooth stone with one jagged edge pricked the skin
 Drawing out the nerve you had that night
The bone peeked out
 Among the secrets we shared
Because the world wanted to know
And all the blood spilled out
Only to mend the phalanges
Licking joint to joint up
 With dreaded truth-
There's red dribbling out
because
 I can't
 stop
 writing
 about



The Nice House

It's a very nice house
All the boys (no, men) are clean cut
There's no booming basement
But a cozy crows nest
It's a very nice house

It's a very nice house
They take care of a tabby cat and
They'll buy you a birthday piñata
Before drunkenly punching it across the room
It's a very nice house

It's a very nice house
They'll teach you about dungeons and demons
And keep you up until 6 am
They'll grab your waist so you don't fall
And make sure you drink plenty water
It's a very nice house

They know it's a very nice house
Their hands will wander (up and down)
Under and over clothing, they're thorough
Cause it's a very nice house

It's a very nice house
Which is why they're only responsible
For how much alcohol they consumed
They hope you know they would never
Intentionally hurt you and that you remember
How very nice their house is

It's a very nice house
Don't expect any apologies
Unless you perish in a fictitious game
They won't believe the hurt in your heart
But they'll offer betrayal behind the back
After all, it's what a nice house is supposed to do



Happy Anniversary

It's been one year
I'm still here with the same
Name place and shirt
Going from hurt to happy then
Again my body drops to rock bottom
With all the leaves from autumn spice
 Withering away to die

It's nice of you to check in
Thank you, but you leave my skin
Dry, brittle and no you're not the bad
Guy, I just can't help but cry every time
I see your eyes, they swallow me, am I the crime?
 feel numb on the inside

The highs don't match the lows
Or clothes, this prose is all I can do
To shoo, shove, stop your touch
This clutch, you have too much power
I'm going sour from all the nausea
The insomnia doesn't keep me up
It's the "hookup" and your ability
To shrug accountability off your back
 fine, just fine

the college pack to sexual violence
Includes violet violent doom
Born in the womb and it leaves
Long sleeves to cover up scars
Writing memoirs like it's nobody's business
Because no one was witness except
You, who feels different about those nights
 heave a sigh, blow a kiss

Miss you, no miss myself
It delights me to know you're fine.
This body of mine wants you to know
You should go away forever
Wherever, but never step foot
Or put your presence
 near my body and skin again



STRIP → BED → BARE → EMOTIONS

i think they call - you and i-
abuse (tattered hearts leaking spoilt milk)

i think you see yourself
attractive (celestial gold in california water)

i think you're
awful (the plain window speck refusing to leave)

i'm unsure what you think of me
artful (the angel's trumpet commanding zombies)

i think i'm
atrocious (dust lingering for attention)

i think we call - you and i-
anguish (the firestarter bringing wonderland to an end)



A Note for 47, Your Favorite Number



All I want from him-
You took me to your brother's wedding
Even though it was only five months
I wasn't allowed in any of the official photos (only careless selfies)
As if your whole family knew

You obsessed over straight lines and perfect squares
When your ex told me you sexted her
You said you just wanted your good earbuds back
I'm still not sure if I believe you, who blurred lines in the relationship cycle

You told me if I needed to get an abortion
I'd have to go by myself cause two hours is too l o n g to drive
I'm so glad I held negative test in that dirty gas station
Kids with someone who only eats buttered noodles is a death sentence

My body was cramping and bleeding when you broke up with me
I think you waited because my grandma had died
Unfortunately, w a i t i n g meant reaching six months
My longest relationship, your shortest and most forgettable

You never wanted to get back together
But the lust in your throat forced sweet words
You trapped me with sickening lies for a few photos
I wish someone warned me about your smarmy nose

My roommate and I started a fire in the Hogate parking lot
I burnt your stupid red basketball shorts
And a photo book that was a surprise gift you'll n e v e r see
We spun around fire and cheered to the moon

___vember



I said ___ in ___vember
Well, not really.

I said ___ in ___vember
In my head
So it doesn't really count

He believes
I said yes in ___vember
a physical cue
though my body molded
Moaned and writhed
against his
I really wanted to say
___ in ___vember



Q What Kind of DePauw Man is He?



1. **How much does he drink?**
 - a. day/night, doesn't matter as long as there's a party
 - b. Maybe every weekend, but at least once a month
 - c. He'll drink when he wants to, but he doesn't need to
2. **What's his spending habits like?**
 - a. Money doesn't concern him
 - b. He spends when he wants, but not excessively
 - c. Frugal, he's conscious about how much he has to spend
3. **Did he join a fraternity?**
 - a. Of course!
 - b. Yes
 - c. No
4. **What's his politics?**
 - a. Conservative
 - b. Leaning conservative/liberal
 - c. Liberal
5. **What would make him laugh the most?**
 - a. Something problematic, but funny
 - b. An embarrassing story
 - c. A pun
6. **Does he think about doing the right thing?**
 - a. Not really
 - b. Only when something bad has happened
 - c. Usually
7. **What was his reaction to Dr. Lori White becoming the new president?**
 - a. Unhappy
 - b. Neutral, calm
 - c. Pretty excited
8. **What would disgust him the most?**
 - a. Period talk
 - b. Greek life
 - c. Racists

Mostly A's

The Frat Boy

He's what you'd expect a man to be. You can find him at any college, in any place or party. He's definitely in a fraternity and most likely a business or economics major. He's surface level nice and polite (usually). Don't expect much. His ideals are probably more conservative and he has traditional values. He has the potential to be racist, homophobic, etc. He's got a "date to marry" mindset or he just treats women poorly.

Mostly B's

The "Better" (Frat) Boy

Have caution with this guy. He thinks he's better than the Frat Boy because he's in a better house or he didn't even join a house. He's fake nice and supports women until it doesn't work for him anymore. Usually this happens when he's done something sexual with a woman and she tells him how uncomfortable it made her feel. He's probably a communications or science major (think chem, bio, poly, and environment). In short: lowkey sexist.

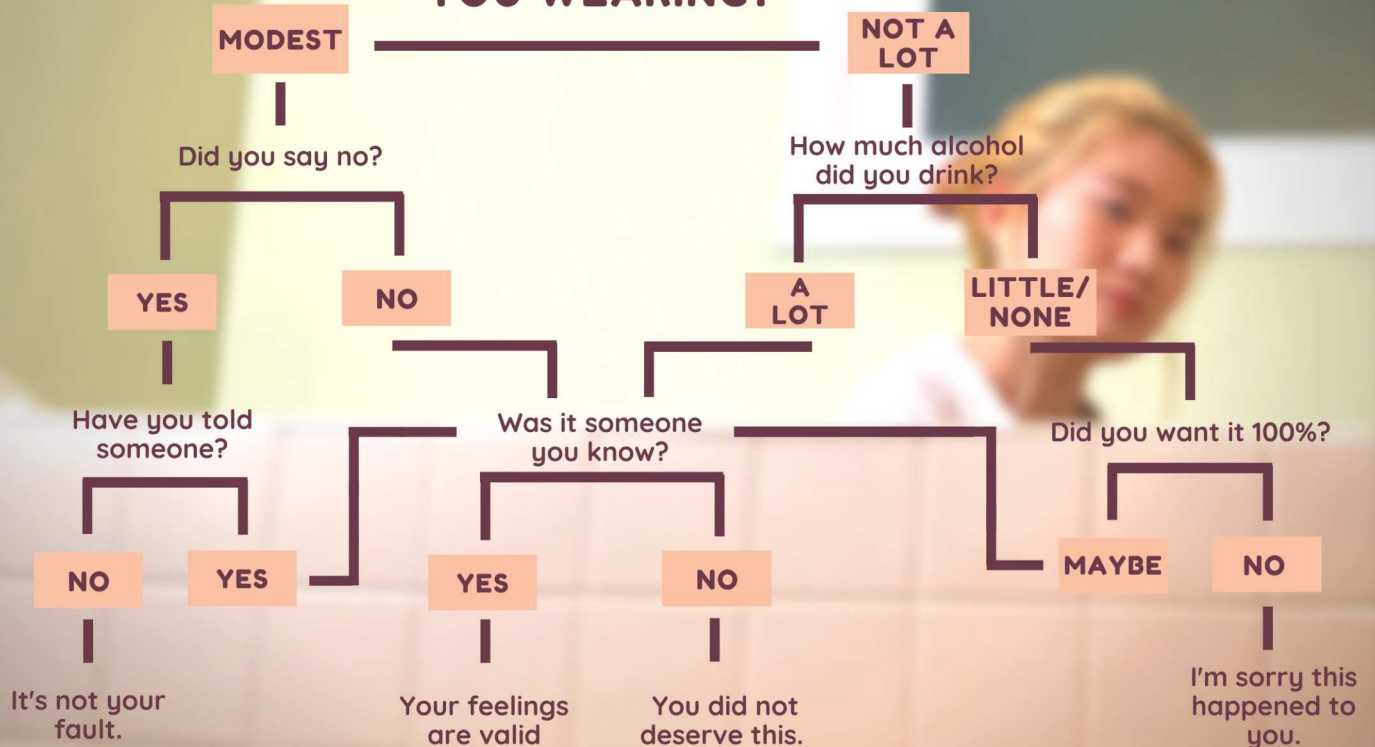
Mostly C's

A Guy

There are a few DePauw men who can be kind, empathetic, and aware of the privilege they hold in this world (esp. if they're white). There are a few gems in a frat who are genuinely nice and polite. That being said, men are men in the same way we're all human. This guy may say the wrong thing from time to time or be complicit in some situations. Don't worry. If he's truly a good guy, he'll take responsibility for his actions and try to do better.

ARE YOU A VICTIM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

WHAT WERE YOU WEARING?



Supporting Yourself

- Go to a safe space. Whether that's your room or a sunny spot in the park, find a place where you can rest.
- Seek support. You can try talking to your friends and family, but remember they are not therapists.
- Some find counseling to be helpful. You can also try a local support group.

REMINDER: Every reaction after sexual assault is different and valid.

Supporting a Survivor

- Validate them: "I believe you"
- Acknowledge the difficulty it took in confessing: "It took a lot of courage, thank you"
- Remind them: "It's not their fault and they didn't deserve this."
- Support them: "You are not alone. I care about you and am here to help and support you."

REMINDER: Do not ask how much alcohol they consumed or say it was all a misunderstanding.

ACROSS

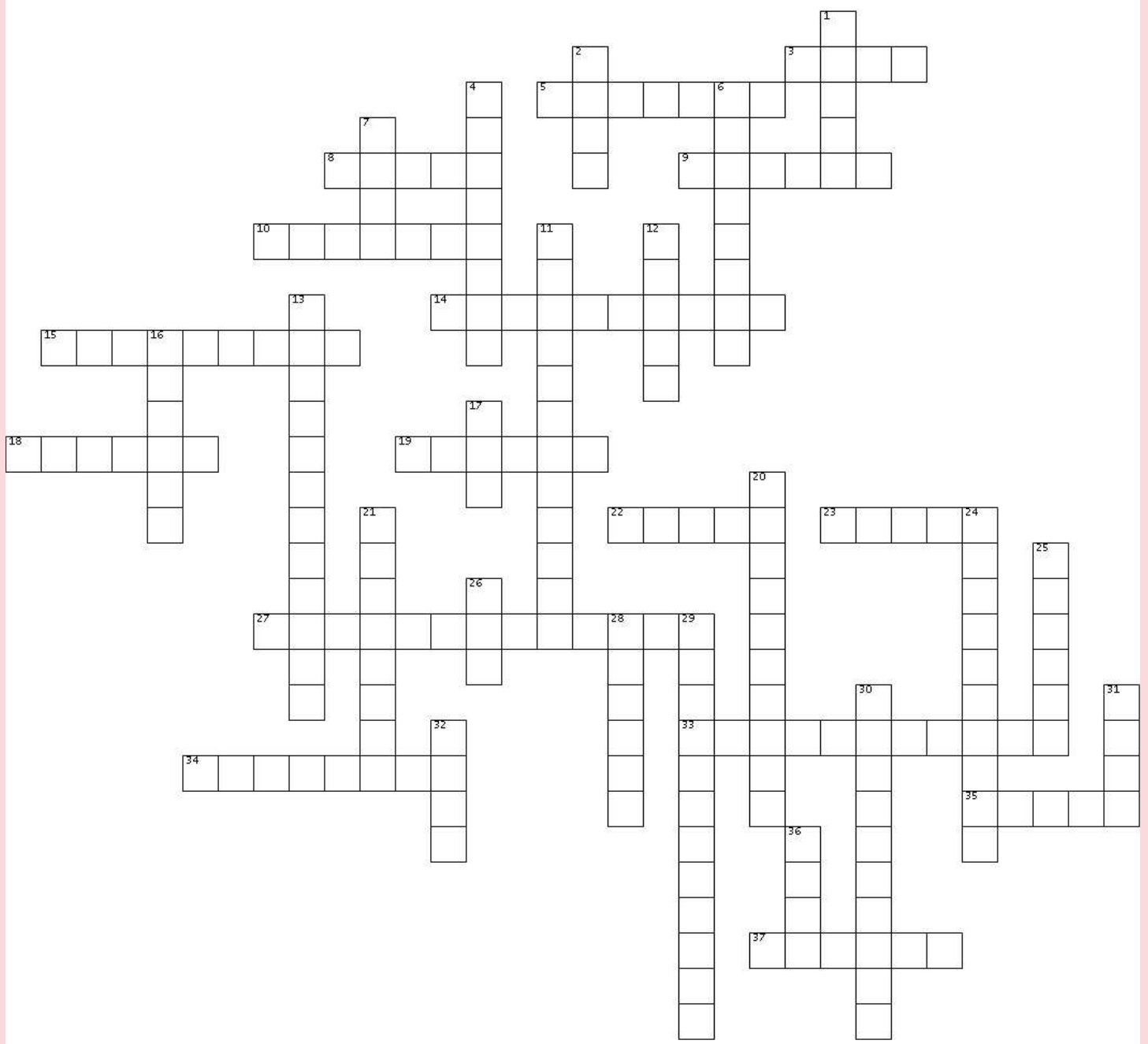
- 3. first casualty
- 5. second casualty
- 8. second ex
- 9. mustached character with redemption arc
- 10. magazine title
- 14. book by Kelly Yang
- 15. ghosted guy
- 18. wore one from 5th grade to the end
- 19. third ex
- 22. how many times did it happen?
- 23. job two
- 27. likes to collect
- 33. _____ issue
- 34. a beautiful flower
- 35. book by madeline miller
- 37. talent for _____



DOWN

- 1. response one
- 2. _____ hair is my favorite
- 4. first ex
- 6. a color
- 7. original magazine title
- 11. no longer emily doe
- 12. it's my _____
- 13. dpu program
- 16. response three
- 17. confessions
- 20. fourth ex
- 21. current partner
- 24. short film to be feature
- 25. response two
- 26. it's _____ my fault
- 28. pompous god of the sun and music
- 29. hamburger topping
- 30. job three
- 31. favorite color
- 32. third casualty
- 36. job one

Crossword



Affirmations

This page is for you and only you. These words are a reminder of your existence and why you should continue to exist. Submissions anonymous



You are a gorgeous human with an incredible heart. You deserve all the love you give to others and then some. We've got you, you're not alone!



I'm in your corner. You have a group of women here that will forever be in your corner. You are tough, you are strong, and you deserve to be happy. Everything you do is amazing, your care for others is admirable, but remember it's okay to be selfish.



*Your courage and compassion are an inspiration to me. Thank you for sharing your story.
It's yours to tell.*



Wow. I wish you knew what an amazing person you are. The level of consideration you have for others is incredible. I hope those around you come to realize how important you are. I also want to say I believe you, and think everything you feel is valid.

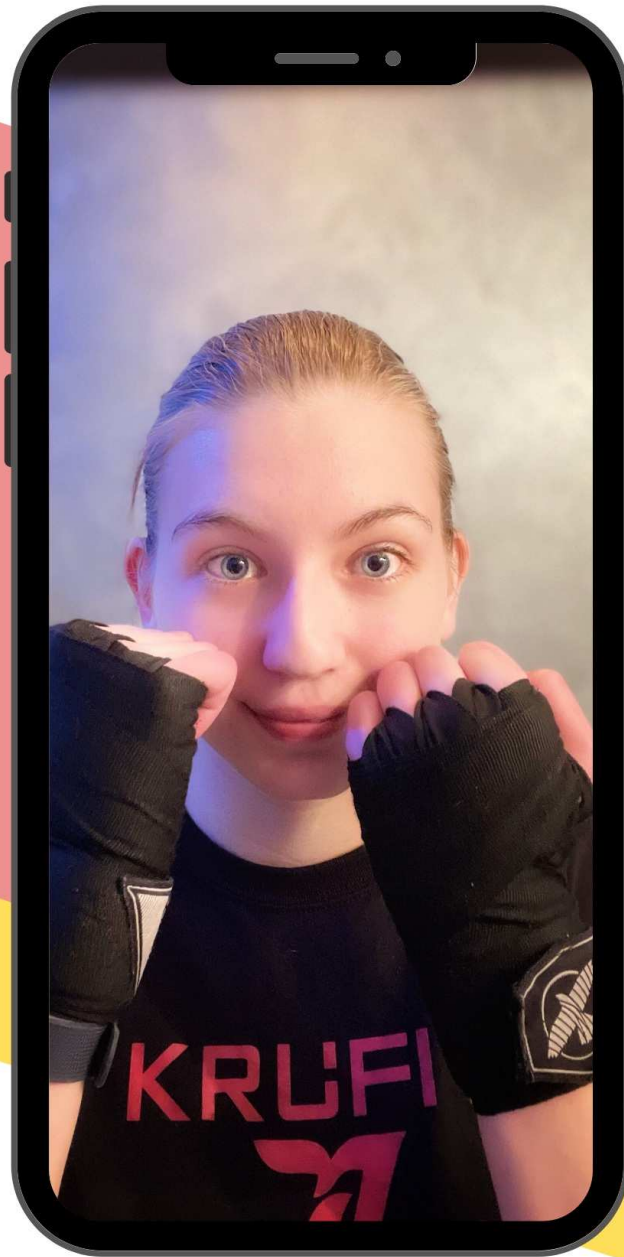


You're so calming and welcoming and so friendly. Your strength and consideration is admirable. Just remember: you're IMPORTANT.



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Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Civil rights activist, Tarana Burke, founded the #MeToo movement in 2006 in order to raise awareness of abuse and sexual assault on women. A woman of color, Burke worked tirelessly for more than a decade promoting her cause. However, it wasn't until October 15, 2017 that it took off when actress Alyssa Milano ignited a fire by tweeting, "If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet."

Thousands of women responded including Lady Gaga, Evan Rachel Woods, Anna Paquin, Gwyneth Paltrow, Patricia Arquette, and Viola Davis. In just one year, the #MeToo hashtag was used more than 19 million times on Twitter. And, in subsequent months, high-profile, mostly white, men would be accused of and held accountable for their abuses of power.

One could argue that the #MeToo movement started as far back as 1944, when Recy Taylor, and Rosa Parks joined forces to hold Recy's six white rapists accountable for her kidnapping and gang rape. Two grand juries failed to indict the six rapists, and none of the men were ever prosecuted, despite having admitted to the crime and offering Recy's husband \$600 to "forget" about their assault.

It took until 2011 for Alabama lawmakers to admit their wrongdoing and apologize to Taylor for the way that her rape case was handled. Taylor died in 2018, at the height of the #MeToo movement. I can only imagine her frustration at



Bethann B. with one of her daughters

watching white women bring down powerful white men in such a short period of time, while it took over half a century just to have the crimes against her recognized.

While the cultural reckoning of the #MeToo movement brought to light very real workplace abuses of power, much of the focus remains on white women's claims against white men in white-collar jobs. Burke's movement has been white-washed.

Women of color are no stranger to being excluded by those of their own gender. Black women fought for women's rights and women's suffrage alongside white women, beginning in the late 1800s. However, they would have to wait until 50 years after the passage of the 19th Amendment to vote, when the Voting Rights Act of 1965 passed.

Most women I know have experienced some

level of sexual harassment, whether in the workplace or out in the world. But, women of color and blue-collar workers experience a disproportionate amount of abuse. An analysis by the National Women's Law Center of EEOC complaints filed between 2012 and 2016 found that per 100,000 women workers, black women filed sexual harassment charges at a rate three times more than white, non-Hispanic women.

Just this past week {March 16, 2021}, six Asian women in Georgia were targeted and murdered by a white man who was motivated by his addiction to sex. Hyper-sexualization is at the root of violence against Asian women.

As the mother of Asian daughters, I am all-too-familiar with the stereotypes and challenges that they face. These past four years have brought a renewed sense of concern for their well-being, and a heightened sense of fear for their safety.

"Make sure to never walk anyplace without a token white person," I jokingly tell them about venturing out.

But, in my heart, it's no laughing matter. Growing up, their father and I were their token white persons. Whenever they were with us, people viewed them through a different lens. Now, they are grown and venturing out on their own, and the dangers that they face as women of color are real and they are frightening.

Those with power and influence have voices that are heard and concerns that are acted upon. White women have a platform that women of color simply do not have at this point in history. After the Harvey Weinstens, Matt Lauers, and Les Moonveses of the world were publicly exposed and held accountable for their bad deeds, the world, and many women who were so vocal in the recent #MeToo movement, moved on.

If we are going to continue to make inroads against sexual harassment, we must take up the fight for those who are marginalized and silenced. We must not only be women of color's "token white person," but we must also be willing to set aside our own agendas and bear witness to their suffering.

As professor and author Berne Brown states, "A crisis highlights all of our fault lines. We can pretend that we have nothing to learn, or we can take this opportunity to own the truth and make a better future for ourselves and others."

- Bethann B.

Thanks for Reading



Send a Letter to the Editor



Questions
Comments
Concerns

DÉSESPOIR



the only cry you need

Annotated Bibliography

Angel, Katharine. "Why We Need to Take Bad Sex More Seriously." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 11 Mar. 2021.

Consent is a huge part of sex life and sexual assault. Angel discusses consent and self-knowledge about what you want and what you don't want during sex and the pressures it can bring. Then, there's the idea of bad sex. Bad sex can indicate clumsy and bad sex as in *not good* or sexual coercion. Consent can change at any time during sex and it's important both parties respect the other's boundaries.

This article helped me think of gender differences involving sex. A man can believe he did the right thing if he asks for consent a single time. The woman, on the other hand, could've changed her mind or felt pressured to say yes by the man and may not have wanted to share intimacy at all. Both people walk away from the situation feeling different things.

Bennett, Brit. *The Mothers*. Riverhead Books, 2016.

Originally, I read this book because I was bored. I didn't think of any way it could relate to my thesis, but a conversation with one of my committee members, Sarah Ryan, made me think differently. I thought about the different ways a mother is portrayed through the protagonists and the ending.

There are tense relationships (familial, romantic, and platonic) and the power of gossip. It's difficult for me to not think about what other people could be saying about me. I know I can't control their thoughts and reactions, but if I could, I'd ask them all to leave me alone.

Febos, Melissa. "I Spent My Life Consenting to Touch I Didn't Want." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 31 Mar. 2021.

Consent, saying no, and power dynamics between the genders are the key themes of this article. Febos discusses consent and its relation to sexual assault. Though she did not fully consent to several touches in life (for example, a cuddle party where saying no is encouraged), she does not classify those moments as traumatic. Trauma indicates victimization and that's not the conversation she's after. Instead, Febos looks to discuss how women often say yes in fear of saying no or because it's easier.

I found this article after subscribing to Roxane Gay's book club. The title intrigued me and the content caused me to think about the tie between consent and sexual assault. There's a generational divide on what sexual assault entails and this article helped me reflect on trauma and touch. Febos describes a time when she attended a cuddle party that required verbal consent and encouraged participants to change their minds and speak their voices. Despite the rules and group mindset, Febos still found herself being cuddled by a man against her will. She said yes because it was instinct. After the party, her partner

told Febos they should attend another cuddle party so Febos could practice saying no. The second time, Febos was able to say no to the men who came up and asked if they could cuddle. She saw different expressions flit across their faces from anger to hurt to disappointment. Each man had to say, “Thank you for taking care of yourself” as the response (another rule of the cuddle party). If it was difficult for the men to accept rejection in a safe space, it’s no wonder women are afraid to say no.

Gay, Roxane. *Hunger: a Memoir of (My) Body*. Harper Perennial, 2018.

This was one of the first books Professor Samuel Autman recommended to me over the summer. Quarantine left me in a state of limbo (as it did with everyone else) and I knew that I needed to get started on my Honor Scholar Thesis. I’d read a section from the book in one of my previous classes and this was the first time I would fully read her work. It was strange for me to read. I’ve never struggled with bodyweight the way Gay did and my sexual violence experience was very different.

Still, I was drawn to the chapter lengths; some a paragraph, and some four pages. Despite not knowing the same feelings, I could still relate to her descriptions of her body. How it’s hard to reclaim what’s yours and how society is so controlling to women’s bodies.

Higson, Rachel, "Manning Up at DePauw: Performing Fraternal Masculinity on a Liberal Arts Campus" (2018). *Honor Scholar Theses*. 86.

Higson analyzes masculinity combined with personal experiences she’s had on campus. The male mindset she describes is frightening, yet not surprising. This Honor Scholar Thesis helped me coin the term “The DePauw Man” and inspired the DePauw Man Quiz.

Holliday, Laura, director. *Disfluency*. Vimeo, 21 March 2019, vimeo.com/259639474.

This short film will someday be a feature film once the creators receive funding. For now, the film is on Vimeo and it was a very good watch. The protagonist, Jane, is followed through her use of the all too common phrase for women (“I’m sorry”) through her sexual assault and the aftermath.

Krenzer, Emma. *Touches*. Twitter, 2017, United States.

The body remembers everything. I think that’s why I start crying every time my biological parents come up. I feel like my skin remembers, it knows, and it yearns. I love my adopted parents, for me, they are my real parents. But there was that foreign touch that I can’t remember, but I also can’t forget.

Krenzer’s artwork shows the different touches a human remembers in their life from their parents to their friends and to lovers. Her photo could be seen as NSFW (Not Safe For Work) as it is a naked photo of her friend’s body. However, Krenzer uses different colored paints to create patterns and physical interpretations of the memories mentioned earlier.

Mazurek, Emma, "Fight, Flight, Freeze: a series of short films on sexual assault" (2019). *Honor Scholar Theses*. 126.

Funny enough, I helped Mazurek on her short films when I was a sophomore and had a grand time. Her thesis provided information about the three responses to sexual assault (fight, flight, freeze) in a creative way. Because the films deal with sexual assault, I decided to include her films as an ad in my magazine since both theses revolve around sexual violence.

Miller, Chanel. *Know My Name*. VIKING, 2019.

This book was difficult to read. There was so much relatable content and yet things that I would never ever know. I remember reading briefly about the Stanford sexual assault case when I was in high school. An avid BuzzFeed reader, I even remember skimming the Emily Doe victim impact statement. I remember Brock Turner's face. Now I've finished the book and it's strange that this only came out a year or two ago.

There are sections about Donald Trump, police brutality, the #MeToo movement, and all sorts of things about survivors. Two moments that really stuck out to me were anger and apologies. Her anger towards her assaulter, herself, her family, the system, all of it. Miller also discussed how an apology wouldn't have solved everything, but it would've been nice if Turner had taken accountability for more than the amount of alcohol he had consumed.

Miller, Madeline. *Circe*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.

Recommended by two amazing people on my committee, I picked up this book over Winter Term and fell in love. They were right, of course, that it was a good read. This book is an empowering reflection on how anger presents itself in men and women. Then, there's the self-pity and self-loathing issues that Circe has to work through.

Orange Is the New Black. Created by Jenji Kohan, Seasons 1-7, Netflix, 2013-2019.

Originally based on a memoir by Piper Kerman this TV show has been phenomenal in its representation of prison life, women, Black Lives Matter, the LGBTQ+ community, and more. Though it's not without its faults, one particular aspect reminded me of my thesis: Joe Caputo (Nick Sandow) and his character arc. Caputo is a mustached, bald, sleazy man in the first season. He's known for masturbating in his prison office and he cares little for the inmates. As the series progresses, he comes to care more and more for the women in the prison. By the last season, he's helping to run restorative justice sessions for the women and helping a particular woman facing a life sentence. Everything seems to go well for him in this seventh season until a former female employee shows up from his past, Susan Fisher. In a Facebook post, Fisher describes how she is part of the #MeToo movement and describes a former boss who sexually harassed her. It's true, in the first season, Caputo, her former boss, had an inappropriate crush on her and ended up firing her for a couple of reasons: one, she wasn't the best guard because she was often too nice to the women and two, she kept subtly rejecting Caputo's advances towards her. I think both reasons are terrible reasons to be fired.

You spend the series seeing Caputo go through this amazing arc of redemption. When Fisher comes up, Caputo is adamant that he did not sexually harass her and that she's mistaken. He even confronts Fisher at her home. His surprise visit to her house led to a restraining order. Caputo loses his job and prospects at the prison. It takes him a couple of episodes before he realizes that despite his feelings, he hadn't been listening to Fisher. He was busy defending himself and trying to reason that he wasn't "that guy" before realizing that his actions did make him that guy. Though he's not the same person he used to be, his past actions had a harmful effect and he learns to accept that. It was really humanizing for me to see and it's really meaningful. I don't know if I would compare the men who harmed me to him, but Caputo's growth was interesting to see.

Thomas, Iain S. *How to Be Happy: Not a Self-Help Book. Seriously: Old and New, Common and Rare Stories, Prose, and Poems*. Central Avenue Publishing, 2015.

This book's format contains several different writing mediums from poetry, tweets, emails, short stories, to even text messages. This nontraditional format paves way for a narrative (though it doesn't look like it on the outside) and a rush of melancholic notes. Though this book is not a magazine, I was inspired by the various writing formats.

Yang, Kelly. *Parachutes*. Katherine Tegen Books, 2021.

I found this book by chance and out of boredom. The cover featuring two women of color interested me and the blurb on the back drew me in further. The GoodReads reviews were the clincher as they mentioned sexual harassment and assault. Claire (Chinese) is sent to live in California to finish out the rest of her high school career. She lives with Dani, a Filipino woman the same age, and Dani's mother as her host family. Both women have the usual miscommunication issues, but finally, become close friends by the end. The book looked at each girl's relationship with their parents and romances in their life. Though the book switches back and forth between two protagonists, I wasn't confused or lost.

The boys and men in this book were really something. A teacher attempts to groom Dani and when she speaks out, she is punished. No one believes her. When Claire's ex-boyfriend r*pes her, she finds support in another boy and her friends. She tries to go to court, but because her ex comes from a family of wealth and power, she loses. I identified with so many parts of this story. When Claire comes to America, she's faced with racism that I've encountered. Though the ending was a little rushed, I found myself really enjoying what the author had to say about sexual assault and authority figures.