

# SOMETHING CLEAN

**ROUNDABOUT**  
UNDERGROUND



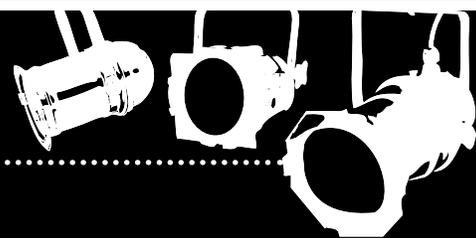
**ROUNDABOUT  
THEATRE  
COMPANY**

**UPSTAGE GUIDE**

A publication of

**EDUCATION AT  
ROUNDABOUT**

# UPSTAGE SPOTLIGHT



## SOMETHING CLEAN

By Selina Fillinger

Directed by Margot Bordelon

Wash the dishes. Mop the floors. Change the sheets. Change the past. Charlotte is a wife and mother who'll try anything to put her family back together. Playwright Selina Fillinger's new drama slips into the jagged cracks of a sex crime's aftermath—the guilt, the grief, and the ways we grapple with the unthinkable.

### A NOTE FROM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR TODD HAIMES

What draws me so strongly to *Something Clean* is the piercing insight it offers into the experience of those collateral victims of violence: the perpetrator's parents, who must live with an offense that haunts them as though it were their own. The character of Charlotte, whose son has committed a life-changing crime, struggles with her own complicity in her son's actions. Does she share the blame? Has she lost her place in her community, or does she still have a chance to leave the world better off than she found it? Selina captures the process of grief and healing at its most human, its most honest, and its most heartbreaking, crafting a story that ripples with a vivid authenticity—one that few other writers' first major productions can claim.

#### WHEN

Present day

#### WHERE

A clean, lonely house in upper-middle class suburbia.

An overstuffed, inner-city sexual assault center.

A dumpster, in a dark alley.

#### WHO

**Charlotte:** fifties

**Doug:** fifties

**Joey:** twenty-four

**A Police Officer**

**A Frat Boy**

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# INTERVIEW WITH PLAYWRIGHT SELINA FILLINGER

Education Dramaturg Ted Sod spoke with playwright Selina Fillinger about her work on *Something Clean*.

**Ted Sod:** Where were you born and educated? When did you decide to write for the stage? Did you have any teachers who had a profound impact on you?

**Selina Fillinger:** I was raised in Eugene, Oregon and went to Northwestern for college, where I ended up doing the acting and playwriting sequences simultaneously. Laura Shellhardt runs the undergrad playwriting department there, and she's the one who really changed my life. Her intro class was the hardest thing I'd ever done, and when it ended I thought, "Okay, I am not good at this. Never doing that again." But from that class I had 30 pages of a play, which Laura encouraged me to submit to the university's Agnes Nixon Playwriting Festival. It was selected—which meant I had to finish it. Laura kept telling me, "You're a writer," and I kept thinking, I don't know, it's too hard. But I also couldn't stop. My senior year, Laura partnered me with BJ Jones at Northlight Theatre for what she calls "the working commission." It was meant to be an academic exercise, where I could experience writing a play for a theatre under the mentorship of a real artistic director. But then BJ decided to put the play in his season, and the theoretical commission became my first professional production. It launched my career, got me my agents, accelerated everything. Somewhere in that process I began identifying as a writer.

**TS:** Are you still acting when opportunities arise?

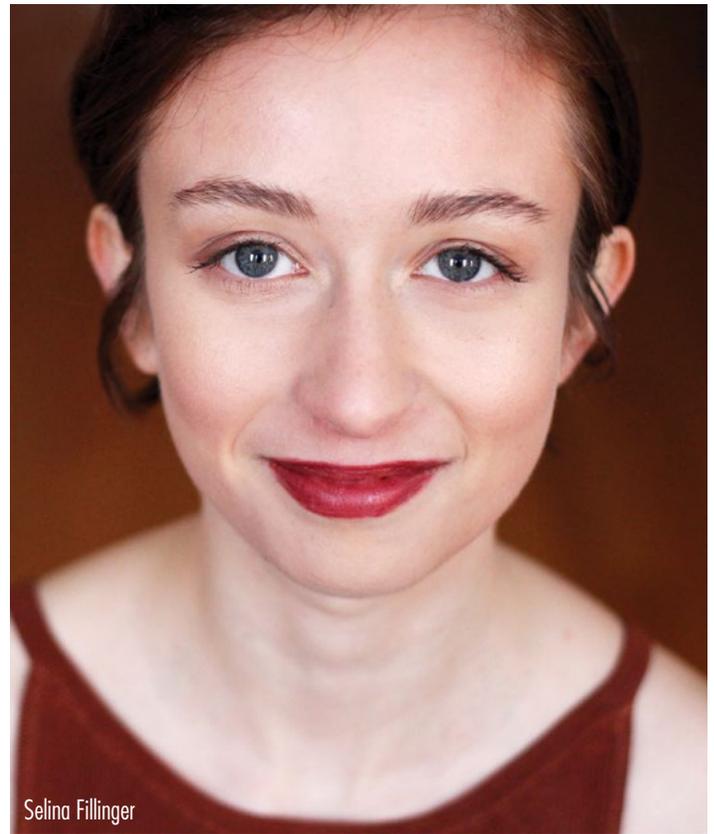
**SF:** Not recently, because life's been very full of writing and life things. But I do crave it. I'm an introvert, so I can stay long periods of time in my own brain—which after a point gets pretty stagnant. Acting brings me out of myself. My dream would be to write all the time and then perform in one show a year. I'd like to write a one-woman show for myself. I have an idea for one percolating, but it would require a lot of research so I haven't taken the plunge yet.

**TS:** Does your past work as a performer influence your work as a writer?

**SF:** One hundred percent. Nothing made my writing better than my acting, and nothing made my acting better than my writing. Having an instinct for rhythm, genre, character, arc—it helps me find my way into a script so much faster as an actor. And as a writer, my rule is, if I don't want to play the part, I cut the character.

**TS:** What inspired you to write *Something Clean*, and what would you say the play is about?

**SF:** The inspiration for the play was an article about Brock Turner. He was a Stanford University swimmer who raped a woman behind a dumpster. There were witnesses who pulled him off of her, and he was sentenced to six months in prison and ended up getting out after three months. This year they tried to repeal his sex offender status and, fortunately, that was shut down. I was following that story, and I saw a photo of him walking to court holding his mother's hand. It was an incredibly domestic and maternal image. She looked stoic and warm; she looked almost like she was taking him to his first day of school. If you saw the photo out of context, you wouldn't have known she was walking her rapist son to court. I couldn't stop thinking, what is the cognitive dissonance you have to do every single day when you're a woman whose son was seen raping another woman? To me, it was



Selina Fillinger

fascinating, and I wanted to see if I could write about sexual assault without giving voice to a rapist character or depicting a rape on stage.

I would say *Something Clean* is about consent and intimacy and the ways we are societally complicit in the violations that occur. These things don't happen in a vacuum. Somewhere along the way, this young man thought it was okay to do this crime. I feel we've given enough airtime to the rapists and that it's time to look at the other characters around them. The people who are related to them and those who suffer by their actions.

**TS:** What kind of research did you have to do in order to write this play?

**SF:** I didn't look a lot at the Brock Turner case. Yes, it was in the back of my mind, but I jettisoned a lot of the details. That particular case didn't focus on his parents, aside from the statements they made to the courts, which I did read. There were certain details I incorporated from the case, but the mother in my play is a character of my own making, as are the other characters. I interviewed people who worked at sexual assault centers and talked to a young man who held a job similar to the job that I gave to the character Joey. I also read selected parts of *A Mother's Reckoning*, which was written by the mother of Dylan Klebold, the Columbine shooter. I would read a few paragraphs and then write and read a few more paragraphs and then write again. She speaks so candidly and articulately about the whole experience and how it impacted her. Klebold's mother has truly dedicated her life to understanding why her son did what he did, and she is trying to prevent it from ever happening again.

**TS:** By focusing on how violent crime affects the parents of the perpetrator, you're really dealing with collateral damage. Correct?

**SF:** Collateral damage, yes, but also those who are indirectly complicit. I think the play follows the fallout, but it's far more about what do we do going forward. How do we raise our children to understand what consent means and to have healthy relationships? Charlotte, the mother in my play, is looking for redemption and answers. She feels responsible. One thing that stayed with me from reading *A Mother's Reckoning* is in the forward. Both Klebold's mother and father were asked, "If your son were here right now, what would you say to him?" I'm paraphrasing, but the father said something along the lines of, "I'd ask him what the hell he was thinking and why he did this?" And the mother said, "I'd ask his forgiveness for not seeing this coming and preventing the whole tragedy." It's really indicative of how people deal with grief along gender lines. Women, mothers especially, tend to internalize the suffering. The play deals a lot with the different ways we grieve. It's about people closing the distance between them and moving toward each other.

**TS:** Will you tell us about the development process for this play? Do you expect to do much rewriting?

**SF:** *Something Clean* was developed over a series of workshops with a variety of actors. Every play has a different revision process. This particular one is so tender and quiet, the revisions are all about calibration. It's like using a fine-tooth comb to get each moment balanced.

**TS:** In the epigraph of your script, you write two quotes. One from Pablo Neruda: "I love you without knowing how, or when, or from where." And one from Margaret Atwood: "I am the space you desecrate as you pass through." Why were these quotes important for you to include in the script?

**SF:** They are single lines excerpted from longer poems. I feel that they represent two sides of unconditional parental love. I tend to pick quotes for me more than anyone else. It is usually one of the first things I do. It's a center, a thing to come back to if I'm getting lost in the play.

**TS:** Had you seen director Margot Bordelon's work before you became collaborators?

**SF:** The workshop we did at Roundabout for the Underground reading series was a blind date. She's a writer's dream. She doesn't try to "fix"

or "solve" the play—she tries to open it, unravel it. It's such a flattering and generous way of approaching new work.

**TS:** What questions did you and Margot ask each other about the play?

**SF:** I think a lot of what we go back and forth about are tiny things like, should we add a pause there? No matter what, she takes the script as it is, and she finds a way to make it work. It's my job to listen and realize when she and the actors are working a bit too hard so that I can rewrite to make it easier for them.

**TS:** Who are your favorite playwrights and why?

**SF:** I love playwrights who blur tragedy and comedy. That's why I love Chekhov so much. Edward Albee, Tennessee Williams, Caryl Churchill—those giants, who have wicked humor and the deepest souls. Contemporary playwrights: Will Eno, Tarell McCraney, Suzan-Lori Parks, Jiehae Park, Sarah Ruhl, Antoinette Nwandu. I love Jen Silverman's play *The Moors*, and I just saw Ming Peiffer's *Usual Girls*, which blew my mind! I thought it was extraordinary.

**TS:** What keeps you inspired as an artist?

**SF:** Doing things that are not theatre. Reading novels, going

to museums, going to bed early, going for walks. It took a long time for me to give myself permission to do all that, but I find that if I'm uninspired, it's usually because I haven't left enough room for dreaming and living.

**TS:** What advice would you give a young person who says they want to write for the stage?

**SF:** Do it. I was so lucky to have parents who told me that I could do anything that I wanted. That's so rare, and I'm so fortunate. A young writer should absorb information from any teacher who is willing to give it to them, but they should be willing to throw it away and come up with their own "rules" of what makes a good play. For a long time, I adhered to what I had been told were the rules of theatre, and it's only lately that I've started to break those rules. •



Kathryn Erbe and Daniel Jenkins  
in *Something Clean*

# COLLATERAL DAMAGE: WHEN LOVED ONES COMMIT VIOLENCE

As demonstrated through Charlotte and Doug's experience in *Something Clean*, acts of violence resonate like explosions. At the epicenter, the victims and survivors of the crime experience the most extreme and immediate effects, but this doesn't spare the families of perpetrators from feeling the aftershocks.

## INTERNALIZED BLAME

Families often suffer from the societal assumption that criminal behavior is a direct result of parental inadequacy. While there are proven links between childhood trauma and criminality, not all traumatized children become criminals, nor were all criminals traumatized as children. In fact, most children who suffer from neglect and abuse do not become criminals.

Countless factors play into a person's propensity to commit a violent act. The Centers for Disease Control's report on Preventing Youth Violence identifies "risk factors for perpetration," which are not only linked to family dynamics but also include individual biological traits and predispositions, social and peer circumstances, and community factors (such as economics and transiency).

Still, many family members question whether they could have prevented the actions that their loved one committed and feel the burden of apologizing or making amends on behalf of the individual who committed the crime.



Daniel Jenkins and Kathryn Erbe  
in *Something Clean*

## UNDERSTANDING THE VIOLENCE

In addition to societal blame, many families struggle to come to terms with the reality that their loved one has caused harm and suffering. Individuals often grapple with feelings of confusion, loss of trust, and fear of intimacy or forming new relationships. Many spend money and time on therapy and in support groups grappling with these questions.

Sue Klebold, whose son was one of people responsible for the 1999 murders at Columbine High School, has spoken openly about her experience. In her public statements, she regularly reiterates the concept that, "The cruelty that defined the end of his life showed me he was a completely different person to the one I knew."

## DEALING WITH INCARCERATION

Incarceration impacts not only the individuals who are sent to prison, but the lives of the people that support them and the people that they support. For the one in eight American parents who have had a child incarcerated, a prison sentence can spur fear and anxiety, starting with an awareness of both the fables and realities of prison life.

Deliberately restricted information about the conditions within correctional facilities, along with limited access to communication, increases parental concerns for the safety of loved ones. Opportunities to see a family member in person are commonly limited to 3-4 hours per week or less, depending on the facility and sentence. Because individuals are incarcerated on average 100 miles from their homes in state prisons and 500 miles from home in federal prisons, families often do not have the time or financial resources to visit frequently.

Having a family member who has been incarcerated has been shown to increase the risk of numerous health outcomes, including depression, hypertension, obesity, and diabetes. These negative effects are particularly common in mothers who have incarcerated sons. In a 2018 study that measured the impact of incarceration on American families, a loved one's incarceration significantly or extremely affected the physical health of 63% of women and the mental health of 86% of women.

## RESPONSIVE COPING

The task of condemning a loved one's actions while also creating space for forgiveness may sometimes feel impossible. Carleen Turner, whose son Brock was convicted of felony sexual

Christopher Livingston and Kathryn Erbe  
in *Something Clean*



assault, was famously criticized for her letter to the judge that sentenced her son, in which she minimized the trauma her son inflicted on his victim, stating, “Brock is crushed that the jury ruled against him...He has never been in trouble - he has lived an exemplary life...Having lost everything he has ever worked for his entire life and knowing the registry is a requirement for the rest of his life is certainly more than harsh. His dreams have been shattered by this.” Her words indicate how some parents choose to handle such situations.

Conversely, some individuals find it impossible to keep associations with criminal family members. It is not uncommon for parents of violent offenders to change their names or cut off association with the perpetrator, especially when the harm has been inflicted upon another family member. In instances where violent acts are a culmination of repeated behaviors, some individuals are compelled to distance themselves for reasons of personal protection.

Amidst the pain and suffering of the violence, the parents of many perpetrators become fierce advocates for reform, dedicating their lives to researching the causes of violent crime, supporting victims, or engaging in activism to prevent future tragedies. Sue Klebold has dedicated her life to speaking and writing about mental health awareness. Similarly, after her daughter was incarcerated, Monalisa Johnson began one of the nation’s largest networks for families of incarcerated individuals, called Parents with Incarcerated Children, and speaks nationally on the topic.

For not just families, but all those attempting to hold culpability and forgiveness simultaneously, there is increasing interest in exploring and implementing a system of criminal justice that focuses on rehabilitation and reconciliation with one’s immediate victims and the community at large. This concept, called restorative justice, is bringing new hope to the possibility of honoring and remedying the pain inflicted on the victims, without deliberately inflicting further harm on the lives of all of those who surround an act of violence. •

# INTERVIEW WITH ACTOR KATHRYN ERBE

Education Dramturg Ted Sod spoke with actor Kathryn Erbe about her work on *Something Clean*.

**Ted Sod:** Where were you born and educated? Were there any teachers who had a profound impact on you? When did you know you wanted to act?

**Kathryn Erbe:** I was born in Boston, and I grew up in Newton Center, Massachusetts, which has an arts-rich public school system. There have been lots of articles written about the famous actors who were educated there. In my junior year, I dropped out, and I ended up going to an alternative high school in Western Massachusetts called the DeSisto at Stockbridge School. I studied for two years at Strasberg and two semesters at NYU's Experimental Theatre Wing, which was part of the four years I spent earning my undergrad degree at the Tisch School of the Arts. I have had many significant teachers along the way. My eighth-grade teacher, Ms. Crosby, was a formative influence. At that same junior high school, Mr. Richard Travers, who directed the plays and was the chorus director, was and is still a very supportive and loving friend to me.

I always loved reading books. They saved my life, and I think that reading had a lot to do with my wanting to be an actor. I just wanted to disappear into all the characters that I was reading about. At my alternative high school, there was a teacher working there named Greg Moffatt, who took all of us in the summer drama program to see the Steppenwolf production of Lanford Wilson's *Balm in Gilead* in New York City. All I had seen before then were tours of *Annie* and *A Chorus Line*. Here I was, this rebel teenager who was madly in love with Bruce Springsteen, so to hear his music played loudly in a play about these outcast characters, directed by John Malkovich—it changed my life and made me want to live and work in New York.

**TS:** Why did you want to play the role of Charlotte in *Something Clean*? What would you say the play is about?

**KE:** I really loved working on it when we did it as part of the Roundabout Underground Reading Series in 2018. My heart responded to Charlotte's anguish and the position she finds herself in. As a parent of a daughter and a son, I'm keenly aware of the vulnerabilities for each of them, inherent in their genders and their respective positions in society. Being part of stories like this, one can feel a real responsibility to raise a fierce daughter and a gentle son. Hopefully they will become conscious people who will treat others kindly and justly. I'm also painfully aware of the fact that we're human and imperfect, and things don't always go the way we wish. So all of that added up to me really relating to this character's plight. I agreed to do this play after a period of really not wanting to do any plays. There's a part of me that questions what is wrong with me each time I do a play, because they're so scary and so hard, and you're so vulnerable. But I really love getting in the trenches with people, especially artists like Selina and Margot, the director.

**TS:** So the events dramatized in this play have affected you personally?

**KE:** I can't say they haven't. It really is a cautionary tale. It makes me feel even more strongly that I want to try to just pay attention. I have had things happen in my personal life that have made me realize that I had better be more present, and listen better, and try to stay as



conscious as possible regarding my children and what's going on in their lives. But I was the kind of kid that didn't want my parents to know anything—so they didn't.

**TS:** What will your process be for this piece?

**KE:** Well, I'll have to memorize the lines. There's that hurdle to get through. We got so lucky because Roundabout was so generous. I personally find that the longer you have with the project, the better the outcome. It was a year ago February that we read it, and then we had a workshop to decide about the blocking. In three days, we blocked it two different ways because we needed to decide in what way the audience would be right on top of us—since the Underground space is so small. We had to decide whether they were on one side or two sides. We had to move so quickly that there was no time to really think. We had to work purely on instinct and being in the moment. For me, that was incredibly freeing. As far as my acting process, it's really just getting closer and closer to Charlotte and allowing myself to be more and more vulnerable. And then I will be trying to leave the work at work and not carry it around outside the theatre.

**TS:** Do you do a lot of research for a role like this?

**KE:** I will read Sue Klebold's book *A Mother's Reckoning*, that Selina read before writing the play, and I'll watch Sue speak on YouTube. I don't know that I'll be looking for physical characteristics, but mainly for her mindset and her emotional state.

**TS: What is the most challenging part of this role for you?**

**KE:** The emotional burden of it. I have yet to experience doing a lighthearted comedy, and I long for that experience. It would be so nice to be a part of something where people are laughing all the time.

**TS: What do you make of Charlotte's relationship to Doug, her husband?**

**KE:** I don't know yet. I could imagine it being very difficult to avoid trying to blame what happens in this play on your spouse. I think in the course of the play's storytelling, they actually do a remarkable job. That's one of the things I find the most moving about their relationship. They are trying not to end their marriage. They are filled with grief and guilt and they are trying to coexist. We are watching them stumble along, separately and together, and their humanity is one of the things that is emotionally charged for me.

**TS: How do you see her relationship with Joey, her co-worker? Do you see Charlotte's desire to work at an office that deals with victims of sexual assault as mercenary?**

**KE:** I don't think it's intentionally mercenary. It's desperation. And Joey is such a great young person that it's hard for her not to fall in love with him. I do think it's her relationship with Joey that fills this hole, this gaping wound she has—she's so hungry not to feel alone. I also think that when she's with Joey she works at being a better mother.

**TS: Do you see Charlotte's lies to Joey as a betrayal?**

**KE:** Absolutely. Their connection to each other goes so deep, and she didn't have any idea that they were going to have this intimate, close relationship. I think it could have been different, but they do get so close—so when the truth comes out, it's a horrible betrayal. Of course, it's not that she intended to hurt him. It's about how even well-meaning people can wreak havoc.

**TS: What do you look for in collaborating with a director?**

**KE:** I look for honesty. When I'm working with a director, I live in fear of people being afraid to tell me the truth. I really long for blunt honesty because you need an outside eye as an actor. I am not the kind of actor that wants to do things in a vacuum. I really love to collaborate, and I love being directed. I love trying things differently and seeing what works. I don't feel precious about my work in the way that I used to. I'm really excited to collaborate with Margot, the other actors, the designers, and Selina.

**TS: How do you keep yourself inspired as an artist?**

**KE:** By going to see inspiring work. I also do as much as I can with Theater of War Productions. Bryan Doerries started the company. He translates the Greek war plays, and he developed this format where actors read an excerpt or a truncated, distilled version of a play. That is the launching pad for a discussion about any number of subjects. He has about twenty different programs covering PTSD among soldiers, suicide and its effects on families, domestic violence, prescription pill addiction, and alcoholism. The most recent production I did was his *Antigone in Ferguson* up at the Theater of Harlem, which was written in response to Michael Brown's murder. That work just fills me up, and it's what I wanted to do when I was in college, but I forgot about it as my life progressed. So I love that I get to be involved in the social justice aspect of this work. That's what really inspires and moves me

about being an actor. Maybe with Selina's play, some people will take comfort or be able to refer back to what they learned watching it if they find themselves in a similar situation.

**TS: What advice do you have for a young person who wants to know what it takes to be a successful professional actor?**

**KE:** I think people have different definitions of success. For me, success has meant having a rich family and personal life outside of my work. My commitment to my family has compromised my freedom to be ambitious. That's not always comfortable or easy, but I am always deeply grateful that that's how I have chosen to navigate this career. That's what keeps me sane and grounded in the face of surface, shallow, or flashy things. That's what works for me. And that's really the advice I have to give. •

Learn more about Sue Klebold's book, *A Mother's Reckoning*, [HERE](#).

Learn more about Theatre of War Productions [HERE](#).



Kathryn Erbe in *Something Clean*

# ON THE FRONTLINES: WORKING TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE

## A BRIEF HISTORY

Rape and sexual violence have been a problem in human societies from the very beginning. In Western culture, rape and other forms of sexual violence historically were not seen as crimes against women but rather as property damage committed against their fathers or husbands: the word "rape" derives from the Latin word "raptus," to seize something. For centuries, the experiences of survivors were not a part of the legal or cultural conversation.

This began to change in the United States during the mid-20th century, as small pockets of activism and the women's movement spurred broad cultural shifts. For example, Rosa Parks organized to bring the rapists of African-American women to justice in Alabama in the 1940s and '50s. But it was not until the 1960s that "rape" was legally defined as a violent crime: one that could be committed against anyone, not just women.

In 1971, the New York Radical Feminists organized the first ever "rape speak-out" at a church in Hell's Kitchen. Dozens of women told stories of assault and the difficulties of reporting the attacks. "This is part of our public rape psychology, which emerged as the real villain at the speak-out," writer Gail Sheehy commented in *New York* magazine. The speak-out kick-started a national movement to change attitudes and reform laws around sexual violence.

Sexual assault crisis centers and similar organizations emerged to support survivors and their families at critical times and to provide ongoing counseling, assistance, and education. UPSTAGE spoke with three women who work with such organizations today.



### THE VOLUNTEER

## CHRISTINE MADGY GOIN

VOLUNTEER ADVOCATE

MT. SINAI SEXUAL ASSAULT AND VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM (SAVI)

As a Volunteer Advocate, Goin provides support and information to survivors of sexual assault or intimate partner violence who come into hospital emergency departments across the city. Volunteer Advocates receive 40 hours of training and sign up to be on call for at least two six-hour shifts each month. They offer support through their presence, attending to survivors' needs and explaining their rights. They also help survivors communicate with responding police officers and may remain in the room during the interview, and they may help to connect with follow-up support, which varies depending on the specific case.

*"They're not going to remember any of the facts that you shared. They're not going to remember your name. All they're going to remember is 'Did I feel safe with when I was with this person?' Because you're probably the first person that they're going to see after a traumatic event... Another part of your responsibility is re-establishing that power. It's letting them know: 'You are now back in control of your life.'"*

For more information please click [HERE](#).



**THE EDUCATOR**

**KAREN ORTIZ**

ADULT SEXUALITY COORDINATOR  
PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF NEW YORK CITY

Ortiz coordinates the Sex Education for Adults program, which offers free workshops on sexually transmitted infections, birth control methods, sexual health (including reproductive cancers and screenings), and consent and communication for organizations around the city. As the Adult Sex Education program developed, Ortiz and her colleagues discovered that what people needed most was the opportunity to connect the interpersonal and social aspects of sex to sexual and reproductive health.

*"We also found that when we offered these workshops, [people] requested more than anything our Consent and Communication workshop. I think that that proves that all these issues around consent—not that they're new, but we're finding out now, with Time's Up or the #MeToo movement—these issues are new also to adults, because we don't talk about them. [At] a men's shelter in Brooklyn that I go to all the time, when I talk about consent and communication, these are topics that they may not have heard anyone talk about before. No one's ever asked them how they navigate consent or how they know somebody is consenting. And so by actively making them think about it and asking them, that's a new perspective that they may not have had."*

For more information please click [HERE](#).



**THE CAMPUS EXPERT**

**JEENIE YOON, LMSW**

SENIOR CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT COORDINATOR  
NEW YORK CITY ALLIANCE AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

The New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault is an umbrella organization that provides assistance to anti-sexual assault programs around the city, legislative advocacy, and some direct services. In her campus work, Yoon provides educational workshops to the staff, faculty, and students at 11 colleges on topics ranging from understanding sexual violence to how to receive a disclosure.

*"Real prevention is actually having conversations with people: 'Hey you, nice girl/nice guy, you could actually be a perpetrator.' It's having these really candid and difficult conversations about the fact that you and I equally have the ability to be a victim and the ability to be a perpetrator. And we often don't think about that, because we don't want to think about ourselves in that terrible light...you are a potential perpetrator at all times. So what are you doing to keep yourself accountable? What are you doing to educate yourself? What do you think 'consent' means? What do you think 'no' means? And where are you struggling?...It's talking about how to ask for consent, from any gender to another gender, from 'Hey, does that feel good to you, do you want to keep going, are you ok with this?' What I'm actually saying is, let's respect each other and not only think about our own sexual gratification."*

For more information please click [HERE](#).

# INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR MARGOT BORDELON

Education Dramaturg Ted Sod spoke with director Margot Bordelon about her work on *Something Clean*.

**Ted Sod:** Why did you choose to direct *Something Clean*? What would you say the play is about? It seems very topical, yet it focuses on the psychological aftermath of a very specific event. How important are current events to you when directing a play that may be seen as a response to those events?

**Margot Bordelon:** I felt instantly compelled by Charlotte's journey when I first read the piece. Her confusion, her despair, her overwhelming sense of guilt and responsibility. I imagine how my own mother would feel if one of my brothers or I committed a terrible crime. She would never stop loving us, and I suspect she would take it on to herself. As a parent, how do you negotiate between your love for your child and your anger and guilt over what they've done? Some of the potent questions this play asks are how do you move forward after the unthinkable has occurred? Is it possible to atone for someone else's crime?

One of the reasons I love directing new plays is because I want the work I create to be in immediate conversation with what we're currently experiencing socially and politically. Not to say that revivals can't do that, because of course they can, but right now I'm finding it very fulfilling to be working on stories written by women, writers of color, queer artists—voices that have historically been marginalized. I want to work on narratives that promote inclusivity and equality—which, to me, feels like an act of resistance against our current administration.

**TS:** How are you collaborating with Selina on her play? Do you expect there to be any major rewriting during the rehearsal and preview periods? How involved are you in the rewriting process on a new work?

**MB:** Normally I'm very involved in the rewriting process with a playwright—I love to get into the trenches with writers—but from my vantage point, Selina has written an incredibly well-made play. She's done a little bit of rewriting through the reading and workshop process, but my guess is that the play won't undergo any extensive overhauls over the course of the rehearsal period. We will certainly find moments that can be shaped for clarity, or modified for staging, but I don't foresee massive changes. (Though one should never speak too soon!)

**TS:** How do you understand the relationship between Charlotte and Doug at this point in the process? Their marriage seems to be very vulnerable after the inciting incident of the play happens.

**MB:** I imagine that they've never experienced a trauma of this magnitude in their marriage thus far, and they're both feeling lost in how to move forward. Perhaps Charlotte feels more responsible for what happened than Doug does, and she resents him for not taking it on in the same way? They become isolated from one another, and their physical relationship grinds to a halt.

**TS:** Another fascinating relationship in the play is between Charlotte and her co-worker Joey. How do you understand that relationship? Do



Margot Bordelon

you feel that Joey's sense of betrayal is justified given what Charlotte is going through?

**MB:** The friendship that forms between Charlotte and Joey is a unique one—it moves from colleagues, to mentor (Joey) and mentee (Charlotte), to friends, to mother and son. It's through her relationship with Joey that Charlotte is able to find emotional intimacy again, and in turn, Charlotte becomes a maternal figure for Joey. The relationship seems to be delicately symbiotic, except that Joey has been transparent about his past and who he is, and Charlotte has not. Their relationship was founded on a lie of omission, so it makes complete sense to me that Joey feels so betrayed.

**TS:** Will you give us some insight into your process as a director? What kind of research did you have to do in order to direct this play? What kind of atmosphere do you like to create in the rehearsal room?

**MB:** I've been going down a dark rabbit hole of research reading about Brock Turner, sexual assaults on college campuses and resources that are offered to survivors, community sexual assault centers, Dylan Klebold's mother, and the effects a tragedy or trauma has on a marriage. This is all context, and then the real work happens with the actors. My aim is to cast well and then follow the actors' impulses. My general belief is that if actors know what they want in each scene and have an idea about how they're going to get it, then the blocking arises

organically. I hope to create a rehearsal room that is open and fun—where actors feel safe trying out big choices, and speaking honestly. I always want actors to feel like they can be transparent with me.

**TS: What traits did you need in casting the actors for the roles in *Something Clean*? What specifically were you looking for in the actress playing Charlotte?**

**MB:** The role of Charlotte must be played by an actor with a huge heart, ferocious strength, and a funny bone. Kathryn Erbe possesses all of this and more. My favorite actors are master technicians who possess deep emotional access. The main task of these actors is the ability and willingness to consistently share their vulnerability and their hearts. There is no hiding in the Underground. The task is to stay present, open, and genuinely listen and respond.

**TS: You used the RTC Underground space in very inventive ways when you directed *Too Heavy for Your Pocket* last season. How have you been collaborating on this production with your set designer, Reid Thompson (who designed *Too Heavy for Your Pocket*), and the rest of your design team?**

**MB:** We're using the Underground in a "tennis court" style, with Charlotte and Doug's house on one end of the space and the sexual assault center on the other. Charlotte is constantly being pulled back and forth between the two spaces. An opening stage direction reads, "A world that transforms seamlessly around Charlotte, thrusting her into

new locations or conversations—often without warning, often without her consent." So it was important to us to create a space that was minimal and allowed for fluidity so we could swiftly move between the spaces. Charlotte rarely leaves stage, so our approach to costumes is that she essentially stays in the same look for the entire show while Joey and Doug change for each of their scenes. Charlotte is stuck, while the world continues to move forward around her.

**TS: Will you talk about working on new work and what the specific challenges are? Are you exclusively interested in directing new work? Are there plays you are eager to direct revivals of?**

**MB:** I enjoy working on new plays because I love collaborating with my team to invent a new world that's never been imagined before—and because I feel deeply invested in telling stories for the here and now. The biggest challenge of a new play is the ever changing script and trying to figure out if you're actually making the script stronger, or rewriting it towards the actors you have playing the roles—and if those things are mutually exclusive. And of course, it can be tricky to design a new play before it goes into rehearsal, knowing that the script may radically change. Ultimately, I'm drawn to new plays because I love the camaraderie of working with a playwright, but I'm absolutely interested in directing revivals as well. I'd love to direct anything by Caryl Churchill, who is one of my great playwrighting heroes. •

Kathryn Erbe and Christopher Livingston in *Something Clean*



# SEXUAL ASSAULT IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

**1 IN 3** **1 IN 6**  
WOMEN AND MEN  
have been the victim of  
sexual violence in  
their lifetime<sup>1</sup>

The experience of sexual assault can never be reduced to statistics for survivors, families, and supporters. However, these data offer a larger view of how the U.S. criminal justice system handles rape and sexual assault, and who wins and loses as a result.

The percentage of rapes/sexual assaults reported to police rose from

**23%** in 2016  
TO  
**40%** in 2017<sup>12</sup>

**11.2%**

of all graduate and undergraduate students experience rape or sexual assault in their time on campus<sup>2</sup>



Queer women and men are up to

**15** TIMES  
MORE  
LIKELY

to experience assault than heterosexuals<sup>3</sup>

**NEARLY 50%**

of all transgender and/or gender non-conforming Americans have been sexually assaulted in their lifetimes<sup>4</sup>

In 2016,  
**OUT OF EVERY 1,000 INSTANCES OF RAPE:**

**230** are reported to the police

**46** result in an arrest

**9** cases are referred to prosecutors

**5** cases lead to a felony conviction

**4.6** convicted rapists (average) are incarcerated as a result<sup>5</sup>

The United States Sentencing Commission recommends a sentence between **8 YEARS TO LIFE** in prison for a criminal sexual abuse conviction, depending on factors such as age of the victim, extent of injury, and the defendant's criminal history<sup>6</sup>

The average sentence length for convicted sexual offenders is **11 YEARS**<sup>7</sup>

State prisoners sentenced for rape or sexual assault serve a median of **4.2 YEARS** before initial release<sup>8</sup>

## RAPE SENTENCES AND RACE

- Black people are **6 times more likely** than white people to be sentenced to prison for an identical offense<sup>9</sup>
- Black men are **75% more likely** to face charges with mandatory minimum sentences than white arrestees<sup>10</sup>
- Black men receive sentences that are nearly **20% longer** than those of white offenders convicted for identical felonies<sup>10</sup>
- Hispanic people are sentenced to prison at **2 times the rate** of white people<sup>9</sup>
- Native American people are sentenced to prison at **4 times the rate** of white people<sup>9</sup>

White men are more likely to get their sentences reduced under the judge's discretion, and these reductions are, on average, significantly larger than those received by black men.<sup>10</sup>

An average American is strongly likely to identify a black man as

**"LARGER" AND "MORE THREATENING"**

than a white man, even if the black man is not actually physically larger.<sup>11</sup>

1. "The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010-2012 State Report." *National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 2012.

2. Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Reanna Townsend, et. al. *Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct*. Association of American Universities, 21 Sept. 2015.

3. Rothman, Emily F, Deiera Exner, and Allyson L. Baughman. "The Prevalence of Sexual Assault Against People Who Identify as Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual in the United States: A Systematic Review." *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse*, 19 Jan. 2011.

4. James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. *The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey*. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality. 2016.

**The 2016 Brock Turner case, which provided inspiration for *Something Clean*, provides insight into how U.S. courts handled one high-profile campus rape case.**

**JANUARY 18, 2015**

- Stanford University student Brock Turner (age 19) sexually assaults an unconscious woman known as “Emily Doe” behind a dumpster outside a college party.
- He is stopped mid-assault by two graduate students who remove him from Doe and have him arrested.
- Turner posts \$150,000 bail and soon withdraws from Stanford.

**JANUARY 28, 2015**

- Turner indicted on two counts of rape, two counts of penetration, and one count of assault with intent to commit rape— all felony charges.
- Turner pleads not guilty to all five. The two rape charges would later be dropped.

**MARCH 14-30, 2016**

- Turner stands trial in Palo Alto, California (People v. Brock Allen Turner).
- Turner is convicted on all three counts of sexual assault.

**JUNE 2016**

- In a written statement to Judge Aaron Persky of the Santa Clara County Superior Court, Turner blames his actions on a college “party culture” that encouraged drinking and “sexual promiscuity” and maintains that Doe had consented to their activity.
- Judge Persky delivers a sentence of six months’ jail time (far shorter than the maximum possible 14 years) and three years’ probation, citing Turner’s lack of prior offenses, hardship suffered as the subject of national media attention, and “less[ened] moral culpability” on the night of the assault due to intoxication.
- Persky’s sentence sparks a national outcry for what many find to be extreme leniency.
- Doe’s written statement to Judge Persky vividly describes the horror of enduring a sexual assault and living through its aftermath, and it condemns the court proceedings as being more concerned with Turner’s ruined prospects than with her well-being. The statement is published online and goes viral.

**SEPTEMBER 12, 2016**

- Turner is released from a Santa Clara County jail after serving three months of his six-month sentence.
- Turner registers as a sex offender for life in his home state of Ohio, where he goes back to live with his parents.

**DECEMBER 1, 2017**

- Turner appeals his 2016 conviction, claiming he did not receive a fair trial due to the exclusion of testimonies of his high performance as a student and swimmer.
- Turner’s attorney also cites Doe’s intoxication on the night of the assault.

**JUNE 6, 2018**

Judge Persky is recalled from office for his light sentencing of Turner, after a two-year recall campaign led by Stanford law professor Michele Dauber.

**JULY 21, 2018**

Turner’s lawyer appears before a panel of judges of California’s Sixth District Court of Appeal, arguing that Turner had never intended to commit rape back in January 2015, as he had not taken his pants off during the assault.

**AUGUST 19, 2018**

Unconvinced by the argument made by Turner’s lawyer in July, the panel of judges upholds Turner’s 2016 conviction, denying his appeal.

5. Department of Justice. “National Crime Victimization Survey, 2010-2016.” *Office of Justice Programs: Bureau of Justice Statistics*. 2017.

6. United States Sentencing Commission, *Guidelines Manual*, §3E1.1 (Nov. 2018)

7. Reeves, Dr. Brian A. “Felony Defendants in Large Urban Counties, 2009 - Statistical Tables.” *U.S. Department of Justice*, 2013.

8. “Most Violent Offenders Released From State Prison in 2016 Served Less Than 3 Years.” *Department of Justice: Office of Justice Programs*, 29 Nov. 2019.

9. Hartney, Christopher, and Linh Vuong. “Created Equal: Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the US Criminal Justice System.” *National Council on Crime and Delinquency*, 2009.

10. “Demographic Differences in Sentencing.” *United States Sentencing Commission*, 14 Nov. 2017.

11. “People See Black Men as Larger, More Threatening Than Same-Sized White Men.” *American Psychological Association*, 13 March 2017.

12. Department of Justice. “Criminal Victimization, 2017.” *Office of Justice Programs: Bureau of Justice Statistics*. 2018.

# BOYS WILL BE BOYS? RAPE CULTURE ON CAMPUS AND IN POPULAR MEDIA



## INSTITUTIONAL RAPE CULTURE

The Oxford Dictionary defines rape culture as “a society or environment whose prevailing social attitudes have the effect of normalizing or trivializing sexual assault and abuse.” Jokes about sexual assault, victim blaming, objectification, and the cultural expectation that men have to coerce women into having sex all contribute to rape culture.

In *American Hookup*, Lisa Wade examines perceived sexual norms and the paradigm of hookup culture on college campuses. Wade explains, “Hookup culture both catalyzes and camouflages sexually coercive behavior.” Students acknowledge the role of status: a hookup has to be “worth it.” The common colloquialism is “to score.” And no student group has more to gain from status-based hookup culture than college athletes and fraternity members, who are 300% more likely to commit sexual assault than their peers.



Percentage of undergraduates who experience rape or sexual assault through physical force, violence, or incapacitation:

**23.1%**  
of females

**21.0%**  
of transgender,  
genderqueer, and  
nonconforming

**5.4%**  
of males

(AAU, 2015)

## INADEQUATE RESPONSE

In the past decade, many universities have been publicly criticized for failure to address sexual assault on campus. A U.S. Senate survey of 440 colleges and universities found that staff or administrators discouraged victims from reporting, downgraded assault severity, delayed proceedings while athletes finish their season or graduate, or simply failed to follow up altogether. Some institutions protect high-profile student-athletes, who garner attention, funding, fans, and therefore, applications. Athletes may suffer only trivial consequences for sexual assault. Fraternities often generate strong alumni and donor relationships for the university. Protecting athletic and fraternal organizations are the equivalent to protecting the institution itself. Universities and the national fraternity industry also carefully measure oversight to avoid liability. All this may explain why 80% of campus sexual assaults go unreported.

## COLLEGIATE RAPE CULTURE IN POPULAR MEDIA

With only 24 states requiring sex education in public schools, and only eight of those including discussions of “sexual assault” and “consent,” many young people may look to peers, film, and other forms of media. Popular culture contributes greatly to the perception of an ideal college experience. Because of this, many 18- to 22-year-olds allow media stereotypes to shape their actions. When everything from party music to nostalgic films normalizes rape and sexual assault—often glamorizing intoxication and incapacitation—the media has the effect of perpetuating rape culture.

## RAPE CULTURE IN SONG



**Robin Thicke’s “Blurred Lines”**

“I know you want it”

**Justin Bieber’s “What Do You Mean?”**

“What do you mean, when you nod your head yes,  
but you wanna say no”

**Jamie Foxx’s “Blame It On The Alcohol”**

“Say she usually don’t, but I know that she front/’Cause  
shawty know what she want, but she don’t wanna seem  
like she easy/I hear you saying what ya won’t do,  
but you know we probably goin’ do”

## BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

One of the most pronounced examples of collegiate rape culture is the string of Baylor University sexual assault scandals in Waco, Texas:

- Between 2011-2015, Baylor football players were accused of committing 52 rapes, many of which the administration was accused of covering up.
- In April 2012, Baylor football defensive lineman Tevin Elliott was accused of two counts of rape. Court documents alleged that senior administrators knew of at least one other accusation of sexual assault against Elliott in fall 2011. Despite sexual assault allegations first appearing in 2011, Elliott played every regular season game leading up to his arrest in spring 2012. In January 2014, Elliott was sentenced to 20 years in prison.
- In February 2016, Jacob Anderson, president of Baylor's Phi Delta Theta fraternity "repeatedly raped" another student at a fraternity party. Although he was indicted on four counts of sexual assault, he has not served any jail time.
- The law firm of Pepper Hamilton reviewed Baylor's Title IX processes, including sexual assault or dating violence reports during 2011-2015, and said the school response to sexual violence was inadequate and "failed to take action to identify and eliminate a potential hostile environment."
- Over 1000 suggested changes to Baylor's Title IX processes have been implemented this past year.

## TITLE IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any education program or activity that receives federal funding. Sexual harassment can qualify as discrimination under Title IX if it is "so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively bars the victim's access to an educational opportunity or benefit." Courts have generally found that even a single instance of rape or sexual assault by another student meets this standard.

In November of 2018, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos shared the first regulations to govern how schools should meet their legal obligations under Title IX. DeVos's suggestions reduce the liability of colleges and universities for investigating sexual misconduct claims and increase the due process rights of defendants, including the right to cross-examine their accusers. For victims of sexual misconduct on campuses, DeVos' rules could make it more difficult to seek justice.



Photo by Richard Potts

## WHAT'S BEING DONE

**End Rape on Campus** is an organization that works to end campus sexual violence through direct support for survivors and their communities; prevention through education; and policy reform at the campus, local, state, and federal levels. More information [HERE](#).

**It's On Us** is a national movement to end sexual assault, launched following recommendations from the White House Task Force to Prevent Sexual Assault. The campaign works with 95 partners and students on over 500 campuses, reaching out to students, community leaders, parents, organizations, and companies. More information [HERE](#).

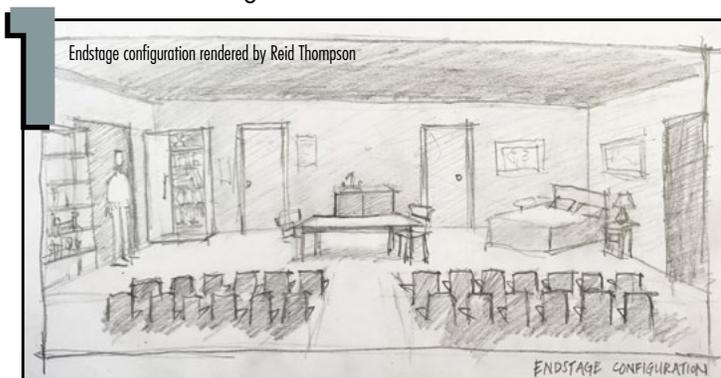
**Sexual Violence Prevention: An Athletics Tool Kit for a Healthy and Safe Culture, created by The National Collegiate Athletic Association**, helps member schools to prevent sexual violence on their campuses. It provides tools for athletics administrators to create safe, violence-free communities. More information [HERE](#).

**The Good Men Project** provides resources such as "The Healthy Sex Talk: Teaching Kids Consent, Ages 1-21" to help adults teach age-appropriate concepts of consent. More information [HERE](#).

# DESIGNER STATEMENTS

Set Designer Reid Thompson talked to UPSTAGE about the process of configuring the Roundabout Underground for *Something Clean*.

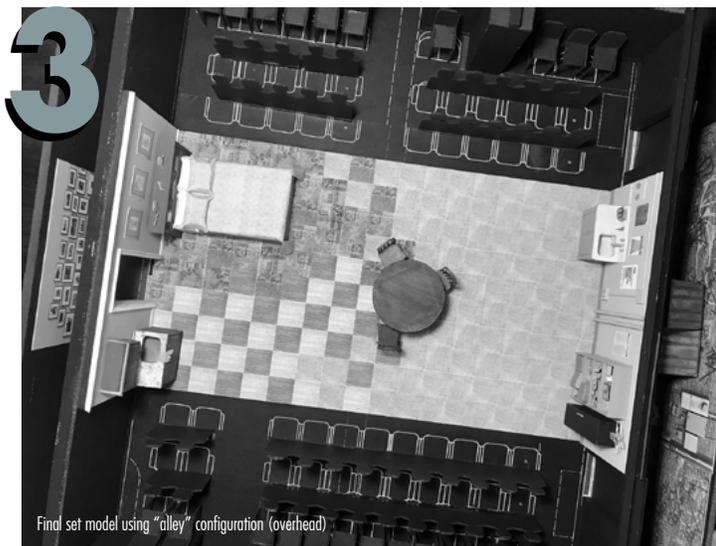
Most of the play takes place between Lottie (Charlotte) and Doug's suburban home and an inner city sexual assault center, with some pivotal moments around a dumpster in a back alley. Director Margot Bordelon and I wanted to minimize scene shifts, so the play could move cleanly between spaces. We also wanted audience members to see each other as they watch the play, to share the experience and their reactions. With these goals in mind, we explored the space in a workshop with Selina, the cast, and stage manager. I prepared by exploring three different groundplans. Each day we arranged rehearsal furniture into a different configuration, and Margot led the actors through a loose staging of the play. Then, we all discussed how each set-up worked from an acting perspective: Was the storytelling clear? Were the staging possibilities interesting? Each day, we repeated the exercise with a different configuration.



The first arrangement was the 'endstage,' the Underground's default set-up. Many technical factors push this to be the default, so we wanted to see how it worked. The advantages were that actors could play to one direction and not have to think behind themselves. Also, lighting in the higher-ceilinged area is easier, and we could have a surprise reveal of the dumpster/alley upstage. But the two spaces next to each other did not allow for dynamic staging, and we missed having the audience seeing itself.



Next we discussed an 'L' configuration, with audience on two sides and two scenic walls to represent the home and the center. This had an interesting dynamic: each side of the audience faces a different part of the set. As the settings alternate, audiences keep shifting their relationship to the space. The problem was that the far corner felt very far away, and we couldn't land on a good place for the alley-dumpster.



We ultimately landed on the 'alley' (sometimes called 'tennis court') configuration, which has two sections of audience facing each other and two scenic walls opposing each other across the space. The moment we set this up, it felt electric. The two spaces are like magnet poles, pulling Charlotte back and forth and encouraging dynamic staging. The actors loved how this set-up pushed them to keep things in action and feeling the audience's eyes on them from all sides. I hope this version lands the audience inside Lottie's experience of the world after the disruptions in her life: things are floating in space and mixed up. The audience facing itself creates a dynamic of community, reminding us of the eyes that are constantly watching this family. I also hope audience members will consider the reactions and experiences of others: if I am a man, how does this play affect a woman? If I am young, how does this play affect someone who is older?

## VALÉRIE THÉRÈSE BART – COSTUME DESIGN

Selina Fillinger's script is fluidly and beautifully written, and with it comes the challenge of making sense of the 36 scenes between three characters. I wanted to evoke the idea of Charlotte's world revolving around her and progressing almost without her. We decided she would never change in the span of the story, which takes place over six months—always with the same outfit, coat, and purse. We would instead show the seasonal and time of day shifts through Doug and Joey. Designing contemporary costumes is just as difficult as period costumes. In some ways, it's actually harder to make character statements with small and nuanced details, so that the costumes become natural and effortless. I looked at a lot of family portraits and pictures of regular families from the Midwest, focusing on sports families for Charlotte and Doug. I noticed similarities with how men tend to wear the same cuts and colors, how women accessorize, and how they style their hair. For Joey, I turned to some actual friends that I felt had the right kind of fashionably put-together style with pops of color and patterns—in direct contrast to Charlotte and Doug's more solid, subdued classic elegance. I'm hoping to create hyperrealism and inject slices of real life in a space and script that is abstract in structure.

## JIYOUN CHANG – LIGHTING DESIGN

I see lights in the space for *Something Clean* as not necessarily unnatural, but more psychological, more internal, than environmental. The play allows me to navigate myself as Charlotte in the space, lightwise. The color, shape, and scale of the lights in the space will be determined by the state of her mind. We've talked about isolation: as Charlotte feels more distant from the rest of the world, the space will be tighter around her and other people. We've also talked about the feeling of lingering – as Charlotte is present in one place, she co-exists in another place in her mind, or imagination, or memory. There are constant collisions and invasions between the two places. Lights can also show the level of her discomfort; the space can feel colder at times or brighter than it should, to make her feel uneasy with her surroundings. While isolated lights will make her feel lonely but safe, over-explosive and invasive lights will terrify her violently. And that will apply to the audience as well, since the set is in tennis court orientation. Audiences will be aware of other people sitting on the opposite side, and we will explore that more so at times, to control their level of discomfort. Finally, we found it important that the dumpster in a dark alley evolves each time we visit it. Whether it's more real and terrifying, or not, we hope to find out during rehearsal and tech process. •



Costume Designer Valérie Thérèse Bart's inspiration for the character of Joey  
(courtesy of Marcus Scott and Jereme Kyle Lewis)



# PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES



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## HOW DOES A DESIGNER CONFIGURE A SPACE TO ENGAGE AN AUDIENCE?

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(Common Core Code: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.2)

*Something Clean* uses a unique staging configuration in Roundabout's Underground space. Prior to seeing the show, students have an opportunity to explore the impact of spatial relationships between actors and audience.

**NOTE:** This activity requires an open work space with movable chairs.

**PREPARE** Read set designer Reid Thompson's description of how he worked with the director and actors to explore different configurations of Roundabout's Underground on page 18. Use the images in the article to help students understand how performance spaces can be reconfigured in multiple ways.

**WORKSHOP** Use the excerpt from *Something Clean* found **HERE**. Assign students into groups: including 2 actors, a director, and a set designer. Have them choose one type of staging configuration (endstage, "L" configuration, and alley; you may also use theatre-in-the-round and  $\frac{3}{4}$  thrust). Each group stages the excerpt in one configuration. Set designers should set up the stage space, including a few chairs to represent the audience, Directors should pay close to attention to how the scene is blocked for this layout.

**PRESENT** Present the scenes and allow each group to discuss what they like about the configuration they worked on. How does this help the storytelling? How does this help or challenge actors?

**REFLECT** How does the scene work differently in different configurations? How does the configuration impact the audience's experience of the play? Why do set designers and directors consider the audience's spatial relationship to the stage?

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## HOW CAN THEATRE ARTISTS USE FORUM THEATRE TO EXPLORE ISSUES OF CONSENT?

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(Common Core Code: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.B)

Students will learn about the Forum Theatre style of performance and will use this to practice preventions and interventions on issues of consent.

**EXPLAIN** Forum Theatre is a style of theatre that includes the audience in the action. Plays feature unsolved problems that abruptly end at the climax. Then, the audience is asked to step in and improvise how they might fix the situation. Read the "Introduction to Forum Theatre" section on the Consent Activity Scripts (available **HERE**) with students.

**DISCUSS** Next, facilitate a discussion on students' understanding of consent. (Consent means giving affirmative permission. Consent is not the absence of no; it is the presence of an enthusiastic yes). You can find more information about these discussions **HERE**.

**ACT** Using the Consent Activity Scripts (available **HERE**), ask students to take on roles in the scenarios. Give students a few minutes to read through the scenes with the rest of their cast.

**IMPROVISE** Each cast presents their scenario, as written. Then, invite students who are WATCHING the scene to swap out with a character and improvise to alter the course of events in the scene. The other actors in the scene improvise to an intervention that takes the situation in a new direction. Repeat this exercise with all three scenes.

**REFLECT** What parts of each intervention worked? What parts of each intervention could be improved upon? Were there any interventions that allowed you to see the situations from a new perspective? When might you be able to use this practice in your life?

## HOW DOES AN ACTOR CREATE A CHARACTER BIOGRAPHY TO EXPLORE A CHARACTER'S SUBTEXTUAL CHOICES?

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(Common Core Code: CCLS ELA: RI.9-10.1)

After seeing *Something Clean*, students analyze and articulate how a character history or biography can influence the development of a role.

**DISCUSS** As a group, discuss how creating a character biography influences an actor's performance. Explain that as part of the rehearsal process, actors sometimes write detailed "biographies" of their characters, including background and history that is not part of the play's action.

**WRITE** Have students write a detailed backstory for one of the characters in the play. You may wish to analyze the aspects of a character based on the choices we see in the play (i.e. Why Charlotte chooses to work at the crisis center? Why Charlotte doesn't tell Joey about her son? Why she doesn't tell Doug about volunteering?). Consider how relationships impact the character's choices and what are the other significant events in the character's life.

**SHARE** Allow a few students to present their biographies. As they listen, students should identify which elements of that character's biography connect to the events in the play.

**REFLECT** What does a backstory reveal about a character? Why do actors use this tool in preparing for a role?

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## HOW DOES A GRAPHIC DESIGNER CREATE A GRAPHIC THAT ENCOURAGES TEENS AND ADULTS TO DISCUSS SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND SEXUAL CONSENT?

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(Common Core Code: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.5)

After seeing *Something Clean*, students create images for a public health campaign that encourages discussion of sexual assault prevention and consent.

**MATERIALS** Art supplies and blank paper; (optional) graphic design software such as the Adobe Creative Suite.

**READ AND DISCUSS** Read "On the Frontlines: Working to End Sexual Violence" on pages 10-11. What do the women interviewed want people to know about prevention of sexual violence and consent?

**RESEARCH** (Optional) Make a list of public health or social advocacy campaigns students are familiar with, and look up images from these campaigns on the internet. What do they have in common? What makes each image an effective way to encourage healthy behaviors?

**DESIGN** Ask students to design an image, with text, for either a t-shirt, mug, poster (or any other printable item; click [HERE](#) for a good selection) that encourages teens to talk about sexual consent or preventing sexual assault.

**SHARE** If students have been working digitally, or you have access to a scanner, you may want to upload student designs [HERE](#) or a similar site and save the mock-up images that are automatically generated. Regardless of format, display student designs and host a gallery walk. Which images catch your attention? How has the designer conveyed their message?

Education at Roundabout wants to hear from your students, so please consider sharing students' designs with us [HERE](#).

# GLOSSARY AND RESOURCES

- MEDICAL ADVOCATE:** someone who accompanies a patient to medical appointments to ask questions, write down information, and speak up for them, so they can better understand their situation and get the care and resources they need  
*Joey suggests that Charlotte's background might make her a good medical advocate.*
- NON-CONFORMING:** a person who has a gender identity and/or expression that does not conform to the traditional expectations of the gender they were assigned at birth  
*Joey explains to Charlotte that their center serves not just women, but also people who are gender non-conforming.*
- GYNECOLOGIST:** a doctor specializing in the diseases and routine physical care of the reproductive system of women  
*Charlotte shares details about her life that she has only ever shared before with her gynecologist.*
- LANGUISH:** To become feeble or weak; to be or live in a state of depression  
*Charlotte tells Doug that she did not languish while he was away on a business trip.*
- DEIGN:** to do something a person considers below his or her dignity  
*Doug feels that Charlotte is deigning to allow him to kiss her since she has not done so in five months.*
- EMASCULATING:** to make a person feel less masculine; to deprive a man of his male strength or role  
*Charlotte asks Doug if he refuses to kiss her knee because he might feel it is emasculating.*
- WILY:** having a very good understanding of situations and possibilities, and often willing to use tricks to achieve an aim  
*Doug describes Charlotte as wily to suggest how she often hides her true motives for doing things.*

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# ABOUT ROUNDABOUT

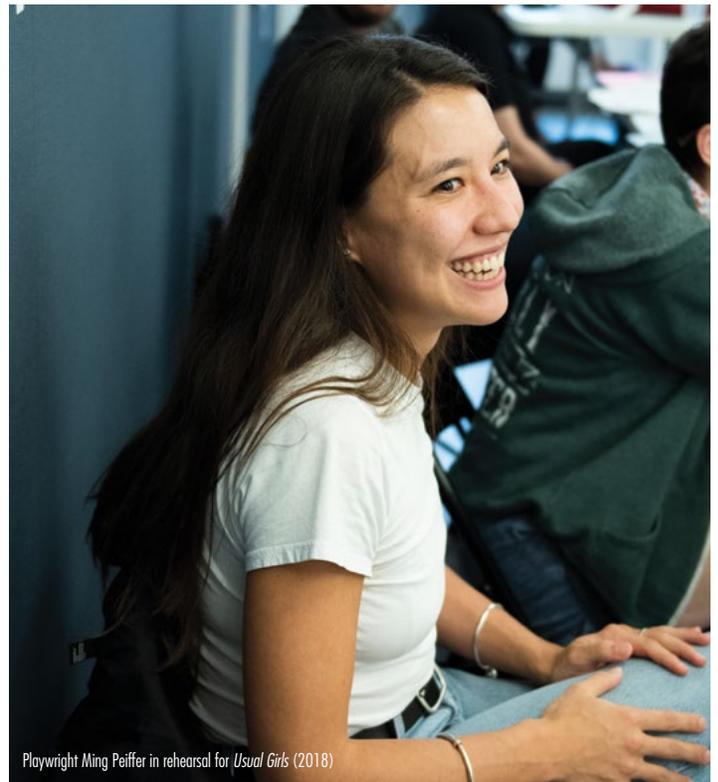
## ROUNDABOUT ARCHIVES

### PEEKING THROUGH THE CURTAIN: STORIES FROM THE ARCHIVES

Roundabout's Underground productions are changing the way we think about and tell stories. With our hands-on commissioning process, we have a unique opportunity to work intimately with playwrights as they shape their plays.

One of our most dynamic Archives initiatives aims to chronicle the creative process in the Underground. Through interviews with the playwrights, dramaturgs, and collaborators in the artistic process, we can provide a lens through which anyone can understand the artistic choices that ultimately shaped the play. The idea is to record the writing/rehearsal/staging process through the words of the artists themselves, which allows Roundabout to understand its relationship to these creative minds. It can also be used by the artists themselves, to look back and listen to the ways they approached their work in the moments of creating. This fantastic resource offers a unique view into the process of theatre-making.

To date, the archives have interviewed playwrights Alex Lubischer and Ming Peiffer. We hope to gain more speed with this production of *Something Clean*, where we will record interviews, observe rehearsals, and capture aspects of the process for theatre practitioners and scholars to use now and in the future.



Playwright Ming Peiffer in rehearsal for *Usual Girls* (2018)

For more information on the Roundabout Archives, visit <https://archive.roundabouttheatre.org> or contact Tiffany Nixon, Roundabout Archivist, at [archives@roundabouttheatre.org](mailto:archives@roundabouttheatre.org)

### STAFF SPOTLIGHT: INTERVIEW WITH MADELINE HURLEY, MARKETING ASSOCIATE

**Ted Sod:** Tell us about yourself. Where were you born and educated? How and when did you become the Marketing Associate?

**Madeline Hurley:** I grew up in a suburb of Charlotte, North Carolina, and studied at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After a few jobs and internships, I moved to Richmond, Virginia, where I was the marketing associate at Virginia Repertory Theatre. The company had just a two-person marketing team, so I was able to get hands-on experience in all the different facets of theatre marketing and communications. In the spring of 2017, I moved to New York to work for Roundabout!

**TS:** Describe your job at RTC. What are your responsibilities?

**MH:** I work in several different areas of Roundabout's marketing efforts. I work on our discount and pricing strategy; I liaise with our partners, vendors, and group sales agencies; and I manage some of our audience development initiatives, including Hiptix and audience outreach. I spend a lot of time combing through data, but I also work with many of our partners to come up with creative ways to reach new audiences. I really enjoy using data to track where our audiences are coming from and how we can reach more people.

**TS:** What is the best part of your job? What is the hardest part?

**MH:** I have been lucky enough to work on Roundabout's accessibility initiatives, like our new Relaxed Performances. I love that accessibility is not just an obligation at Roundabout, but a priority, and I believe it's truly key to developing new potential audiences. With so many shows happening at once and so many ideas bouncing around the marketing department, there is no way we can realistically pursue every opportunity to completion. It's always a balance to follow the most promising opportunities while letting others go.

**TS:** Why do you choose to work at Roundabout?

**MH:** I love supporting the artistic work that we do. Roundabout puts amazing performances on stage, and it's gratifying to spend my days spreading the word about a piece of theatre that I really believe in. It's a great team to be a part of. •

Learn more at [roundabouttheatre.org](http://roundabouttheatre.org). Find us on:



# WHEN YOU GET TO THE THEATRE

FOR EDUCATORS

## TICKET POLICY

As a student participant in an Education at Roundabout program, you will receive a discounted ticket to the show from your teacher on the day of the performance. You will notice that the ticket indicates the section, row and number of your assigned seat. When you show your ticket to the usher inside the theatre, he or she will show you where your seat is located. These tickets are not transferable and you must sit in the seat assigned to you.

## PROGRAMS

All the theatre patrons are provided with a program that includes information about the people who put the production together. In the "Who's Who" section, for example, you can read about the actors' roles in other plays and films, perhaps some you have already seen.

## AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

As you watch the show please remember that the biggest difference between live theatre and a film is that the actors can see you and hear you and your behavior can affect their performance. They appreciate your applause and laughter, but can be easily distracted by people talking or getting up in the middle of the show. So please save your comments or need to use the restroom for intermission. Also, there is no food permitted in the theatre, no picture taking or recording of any kind, and if you have a cell phone or anything else that might make noise, please turn it off before the show begins.

## ROUNABOUT THEATRE COMPANY • 2018-2019 SEASON



Roundabout Theatre Company (Todd Haimes, Artistic Director/CEO), a not-for-profit company founded in 1965, celebrates the power of theatre by spotlighting classics from the past, cultivating new works of the present, and educating minds for the future. More information on Roundabout's mission, history and programs can be found by visiting [roundabouttheatre.org](http://roundabouttheatre.org).

Major support for *Something Clean* and *Roundabout Underground* is provided by Jodi Glucksman.

*Something Clean* is a recipient of the 2019 Laurents/Hatcher Foundation Award.

Roundabout's work with new and emerging playwrights and directors, as well as development of new work, is made possible by Katherina Patterson and Tom Kempner.

We gratefully acknowledge the Roundabout Leaders for New Works: Alec Baldwin, James Costa and John Archibald, Linda L. D'Onofrio, Peggy and Mark Ellis, Howard Gilman Foundation, Jodi Glucksman, Sylvia Golden, Judith and Douglas Krupp, K. Myers, Katherina Patterson and Tom Kempner, Laura Pels International Foundation for Theater, Ira Pittelman, Laura S. Rodgers, Mary Solomon, Lauren and Danny Stein, Harold and Mirri Steinberg Charitable Trust, The Tow Foundation.

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