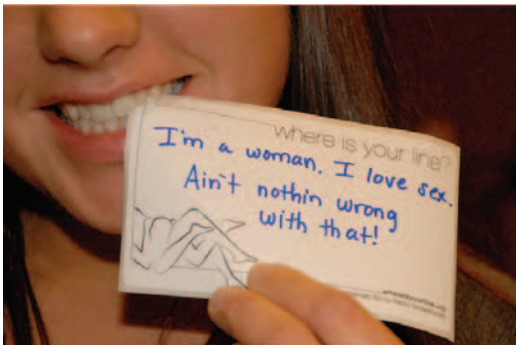




THE LINE

SEX. CONSENT. POWER. PLEASURE.

A documentary by Nancy Schwartzman



TAKE ACTION
toolkit

whereisyourline.org

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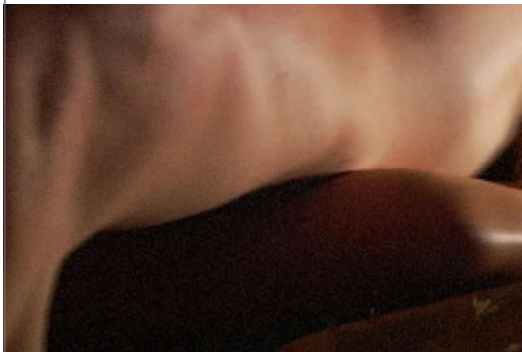
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ABOUT THE LINE DOCUMENTARY



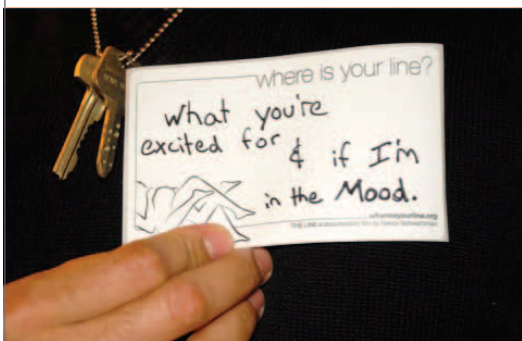
A one-night stand far from home goes terribly wrong. As the filmmaker unravels her experience, she decides to confront her attacker.

Told through a “sex-positive” lens, **THE LINE** is a 24-minute documentary about a young woman – the filmmaker – who is raped, but her story isn’t cut and dry. Not a “perfect victim,” the filmmaker confronts her attacker, recording the conversation with a hidden camera. Sex workers, survivors and activists discuss justice, accountability and today’s “rape culture.” The film asks the question: where is the line defining consent?

For more information, visit: whereisyourline.org.

THE LINE is a provocative and personal film, it can be triggering for some audience members. Please see Step 6 for more information about creating respectful, productive dialogue + safe spaces.

ABOUT THE LINE CAMPAIGN



THE LINE Campaign is an educational and interactive digital space that fosters dialogue about sexual boundaries and consent, and empowers young men and women to discuss complex scenarios about healthy relationships and sex. While we’re proud of the film, the discussion it sparks is the most important. We’ve had great success bringing together diverse audiences at colleges, independent bookstores, bars, galleries, coffee shops, community centers, “safe spaces” and more...

Creating a program is a great way to build alliances with different groups, as it encompasses a lot of related issues: men’s violence prevention,

women’s groups, public and sexual health, student life, LGBTQ issues, etc. This program is good for events such as Women’s History Month, Take Back the Night, Sexual Health Week and other similar functions.

For more information, visit: whereisyourline.org.

This campaign is supported by The Fledgling Fund.

USING THIS TOOLKIT

THE LINE Take Action Toolkit is for activists, educators, students and anyone interested in bringing the film + DIALOGUE about sexual boundaries and consent into their communities. This toolkit is designed to help raise awareness, start discussions and encourage people to ACT.

Here are some suggestions for how to use THE LINE effectively within your community. Feel free to modify them and design your own.

Please note that a separate Study Guide for Facilitators is available to help guide classroom and community discussions. We encourage all those leading screenings/discussions to carefully review the guide and incorporate relevant exercises into your post-screening discussion. It also includes a FAQ sheet for addressing interrelated themes and topics. You can download it here: wherisyourline.org/about/bookings or find it on p9 of the tool kit.

PLANNING YOUR EVENT

Below are some guidelines to help you plan your event...

SEVERAL WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT

STEP 1: Purchase/Rent THE LINE DVD.

STEP 2: Identify Objectives & Target Audience

Figuring out your target audience is important for all the next steps.

- Is this a classroom / organization screening where only your students / members will be invited?
- Or are you trying to engage a whole community where various members from different groups will be present, and you can all unite towards next action steps?
- Or is this more of a house party / dorm room screening with an intimate group of peers?

“THE LINE” will encourage the audience to:

- Evaluate their own experiences, ask questions and reflect on whether or not they have ever crossed the line;
- Engage in the topic of sexual boundaries and consent from varying perspectives, with different sets of expectations;
- Take ownership of the issues and, through the lens of peer response, come to realize their own stake in having a healthier sexual climate; and
- Take action through sticker creation, blogging or joining on-campus / community initiatives.

For campus or community advocacy organizations, additional objectives can include:

- Using the film to draw attention to the important work you're doing;
- Bringing different groups together towards one common cause; and
- Forming alliances with these groups towards future work (power in numbers!).

STEP 3: Draft a schedule of your event.

Sample schedule for screening + discussion:

- Introductions and ground rules / creating a safer space for discussion (5-10 minutes)
- Screening (24 minutes)
- Discussion (30-45 minutes)

Take Action discussion (15-20 minutes)

- Optional Post-screening networking/refreshments (10-20 minutes)

STEP 4: Book the venue and set the date.

Things to keep in mind when selecting a location:

- Convenient location
- Provides a DVD player, TV or screen projector (the larger the screen, the better), speakers
- Good acoustics
- Accommodates your audience
- Allows a safer / intimate space in order to encourage discussion
- Space to set up resources, hand out documents / flyers / informational pamphlets

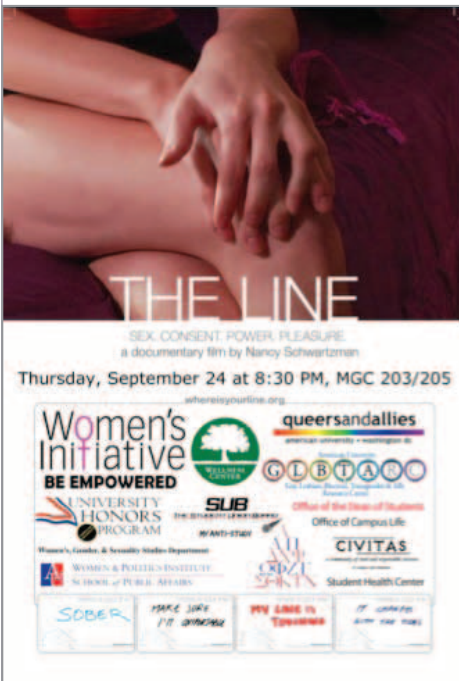
STEP 5: OUTREACH! OUTREACH! OUTREACH!

Outreach is key to making your event a success. There are two types of outreach that should happen simultaneously – speaker outreach and participant outreach.

Speaker Outreach

Reach out to local advocacy organizations, student groups, women’s centers, LGBTQ groups and other local activists who can be on a post-screening panel or who can provide information – help answering audience questions, provide informational pamphlets or to just be there for support after the screening. Also, make sure to choose a facilitator / moderator who can keep the conversation on track and help make sure all voices that want to be heard.

Audience Outreach



It is always a good idea to send out a **Save the Date** email as soon as you have one confirmed. Once you have details (ideally 4-6 weeks before the event), blast the info online via:

- Email blasts to target audience members;
- Listservs and relevant websites;
- Posts on social networking sites (e.g. facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc.);
- Blog posts; and
- Be sure to link them to whereisyourline.org in all outreach.

If it’s a larger event or bringing together various groups, other ways to get the word out include:

- **Download our flyer** and tailor to your event;
- Announce the event at meetings;
- Post banners and distribute flyers (all around campus, coffee shops, libraries, student centers, community centers, other hangout spots – have fun with it and get creative!);
- Make sure professors are letting their classes know and ask them to offer class credit;

- Advertise in your local newspaper, online journals;
- Call your local radio station – try to get at least a quick plug; and
- Ask organizations / groups to get the word out to their constituents (via website, blog, newsletter, facebook, twitter, etc.).

Also, make sure to let THE LINE Campaign know the details, so we can publicize your event!

STEP 6: PREPARE FOR THE POST-SCREENING DISCUSSION

This is not an easy topic to discuss – preparing early will help both you and the audience.

- It is highly recommended to download and read through the entire **Study Guide for Facilitators**, which includes a FAQ page where Nancy, the filmmaker, addresses many of the most common questions asked at screenings.
- Preparation could include getting together with panelists (even via email) to work through the details and create an agenda specific to the discussion. For example, if there is more than 30 minutes, it is a good idea to have each panelist briefly introduce her/himself and her/his work.
- It could also include a pre-screening with a few students who may be helping guide the discussion along.
- Remember the room is a “safer space”, and there should be resources (local services, national hotlines, other places to go for help / advice) on hand for participants.

SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE THE EVENT

Take steps to ensure your event will run as smoothly as possible.

Some examples include:

- Confirm the location and seating availability.
- Test the DVD on the location’s equipment (be sure to test sound and viewing capability) and become comfortable using the equipment.
- Send a reminder email blast to relevant people, organizations, and listservs.
- Confirm date, time and location with any panelists or partners.
- Run through the agenda with them again and make sure there are no questions re: the post-screening discussion in particular.
- Be sure to have plenty of stickers and markers available for people to Take Action.
- Appoint 1-2 people as photographers and make sure they know the drill (more details in the “Audience Takes Action” section of this toolkit).
- Make copies of any handouts you have prepared, including THE LINE’s Take Action flyer.
- Download our sticker slideshow on Flickr www.flickr.com/groups/1187243@N22/ and play our sticker slide show on Flickr or Tumblr whereisyourline.tumblr.com

THE EVENT!

Prepare the screening room.

Some things to think about include:

- Prepare the DVD and test the screening equipment.
- If possible, arrange the seating in a way that encourages equal participation.
- Ensure people can find the way to the screening space (signs or volunteer guides).
- Put a sign-in sheet near the door to track attendance and collect contact information.
- Play the sticker slideshow on a loop (_____).
- Take steps to create a safer space. Examples include:
 - Write the name of a school or local counselor on the board.
 - Write local resources on the board (e.g. rape crisis community center).
 - Write the national Sexual Assault Hotline on the board: 1.800.656.HOPE.
 - Write the online hotline website on the board: <http://online.rainn.org>.
 - Write the local LGBTQ community center on the board (or use a national network’s website, such as www.glaad.org).
 - Write the Men Can Stop Rape website on the board: www.mencanstoprape.org.
 - Write SAFER’s (Students Active For Ending Rape) website on the board: www.safercampus.org.
 - Be sure to have counselors in the room who can engage in the discussion and also be available for more private questions / conversations afterward.
 - If possible, provide pamphlets of local advocacy organizations.

Pre-Screening Introduction

It is a good idea to keep this to 5-10 minutes, but it could include:

- A brief introduction of the documentary – it mostly speaks for itself;
- A brief intro to panelists / partner organizations;
- Setting ground rules; and
- If you are the facilitator, clarify your role as neutral facilitator of discussion.
- Let the audience know there will be a post-screening discussion and action steps so they stick around.
- If it's a smaller group and attendees do not know each other, a quick go-around of names (or even a short ice breaker) would be beneficial towards the post-screening discussion.

Post-Screening Discussion

Hopefully by now you are well-prepared for this, whether you are using student peers, have panelists or are acting as the neutral facilitator yourself to help guide the audience discussion. Again, THE LINE Study Guide for Facilitators, and included FAQ section, may come in handy. Some basic questions to think about include:

- What does consent really mean?
- What is “rape-culture”?
- What do you want from your partner?
- How do you define justice?

Audience Takes Action

Now that you have taken action to create this screening, it is the audience's turn!

- If you have people in the audience who are there to provide information, now is a great time to introduce them, point them out to people;
- Pass out any flyers / pamphlets (of your own organization, e.g.); and
- Pass out THE LINE's Take Action flyer. Explain that there are 3 ways to make noise: NOW, Tomorrow & Daily.
- Do the NOW Action: Stickers! Pass out stickers and ask people to share markers – make sure the photographers are asking permission before taking photos. Most of our stickers are anonymous (creatively held with faces excluded from the frame). See our website for examples: whereisyourline.tumblr.com or www.flickr.com/groups/1187243@N22/
- Encourage audience to continue their discussion on our blog!

FOLLOW-UP

Please let us know how it went!

We would love to hear from you...

- Send us a copy of your sign-in sheet (or give us emails for those who want to be on our monthly newsletter blast);
- Count how many people are there and from what organizations.
- Fill out our quick and easy online survey.
- Write a blog post for your personal blog, school group or our site about the screening and the discussion it generated. whereisyourline.org
- Share the blog post with us and on facebook / your own social networking sites.
- Create your own “where is your line?” stickers, photograph them and upload them to our site – add comments. whereisyourline.org/submit
- Create a short video using imovie, a digital camera or your cell phone of the folks in the room, what's on your mind or just to say “hi” to share on our site.
- Tell at least 5 other people about THE LINE and the conversation you hosted.
- Become a fan of THE LINE on facebook and share with others.
- Sign up for our newsletter. whereisyourline.org/newsletter

RESOURCES

Below is a list of resources, which can also be found on our site: whereisyourline.org/resources

General Resources:

RAINN
NYC Against Rape
Love Is Respect
Women's Law
The National Center for Higher
Education Risk Management
Men Can Stop Rape
The White Ribbon Campaign

Youth Resources:

Sex, Etc.
Go Ask Alice
Scarleteen
Teenwire
Stay Teen
Teen HealthFX
Youth Resource
My Sistahs

Feminist and Sex Ed Media:

Jezebel
Audacia Ray
ISIS, Inc
Girl with Pen
Bust
Bitch
Feministing
Trixie Films
Worldpulse

Activism:

Raising Change
Hollaback NYC
V Day
Girls Club
NYC Safe Streets
Women, Action and the Media

Filmmaker resources:

Documentary Doctor
Films That Change the World
Center for Social Media

THE LINE FAQ

Why did you make the documentary film THE LINE and create THE LINE Campaign?

Because we wanted to start conversation, to bring to light some common rape myths and, most importantly, to get people to examine their own lives and their own behaviors. The film works to create a space where people have an opportunity to speak their minds and explore their beliefs, while not feeling alienated or silenced.

Keep in mind, no matter how open or free-form the dialogue is, there are some points that Nancy always addresses:

- Responsibility always rests on the person initiating sexual conduct, at any stage.
- The conversation is not about women «saying no better, or more loudly»; this is about asking before doing and saying YES, because sex should be an enthusiastic activity that both partners want, a lot!
- We need to collectively shift responsibility onto those that perpetrate violence, use force or coercion. Not on those on the receiving end of violence, violation, force or coercion.
- Legally what happened to Nancy is defined as rape, but explore some reasons why people don't understand that. And what might be some of the reasons that a woman would choose not to report?

Here are some questions that may come up, or that you may want to ask your students directly:

Was Nancy raped?

Legally and technically, yes.

Although the legal definition of rape varies from state to state, rape is generally defined as forced or nonconsensual sexual contact. Rape and/or sexual assault is forced, manipulated, or coerced sexual contact by a stranger, friend or acquaintance. It is an act of aggression and power combined with some form of sex. A person is forced into sexual contact through verbal coercion, threats, physical restraint and/or physical violence. Consent is not given.

Moreover, forced sodomy, also called anal rape, is forced/coerced anal intercourse, usually male-to-male or male-to-female.

Is Nancy at all responsible for what happened to her?

Responsibility always rests on the person initiating sexual conduct, at any stage. The conversation is not about women "saying no better, or more loudly"; this is about asking before doing and saying yes, because sex should be an enthusiastic activity that both partners want, a lot! We need to collectively shift responsibility on those that perpetrate violence, use force or coercion, not on those on the receiving end of violence, violation, force or coercion.

Common questions/comments/doubts:

But alcohol was involved?

But she was in his bed?

Why didn't she fight?

Why didn't she just «get up and leave»?

What if he thought the screams were screams of pleasure?

Again, this is victim-blaming, which is very common in our society.

According to the Rape Crisis Online Encyclopedia: "Victim blaming" is holding the victim of a crime to be in whole or in part responsible for what has happened to them. In the context of rape, this concept refers to popular attitudes that certain victim behaviours (such as flirting or wearing sexually-provocative clothing) may encourage rape. In extreme cases, victims are said to have "asked for it", simply by not behaving demurely. In most Western countries, the defense of provocation is not accepted as a mitigation for rape, although questions about the victim's clothing and behaviour is present in almost all rape trials.

From the NYC Alliance Against Sexual Assault: It is important that the victim of sexual assault understand that no matter where they were, the time of day or night assaulted, what they were wearing, or what they said or did, if they did not want the sexual contact, then the assault was in no way their fault. Persons who commit sexual assault do so out of a need to control, dominate, abuse and humiliate. Sexual assault is the articulation of aggression through sex, and has little to do with passion, lust, desire or sexual arousal.

Thus, whether someone is drunk or sober is irrelevant. While it may make it more difficult to prosecute in a court room, it does not change what actually happened or make it less of a violation. The perpetrator is always the one responsible for the rape, and he/she is the only one who can fully prevent it. It is always their fault. For this reason, it is more appropriate to call Nancy, along with anyone else who has been raped, a survivor.

But the lawyer, Karen Smolar said that she wouldn't go to the police. And the other lawyer, Brett Sokolow (wearing yellow), said that Nancy is not "a perfect victim".

Both of those people serve to illustrate how hard it is to prove a case, and just what kind of hurdles we place in front of victims when they come forward.

Why do you think a woman would choose not to report a rape or sexual assault?

Fear; embarrassment; wanting to forget it ever happened; it was a friend/family member and afraid to report or worried nobody would believe them; little evidence so afraid nobody would believe them; already suffered enough - afraid of the (lack of) reaction from an «unsympathetic society»

Can you think of who in our society is deserving of our sympathy, ie. who is the "perfect victim"?

Generally these women tend to be "good girls", or that stereotype reflected in the media: white women, married women, pretty women, Christian women, etc.

Why would somebody with Nancy's kind of story (the most typical, 80% acquaintance rape, most common on college campuses) seek criminal justice?

To prevent it from happening to somebody else; may feel a sense of empowerment; may help in the healing process; may help regain a feeling of control

From Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN): While there's no way to change what happened to you, you can seek justice while helping to stop it from happening to someone else. Reporting to the police is the key to preventing sexual assault: Every time we lock up a rapist, we're preventing him or her from committing another attack. It's the most effective tool that exists to prevent future rapes. In the end, though, whether or not to report is your decision to make.

Also, contact Students Active for Ending Rape (SAFER) to discuss ways to bring about creating change on your campus: safercampus.org.

Filming/technical questions taken from an interview with Nancy:

How long did the film take?

The film took 5 years. I really count the beginning of my commitment to make a film about my experience, when I confronted my perpetrator, which was January 2004.

How did you get access to the Bunny Ranch? I imagine that's a really difficult place to bring a camera...

It took a lot of planning and letter writing, only HBO really has official access to the Bunny Ranch. Through a series of lucky connections, I met the state archivist of Nevada, who had done a lot of work advocating for women working in the brothels. Through his good work, and history with the state, I was able to get a foot in

the door. I convinced them that I really wanted to show how the women working at the brothel were agents of their own lives and destinies, and they are not victims. I wanted to give them a chance to speak their minds on camera.

Have they seen the film?

Yes, Madame Suzette and Alexis Fire were both very moved.

How'd you get the Spring Break footage?

I first went to Daytona Beach (probably inspired by Byron Hurt's *Beyond Beats & Rhymes*), but it was not happening at all, just a bunch of trucks on the beach. Also, as a woman, I was having a hard time disarming young men. Incidentally, my friend a soundman, Roy Marasigen, happened to be in Panama City with a camera. He is a party animal and travels the world looking for parties. He was the perfect shooter because he manages to inhabit both worlds, that of a frat boy drinking beers and the other as anthropologist recording. He was the one who got them to talk.

Tell us about the Hidden Camera/private detective segment...

I spent six months researching the best way to approach the man I called "the perpetrator." I researched restorative justice principles and tactics, one of which is a victim and offender having a mediated conversation. Once I realized I had to meet with him, nothing could stop me.

I went to the Lexington Avenue Spy Shop in NYC and bought equipment – a tiny button-size camera, a microphone the size of a matchstick and a huge battery pack. I didn't really think through how I was going to wire the mic, the purse and all that stuff; and I was nervous that the Israeli airport security would think it's some sort of bomb. I got to Israel and realized that I didn't have the capacity to pull it off by myself, and a friend connected me to a private detective who formerly worked for the Secret Service. He sewed a camera replacing a button on my vest, wired and tucked the receiver in the base of my pants and also had a wireless receiver with him where he was recording.

Restorative Justice would recommend having a third party there to witness and mediate, but I was concerned that he wouldn't agree to meet with the two of us. I went alone and brought the camera as my witness. Knowing it was there made me feel safer.

At first I was really upset because the image was crackly and breaking up, but it actually added to the atmosphere and the material.

Personal questions taken from an interview with Nancy:**Did you have any qualms about making such a personal piece as you were filming?**

I did. I found it really challenging but also ultimately very productive to have my experience of a sexual assault, as someone who is not a "perfect victim", questioned over and over again. It underscored the need for the film on a societal level. On a personal level, I was fearful of sharing it with my family, and embarrassed to lay bare the details of my sex life, my rape, my past. What continued to inspire me was the flood of personal stories that audience members share with me and online, and how I can see that speaking out encourages others to share, and lose their shame and inhibitions and actively want to make change. The stories and thank-yous make the less pleasant experiences completely worth it.

How do you feel about making a film about consent but filming your perpetrator without consent?

I thought about if that was a fair thing to do, and I even brought it up with a rabbi. Basically, I made pains to disguise his identity because I'm not trying to demonize him or ruin his life, so I do feel like I covered my bases.

Has the perpetrator seen the film, or do you have plans to send it to him?

Not to my knowledge. If it were broadcast in Israel, I would probably let him know. I have no intention of sending it to him.

Further questions to explore:

- Why do you think Nancy chose not to use the word rape right away in the film? (Creates a polarizing dialogue, but she does use it.)
- Why do we in society blame the victim?
- Dissect this comment: *"75% of the bitches out here are using alcohol as an excuse to fuck, 25% are just whores"* – how do young people hide behind alcohol to justify their behavior, or shame young women for engaging in sex?
- What might be some of the factors that make us feel shame about sex and our bodies?