



The Hunting Ground Discussion Guide

Director: Kirby Dick

Year: 2015

Time: 103 min

You might know this director from:

The Invisible War (2012)

Outrage (2009)

This Film is Not Yet Rated (2006)

Twist of Faith (2004)

Derrida (2002)

Chain Camera (2001)

Sick: The Life & Death of Bob Flanagan, Supermasochist (1997)

Private Practices: The Story of a Sex Surrogate (1986)

FILM SUMMARY

Filmmaking team Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering are well-versed in the lack of justice experienced by survivors of sexual violence. Their Academy Award-nominated “The Invisible War” exposes the U.S. military’s mishandling of sexual assault cases. In THE HUNTING GROUND they shine a light on the issue of sexual assault on U.S. university campuses, examining institutional cover-ups and the brutal social toll that sexual violence takes on victims and their families.

In THE HUNTING GROUND, Dick and Ziering crisscross the country, interviewing campus assault survivors, their families, and a chorus of campus administrators, professors, psychologists, and attorneys whose testimony exposes pervasive sexual violence at American colleges. A resounding message emerges: where help and support are needed most, they are sorely lacking. Survivors are discouraged from reporting the crimes committed against them, and those that do report often face apathy, blame, threats, and retaliation from fellow students, administrators, and law enforcement.

Striving to keep campus crime statistics low and to protect their public reputations, universities often downplay or ignore instances of sexual violence. Yet THE HUNTING GROUND offers a hopeful and galvanizing twist: the stories of Annie Clark and Andrea Pino, two survivors-turned-activists who file a federal discrimination lawsuit against their own university, and inspire a network of survivors to find a voice and take a stand against injustice.

FILM THEMES

Sexual violence is rampant on college campuses across the U.S. Fighting back against decades of indifference and inaction, students are now challenging their schools to make the policy changes necessary to keep campuses safe—and to hold university administrators accountable.

SERIAL PREDATION

Contrary to popular perception, *THE HUNTING GROUND* reveals that the vast majority of rapes on campus are perpetrated by a very small number of assailants. Academic research finds, in fact, that less than 8 percent of men in college commit more than 90 percent of sexual assaults. The pervasive lack of appropriate and consistent reporting, investigation and adjudication of their crimes leads, in effect, to ongoing predation by this small number of perpetrators.

A SILENCING EFFECT

Many students and faculty on U.S. campuses assume that victims of sexual violence can depend on access to a robust network of support from their universities. The stories in *THE HUNTING GROUND* offer a sobering contradiction. In order to keep crime statistics low and to attract funding from alumni, many colleges effectively silence survivors, discouraging them from reporting their assaults, or making the disciplinary process cumbersome or hostile. In the words of attorney Colby Bruno, “The message [to survivors] is clear: Don’t proceed through disciplinary hearings. No matter what you do, you’re not going to win.”

BIG BUSINESS

American universities are big business. College presidents are tasked with selling a product and bolstering a brand. Rape allegations tarnish that brand, scaring off potential students and alumni donations, and damaging profitability. *THE HUNTING GROUND* reveals that two of the institutions that offer the most powerful financial benefit to universities—fraternities and champion athletic programs—also harbor an outsize number of sexual predators. Two independent academic studies have found that less than 4% of college men are student-athletes, but that male student-athletes commit 19% or more of reported college sexual assaults.

ACTIVISM

As campus rape survivors, Andrea Pino and Annie Clark were frustrated and astounded by the barriers they faced as they sought justice after being sexually assaulted on campus. As Annie Clark says, “My rape was bad, but the way I was treated was worse.” Clark and her fellow student Andrea Pino eventually brought a federal lawsuit against their university, and empowered student survivors at schools across the country to do the same. In 2015, more than 100 American colleges and universities are under federal investigation by the U.S. Department of Education for their handling of sexual assault.

“Sexual violence has always been part of the college experience.”

Susan Marine

“There’s this moral high ground in higher education that is sitting vacant.”

David Lisak

“It is in the interest of the college to suppress all knowledge that rape has happened.”

Claire Bond Potter

FILM FACTS:

- THE HUNTING GROUND premiered at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival.
- Director Dick and producer Ziering worked together on Academy Award-nominated “The Invisible War,” which investigates the way cases of sexual assault are mishandled within the U.S. military. They began collecting footage for THE HUNTING GROUND in April 2013 after reading an article in “The New York Times” about the work of Annie Clark and Andrea Pino. Many survivors were willing to be interviewed for this film, having seen “The Invisible War” and the filmmakers’ handling of such sensitive subject matter.
- Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering first collaborated on the 2002 documentary “Derrida,” about French philosopher Jacques Derrida, Ziering’s mentor while she studied at Yale University.
- In 2014, approximately 12 million female and 9 million male students attended American colleges and universities.
- Title IX, the federal law Andrea Pino and Annie Clark brought into focus, passed into law on June 23, 1972. Title IX “prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity.”
- Clark, Pino, and Sofie Karasek founded and continue to work with End Rape on Campus, a national organization providing help to campus rape survivors, parents, alumni, and faculty.

FACTS FROM THE FILM:

- 16 to 20 percent of women who enroll in college are sexually assaulted while in college. (1)
- 88 percent of women raped on campus do not report. (2)
- In 2012, 45 percent of colleges reported zero sexual assaults. (3)
- Only 2 to 8 percent of sexual assault claims are found to be false. (4)
- Less than 8 percent of men in college commit more than 90 percent of sexual assaults. (5)
- 95 percent of college presidents claim their institutions handle sexual assault “appropriately.” (6)

- 1 Fisher, Cullen, Turner (2000); Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher, Martin (2007); Princeton Sexual Experiences Survey (2008); University of Oregon Sexual Violence and Institutional Betrayal Survey (2014); MIT Community Attitudes on Sexual Assault (2014)
- 2 Kilpatrick, Resnick, Ruggiero, Conoscenti, McCauley (2007)
- 3 Washington Post (2014)
- 4 Percentage of sexual assault claims found to be false: 8% Grace, Lloyd, & Smith (1992); 3% Kelly, Lovett, & Regan (2005); 2% Heenan & Murray (2006); 7% Lonsway & Archambault (2008); 5% Spohn, White, & Tellis (2014)
- 5 David Lisak, PhD, and Paul M. Miller (2002)
- 6 2014 Gallup poll

WAYS TO INFLUENCE

1. **Donate** to the Hunting Ground Campaign, supporting student-led campaigns, public education, policy reform, and prevention approaches.
2. **Learn** more about, and consider donating to [End Rape on Campus \(EROC\)](#) that was founded by Andrea Pino and Annie Clark, two survivor-activists featured in the film.
3. **Visit** [The Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network’s \(RAINN\)](#) website and find out how to aid their cause: to offer support to victims of sexual assault, with a comprehensive network for campus victims.
4. **Reach out** if you or someone you know has been a victim of sexual assault. There are many ways to report and receive help. You can find links to resources at [THE HUNTING GROUND’S website](#).

We believe a good documentary is just the beginning...

In a world of sound-bites, documentaries provide an opportunity to think, understand, share, and connect with the world.

They are controversial, divisive, fascinating, unexpected, and surprising. They can be thrillers, dramas, comedies, romance, tear-jerkers, and horror films.

Documentaries provide the perfect topic for meaningful conversations. If you want to talk about the things that matter with people that matter then pick a film, invite your friends, and watch & discuss together. It's as easy as that.

Influence Film Club – We are the conversation after the film.