



## THE LINE

Sex. Consent. Power. Pleasure.

a documentary film by Nancy Schwartzman

[www.thelinemovie.org](http://www.thelinemovie.org)

### PRESS MENTIONS (continued)

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## FEMINIST REVIEW

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### **The Line** By Nancy Schwartzman Review by Heather Brown

This documentary, which clocks in at just twenty-four minutes, will continue to haunt you long after it ends. *The Line* is Nancy Schwartzman's wonderfully brave effort to interrogate the circumstances of a sexual assault she endured while living aboard. Because she is not a "perfect victim" (the incident happened after she willingly went home with a guy, as opposed to having been raped by a stranger), she soon finds that this leaves her no recourse in the eyes of law.

What's more, Schwartzman's sense of herself as a sex-positive feminist, an identity she had long embraced, was severely shaken. What becomes clear, however, is that it isn't Nancy who has a problem: it's the misogynist sexual rules of a culture that beckons a woman's sexual confidence on the one hand and beats it into submission on the other that are really to blame. Images of bikini-clad twenty-somethings doing keg stands while a crowd of young men look on only make her point further (need I mention *Jersey Shore*?)

Rendered as a kind of visual personal essay, Schwartzman frames her story with a chorus of voices—family, friends, advocates, legal counsel—who, though sympathetic, cannot give her the answer she seeks: where is the line of consent in which a sexual encounter goes from wanted to unwanted? Schwartzman makes two important realizations on which the whole story of trying to understand the why and how of her date rape pivots: the line is as personal as it is real.

Empowered and motivated to own her line of consent and let her rapist know he crossed it, Schwartzman arranges a meeting with him and records their conversation in what is a truly staggering few minutes of film. *The Line* is not a film you merely watch and put back on the shelf. Schwartzman has made sure of that by using it as a platform from which to promote conversation, debate, and outreach about the constellation of sex, power, pleasure, and consent. As she says, "*The Line* is a film. *The Line* is a movement. *The Line* is up to you."