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IT HAPPENED HERE

stories of sexual assault on campus

Director
Lisa F. Jackson

Producer
Marjorie Schwartz Nielsen

Executive Producer
John Ward Nielsen

IT HAPPENED HERE



STORIES OF SEXUAL ASSAULT ON CAMPUS

Neponsit Pictures presents *It Happened Here*

music by Jeff Elmæssian and Andy Rehfeldt edited by Bret Granato

director of photography P.H.O'Brien co-producer Jennifer Ollman

executive producer John Ward Nielsen produced by Marjorie Schwartz Nielsen

directed by Lisa F. Jackson

Run Time: 75:57

Press Contact: Annie Jeeves at Cinematic Red
310-995-3834 | annie@cinematicred.com

Short Synopsis: Through the intimate portraits of five student survivors, IT HAPPENED HERE exposes the alarming pervasiveness of sexual assault on college campuses, the institutional cover-ups and the failure to protect students, and follows their fight for accountability and change on campus and in federal court.



Long Synopsis: IT HAPPENED HERE, a compelling new documentary from director Lisa F. Jackson and producer Marjorie Schwartz Nielsen, explores sexual assault on campuses through the personal testimonials of five survivors who transform their experiences into a springboard for change.

In raw and intimate interviews, the students describe surviving sexual assault only to be met with apathy, disbelief, blame and retaliation from the authorities when they tried to report the crime. When they tried to get justice, they were ignored, belittled and shamed, while their attackers remained on campus with impunity. But instead of hiding away in shame, they chose to speak out, and found a way to force institutional change.

Screeners available upon request.
Website: www.ithappenedhere.org
IMDB: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt4314944/>



About The Production

I've been working in film production and as a screenwriter for over thirty years. However, nothing comes close to the humility, pride and gratitude I felt working with five remarkable women who let me into their lives and shared their stories.

As the parent of two college students who toured dozens of schools, and a volunteer in the non-profit sector helping under served students get into college, I thought I knew everything about campus life. It wasn't until a friend alerted me to the pervasiveness of sexual assault in college, and how her family had been directly affected, that I first learned about this shocking epidemic.

Work on IT HAPPENED HERE began immediately with research and a call to director Lisa F, Jackson. Lisa's films on sexual violence have had tremendous impact on communities and legislators—creating tangible change through storytelling. I tracked down Angie Epifano, a former student at Amherst College whose letter to her school paper about her experience launched a nationwide conversation.

Filming began one week later.

The courageous women at End Rape On Campus (EROC) and Know Your IX put me in touch with Kylie, who led me to Carolyn and Erica. These three women were taking action against the University of Connecticut, a state school where “rape culture” and division one sports prevail, while the administration had failed their student survivors.

I was very fortunate to find Sarah, a lone voice in a silencing southern school with a dominating Greek life. Sarah was a student athlete betrayed by athletes. She was the first to come forth and take action against her school. Sarah's activism has led to revisions of Vanderbilt's policies and practices, and she continues to work for change.

These five women continue to humble and impress me. I hope their stories will inspire and encourage others to break the silence surrounding campus assault, and work towards safety on campus and a culture of accountability and respect.

--

Marjorie Schwartz Nielsen
Producer

Director's Statement

I've been a documentary filmmaker for over 40 years and in that span have crafted film on topics as diverse as the Barbie doll, the New York Mets, restorative justice, breast cancer and people who think they can communicate with the dead.

But my resume for the last 10 years has reflected a singular focus: violence against women. *The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo* describes the use of rape as a weapon of war in that country's intractable conflict. *Tres Mujeres* explores the connection between sexual violence and displacement in Colombia's civil war. *Sex Crimes Unit* is a verite portrait of prosecutors in the Manhattan District Attorneys Office, the first unit in the country dedicated to rape and sexual violence.

So in 2013 when Producer Marjorie Nielsen approached me to direct a film that exposed the epidemic of sexual assault on American college campuses, I knew immediately that I was all in.

But I also knew that in order to grab its audience this film needed strong and compelling characters, young women who could be stand-ins for someone's sister, daughter or best friend, characters who were on journeys that we all could relate to, who spoke a truth that you couldn't not hear.

Because if I've learned anything after all these years it's that sexual violence is a topic that people turn away from. It is a subject fraught with misconceptions and veiled in myths, a crime that is denied, belittled and misunderstood, an assault that leaves debilitating scars on its victims, whether in the Congo or on a college campus.

The characters we found are what give *It Happened Here* its unique and intimate perspective on this national problem: women like Angie Epifano, one of the first survivors in the country to publicly denounce how her college – Amherst – treated her when she came forward asking for support and justice. And Carolyn, Kylie and Erica, students at the University of Connecticut, who together challenged the assumptions of a “rape culture” that would silence them. And Sarah O'Brien, who, with Angie's support, brought a first-ever Title IX suit against Vanderbilt.

They shared with us a great gift, trusting us with their stories and allowing us to follow their brave journeys. It is my hope that their example will inspire others, and inspire change.

--

Lisa F. Jackson

New York City
December 11, 2014



The Subjects

ANGIE EPIFANO **Amherst College**



Angie Epifano, a cross-country athlete and student scholar, was raped in a dorm her freshman year. For months Angie suffered in silence until a friend found her despondent and convinced her to get help. But when Angie went to school counselors she was met with disbelief and dismissal. They tried to convince her to "forgive and forget" and sent her to the psychiatric ward. Like many survivors, Angie withdrew from school. Her assailant graduated with honors.

In October '12, Angie wrote a letter to the student newspaper detailing her experience and treatment after her assault and it went viral, crashing Amherst's server (garnering over 1 million hits to date) and a movement of student survivors was born.

KYLIE ANGELL
University of Connecticut



A UConn nursing student, Kylie was sexually assaulted in her dorm by a friend. When she reported to campus police, Kylie was told “if women would stop spreading their legs like peanut butter rape wouldn’t keep happening.” Her assailant was expelled on 4 counts, but appealed and was allowed back on campus. Within an hour of his return, he broke his no contact order, stalked and harassed Kylie, and committed more sexual assaults.

Kylie refused to remain silent and staged events such as Take Back the Night and Slutwalk to call attention to campus assault, and bring change to her school.

SARAH O'BRIEN
Vanderbilt University



Vanderbilt University student athlete Sarah O'Brien was raped by a trusted football friend who escorted her home from a party. Sarah chose not to report for fear of harassment and retaliation, but after a year of silence and news of more assaults on campus, she chose to self identify as a survivor and came forth to take action against her school.

Sarah mobilized other survivors and activists and staged events including Take Back the Night and The Clothesline Project where she presented a list of demands to Vanderbilt deans that have led to a revision of Vanderbilt's policies. Through social media, Sarah reached out to Angie and Carolyn, and together they filed Clery and title IX complaints against their schools. As a result, Vanderbilt is under investigation for Title IX violations.

CAROLYN LUBY
University of Connecticut



When Carolyn wrote an open letter to UConn President Susan Herbst challenging the rape culture on campus and aggressive imagery of the new Husky mascot, she never imagined the hostile blowback she would receive-- hundreds of violent threats (“I hope you get raped by a husky”) and dozens of web sites slandered her.

Undeterred, Carolyn remained outspoken on campus and filed a suit against UConn, which was settled in July '14. She continues her activism with student groups and is devoted to bringing change to our schools.

ERICA DANIELS
University of Connecticut



When UConn student ERICA DANIELS spent the evening with a trusted friend and co-worker, she knew immediately that her drink had been drugged. Her head felt heavy, she was sick and unable to defend herself. Erica just wanted to change her work schedule to avoid her assailant who began harassing her. Instead, she was forced to quit her job while her assailant was promoted. When Erica went to Community Standards she was told there would be no investigation because of a lack of evidence.

Worried that her attacker is the worst kind of predator because he presents as friendly and harmless, Erica decided to take action. She joined the Clery, Title IX and civil suit against UConn and along with Kylie and Carolyn, Erica testified before Conn. State Legislature, which has lead lawmakers to draft new legislation to protect students.

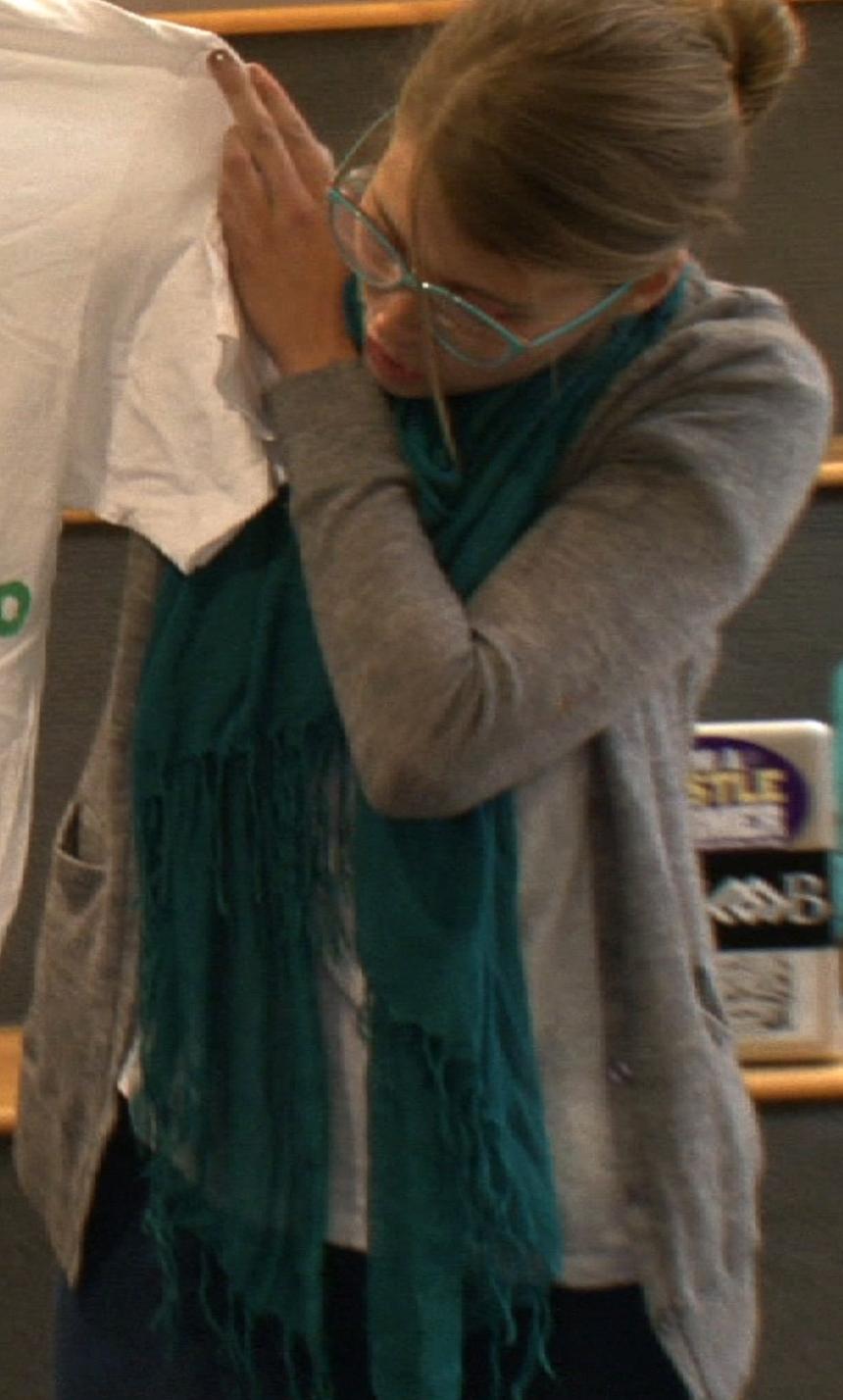
WHILE HE

RAPED ME

I forgot how to
return to MY
Body.

-JEN

Small white card with illegible text.



About The Filmmakers

LISA F. JACKSON – Director
has been making documentary films for over 35 years. Sex Crimes Unit, her most recent film, is an unprecedented verite portrait of prosecutors in the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office. The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo won a Special Jury Prize for Documentaries at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival and earned 2 Emmy nominations. She produced and directed Meeting with a Killer: One Family’s Journey (2001 Emmy Award nominee) for Court TV; The Secret Life of Barbie (1999 Emmy Award winner) for ABC News; Addicted and Why Am I Gay? for HBO’s “America Undercover” series; Smart Sex for the MTV series “True Life”. She studied filmmaking at MIT with Rickey Leacock.



MARJORIE SCHWARTZ NIELSEN-Producer began her professional career at the Nickelodeon Network producing non-fiction television for teenagers, and has been working with and writing for young audiences ever since. After associate producing documentaries for WNET and KCET, she spent the next 20 years writing feature films and original made-for-cable movies, and was a nominee for a Humanitas Prize. Nielsen has worked with at-risk youth, starting with School on Wheels in Los Angeles missions and shelters, and created programs for Hollygrove Family Services, a non-residential facility for foster youth and Art Division, a non-profit art school providing free classes, literacy programs and resources for underserved youth in the Rampart district of Los Angeles.



JOHN WARD NIELSEN - Executive Producer is an Emmy award-winning editor who has worked in television for over 25 years. John edited all formats including documentaries, variety shows and comedy specials, music videos and dramas. A member of the DGA, he moved on to direct news and magazine shows. As an experienced pilot, John opened a flight school and flew aerial production for dozens of feature films and television. He is president and owner of Touchstone helicopters, an aircraft leasing company.



Creative Team

Jennifer Ollman - Co-Producer is a documentary and TV producer who lives and works in New York City. Recently she produced "6 Days to Air: The Making of South Park" for Comedy Central for which she was nominated for a 2012 Primetime Emmy. She has worked with director Lisa F. Jackson on two previous films: "Sex Crimes Unit" (HBO/2011) as co-producer and "The Greatest Silence" (HBO/2008) as associate producer.

Jeff Elmassian--Music – is a Grammy Award-winning composer and musician. Founder of Endless Noise, which composes and produces innovative music and sound design for commercials, TV, film, online, digital and games. A-list clients include Nike, Coca-Cola, Hyundai, American Express, Motorola and Volkswagen. Recent winner of three 2012 Clio Awards, along with Grammy and Cannes Gold Lion Awards. Elmassian holds a BA in Music from the University of Southern California.

P.H. O'Brien — Director of Photography is a cinematographer who has shot numerous documentaries including the Primetime Emmy nominated "6 Days to Air: The Making of South Park"(Comedy Central/2011), Peabody Award winning "Earth Made of Glass" (HBO/2010) and "The War Tapes"(2006).

Andy Rehfeldt – Music.. As a professional guitarist he performed and also sang backup vocals with R&B vocalist Siedah Garrett, as well as Black Oak Arkansas and Silent Rage in nightclub tours of LA. Andy has contributed to such feature-length soundtracks as "Dead Fall," "Palmer's Pickup," and "Bel-Air," director Christopher Coppola films. Together with composer, Jeff Elmassian and Siedah Garrett, he produced songs for the Grammy award-winning movie soundtrack, "The Adventures Of Elmo In Grouchland." Andy continues to compose and produce music with Elmassian at Endless Noise.

Awards





IT HAPPENED HERE photos



End Credits

Director

Lisa F. Jackson

Producer

Marjorie Schwartz Nielsen

Executive Producer

John Ward Nielsen

Co-Producer

Jennifer Ollman

Editor

Bret Grant

Director of Photography

P.H. O'Brien

Additional Photography

Lisa F. Jackson

Ariel R. Jacobson

Guy Mossman

Michael Parks Randa

Tyler Ribble

Sebastian Lasaosa Rogers

Dyanna Taylor

Ethan Young

Additional Sound

Paul Graff

David Renner

Post Production Producer

Inbal B. Lessner

Additional Editor

Hoa Mai

Assistant Editors

Maxwell Anderson

Richard Miron

Pilar Rico

Transcription

Lisa Daly

Production Assistants

Russell C. Brisby

Brandon Daley

Michael
Kohlbrener

Jake Nielsen

Marshall Petty

Emma Tolkin

Assistant To Producer

Lucy Jackson

Office Manager

Ari Mostov

Clearance Counsel

Lisa Callif, Chris Perez, Donaldson
+Callif LLP

Legal Services

Saul C. Janson Esq.

Sales and Legal Representation

Lichter, Grossman, Nichols, Adler &
Feldman Inc.

Post Production Music and Sound
Services

Endless Noise

Music

Jeff Elmassian

Andy Rehfeldt

Music Supervisor

Mary Catherine Finney

Music Editor

Mary Catherine Finney

Music Scoring Mixer

Grant Cornish

Sound Editor/Re-Recording Mixer

Grant Cornish

Post Production Facilities

Pacific Post

Digital Post Finishing
Facilities

Chainsaw

Closed Captioning

CaptionMax

Colorist

Andy Lichtstein

Chainsaw Online Editor

Carlos Verdugo

Chainsaw Assistant Editor

Kevin Purcell

Chainsaw Operations

Rick Marciano

Dan Gaynor

Chainsaw Post Executive

Michael Levy

End Title Song

"Enough" Music and Lyrics by Ruut

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Heartfelt Thanks

Kylie Angell

Erica Daniels

Angie Epifano

Carolyn Luby

Sarah O'Brien

Curt and Mary Lou Angell

Rich and Barbara Daniels

John D. Foubert, Ph.D.

Jay Harris, Ph.D.

Karestan C. Koenen, Ph.D

David Lisak, Ph.D.

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Gloria Allred

Laura K. Christa, Esq.

Joyce deep

Drexel University

Northwestern University

Special Thanks

Our friends formerly known as Scout Capital:

James Crichton

Melissa Neumann

Adam Weiss

Lydia Callaghan

Special Thanks

Mitchell and Janet Feldman

Lisa Reik

Sagalyn Family Fund

Rosman Schwartz Family Foundation

And to our donors who prefer
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