Directing Rebecca Gilman's Boy Gets Girl: A Southern Feminist's View on What I'm Supposed to do as a Woman

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DIRECTING REBECCA GILMAN’S *BOY GETS GIRL*: A SOUTHERN FEMINIST’S VIEW ON WHAT I’M SUPPOSED TO DO AS A WOMAN

by

Kelley McGahey Jordan

B.S., Birmingham-Southern College, 2009

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master of Fine Arts in Theater

Department of Theater in the Graduate School Southern Illinois University Carbondale May 2018
THESIS APPROVAL

DIRECTING REBECCA GILMAN’S *BOY GETS GIRL*: A SOUTHERN FEMINIST’S VIEW ON WHAT I’M SUPPOSED TO DO AS A WOMAN

By
Kelley McGahey Jordan

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Fine Arts in the field of Theater

Approved by:
Olusegun Ojewuyi, Chair
Dr. Jacob Juntunen
Wendi Zea

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
April 5, 2018
AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Kelley McGahey Jordan, for the Master of Fine Arts degree in Theater, presented on April 5, 2018, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: DIRECTING REBECCA GILMAN’S BOY GETS GIRL: A SOUTHERN FEMINIST’S VIEW ON WHAT I’M SUPPOSED TO DO AS A WOMAN

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Olusegun Ojewuyi

“Directing Rebecca Gilman’s Boy Gets Girl…” reviews the process of directing Boy Gets Girl by Rebecca Gilman, presented on October 26-29, 2017, in the Cristian H. Moe Laboratory Theater at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois. This document chronologically details the year-long production process for the director, beginning with the preliminary research and discussing the development of a concept, through formulating designs, conducting rehearsals and observing performances, and concluding with a post production evaluation. This document begins with Chapter 1, exploring the preliminary research which developed into the director’s concept and vision for production. Chapter 2 explains the pre-production process, including design and production meetings, dramaturgy, and publicity. Chapter 3 details the production process, including auditions, callbacks, rehearsals, and performances. Chapter 4 is a personal reflection and committee evaluation of the overall production, including the recognition of opportunities for future growth as a director.
DEDICATION

In honor of my parents, James and Suzanne McGahey, who introduced me to the magical world of theater and who always encourage my artistic journey.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to my advisor and mentor, Professor Segun Ojewuyi, for taking a chance on this wannabe director and turning her into one. Thank you for your endless guidance and patience, and the occasional tough love. Thank you for the priceless wisdom you have shared with me. This has been a journey I’ll never forget.

Thank you to my committee members, Professors Wendi Zea and Dr. Jacob Juntunen, for your expertise in the fields of design and play analysis, but also for answering a ridiculous amount of questions. I am very honored to have you both on my committee.

Thank you to the rest of the theater faculty and staff at SIU. You each have been an inspiration during my MFA journey. A special thanks to Professor Dr. Anne Fletcher for the essential “study hall” hours, which were not necessarily limited to Research Methods, but anytime and anywhere I saw you. Also, thank you to Professor Tom Fagerholm for your guidance and advice during my assistantships.

Thank you to the cast, crew, designers, and production team for Boy Gets Girl. You each made my thesis production special and I am forever grateful for your dedication to our show.

Thank you to my friends and classmates Janessa Harris, Andrew Armas, and Terry Baker, for sticking by me when times were tough and celebrating with me when milestones were surpassed. I could not have done this without each of you.

Thank you to my parents, James and Suzanne McGahey, for instilling a love and appreciation for the arts at a very young age. Thank you for chauffeuring me to choir
practice after dance recital after play rehearsal. A very special thank you for continuing to support me even when I decided to make a career of it.

Thank you to my sister, Erin McGahey, for being the best sibling I could’ve asked for. However cliché, I know that, day or night, you are always there for me and just a text away. Thanks for getting me.

Thank you to my husband, Daniel Jordan. Even for someone as long winded as me, it's hard to find the words to thank you for your unending support and unwavering love. You are my rock, especially when we're apart. I promise one day I'll stop going to school. “I love you morer.”

Lastly, thank you to Pup and Parker, my dogs, for being attached at my hips and comforting me during more tough times than Taco Bell ever could.
PREFACE

Feminism wasn’t always a dinner-table conversation in the southern states. Only in recent years have young women begun to question their upbringing and the social conditioning that is traditional for these areas. As a female growing up in Alabama, I had a first-hand account of the patriarchal society that taught young women to be “ladies” and to dream to become housewives. Luckily for me, I had strong, independent parents who saw the potential in their children, regardless of our sex. We were encouraged to be strong women and to chase after our dreams, whether that was at home or afar. But not many of the girls I grew up with had these opportunities or support. Many of the girls my age, or in the grades immediately surrounding me, went straight to the local nursing school, married young, now have at least one child, and have never experienced life outside of the area, except for vacations. Strong women have not been acknowledged in my hometown until recent years, and even then, women have a long way to go to be recognized as equals to men.

When I moved away from my hometown for the first time, I attended Birmingham-Southern College (BSC) in Birmingham, Alabama. While here, I began to read plays by fellow BSC graduate, Rebecca Gilman. In Boy Gets Girl, Gilman “stridently writes as if she is introducing feminism and objectification of women as new concepts” (Toscano). But these concepts and ideas are far from new. Also, having grown up in Alabama – where stereotypes like Civil War reenactment or sipping sweet tea on front porches are not only true, they’re tradition – Gilman undoubtedly witnessed the ever-predominant societal ideals that condition men to objectify women, and where
women are taught to be subservient. Though *Boy Gets Girl’s* leading-lady Theresa is not a southern belle herself, Gilman is, and her writing of her heroines is often described as follows:

To be a feminist in the American South might seem an anomaly. No doubt the South has earned its reputation well as a patriarchal society where women don’t sweat – they perspire – and where the men have placed them on a pedestal so high that the women... are afraid to jump...

Southern women playwrights also have addressed the inconsistencies for... women who don’t fit the mold (Gupton 124).

Gilman addresses this negative conditioning in her writing of Theresa. Theresa is an outlier to the “mold.” A self-proclaimed feminist, independent and strong, she is not flattered by unwanted attention. *Boy Gets Girl* has both a protagonist and playwright that I strongly identify with on both subjects of feminism and the oppression of women.

This oppression and conditioning were the struggles that I carried into the rehearsal space as a director. This was where I began to stage my own fight and learn “what I’m supposed to do” – as a woman, as a feminist, and as someone who’s witnessed first-hand the social conditioning Gilman sought to highlight (to be discussed more in Chapter 1). Though the current political environment would prefer secrecy and oppression, what I was “supposed to do” was not be silenced.
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CHAPTER 1
RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Historic and Biographical Information

Rebecca Gilman is praised as one of the leading Southern, female playwrights for “her ability to create entertaining plays which examine social problems affecting the American society” (Solomonson 200). Her play Boy Gets Girl follows the story of Theresa Bedell and Tony Ross – from their first, blind date until Theresa moves to Denver after fearing for her safety when Tony violates his restraining order by stalking her apartment. This play explores the cultural influences of violence targeted at women and the “patriarchal conditioning” that allows men to objectify women and to look at them as a “commodity” (Solomonson 200).

Born in Trussville, Alabama, Gilman became interested in theater at a very young age upon reading works of playwright George Bernard Shaw, “whom she admired for his willingness to take a stand on controversial issues” (Rebecca Gilman 2008). She began her career in playwriting while attending Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont, but ultimately graduated from Birmingham-Southern College in Birmingham, Alabama in 1987. She went on to earn a Master of Arts from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia, completing her education with a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa (Rebecca Gilman 2008).

Though Gilman began playwriting while in college, she was forced to support her playwriting career with clerical jobs after moving to Chicago in the nineties. When she became a part of the Chicago Dramatists group, the resident artistic director convinced the Circle Theatre to produce one of Gilman’s plays, The Glory of Living, in 1997.
Because of the success of this play, the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, Illinois awarded her the Scott McPherson Award and commissioned a new play, *Spinning Into Butter* (*Rebecca Gilman* 2008).

Gilman is currently serving as the Artistic Associate for the Goodman Theater in Chicago, Illinois, and, at Northwestern University, is an associate professor of playwriting and screenwriting in its Writing for the Screen and Stage Master of Fine Arts program. Her other most recognized plays, all of which were commissioned and initially produced by the Goodman Theater, include *Luna Gale, A True History of the Johnstown Flood, Dollhouse,* and *Blue Surge*. Gilman is the recipient of several prestigious awards, as well as a Pulitzer Prize nomination in 2001 for *The Glory of Living* (*Artist Bios: Rebecca Gilman*).

**Boy Gets Girl**

Originally titled *Boy Meets Girl*, Gilman was forced to change the name because of copyright infringement with a show of the same name, but it was a change that ended up blending more clearly with the final script. With the original manuscript beginning to make the rounds in 1999, as another one of Gilman’s commissioned pieces for the Goodman Theater, it quickly became known as “the stalker play” (*Jones 2001* 47). However, Gilman said in an interview that she wanted to write a play “about how people have incorporated cultural attitudes into their own makeup” (*Jones 2001* 49). *Boy Gets Girl* was first produced at the Goodman Theater on March 13, 2000, and had its New York City debut at the Manhattan Theater Club in 2001 (*Gilman 2001* 3). Hailed by Richard Christiansen of the *Chicago Tribune* as “[a] provocative, unsettling play,” *Boy Gets Girl* begs the question, “What is a stalker?” as well as “[W]hat kind of
life can a woman lead when she knows she is being followed, obsessively and perhaps dangerously…?" (Gilman 2000 cover).

Theresa Bedell, the protagonist, is a reporter for *The World* in New York City. She has always loved journalism and is married to her work. When her friend Linda suggested she go on a blind date, Theresa initially refused, but ultimately agreed to give it a chance. *Boy Gets Girl*’s opening scene is the uncomfortable first date between Theresa and Tony Ross. Tony is handsome and charming, but admits that he is nervous and tends to move too fast, after quickly asking Theresa out on a second date. Though the date is awkward, Theresa remains optimistic and agrees to meet Tony again the following weekend. Following numerous calls and flower deliveries as well as the second date, she is convinced that they have little more than coincidences in common and believes, blaming her feelings on her attachment to her job, it would not be fair to continue seeing each other. Theresa decides to end the relationship before it begins. Tony, however, does not reciprocate this sentiment.

Theresa becomes suspicious that Tony is stalking her after a series of voicemails one night that subtly indicate he has been watching her apartment. Theresa finally answers his call, losing her cool and yelling:

*THERESA: Stop calling me! Don’t send me things, don’t try to see me.*

*Don’t ever speak to me again!* (Gilman 2001 45).

This only fuels Tony’s obsession, and he begins calling her office, leaving voicemail after voicemail that progress quickly from anger to the threat of violence. It is Theresa’s co-worker, Mercer, who finally convinces her to call the police.

Detective Beck arrives and grants Theresa a restraining order. Once again, this
adds fuel to the fire and, as Beck puts it:

BECK: … it’s hard to enforce it. If [Tony] doesn't want to be seen, he won't be… (Gilman 2001 48).

Theresa is advised by the detective to get a new number, adopt new behavioral patterns, move to a more secure apartment, and to change her name. But when she receives the news that the new apartment she intended to rent was rented from under her in the twenty minutes it took her to travel back to her office as well as her receiving a degrading letter from Tony upon her arrival there, it has become obvious that Theresa is in danger.

Though Theresa has been staying with Howard, her boss, it has been an added burden to not be able to go home and get her own belongings. After Howard and Mercer offer to do this for her, they find her apartment has been ransacked. In the end, Theresa must make a choice to fight or to flee, prompting her to move to Denver and adopt a new identity.

**Character Analysis**

Though simplistic in their dialogue, Gilman's characters are complex, remaining “unsentimental and truthful” (Solomonson 200). Michael Solomonson, author of “Rebecca Gilman’s Exploration of Gender Conditioning as a Factor in Violence Against Women,” offers that Gilman did not write a play where a man simply terrorizes a woman, but rather she “suggests that cultural conditioning of both men and women play a part in the violence that occurs” – where men are conditioned to objectify women and women are taught to be submissive when gazed upon or pursued (Solomonson 200-201). Therefore, Gilman’s portrayal of her characters’ needs and motivations requires a
deeper exploration to better understand the relationships among them.

**Theresa Bedell**

For Theresa Bedell, her life is about routine and comfort. She is content with the way her life unfolded and only becomes ill at ease when her routine begins to change. Her arc throughout the play begins in a place of confidence and independence, transforming into paranoia and insecurity, and finally, resolution, even though her changes are due to a decision she felt forced to make.

Theresa is a self-proclaimed feminist and is in her late 30s – an age that is old enough for one to feel the need to be well established in life, in a routine, and a job, but still young enough to feel youthful and attractive as a single woman in New York City. While she is perfectly comfortable being single, her friends think it is time for her to date again, and this is how she comes to meet Tony, who then turns her whole life upside down.

Theresa has no family and no significant other, having separated from her boyfriend, Mark, a year prior to the action of the play. While her estrangement colored her judgement, she is by no means a hater of men. Rather “[s]he continuously attempts to show the men in her life, be they employees, friends, or people she interviews for the magazine, how to understand women without objectifying them” (*Boy Gets Girl, Study Guide 2*). She tells herself that she is married to her job and that is the reason she cannot commit to a relationship, although lasting romantic relationships are a struggle. Though she has always enjoyed writing and is currently a success in her job, changes are hard for Theresa to make – a reality she must face in the end by moving and changing her name, even if only as a precaution to feel safe again.
Tony Ross

Tony Ross is in his early 30s, younger than Theresa. He’s more of a drifter than she is, having moved from jobs or opportunities more often than most. Ironically, the move that brought him to New York City was allegedly to get away from a woman and a relationship. However, his new city has provided ample opportunities for stalking. Though we only know of one female Tony took an interest in before Theresa, according to Detective Beck, it’s a behavior that most likely has been part of Tony for a long time spanning across moves.

Tony is charming and attractive, though he self-diagnoses nervousness, awkwardness, and moving-too-quickly on his dates while out with Theresa. Still, he shows no outward signs that Theresa should make worry – “neither buzzers signal nor lights flicker huge letters saying ‘STALKER, STALKER’” (Paige 400). Because he is currently out of work and his last fixation suddenly moved, Theresa becomes his prime target, whether he has true feelings for her or not. He is “obsessive and controlling” over Theresa (Boy Gets Girl, Study Guide 2). His obsession, consequently, becomes all about his own needs, and Tony ignores Theresa’s repeated pleas to leave her alone as well as the restraining order so as to get his “fix”. Though there is abundant information available about stalkers and their behavior, “there is little to explain what exactly motivates the stalker, and further, how to therapeutically treat these offenders” (Muller).

Howard Siegel

Howard Seigel is in his 50s and is Theresa’s boss at The World. He is approachable and friendly with his employees, allowing for a more relaxed environment
around the office. Consequently, as the play progresses, his role shifts from boss to a father-figure for Theresa. He tries to relate to her, citing his own divorce as an example. Though he is naive with regards to how to handle the situation at first, he becomes concerned for her welfare, giving her his phone, and eventually letting her stay at his home and borrow his clothes.

**Mercer Stevens**

Mercer, also in his 30s, is Theresa’s coworker and the “new guy” in the office (*Boy Gets Girl, Study Guide 2*). Much like Howard, his role also shifts with the progression of the stalking to that of a brother-figure or guardian for Theresa. However, his fascination with her case intensifies to the point of pitching an article based on Theresa’s situation. Though his intentions are good – to provide information to other women on avoiding situations such as this – he is completely unaware at first of the pain it will cause Theresa, which leads to her comparison of him to Tony and his neglect for Theresa’s feelings. Ironically, he confesses to Howard of his own sexual attraction to Theresa upon their first meeting.

**Harriet**

Harriet, 21, exploits the newfound independence and power attained by most 21-year-old’s who still hold onto their mother’s credit cards. She is Theresa’s assistant, but she does more harm than good. Despite being told on numerous occasions to reject flowers, calls, and visitors, Harriet’s blatant ignorance to do so in connection with her own naivety has only aided Tony in his efforts. Harriet is the first person in the play who has all the pieces to the puzzle and puts them together to understand the full picture – and her role in it. She tries to bury her guilt by offering continuous gifts to Theresa, but
after seeing that Tony has begun pursuing those he believes are connected to Theresa, she confesses her accountability.

**Detective Madeleine Beck**

Beck is the detective assigned to Theresa’s case. She is in her mid-40s and is a tough woman, as women on the force tend to be assertive to prove worthiness as “one of the boys.” She often comes off as brash and robotic, but eventually warms up and shows real concern when questioned directly by Theresa, opening up about her own memories of being objectified as a woman. She is also a woman dedicated to her job (as we see in the stage directions when she arrives to Theresa’s office a second time wearing the same clothes as the day before). Though dedicated to the case and finding Tony, she does not offer Theresa the advice she wants to hear. Beck has seen this too many times and makes Theresa’s safety her top concern, even if it means coming off as strident.

**Les Kennkat**

Les, 72, is a lifelong director of pornographic films and a “connoisseur of breasts” (Gilman 2001 56). Though in her original interview with him, Theresa finds him rude and repulsive, Les is open and honest about his work and, over the course of the play, his role becomes much larger than that; he shows her it’s okay to open herself up to people, especially men. Eventually, in his hospital room, she would even consider him to be a friend.

**Genre**

Dramatic Publishing lists *Boy Gets Girl* under their genre of “drama” (*Boy Gets Girl*). This is a broad term, though, that blankets several genres within it. Theater
historian Oscar Brockett suggests that “[w]estern theater has always reflected changing views about man and his world. Thus, as conceptions about psychology, morality, sociology, and politics have altered, so too has theater” (Brockett 606). However, our terminology for genres has not, blanketing most plays under “comedy” or “tragedy”. Gilman said it best herself in an article in American Theatre: “The pitfall is the expectations of the genre… You expect someone to get shot and that there will be a neat conclusion in some way or other. I wanted to take the subject seriously and write about it more realistically” (Jones 2000 28). I would argue, perhaps, that Boy Gets Girl be placed in a subcategory of drama, labeled psychological thriller – suggesting the characters are psychologically unstable and involving both mystery and drama.

**Style**

*Boy Gets Girl* has a noticeable plot line and calls for character development that is characteristic to realism. Realism takes a more objective view, moving from a cause to effect by means of motivated dialogue and exposition. Playwright Henrik Ibsen’s work (best known for *Ghosts* and *A Doll’s House*) influenced the development of realism by “discarding asides, soliloquies and other nonrealistic devices, and was careful to motivate all dialogue” (Brockett 468). Author Oscar Brockett in *History of Theater*, states that “[a]ll scenes are casually related and lead logically to the denouement” and that “[d]ialogue, settings, costumes and business are selected for their ability to reveal character and milieu.” But more importantly, each character for Brockett is regarded “as a personality whose behavior is attributable to hereditary or environmental causes” and therefore “[i]nternal psychological motivations are given even greater emphasis than external visual detail” (Brockett 468).
The focus then for realism, and Boy Gets Girl, is about individuals and their motivations. However, due to limitations of the production – such as space, time or budget – this production of Boy Gets Girl focused on selective realism – where the action takes place in a realistic setting, but certain elements of realism were emphasized or omitted in order to highlight specific areas of design and plot (to be discussed further in Chapter 2).

**Themes & Symbols**

“Rebecca Gilman's plays feature powerful characters who find themselves in difficult, sometimes horrific, circumstances. Her work tackles controversial themes and displays human behavior in an honest manner” (Rebecca Gilman 2008). Boy Gets Girl explores the consequences of stalking, pornography, and the objectification of women, though not in a way that one might expect; Theresa willingly meets Tony and is forced to work with Les, though it turns out to be the latter whom Theresa would call a friend.

In New York, stalking is defined as, “the unwanted pursuit of another person” and, “[b]y its nature, stalking is not a one-time event” (Stalking). Often, it is men who commit stalking, and four out of five of subjects of stalking are women. Additionally, in the National Violence Against Women Survey, findings show that one of every twelve women have been stalked at some point in their lives, reporting “being followed, spied on, or watched at home, at work or at places of recreation. Many also report receiving unwanted phone calls, letters or gifts, and having restraining or protective orders violated” (Mechanic). Further, nineteen percent of women reported that the only way they escaped their stalker was because they moved away (Thoennes and Tjaden 12). Gilman encapsulates these traits in Theresa and Tony’s connection and uses that to
delve into the human emotion of the women who are victims of stalking.

In conversations between both Theresa and Mercer as well as Howard and Mercer, Gilman also establishes a link between pornography and stalking. The National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women defines pornography as “commercially produced sexually explicit books, magazines, movies, and Internet sites, with a distinction commonly made between soft-core (nudity with limited sexual activity that does not include penetration) and hard-core (graphic images of actual, not simulated, sexual activity including penetration)” (Jensen 1). But the term “pornography” has no commonly or legally accepted definition and, therefore, is open to interpretation. Nevertheless, laboratory studies of pornography’s effects have recognized three categories of pornography: “overtly violent; non-violent but degrading; and sexually explicit but neither violent nor degrading” (Jensen 1).

According to Theresa, Les Kennkat’s work with pornography is degrading and not only objectifies women, but also has the capabilities to have toxic side effects, such as lack of intimacy (Tolley) – ironically, something Tony accuses Theresa of early in the play. While most viewers of pornography are men, studies “suggest there is evidence for some limited effects on male consumers but no way to reach definitive conclusions” (Jensen 3). Additionally, studies found that “high pornography use is not necessarily indicative of high risk for sexual aggression” (Jensen 4). However, if we look at pornography as an act of voyeurism, a crime which Tony could be accused, “it becomes destructive for the viewer as well as the one involved in its production” (Struthers).

**Beats**

A beat is a moment of dramatic action within a play – not necessarily divided by
scenes, acts, or the entrances and exits of characters. Each beat, rather, consists of a rise in conflict, climax, and resolution between two or more of the characters. The diagram below shows how I chose to divide *Boy Gets Girl* into beat, based on my own understanding of the dramatic action.

Table 1.1, Director’s Beats Breakdown

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Act, Scene</th>
<th>Beat No.</th>
<th>Beat Name</th>
<th>Beat begins with:</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Blind Date</td>
<td>Beginning of play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Page 12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Small Talk</td>
<td>TONY: So, you know Linda from work?</td>
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<td>Page 14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Changing the Subject</td>
<td>THERESA: … So, do you like baseball?</td>
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<td>Act 1, Scene 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ending the Date</td>
<td>TONY: … Do you want another one?</td>
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<td>Act 1, Scene 3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Flowers</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Second Date</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
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<td>Nipping it in the Bud</td>
<td>THERESA: Look, Tony, this is really, probable, the most awkward moment for me to tell you this, …</td>
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<tr>
<td>Act 1, Scene 4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tony Visits Work</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 1, Scene 5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Interviewing Les</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 1, Scene 6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No More Flowers</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 1, Scene 7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Voicemails</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 1, Scene 8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Call the Police</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 1, Scene 9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Restraining Order</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 2, Scene 1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Follow-Up Interview</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 2, Scene 2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Voyeurism vs. Stalking</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page 59</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>The Letter</td>
<td>HARRIET: Theresa’s mail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 2, Scene 3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Can’t Find Tony</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page 65</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Standard Response</td>
<td>THERESA: … How long have you done this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 2, Scene 4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Harriet’s Help</td>
<td>Top of scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page 71</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Mercer is Just Like Tony</td>
<td>MERCER: … Can I talk to you?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.1 Continued

| Act 2, Scene 5 | 21 | Howard’s Paranoia | Top of scene |
| Act 2, Scene 6 | 23 | Destroyed Apartment | Top of scene |
| Act 2, Scene 7 | 24 | Decision to Move | Top of scene |
| Act 2, Scene 8 | 25 | Visiting Les | Top of scene |
| Act 2, Scene 9 | 26 | Packing | Top of scene |
| Page 90 | 27 | Tony Violates Restraining Order | MERCER: That must be Linda. |
| Page 93 | 28 | New Name | MERCER: What’s the new name? |

Conflicts

George Bernard Shaw wrote “No conflict, no drama”. Conflict, whether internal or external, occurs when a character encounters an obstacle. How a character overcomes – or doesn’t overcome – these obstacles is the basis of drama. Based on the beats from the previous section, the following table shows the conflict involved in each beat I identified for Boy Gets Girl.

Table 1.2, Conflicts within the Beats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beat No.</th>
<th>Central Conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Theresa is caught using her cell phone while Tony is at the bar and must justify the reason behind it after lying about getting a new one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tony wants to go on a second date with Theresa, but she is hesitant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tony wants to move faster than Theresa is willing to accept.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tony would like to call Theresa at home, but she wants him to leave voicemails at work rather than giving him her home number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tony continuously calls Theresa at work and leaving voicemails. Theresa wants to ignore them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tony wants to know if Theresa is a feminist and simultaneously explains his view on feminism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Theresa wants to nip the “relationship” in the bud, claiming there is “no point.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tony visits Theresa at work, but she wants him to leave her alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Theresa disagrees with Les that his work does not objectify women, but celebrates them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Theresa is paranoid that Tony is following her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Tony begins to become verbally violent after Theresa ignores his calls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Tony leaves messages on Theresa’s voicemail, saying that he wants to hurt her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Beck wants Theresa to change her name and take precautions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Theresa needs a follow-up interview with Les, one he claims in the worst he has ever had.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Mercer makes the connection between Les and Tony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tony sent Theresa a demeaning letter, explaining “[a]ll those different ways he wanted to fuck her” (Gilman 2001 80).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Beck can’t find Tony and wants Theresa to be extra cautious to avoid an attack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Theresa and Beck share stories of overcoming the stereotypes of that women are “supposed to do” (Gilman 2001 68).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Theresa wants to go back to her apartment for essential items like underwear, but settles for a gifted pair from Harriet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Mercer wants to explain his reasoning for his story, but Theresa just sees another situation like the one with Tony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Howard rehashes the story of his injured knee, discovering it was Tony that had been following him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Harriet confession that she was the one giving Tony Theresa’s personal information, thinking he was friendly, but Theresa wants her to see that he was just using her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Mercer and Howard search Theresa’s ransacked apartment, contemplating if they want to tell her or not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Theresa wants to give up; she wants to move.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Theresa visits Les in the hospital, discovering that he may be the one who is helping her move on – her only friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Theresa wants only to keep the letters from her mother after discovering that Tony has written in the margins of all of her books.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.2 Continued

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Tony violates the restraining order to stalk Theresa right outside her house, but is lost after a short chase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Theresa opens up for the first time, before she changes her name and leaves for good.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Artistic Justification and Personal Statement of Purpose**

With each new production comes a new set of challenges as well as opportunities to create a living, breathing work of art. Theater is not real life, but rather story telling. You begin telling a particular story with the script and then commence to adding layer upon layer of elements – characterizations, blocking, sets, costumes, lights, sounds – to bring this story to life.

When reading a play for the first time, it is easy for me to get lost in potential blocking or pre-designing elements of the show rather than focusing on the underlying emotions, motives, subtext, or imagery brought to mind. For *Boy Gets Girl*, it was important to connect to the play and the characters on a real level as Gilman requests of her readers by understanding their environment as well as the environment I wanted to create in tandem with the design team. The initial images presented are all in greyscale, an idea I purposely explored to represent the grey areas of certain laws, including stalking. This process, as a director, began with the initial imagery found below.
Inspirational Imagery

Figure 1.1, *Death In The Hood* by George Hodan (Public Domain)

Inspiration: BECK – “If he doesn’t want to be seen, he won’t be” (Gilman 2001 48).

Tony becomes an unseen force after only the first twenty-eight pages of the script. However, he remains not only a central character, but the central topic of conversation and an important part of the plotline for the rest of the play. Although Gilman’s intentions when writing were for Tony to remain unseen, his presence must continue to be felt as a threat by both the characters and the audience.
Inspiration: *THERESA* – “I'll just meet you there. (Beat) Look, I'm a big girl, I can take a cab” (Gilman 2001 18).

Tony is controlling. He most likely chose the bar where he and Theresa meet at the opening of the play much in the same way he chose the restaurant for their second date. Both locations are convenient for him, places where *he* feels comfortable, and, more importantly, they are of *his* choosing.
Inspiration – THERESA – “Because of my work, because I spend so much time on my work that it didn’t seem fair to anybody to get into a relationship with them and then make them take second place to my work. Do you see?” (Gilman 2001:24).

Theresa is a self-proclaimed workaholic. Not only does she enjoy what she does for a living, she enjoys the comfort of the office. It is a place where she can be herself and do what she loves – to write. Often, Theresa hides behind her job in an attempt to avoid relationships. The only lasting relationships she has had, other than her best friend Linda, have been with Howard and Mercer – her co-workers.
Inspiration – THERESA: “What do you want me to do? Stay here and wait for him to kill me?... He’s already won. Whatever is was that he wanted me to feel, I feel it” (Gilman 2001 83).

Victims of stalking often feel trapped, even in environments that were once safe havens and places where they felt comfortable. A stalker’s intention is to make their victims feel helpless and the only way Theresa can break free of the chain of events is to move away and change her name.
Figure 1.5, *Dark Street And Cobweb* by George Hodan (Public Domain)

Inspiration - *THERESA*: “… But I still felt like I was being watched” (Gilman 2001 41).

Tony has Theresa trapped in a web of paranoia. Once again, even though we do not see Tony after act 1, scene 4, he is still a dark, looming presence that the characters can feel.
Inspiration - HOWARD: “… then I lost him. It’s hard to get an angle. He could’ve ducked around the corner” (Gilman 2001 92).

A stalker’s intention is not to be seen. Even though Tony violated the restraining order, he has slipped through the cracks before, unable to be found by Beck. This moment at the end of the play is no different, representing a cycle that will never end unless Theresa makes a move.
Even though his intentions are not to be seen, Tony wants Theresa to know he is watching her. He makes repeated phone calls to her apartment, not careful to hide the fact he knows when she is home and when she is away. This is the turning point for Theresa, and she no longer just feels paranoid, but is justified in her feelings.
Inspiration - THERESA: “I'm not theoretical. I'm real” (Gilman 2001 64).

In a politically charged environment, where women’s rights were at the heart of so many protests within the last year-and-a-half, my approach to Boy Gets Girl followed a similar pattern to my heightened language project of Antigone. Conceptually, Antigone looked back at the Black Lives Matter movement, comparing the injustices of the brother Polyneices to injustices of the victims of police shootings like Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown. Though my staging of Antigone was not meant to be a protest piece for the movement, it had strong ties and symbols to the movement that were
recognized by a modern audience. *Boy Gets Girl* aimed to accomplish the same outcome.

**Feminist Theory**

The oppression of women is widespread and arguably results from a patriarchal society, which feminism seeks to unravel. Feminist theory is “directly and predominantly political. Its purpose is to struggle against the oppression of women as women” (Fortier 85). This critical theory also seeks to “understand the ideologies which have limited women’s ways of becoming subjects or agents and to open up new patterns in which women are free to escape the confines of the subjectivity patriarchy sets up for them” (Fortier 88). While Theresa has been identified as strong and independent, it is because of a man’s presence that her world becomes broken. Therefore, to understand the ways in which a patriarchal society encourages this oppression, a glance into gender theory “stresses the importance of sexuality in human identity” (Fortier 66). It is because of Tony’s actions that Theresa is forced to change who she is and develop a new identity as a professional, as a feminist, and as a woman. *Boy Gets Girl* explores what it’s like to be a woman in a male dominated world and how women become controlled, oppressed, and objectified. By focusing on the objectification of women juxtaposed with what society tells Theresa she is “supposed to do” (Gilman 2001 68), a feminist theory lens for production drew on current political issues for inspiration, answering the age-old question, “why this play for this audience at this time?”

Feminist theory, according to Mark Fortier in his book *theory/theater*, claims that this theory (more than any other) is primarily political. There is a widespread oppression of women, occurring almost exclusively because they are women, which is due in large
part to a patriarchal society, with masculinity reigning supreme, and the deep-rooted idea that authority lies with the father in a stereotypical family unit (Fortier 85).

“Feminism, therefore, works toward the unravelling and overthrow of patriarchy” (Fortier 85). One must look critically at the patriarchy in order to understand feminist theory by “search[ing] out the patriarchal values and ideologies that inform… the prominent work of the masculine cannon” (Fortier 86).

Feminist theory is also predominantly focused on the way in which women are portrayed culturally – a mere representation of women – to the point of unrelating to a real woman. “Patriarchal cultural visions often reduce women to stereotypes…, and fetishized body parts” (Fortier 87). Laura Mulvey, a film theorist from Britain, discusses, “the system of representation whereby the male 'gaze'… is imposed as the only way of seeing women” (Fortier 88). The male gaze can be defined as the way in which particular art forms – with film being the most prevalent – portray women as objects to be desired or appreciated for their beauty (Male Gaze).

A current Tumblr feed delivers a project titled “The Headless Women of Hollywood” in order to draw attention to this practice. This project brings awareness to the objectifying of women, mostly in Hollywood, stating that by “decapitating” women's bodies, or “fragmenting her body into decontextualized sexual parts,” the female becomes just an object for the males to gaze upon. By doing so, consent is removed “alongside her head,” and the sole purpose of the female at this point is to be looked at. This makes the female’s value only “her sexual appeal to men, and not of her personhood.” By consistently fragmenting women’s bodies, the project claims that the sexualized parts are separated from her wholeness and “the viewer does not have to
moral reconciliation of the woman who is being objectified with her complete humanness” (The Headless Women of Hollywood).

But feminist theory is about more than criticizing the patriarchy, it is also interested in nurturing women’s culture. Certainly, all feminists would agree that women are oppressed. They disagree, however, in their examination of the causes of this oppression as well as how to propose change (Carter 6). In her paper titled “A Phenomenology of Feminist Theater and Criticism,” Southern Illinois University (SIU) graduate Kathryn Carter offers the following critique:

Major differences arise over whether women's oppression and lower status are due to private property and capitalism or are due to men; whether women's liberation is only one aspect of the larger struggle for a socialist restructuring of society or is the issue—the most basic and first form of exploitation. All feminists agree that women at present are discriminated against socially, economically, and politically. All feminists agree that this state of affairs is unjustified and must be changed. However, feminists differ in their assessment of the origins of women's inferior status, of why the lower status has persisted, and of what changes are necessary to end sexism. These differences lead to differing ideological positions within the women's movement (Carter 6).

Carter continues to say that the term and ideals of “feminism” have a number of “denotative and connotative meanings.” Nevertheless, there are characteristics that are important propositions of feminist theory. They are:

(1) women are oppressed, discriminated against, and exploited;
(2) women must work to eliminate this oppression;
(3) interactions between men and women have to do with power, with the male as power-ful and the female as power-less;
(4) the socio-political structure is based on ideologies of the male;
(5) feminists reject the culture specific traditional definitions, stereotypes, and myths about women’s role and nature, and are working to change them

(Carter 12-13).

There have been many comparisons made in recent years relating Bill Clinton’s presidency to that of current president Donald Trump. Though accused of sexual assault and faced with impeachment, women’s groups in the year 2000, however, were quick to defend Clinton during his trials due to the gains and successes of women – appointing several women and women’s activists to prominent positions – and women’s rights achieved under his presidency – such as declaring marital rape illegal and the creation of the Violence Against Women Act. In present times, women’s groups have largely been against Trump’s presidency, arguing that his political platform and potential official appointees were largely anti-feminist (Clark and Kumar). Therefore, thinking about our current political environment, Boy Gets Girl was approached with a feminist lens, comparing the injustices of Theresa to the injustices women face in the world today under the Trump presidency, having strong ties and symbols that are easily recognized by a modern audience.

**Concept Statement**

The basis of my concept began with one simple line: “… I did it anyway because
that’s what I thought I was supposed to do. I was supposed to be nice” (Gilman 2001 68). Theresa says this when recalling a story to Beck of kissing an old man in a bar. It was a line that I latched on to for personal reasons, but also because there is a strong political message encapsulated within it.

As discussed in the Preface, growing up in rural Alabama, I witnessed this conditioning firsthand and, as I became older, I began to question my own “conditioning.” Another southern tradition is being asked if my husband and I were planning on having children. “Why should I have children so soon after marriage?” I would ask directly, or present them with a similar question. The response, more often than not, was “because that’s what you’re supposed to do” – a response, which ironically, often came from women, exhibiting their own conditioning. Even having relocated outside this area, for women such as Gilman or me, that “southern charm” remains a part of our nature.

This production of Boy Gets Girl explored the rights of women, specifically the rights of controlling their own bodies and lives. Though it did not serve as an outright political or protest piece, my concept focused on the objectification of women juxtaposed with what society tells Theresa she is “supposed to do,” drawing on current political issues and leaders for inspiration.

In this production, the audience witnessed Theresa’s growing paranoia, beginning with her feelings of awkwardness during the first date with Tony, to the suspicion that he is stalking her, to her fear of danger due to his violation of the restraining order, and finally to his defeat of “Claire” – forcing her to move. The role of the audience, therefore, was that of onlookers. The audience was invited to follow the
same, text-supported progression of feelings that Theresa feels, the same struggles that the characters face, but all the while remaining bystanders of the issues, yet simultaneously close in proximity.

*Boy Gets Girl* was chosen to be performed in the Christian H. Moe Laboratory Theater, a smaller, black-box style theater. I chose this space based on my previous experiences working in theater. Although all of my directing experience at SIU to date has been in the Moe Theater, looking at my larger resume, very little of the productions I have been a part of occurred in a black box theater as, in the past, most were on a proscenium stage. Therefore, the Moe Theater’s first function was for me to gain more experience in working in this type of theater space and non-traditional audience configurations. Further, by choosing the Moe Theater, we placed the action of this suspenseful story in close relation to its audience. Since the audience serves as witnesses and my goal was to “touch” the audience, the theater helped to close the distance between the audience and the actors, not just figuratively, but physically.

**Development as a Director**

The thesis production and paper, in addition to the six semesters of study at SIU, are designed to “prepare students for active careers in professional and/or academic theaters” (*Master of Fine Arts in Theater Handbook* 22). Therefore, the challenges in *Boy Gets Girl*, both anticipated and unexpected, as well as the challenges and accomplishments recognized from other productions throughout my study, helped me develop my own unique voice as a director while simultaneously becoming more confident in my work and my abilities to work with others. I will discuss more on my artistic growth as part of the post production evaluation in Chapter 4.
Qualifier and Heightened Language Discoveries

At the end of my first year, I presented my qualifying production of *The Bear* by Anton Chekhov. Considering where the project began with actors and characterization as well as where I started as a novice director, I felt the show was in a good place for presentation. However, I was not completely satisfied with that production.

One detail that I thought the actors did well on was focusing on their characters. Though in my committee meeting, Professors Wendi Zea and Jacob Juntunen expressed that they wished the actors had “taken [the show] further,” my advisor, Segun Ojewuyi, and I were happy with where the show was at presentation. Keeping the actors from modernizing their speech and movements as well as preventing them from shouting, while simultaneously encouraging them to have some variations in their voices for the entire show proved to be a challenge. But, all in all, they did well remembering the work done in rehearsals. What I felt was lacking from their final performance – something that had been there in the final dress rehearsal – was the overall arc of characterization tying the whole show together. The actors did well playing the story in each beat as we rehearsed, but linking them together with deeper subtext to create the through line is what the actors had forgotten. I came to understand that it is important to stop the actors as many times as possible in rehearsals until the characterization is in place, and only then can you proceed with the work for the rest of the rehearsal. All in all, an overarching concept and a deeper look into subtext was missing from this show, not only in characterization, but also in my direction of the production. Therefore, I cannot conclude that this production was entirely dramaturgically successful.
My second year and heightened language production, *Antigone*, was presented during my third semester of study. I began preparation for this production by reviewing the post production discoveries I made with *The Bear* and thinking about ways I could improve the process, while continuing to develop my own voice and methods as a director.

For the performance of *Antigone*, I think the actors gave a stellar presentation, especially since the last ten minutes of blocking changed just an hour or two before curtain upon a suggestion from my advisor. Conceptually, the original blocking was a good idea (the chorus turning their backs on Creon), but the execution did not read well as it forced the actors to have their backs to the downstage audience, making movements and interaction look unnatural. Therefore, we reoriented the scene to forward facing as well as adjusting some of the blocking to move Creon to the upstage side of the arrangement. By doing this, we could achieve the same directorial concept. I then understood to pay close attention to the compositions and stage pictures, not just how they look, but how they relate to the play and if they further or hinder what the director is trying to achieve.

Further, the character arc from the beginning of the performance to the end was more present than it had been in rehearsals, and something I mentioned was completely lacking from *The Bear* last year. After receiving notes from Ojewuyi at our final dress rehearsal, they all - specifically the chorus - did their homework in thinking about the character in the script and the overall storyline and asking the questions – “why am I here at this moment?” and “what is my objective?”

One large, overall takeaway from *Antigone* is that there comes a time in a
production when every director needs to let it go, and this is something I hadn’t yet figured out how to do. Prior to coming to SIU, I would not watch the performances of the shows I directed. The only reason I do it now is because I need to be able to critique them for reviewing my own performance and so I can discuss my observations in prose form. I have a tendency (and by tendency, I mean problem) to see only the negatives of a performance rather than seeing the good in them or how well it was received by the audience.

Dramaturgically speaking, the original inspiration for my concept for Antigone stemmed from the shootings of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown as well as the Black Lives Matter movement. Thinking about Brown and Martin, I saw links and comparisons between their stories and that of Polyneices – being left for dead in the public view for hours upon end and not receiving proper respect and burial. With my inspiration at heart, I began to develop my “timeless” concept – a patchwork of locations and events (rather than periods in time as is traditional in “timelessness”), grounding us in a specific period in time (present) and evoking that feeling of “destroying hope of safety” (Sophocles 165). All in all, I am not sure that the strong ties to the Black Lives Matter movement were seen by all (or seen at all by those whom I hadn’t already told), but that was not the goal of the production. The goal was to give the message concerning equal law, that those with power control the law, and the consequences for exploiting that power. In that respect, I believe the production was successful.

**Challenges and Goals**

The main goal for this production was to build upon the knowledge gained from my two previous years’ directing projects. With The Bear, I learned that the work is not
to be relied solely as the job of the playwright, but must be explored and interpreted by the director. With this production, I needed to pay special attention to the words of Gilman with a deeper understanding of the characters and what drives the action as well as building on the knowledge of working with the actors on how to portray this. With *Antigone*, I discovered how the language "affects performance choices in terms of staging, movement, physical and vocal gesture and characterization" and I "work[ed] with actors to create a unified performance of the approach and the text" ("Master of Fine Arts in Theater Handbook" 25). In *Boy Gets Girl*, this training became essential in portraying their speech and subtext in a manner the audience understands.

Additionally, this production served as a learning platform to develop working relationships with a design team. With my productions of *The Bear* and *Antigone*, I had volunteer designers for costumes or props, but this was my first production, both at SIU and beyond, with a full design team and production team as well as a substantial budget, so I began the learning process of working with designers and production staff – a process I witnessed as a stage manager and assistant director in other meetings – teaching me about the collaborative process of working not only with designers, but also dramaturges and publicists.

During my first semester at SIU, members of the Directing Studio class teamed up with the Production Seminar class to work on a collaborative project. The project included directors, costumers, lighting and scenic designers, and sound engineers to create a presentation of a unified concept for Samuel Beckett’s *Endgame*. This was just a small glimpse, we were told, of what used to be the Collaborative Process class when it was offered. Unfortunately, this class has not been offered during my time at SIU, but
this two or three-week project taught me not just what goes into collaboration, but the importance of working as a team, by exploring ideas – both good and bad – as a team, and not only communicating with each other, but understanding each other. Through detailed and respectful conversations, we came up with a unanimous concept presentation and this experience traveled with me throughout the design process for Boy Gets Girl.

By reviewing the successes and areas for growth from The Bear and Antigone, the production goals for Boy Gets Girl were as follows: First, my people reading and leadership skills were something I hoped to work to improve by keeping an open line of communication with my actors and creating a safe space for them to think, act, and communicate freely. Second, I feel my own focus and passion for the projects I commit to eventually reach the actors. This is an important observation that I made during Antigone – that when I was excited about the work, they were excited about the work. I always need to take time to refocus and recommit myself to a production by stepping back and rereading the script.

Lastly, perfecting character development by asking questions of the actors concerning character sooner in the rehearsal process was an area for growth as a director that I recognized from my earlier productions. By waiting too long, the director allows actors to develop habits and patterns that are hard to erase and correct, much like what I saw in The Bear. It was my hope that Boy Gets Girl would also hone my skills in character development. A challenge I anticipated was the depth of characters required for this text. Because the script is written as realism and all settings, costumes, or dialogue on stage were to be reflective of real life, I was concerned about having
young actors portray such heavy topics – pornography and stalking – and my style is to typically jump in by getting actors on their feet as soon as possible. The actors would need to understand emotional abuse, defined as “‘the use of verbal and nonverbal acts which symbolically hurt the other or the use of threats to hurt the other,’” and the effects it has on real people and real lives as many women assert that emotional abuse is more damaging than physical abuse (Mouradian). Conversely, “most stalkers do not suffer from hallucinations or delusions, although many do suffer from other forms of mental illness including depression, substance abuse, and personality disorders” (Muller). Though the characters are dealing with complex situations and emotions, this production is also about breaking the stereotypes of societally imposed behavior. As previously mentioned, acting and characterization are areas where I recognize weakness in my own directing process. Therefore, I wanted to explore options in changing my rehearsal processes, including open table discussions, guest speakers, etc., to help better relate heavy topics to actors before delving into blocking.

Additionally, this production of Boy Gets Girl served as my thesis production to fulfil the requirement for directing majors in the Masters of Fine Arts program at Southern Illinois University. It was my goal that this production project a high level of professionalism and uphold the values and integrity of the department. Furthermore, Boy Gets Girl served to broaden my repertoire, as I had yet to direct a full-length play in my career at the time of its production, so also I intended to stage this production to diversify my directing resume. Both with Boy Gets Girl and having "explor[ed] a variety of styles and production settings" through my qualifying productions of Antigone and The Bear as well as the many other plays, scenes, and staged readings directed
through classes and departmental productions, I have worked to make myself a better candidate for hire post-graduation as I develop my “own unique style and voice as [an] artist” (Master of Fine Arts in Theater Handbook 22).

**Preparing for Meetings**

When I was preparing for the research process for pitching shows and preparing for the preliminary research for my thesis, one major consideration of mine was the history of the play. Something I struggled with on *The Bear* and *Antigone* when writing their respective preliminary papers was becoming overloaded and overwhelmed by the amount of research available. It became a task to sort through what research was helpful and what was not. Though I began to hone in on the topics I found important to my productions, I still feel the abundance of information available was clouding my directorial concepts and visions, causing more and more quotations in my preliminary papers rather than finding my own words and ideas. Therefore, when I was choosing plays for my thesis, I wanted to focus on modern plays with less research available, but still with a significant production history. By doing this, I found I could remain focused on my concept and the themes of *Boy Gets Girl* and then find research to support them, rather than the other way around. While I feel the preliminary paper and research completed for *Boy Gets Girl* was in-depth and helpful, looking back on it now I feel it was incomplete. Despite the fact that the bones were there, and though I continued to return to it throughout the design and rehearsal processes for inspiration, goals, and analyses, I feel that my work through the design, rehearsal, and production processes expanded it more fully. Though nothing changed, new discoveries were made leading to more in-depth conversations with designers and actors.
CHAPTER 2
PRE-PRODUCTION PROCESS

Collaboration

An article titled “Teaching and Rehearsing Collaboration” by Lynn Thomson, published in Theater Topics almost fifteen years ago, is still relevant to a production process even today. Drawing on other pioneer improvisational practitioners like Keith Johnstone, Thomson’s article focuses mostly on dramaturgs as collaborators, but her words are still useful for and pertinent to other theater collaborators as well, including directors and designers. This article about collaboration was significant for me, as Boy Gets Girl my first collaborative project as a director. Johnstone asserts that our human nature “automatically inserts hierarchy” and that our consciousness of that status allows for power. But he argues that “[t]rue collaboration is non-hierarchical,” and that a skilled collaborator will seek for the “absence of hierarchy,” and it is also “sensitive to status and understands how to alter it, in order to remove blocks to communication” (Thomson 126).

Recognizing self-imposed stereotypes on status, Thomson starts her own collaborative processes defining what collaboration is not. “True… collaboration,” she says, “is not debate… not barter, territorial dispute… hierarchy… sitting at the same table, or in the same room… [I]t’s not voting, negotiation, compromise, finishing a picture puzzle” (Thompson 118). Instead Thompson teaches that true collaboration is a verb, a “process of engagement that fosters a community of makers, who have a shared vision, which in turn fuels individual creation” (Thompson 118). She strongly
believes that an artist working alone cannot accomplish the same vision and the discoveries as one can through the collaborative process (Thompson 118).

Collaboration is not just a creative process, but a necessary component in all aspects of the theater. “Psychologists have defined creativity as problem-solving” (Thompson 120). The term “brainstorming” is nothing more than a casual word for “collaboration” and was therefore offered as a system for problem-solving. Psychologists tracked this “problem-solving” backward to place the focus, therefore, on “problem-finding.” Thomson mentions dramaturgs specifically, but arguably the director of any play “asks questions in order to formulate problems, which will naturally summon answers. Problems are cause for rejoicing,” she says, “because they are necessary for creative process to happen” (Thompson 120).

Seeking a common ground between actors, directors, playwrights, and dramaturgs, Thomson leads her students through improvisational exercises, much like those developed by Johnstone, designed to encourage collaborative skills (Thompson 122). In one of Johnstone’s more popular exercises, he devised a system involving competition between teams that “relies on theories of status and interaction between people of different levels of power” – Teachers and Students; Men and Women, et cetera – the foundation for shows like Whose Line is it Anyway? (Oehme 24)

Thomson’s argument is that improvisation is nothing more than an unscripted conversation, believing a collaborative conversation can, therefore, “aim to replicate the structure and characteristics of” improvisation (Thompson 122). In this respect, Johnstone writes about a “yes” and “no” dichotomy, saying that there are people who prefer to say “yes,” allowing them to be rewarded by the freedom they attain. There are
also people who prefer to say “no,” but they also feel rewarded by retaining their sense of safety. Johnstone observes that there are more people who prefer to say “no” than “yes,” “but you can train one type to behave like another” (Johnstone 92). Human nature, Johnstone declares repeatedly in his book *Impro*, seeks to maintain the status quo, but storytelling, or dramatic action, requires change.

The “yes and thinking” model is common in improvisational exercises and theater. Described by Viola Spolin in her book *Improvisation for the Theater*, this “accept-and-block” game allows those experiencing it to become a part of the world around them and make it real. Therefore, this “leads us to experiencing and thus self-awareness… and self-expression,” which Spolin believes is an integral part of theater expression (Spolin 6). Only then can there be an atmosphere that permits higher and lower ranks to collaborate equally when “dependencies are done away with” (Spolin 8).

For Thompson, simply saying “yes” is the most important skill for collaborators to learn, but simultaneously the most difficult. Using the example of scene acting, Thompson observed that, in an improvisation, if one of the actors says, “It’s raining,” and the other says, “It isn’t,” the scene is deadlocked. Thomson suggests that the same dynamic exists in a collaborative conversation:

‘What if …’ or ‘I hate that idea.’ End of story… ‘[A]ccepting’ or ‘saying yes’ is not easy or simplistic. Acquiescence is not collaboration… As ‘yes’ can be giving up or giving in, so the word ‘no’ is not innately blocking: what determines collaboration is a forward movement of the story, an ongoing process of transformation (Thompson 122-123).
Whether in a production meeting, rehearsal, design meeting, or performance, collaboration seeks to “install open and unbiased inquiry, encouraging risk and discovery” (Thompson 124). While I will continue what I have learned through my thesis production and working with design teams on future productions, the process of directing Boy Gets Girl added new challenges of collaboration I had not yet faced. Having previously worked on numerous productions together in different capacities, the design team and I had already established an open line of communication allowing for discussion of possibilities and challenges to designing, but also understanding the notion that final decisions of directing and design elements lie with the director. We had “unscripted” and creative conversations, but respected what each brought to the table.

**Given Circumstances**

Set in New York City, Boy Gets Girl first started making the rounds in the late nineties and is often set in that decade. Contextual evidence, such as the use of answering machines and no mention of digital communication, like email, would support that setting it around the year of publication would be most appropriate. Yet, the setting of time for the play, per Gilman, is fluid and is to be set in “the present” (Gilman 2001 4). As a team, the designers and I began by researching the years 1998 through 2004 for placement of our production. The main question encountered during the design process concerned whether or not to include the Twin Towers in the skyline design – definitively placing us before or after the tragic events of September 11, 2001. After careful dramaturgical study of the script by me and the dramaturg, I chose to set the play in the year 2000. This is before the age of social media, which began to become mainstream with Myspace in 2003; it is the last year in our original time frame that the
Yankees won a World Series, a team following heavily mentioned throughout the play; it is before the Take Back the Night Rallies, also mentioned by Theresa, turned into a Foundation in 2001; more specifically, since it is pre-September 11, 2001, the skyline design would firmly ground the audience in a time frame. Additionally, related evidence from Theresa’s following of the Yankees’ successful season tells us that the story begins in September and ends in November, spanning approximately a seven-week period (seen below).

Table 2.1 - Scenic Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Act 1, Scene 1</th>
<th>One weeknight, Monday or Tuesday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 2</td>
<td>The following day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 3</td>
<td>The following Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 4</td>
<td>Work hours, early the following week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 5</td>
<td>That night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 6</td>
<td>A week later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 7</td>
<td>Late Saturday night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 8</td>
<td>The following Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 9</td>
<td>Later that day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 2, Scene 1</td>
<td>That night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 2, Scene 2</td>
<td>A couple of days later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 2, Scene 3</td>
<td>The following day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 2, Scene 4</td>
<td>Three days later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 2, Scene 5</td>
<td>A week later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 2, Scene 6</td>
<td>That night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 2, Scene 7</td>
<td>The next day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 2, Scene 8</td>
<td>That night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 2, Scene 9</td>
<td>Night, a week later</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Design and Production Meetings**

Toward the end of the spring semester in my second year, when *Boy Gets Girl* had completed Design Meeting Four, I had a conversation with Segun Ojewuyi, my
advisor, about how well the designers were collaborating and how things were running smoothly. “Should I be worried?” I asked. The response I received was a swift, “yes.” Now that the process is over, and looking back on it in its entirety, I didn’t have a need to worry when it came to the team working together and solving problems by coming up with creative solutions – or collaborating. Though there were things that needed to be cut, moved, or readjusted as well as design elements that I was insistent upon, the team always worked quickly and professionally to get the job done. However, what I now recognize is that this “yes” was not just about working together and getting the process and designs completed, but also about whether the design was serving the production to its fullest potential. In that respect, some of the designs should have received another look-over, while others were a strong supporter of the directorial concept and production itself.

**Pre-Design Meeting**

Not unlike my readiness to jump right into blocking in the rehearsal process, it was hard for me to not jump right in and get to the designing phase during the early stages of design meetings. The research and inspiration periods were new to me as a director, even though I had been through and witnessed these meetings previously as an assistant director, stage manager, or props master on other SIU productions. However, what I quickly learned is that this is the time to emphasize concept, themes and moods as well as design elements that are important to me. While I am not a prescriptive director when it comes to designing, there are some elements that I find important. I then let the designer present ways to emphasize them or to solve the problem. For example, I told the scenic designer in the Pre-Design Meeting that I was
adamant that scene changes be short and the crew members as invisible as possible. Since *Boy Gets Girl* has seventeen scenes in six different locations, some of which we only visit once (see Appendix A), I knew this would be a challenge. Similarly, I knew that costume changes would be challenging for some characters, but mostly for Theresa because she remains on stage throughout the production (see Appendix B). I requested that both of these designers think of ways to address these challenges.

For sound and lighting, their Pre-Design Meeting task was much more difficult. Reading review after review of previous productions of *Boy Gets Girl*, I observed that one element became a common thread – that Tony was not seen as a real threat because he is not present after act 1, scene 4. Therefore, I challenged lighting and sound to think about this production as a psychological thriller and to find ways to help make Tony’s presence felt without him being seen. These designers teamed up and created a pulsing effect for Tony. Though the actor was not present, a deep, threatening sound was present at the mention of him with an accompanying pulsing light on the cyc that made us feel as if he were there. Between that and my directorial choice to stage him into the scene change transitioning into scene 6 in act 2 - where Mercer and Howard come in to find Theresa’s apartment trashed - I feel like we collaborated as a team to keep Tony present throughout the show.

One final conceptual element that the designers took to heart was my discussion of the color grey. At this early meeting, I spoke about the “grey area” of the laws surrounding not just stalking, but also pornography and women’s rights. Each of the designers found a way to incorporate this into their designs. The scenic designer had grey undertones in his paint treatments, both on the brick and wood floors, which
allowed the lighting designer to pull these tones out when lighting the stage during key moments. Also, scenic incorporated grey into each scene through furniture, props or set dressing. Costumes, too, incorporated grey into the costumes. Theresa was always in grey – grey pants in act 1 and a grey top in act 2 – except when she changed in the final scene, a look that mirrored her opening look signaling the change from Theresa to Claire. Lastly, though it was hard for sound to mimic “grey”-ness, the sound designer did think about black and white, by creating the “Tony sound,” with a mixture of white noises in addition to his pulsing base sound. During a post-production evaluation with my advisor, however, one suggestion for future productions was to explore color in a less literal incorporation and think about what it does to enhance the designs and, subsequently, the plot (to be discussed further in Chapter 4).

Therefore, moving into Design Meeting One, I asked the team to come with conceptual ideas and not pigeon hole themselves too early in the process – advice that was also meant for myself.

**Design Meetings**

As stated previously, I am an individual who desires instant gratification. When an idea pops into my head, I like to see it manifested immediately. However, for the design meetings, it was important that I listen just as much as I lead, which would allow for ideas to grow, change, manifest, or perish based on the development of my concept and vision. In this respect, I allowed myself to open up to the idea of collaboration as an important part of the design process, rather than as a dictatorship where I delegate my own ideas or interpretation. Remembering Thompson’s ideas on collaborating, I recalled that “[c]ollaborators do not have to change who they are, but only how they
engages. As a creative process, collaboration requires a high tolerance for open spaces, advanced skills in uncertainty, a hunger for the question, and a commitment to surpass what is routine” (Thomson 120). In the following sections, I will explore the development and process of each design element.

**Scenic Design & Technical Direction**

One of the largest design challenges I anticipated for this production was the number of different scenic locations and how to accommodate so many locations in the Moe Theater without it looking sparse or ill designed or without the spaces losing their “character”. Many of the locations change in the same way as the individuals in the play do, and presenting *Boy Gets Girl* in a theater like the Moe, with limited backstage space and no fly rail capabilities, would be a challenge. I addressed my concerns to scenic designer Christian Kurka, an undergraduate student focusing on technical theater and stage management, in the Pre-Design Meeting and one-on-one conversations.

In Design Meeting One, we began by discussing specific locations, namely Theresa’s apartment. Kurka brought his research images to the team at this time: he had looked at various apartments, bars, restaurants, offices, et cetera. My initial response to his research was that we would need to be much more selective in our choices due to the number of locations as well as the number of scene changes. For example, we would not try to recreate an entire bar, but only selected elements to suggest the space. Further, lighting and sound would help create these spaces so we wouldn’t need a whole set dedicated to one space or another.

To address the concern of scene changes, through his own ideas and collaborative meetings between us, Kurka came up with the idea of using a revolving
platform, and I developed the idea to leave the office on stage throughout the entire production. The revolve would help with the number of scene changes, as they could be set up on the back of the revolve as the scene out front was occurring. Additionally, because the office is the location of action for eleven out of the seventeen scenes, the decision to leave it on stage permanently throughout the production eliminated eleven scene changes. Also, because of the way the set was designed, the upper area of Theresa’s office located on the platform could also be used in some of the scenes played on the revolve, such as Theresa’s apartment or Les’s office (see production photos in Appendix C).

By Design Meeting Two, Kurka was able to provide an ample number of sketches to which I could respond. He and I had previously spoken in passing about several ideas involving a skyline design and the revolve, so he used these ideas to create his preliminary sketches. This discussion led Kurka and me to schedule an outside meeting to answer some other lingering questions. These revolved around entrances and exits. I reread the script, paying special attention to these moments. There were more than we originally thought due to the number that occur right at the top of or the very end of scenes, but I still chose not to have doors, which is a personal preference and another choice in the team’s decision to focus on selective realism.

For Design Meeting Three, Kurka could present a design concept model that included all of the concerns and ideas we had talked about (see Appendix D). My initial response was that the space for the office was too small. But with only a little tweaking, problems like this were easily resolved for the final design (see Appendix D). Therefore, by Design Meeting Four, we were ready for preliminary budget and build bids. However,
in an outside meeting between Kurka, technical director Tom Fagerholm, the department’s faculty technical director, and me, we discovered that the build was too big for our timeline and also for the budget. Fagerholm’s concerns revolved around the time the build was going to take in addition to the bid’s miniscule $4.00 deficit. With a short build schedule that overlaps with two mainstage shows, his apprehension was about the level of complexity and the number of students available to build. However, Kurka and Fagerholm discussed solutions to make the build easier and faster without compromising Kurka’s original design for the show. For example, the topper pieces for the skyline could be duplicated rather than each piece having a unique design. Although it was a more complicated set design for a Moe show than have typically been done in the past, with some slight tweaking on Kurka’s part, it was able to fit in the build schedule without compromising his look.

In retrospect, however, there was still a one-dimensionality to the set, both in the design and paint treatment. An important element that Kurka and I wanted from this set was for it to be close to the audience. So Kurka focused on building a very large set to help the audience feel “trapped” or “caged in”. However, much like with costumes (discussed later in this chapter), this was a design choice that was translated too literally from the original concept. Though Kurka and I thought about the scenery as a character that has a life, with its own conflicts, and a journey across the play, we focused this attention more so on the furniture and props, and neglected to think about the infrastructure of the set in this manner. In this regard, the set only had the one look, leaving little room for change, which relied then too heavily on lighting to correct.
Sound Design

Daniel Bennett, a second-year graduate student in technical direction, was only officially assigned to the production as sound designer on the day of Design Meeting One, and, therefore, had missed the Pre-Design discussion. So rather than hearing the information requested for Design Meeting One, I received feedback from him about his initial reading of the script. Though Bennett had already begun thinking about music and other design elements, I stated that, as far as music was concerned, I would like to look at instrumental music – nothing with words that could be easily recognized. Additionally, for ambient noises or soundscapes, we could look at soundscapes for the hospital, bar and restaurant, but the other locations would not be as soundscape heavy.

This is an idea that Bennett carried skillfully throughout the entire production process. When developing the playlist for use in the production, not only did he keep in mind the instrumental nature of the design, but he still thought about the lyrics for the songs he intended to use. So, even though no words were present, his playlist included songs that not only met the criteria for placing the production in the year 2000, but also held meaning to the script and the themes of the play (see Appendix E). Additionally, he manipulated the sound of the songs to fit in with a thriller feel for the audience and help to leave them uncomfortable.

In Design Meeting Two, Bennett wanted to discuss the end of the play. He talked about creating a lingering moment between the final introduction of “Claire Howells” and when the audience exited to fashion a soundscape that would leave them with an uneasy feeling. I reminded him that we have curtain call between the final moment of the show and when the audience exits, so his idea for a moment will get broken up
regardless. While he was right in suggesting that I could choose *not* to have a curtain call, after pondering on the idea until dress rehearsals, upon the advice of my advisor I ultimately decided to have one. However, we collaborated between staging and sound to develop a moment where the final action lingers with the audience for a beat to create the effect Bennett had suggested.

At this meeting, Bennett also talked about getting additional speakers so that they could be placed within the audience to help solidify the idea that the audience was *in* the action. Throughout the build process, he acquired a subwoofer that was placed under the middle risers of the audience. This aided his design of immersing the audience, but also was utilized in the “Tony Sound,” an idea that came up in later design meetings.

By the Design Meeting Three, Bennett did not have a lot of new information to present as he was building the requested sounds, but we talked about transitions, which to use music for and in which to use sound. Additionally, he mentioned the use of telephones as practicals, so that the sound comes from the device and not from a speaker. Because I preferred the realistic nature of this idea, I requested he figure out how to make it work, specifically for the phone in the apartment. The solution came through permanent placement of both phones on the set and rigging them to a Tele-Cue device.

Per the request of Bennett, he and I met between Design Meetings Three and Four to discuss the cue list. We went through the script scene by scene and cue by cue, discussing each one at length, removing any that I felt were unnecessary at the time or adding any he might have missed. In general, there were two overarching points
to which I reacted, the first being the ambient noises in each location. I told Bennett that these were fine and still preferred, but I would need to hear them before I made a final “yes” or “no” decision. I recalled my time as assistant director during *Wife/Worker/Whore* and how the ambient soundscapes were so busy that they distracted from the scene. I explained to Bennett that was something I would like to avoid and that he should think about the noises occurring randomly, not as a constant chain of events. They should also be heard subconsciously, so that the audience recognizes them, but doesn’t focus on the sounds.

The second idea that Bennett presented at this meeting was what I have been referring to as the “Tony Sound.” This is a sound effect that occurred when Tony was present, but also when he was talked about on stage. As they stood at the time of this meeting, my initial reaction was that they took us into a film noir type place and too far out of our realm of realism. However, I remembered the information that Brooke Oehme, dramaturg, had shared with me where critics were saying that they wished Gilman had brought Tony back later in the play – that he did not feel like a threat because he wasn’t present (Ironically, in interviews Gilman stated she was adamant about *not* bringing Tony back into the play). Therefore, I told Bennett to explore a resonant sound, again, something the audience would *feel* more than they heard and that could help tie Tony into the rest of the play.

By Design Meeting Four, Bennett was updating the team on what he and I discussed in the previous meeting. He also talked more about speaker placement – as he and I would both like to not hang anything in the air, though this did not work out with
the scenic design. In the meantime, Bennett provided his official sound plot (see Appendix F), as well as some sample sounds.

On the day we returned after summer break, Bennett and I met briefly for an initial feedback to his updated “Tony Sound.” He had loaded samples to Box, but asked that I wait to listen to them at a time when I could meet with him so that he could witness my reaction live, and I could give him my gut reaction to the different versions he provided. I listened to three versions of the same sound. My reaction was that they sounded too much like the pulse you would feel at a rave under the techno music. Bennett’s follow up question was, “Should we abort mission?”. My immediate response was “No!” because I don’t think we should abort anything until we try it. Also, I suspected that the “Tony Sound” was something that would sound and feel different when in the space versus through the headphones I was using. I suggested he try slowing the speed of the pulse and staying in the low-end of the bass range.

In the end, Bennett created a soundscape that was successful in its connection to the script as well as my directorial concept. He thought about the design as if it were another character, and he and I stayed in constant collaboration, bouncing ideas off of each other every step of the way. Bennett’s design masterfully helped create a world that was threatening and uncomfortable, and left the audience on the edge of their seats every time the “Tony Sound” was heard.

**Lighting Design**

As with Bennett, lighting designer Noah Murakami, an undergraduate student focusing in technical theater, was also officially assigned to the production as a designer at Design Meeting One and, therefore, missed the Pre-Design discussion.
Again, rather than hearing the information requested for Design Meeting One, I received feedback from him about his initial reading of the script. Although Murakami and I were not able to meet to discuss what he missed during the Pre-Design as Bennett and I had, I forwarded him my personal notes with the request that he read them and come prepared for Design Meeting Two.

At Design Meeting Two, Murakami presented his broad concept for lighting – which was to take a more vibrant color palette from the beginning of the show and, by the end, mute. While this idea was not retained in its entirety by the time of production, Murakami kept elements of mirroring from earlier scenes to later ones, especially with office and apartment scenes (see production photos in Appendix C).

Between meetings two and three, I requested that Murakami set up a time to meet with me to catch up with him as he and I had not met one on one since the process started. We then discussed the use of a cyc behind the set, as Kurka had designed a skyline. Though he would later discuss the possibility of it with the scene designer, I requested that we indeed use one. It would have to be lit from the floor, he explained, which in turn would light portions of the grid. This was not a concern for me since the grid is not as visible in production as Murakami originally anticipated.

Other items I mentioned to him and asked him to think about were practicals – including one in the apartment, lights in the skyline, and Theresa’s laptop, all of which would have to be controlled wirelessly, depending on the channels and dimmers open, but he added them to his list of things to consider. In the end, due to channels, the only practical we used was the laptop in act 1, scene 7 (see photos in Appendix C).

In Design Meeting Three, Murakami presented a color palette. His images
showed a mixture of red and blue, which conceptually, he said, would help show change from cool to warm. The only note I had for Murakami at this time concerned his lighting for the apartment the first time we were there. His rendering showed a warm light, but because this scene is late at night, and it is the scene with Theresa using the laptop as previously discussed, I was concerned with the warmth.

In Design Meeting Four, Murakami discussed the complexity of wiring the skyline as well as making the middle wall on the revolve double sided in addition to hiding all of the wiring. Therefore, I decided to cut the wiring of the “windows” in the skyline, stating that I would rather Murakami focus his efforts on his original lighting concept, as well as to make sure that faces were lit, an observation based on personal experience for other productions I’ve seen in the Moe Theater. Additionally, Murakami presented renderings from WYSIWYG, a software used by lighting to grid productions as well as making mock renderings. Though his renderings showed more areas of the stage being lit and more model people included than were necessary, he showed that he had enough space to light behind the revolve/wall (see Appendix G).

In collaboration with Bennett, Murakami also created a pulsing effect on the cyc to accompany the “Tony Sound.” It increased in intensity and speed, just like the sound effect, but because it was on the cyc, behind a very tall set, it was subtle and did not distract from the action on stage. The collaboration from these two departments made this effect successful.

Murakami’s final design (see Appendix G) was seamless in its transitions, and he made careful selections to create natural looks for the audience. We used lighting when we wanted to change the look, though, on its own, Murakami’s lighting has the
possibility to have moments representative of a character. Murakami used lighting not just for illumination, but also to create mood and special effects. The cleanliness of clear design choices was present in production but did not rob the humanity from the play. The audience didn’t realize we had made choices for them.

**Costume Design**

In Design Meeting One, costume designer Terry Baker, a third-year graduate student in costume design, began by presenting his inspiration images. His concept was a neutral palette with pops of color inspired by the images of a distorted, rainy New York City. The idea was to not see a lot of color (or bright colors) in this production. However, I did express a concern that I didn’t want to see everyone in black or grey pieces and that some bold color choices were necessary, to which Baker agreed. I responded that I reacted most strongly to an image that had subtle pops of color complimenting the neutrals rather than the others that had more noticeable, stand-out color choices.

In Design Meeting Two, Baker presented research images for costumes. My gut reaction, of course, was that the early 2000s were a terrible time for fashion and that a goal is to make it modern enough that people won’t be distracted by the character’s fashion sense, what costume professor Wendi Zea describes as audience expectation versus period appropriateness. That aside, Baker and I went image by image and discussed what I enjoyed and what to avoid from the images. Baker was right on track with what I envisioned and expected for these characters. The only character I was still reserved about was Les. The designer provided pictures of leisure suits, which are very 70s. While I think Les would hold on to his glory days, I requested
Baker to explore modern pornography icons and research a Ron Jeremy-esque style as well.

In an individual meeting falling between Design Meetings Two and Three, Baker and I talked about the potential quick changes and a preliminary draft of costumes list versus our budget. Because Theresa remains on stage for almost the entire play, Baker suggested creating a base look for her for act 1 and another for act 2. This would allow her to add, remove or change pieces – such as a jacket or cardigan – based on the occasion or the passage of time without requiring a full outfit change. Since the other characters have more time, they would be more apt to receive full outfit changes – depending on stock and budget.

We also reviewed the slides from the previous design meeting and looked more carefully at specific pieces for each character, including hair and shoes. One of the looks Baker was struggling with was the final look where Theresa introduces herself as Claire. He expressed his ideas on Theresa’s character and costumes – strong and structured, a look he was going for in her opening look. Therefore, I suggested that he think about duplicating that look, but in different textures or colors to mirror the opening, as she is mirroring her former self, just with a new name in a new place. This idea made it to the final production (see production photos in Appendix C).

In Design Meeting Three, Baker presented his rough color sketches for costumes. Overall, the direction he took was that all characters move from a warm to cold color palette while Theresa moves in the opposite direction (see Appendix H). While this seemed like an odd choice to me at first, Baker and I decided to meet privately in the next off period to discuss Theresa specifically as we shouldn't see a
change in her for the positive until the hospital scene with Les. Otherwise, the sketches
looked good and were headed in the right direction.

As promised, Baker and I met between meetings to reevaluate his color roughs before he resketched the final designs. Though our biggest concern coming into this day was Theresa, he and I went through character by character and scene by scene hashing out one look at a time and making cuts to emphasize selective choices. There were no major changes or additions, but rather we looked at the scenes and looks we had currently and how they could consolidate or reorganize using the same looks and pieces in order to minimize the number of changes. Baker and I heavily scrutinized the pieces he had sketched, and we talked about adding some of the act 2 pieces into one and vice versa to help show the change from beginning to end – where Theresa is in the same look as the opening of the show, but in a softer palette and more “comfortable” fabrics by the end.

For Design Meeting Four, Baker shared his updated color roughs based on the changes he and I talked about in our meeting. In Design Meeting Five, Baker’s advisor, Wendi Zea, brought up that, even with cuts already made, she was still worried the show would become a show about changing clothes and could add up to a half an hour for costume changes. She suggested that we take another look at selective realism and choose when outfit changes are important textually. Originally, I didn’t want the costume designer to feel limited when creating his final renderings and he had rendered them all (see Appendix H). Upon closer inspection of the renderings during the fittings of actors (see fitting photos in Appendix H), he and I were able to agree upon a more compact design (see costume change list in Appendix H).
In the end, because of the short scene changes I hoped for, Baker was limited for costumes by these quick changes. I knew I wanted to look at having that “base look” and, while we still ended up cutting some pieces due to timing, the looks, the sheer amount of costumes originally rendered, or for making more specific design choices to support the text, the initial concept of mirroring remained in his final designs. However, one shortcoming was the final color palette chosen and its relation to the set. The costume colors were often close to their surroundings, allowing them to become lost. Additionally, Baker took my concept of the “grey area of the laws” literally, by incorporating the color grey into the costumes, which was also done by Kurka in the set, allowing for the blending to occur. This is an element that I failed to recognize sooner as the director and made an incorrect assumption that since the production was in the Moe Lab Theater, and the audience was in close proximity to the actors, this blending wouldn’t be too severe. This was one of the elements about which, per my comment to Ojewuyi, “I should [have been] concerned.”

**Final Design Concerns**

Due to the way the schedule for meetings fell with *Boy Gets Girl*, Design Meeting Five occurred after the completion of summer break. I was a little uneasy with how disorganized it felt. While I do feel like this concern was mostly due to the large break since meeting number four, and although I felt like most of the designers were in a good place before we left, I was worried about the designs coming out of this meeting in particular. What worried me the most was the feeling that the designers had settled – made the assumption that we were complete before the break and this meeting was arbitrary. Throughout the meeting, there was a lack of focus as a group for all of the
people present, myself included. I kept waiting for the production stage manager to bring back the attention of the group, but the side conversations kept occurring throughout designer presentations, and questions still arose for departments from conversations from which we had long moved on. But when it felt out of control, I would simply ask questions of the designers who were presenting to get the attention of the room. However, this is a moment I recognize as an error, and I could have done a better job remaining in control of the room and the direction of the meeting as the director. Final designs for production, per our departmental guidelines, should be complete by Design Meeting Five, but because I failed to lead the room on this day, an additional meeting was required before I felt comfortable using the word “complete.”

Therefore, upon receiving affirmation from my advisor, I scheduled an additional meeting with the designers prior to the beginning of production meetings to talk about the questions that came up in my mind and only then could we set final designs. But I told myself that I would not settle for what came up in the previous meeting. I didn’t intend on adding, but I didn’t want the designers to feel their work was done.

I used the opportunity of this called meeting to check in with each person individually, addressing any lingering, unanswered questions between us – such as final decisions on furniture choices and placements for Kurka, pant choices versus the paint colors because, at this time, the current renderings both scenic and costumes were using the same colors, practicals for both Bennett and Murakami as well as an update on plots for both sound and lighting. This was a time where we finalized these decisions so that each designer could move forward on their respective designs, rather than waiting for any more approvals or clarification from the other members of the team.
Production Meetings

After a two-week break between Design Meeting Five and the start of our production meetings, we were fortunate that the scene shop was on schedule for the department’s production of *Spring Awakening*, and the build for *Boy Gets Girl* would be able to begin on time. This was a persistent concern from Fagerholm because *Boy Gets Girl*’s timeline was so compact, that should *Spring Awakening* fall behind, our design would be compromised. Production Meeting One, therefore, opened by discussing the bid package and the build schedule. Fagerholm explained just how tight the schedule was, especially for paints. This was the lingering worry of mine as well, but I had been assured from Kurka, Tatiana Vintu, faculty scenic supervisor, and Patrick Burke, undergraduate charge artist, that time was tight, but paints required a lot of repetition so the labor would be more tedious than time consuming.

By Production Meeting Two, we were over budget because of unforeseen circumstances with rigging the automation, so no additional walls to add to the depth of the set – part of a very early design – could be erected to give another layer to the set. Paints also went over, but we were able to share with the props budget since we pulled a large percentage or props from stock and were able to borrow a fair amount for free.

The rest of the production meetings felt more like meetings among the designers rather than their conversations involving me. In a previous meeting with Ojewuyi, I was forewarned that there was little for the director to do at this point other than to answer specific questions that relate to concept and interpretation, but most of this work has been completed by the finalization of designs. Therefore, most of the questions and conversations that arose in the final production meetings were designers to designers,
generally relating to sharing the spaces, specific color choices, or other logistical concerns.

By Production Meeting Five, our final production meeting, however, one lingering concern remained for me – that we were moving into tech week and were still missing a fair amount of rehearsal props. Through nightly rehearsal reports, stage management reiterated to the properties master and the properties department which items were still missing. It was understandable that we would not have the final props that would be used in the production, but unfortunately, we had also gone through a majority of our rehearsals without rehearsal props for the actors to be able to get used to having something in their hand. Again, this is an error on my behalf and was a concern that I should not have let loiter for so long. There was confusion amongst the team who was technically in the role of properties master – the scenic designer, the faculty supervisor, or another student. We addressed the concern at this time, however, and Kurka provided any remaining props to stage management by Crew View.

**Publicity**

Discussion of publicity began in Production Meeting Three in order to set up the photo shoot. In previous years’ productions at SIU, there has been someone in charge of the theater’s marketing and the scheduling of these shoots. However, because of employment transitions in the department, Tom Kidd, Department Chair, was currently overseeing marketing. At this time, he requested I choose all the information needed for a photo shoot – actors, costumes, location, look, et cetera – and email them to our current student photographer, Carrington Spires.

At the time of the publicity shoot, we shot the photos in an alley outdoors behind
the downtown Carbondale area. Spires and I had an email exchange prior to the shoot to discuss what I envisioned – Theresa being followed. I shared with him a photo of a young girl in focus at the forefront of the picture with a man following behind her in the background, out of focus. This is what we concentrated on for the shoot. The photos captured were used for the production poster, the front of the program, and publicity articles (see Appendix I). Otherwise, I did not have much of a hand in the online or print marketing for Boy Gets Girl.

**Dramaturgy**

Just as with several of the designers, dramaturg Brooke Oehme was not officially assigned to the production until after the Pre-Design Meeting had already occurred. She and I met prior to Design Meeting One in order to update her on the minutes, concept, and ideas from the Pre-Design Meeting. I also spent some time telling her about my longer proposal paper and the research that I had focused on so she would know some of the areas of emphasis for my concept and vision. She took extensive notes and created a list of items she then began to research for me – including looking for an article rumored to have inspired Gilman to write this play.

Oehme’s research and educational outreach were essential to preparing for the rehearsal process. Through many meetings, conversations and emails, she “nailed” the specific topics of focus that I brought to the rehearsal process and collected those into the dramaturgy packet (see Appendix J), that was used not just by the actors or me, but also by the designers throughout the production process. Additionally, she ran a warm up exercise for the actors that not only incorporated topics from the play, but also built-
in status and hierarchy, inspired by Spolin, Johnstone, and the ideas of collaboration explored at the beginning of this chapter.

Her research finally culminated in a lobby display that shared my directorial concept with the audience - what it’s like to be a woman in a male-dominated world. This carried over into the program note on which Oehme and I collaborated. We concluded it by discussing that, though this production is set in the fall of 2000, “it could easily be set today.” Harking back to the article comparing the Trump and Clinton presidencies, Oehme and I observed that “[s]ince before Trump entered office, women’s rights groups have cited not only the way he personally talks about women, but the fact that many of his administration’s appointed officials have a history of anti-women policies as reasons to protest the current political environment.” Therefore, my production of Boy Gets Girl rooted itself in “this new era for women’s civil liberties… It’s been 21 years since we began openly fighting violence against women. And we still have a long way to go” (Jordan and Oehme).

Preparation for Rehearsals

Though we had laid the groundwork and had literally set the stage to prepare for our “fight,” planning for rehearsals required a deeper analysis of the text and my personal directorial concept as well as studying new ways to work with actors to portray such heavy or political topics. “Theresa’s story shows us how easily women become controlled and oppressed in a culture embracing the objectification of women in everything from pornography to romantic comedies” (Jordan and Oehme). But in real-life situations, stalking is exceedingly different from the “artfully-lit, short-termed, or even well-intentioned activity that is glamorized in the movies” (Jordan and Oehme). In an
article for the *New York Times*, the article I believe to be the inspiration for *Boy Gets Girl*, Jane E. Brody described living as a victim of stalking to be “a waking nightmare characterized by constant fear and hypervigilance that triggers lasting emotional distress and sometimes results in bodily injury or even death” (Brody). This was the fear I needed to generate from the actors.
CHAPTER 3
PRODUCTION PROCESS

Directorial Interpretation and Approach

When conducting research for my second-year project, Antigone, I found that contemporary productions of Greek tragedies often fall short because they, specifically the chorus, fail to connect to the audience. However, I believed this could be true for any production. Therefore, when preparing for Boy Gets Girl, I looked further back to my qualifying production proposal paper, a time when I studied the directorial approach of Yuri Zavadski, head of the Mossoviet Theatre, on his production of The Cherry Orchard and how he incorporated Stanislavski’s method into his directing. When I worked with the actors, I considered Zavadski’s method an important approach, and I used it throughout my thesis production. He stated:

A play is created through the creation of each part; as each character unfolds, the play unfolds. It is very important that each individual part be only a part of the whole we are trying to create. Each person is the sum of his thoughts, his feelings, his actions, and his inner world. My first task as a director, therefore, is to help the actors create the inner world of the part. The actor, according to Stanislavski, must always play from desires, wishes, motivation… Stanislavski was interested in the expressiveness of the spoken word and the laws of speech as well as a person’s thoughts, feelings, desires and actions, the inner life of the character and of the time, and of the meaning under the meaning of each line… You have to work so that the difficulties become habit, the habit becomes easy, the
easy becomes beautiful. When you are sure, the audible and visual, and the inner music of … art will come through (Mitchell 304-306).

Here, Zavadski explored the importance of the actor’s relationship to the character and the text in addition to their discovery of their place within the larger scope of the play. The actors must be able to play and react to discover a character's true feelings or desires.

Since rehearsals for my past productions typically jumped right into blocking, “tablework” was just discussed along the way. Through my experiences of watching other directors at SIU, both as a stage manager and assistant director, rehearsal time does not always need to be spent with the actors on their feet to have a productive rehearsal. Therefore, I modeled my rehearsal process for Boy Gets Girl on, first, variations of my own processes from The Bear and Antigone, and, second, on other successful directors I’ve watched while at SIU, so as to include more time translating the text – not just the language, but also intentions, subtext, goals and motivations (see schedule in Appendix K). Only after this work was completed and an understanding of the text was finished could we begin the work of delving into blocking and stage business.

As I discovered during my first year of study, the word “subtext” originated during a production of one of Anton Chekhov’s plays at the Moscow Art Theatre. It is generally understood as a way for the actor to grasp what his or her character is trying to say. However, it was also a means to express a character’s emotions and inner thought, therefore revealing his or her “relationships, his [or her] behavior, and the meaning of his [or her] words and actions” (Moore 68). Without a clearly defined subtext, even well
executed movements remain “flat” and are not engaging of the spectators. For Stanislavski, what the spectators come to hear is subtext, for “[t]hey can read the text at home… Contradiction between text and subtext makes the unexpected word vivid and significant” (Moore 28, 69).

**Auditions, Callbacks, and Casting**

Prior to auditions, I expected to encounter challenges with casting – not only in conflicting schedules with the other productions in the department, but also when choosing actors who were suitable for the roles. Because *Boy Gets Girl* was scheduled in between, and therefore overlapped with, the fall musical, *Spring Awakening*, and the highly-anticipated return of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* in the winter production slot, I fully expected to have a smaller casting pool during auditions than those productions. Also, while one could argue that casting is undoubtedly important in any production for any role, I am adamant that the roles in Gilman’s plays are particularly difficult to fill, for reasons suggested in the Preface. An actor should not only play the character, but he or she must also play the interrelationships and what happens between characters (Mitchell 300). Therefore, remarkably careful consideration of the auditioning actors’ abilities, flexibility, and taking direction, as well as their understanding of subtext, helped me to develop a skill in recognizing the particularities required for *Boy Gets Girl*, as well as equally demanding roles in the future.

On the evening of auditions, which followed the undergraduate orientation during the first week of fall semester classes, my first reaction to the evening as a whole was simply “WOW!”. There were forty-six auditions, including several staff and non-majors,
and it was a difficult task to narrow them down to the twenty-six that I called back. To narrow the field from auditions to callbacks, the first step was to simply sort the auditionees into three categories - yes, no, and maybe. This was based on first impressions, my personal notes taken during their auditions, and looking at their grasp of subtext and characterization from the monologues they presented. The people who fell into the “no” category were underrehearsed and underprepared, with no noticeable grasp of subtext or interest in being present. The “yes” group showed the complete opposite, but also showed a strong stage presence as well as holding not just my attention, but that of the entire room. When it came to the “maybe” pile, I used the same criteria, but weighed the pros against the cons and decided which prevailed. Additionally, I thought about my own interpretation of the characters and if the actors would fit this interpretation and the mold-ability that I felt each auditionee presented. This was one part I struggled with the most – second guessing my decisions. There were some fine actors who landed in the “no” pile. In the end, I had to remind myself that they did not fit a role based on my interpretations of the text, and I stuck with my original instincts – something I have questioned in my other projects and targeted as a goal for this production.

Callbacks the following evening began with me discussing the plot, characters, themes and what to expect throughout the callbacks. It was important for me to open with this information, especially the items concerning the play itself, for the actors in the room who had not read the play and were in no way familiar with it. The actors could then understand the arc the play takes and how they could then apply and interpret this information to the exercises and readings that were asked of them in the callbacks in
order to make more relevant choices.

Then we moved on to a group exercise, led by dramaturg Brooke Oehme, that was based on the improvisational work of Keith Johnstone and Viola Spolin. This activity had every actor on their feet and interacting with one another. To open, the actors were instructed to walk around the space, just as themselves. Then Oehme would layer on instructions for the actors – “Men, you are Tony. Women, you are Theresa.” Or if you have a beard, you’re Howard. If you’re wearing heels, you’re Harriet.” The actors had to change on the spot to become those new characters, all while remaining totally silent. While Oehme led this exercise for almost an hour, my goals were as follows:

1) To watch and see how everyone reacted to others in the group or if they shied away from interaction and stayed on the outer edge of the circle;

2) To see how quickly they were able to swap from one role to another and the ease with which this occurred;

3) To see if they were willing to interact with numerous individuals, or kept returning to the same individuals repeatedly when the instructions came;

4) To be able to tell stories without the use of words;

5) Their interpretation of the characters given to them;

6) Their comfort levels to the delicate topics given to them, all of which originated within the script, such as stalking, pornography, voyeurism, or objectification.

After a quick break, we began cold readings from the script in pairs. With each of
these readings, the actors were instructed to take the emotions from the improv exercise with Oehme and bring them into the readings, but without the movement about the space. I was looking for how they interpreted the characters they just felt, and how that translated into characterization and subtext. Also, I was looking for the ability to work with – specifically the giving to and taking from – their scene partners. With each new scene I would give some direction to see how well the actors took the notes.

To conclude, I had the group read the Theresa and Tony scene on pages twenty-eight through thirty. The actors were instructed to continue the same subtext and characterization work from the previous cold readings, but they were allowed a cube and two chairs and given the freedom of full movement – a mixture of all the night’s exercises. When the evening was complete and after dismissing the actors, I narrowed the callback list further to complete a “short list” for consideration when casting.

After a night of thoughtful rest on the shortlist from the callbacks, I began the following Friday with a meeting with my advisor to discuss possibilities for casting. My hesitation stemmed from the following question: when you have two actors who meet the same criteria you are looking for in a character, how do you choose between the two? Considering these criteria, plus the actor’s physical appearance as well as considering what actors could learn from a role over other students, Ojewuyi and I discussed specific actors versus characters. With his guidance, I chose individuals for the cast, with a freshman leading the show as Theresa. The cast I originally chose was as follows:
Table 3.1 – Original Casting Choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theresa Bedell</td>
<td>Ellie Dudeck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Ross</td>
<td>Chad Ferriell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard Seigel</td>
<td>Seth Lerner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercer Stevens</td>
<td>Andrew Lampley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet</td>
<td>Grace Nowak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Kennkat</td>
<td>Mark Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detective Beck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the following Saturday, I met briefly with Department Chair Tom Kidd, who was also the director for *Spring Awakening* and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, concerning the possibilities of overlap in casting for his productions that semester and my own. At this time, I learned that the mid-term choir concert was scheduled on October 27, 2017, which was the Friday night performance of *Boy Gets Girl*. Therefore, considering this would impact two of the women I chose – Ellie Dudeck and Grace Nowak, I had to reevaluate my cast. Therefore, the final announced cast was as follows:

Table 3.2 – Final Casting Choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theresa Bedell</td>
<td>Kristin Doty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Ross</td>
<td>Chad Ferriell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard Seigel</td>
<td>Seth Lerner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercer Stevens</td>
<td>Andrew Lampley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet</td>
<td>Bethaney Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Kennkat</td>
<td>Mark Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detective Beck</td>
<td>Taylor Smith</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I believe that the final cast did a remarkable job. They were attentive and tried all the ideas I asked of them in rehearsals, even if they were an idea that did not pull through to the performances. There were a few trouble spots that arose due to the final casting, which I will now investigate.

It became apparent early in rehearsals that some actors were character actors and had extensive training playing comedic roles. It was often hard to pull these individuals out of the comic relief and into empathetic figures, such as Howard. By the end of the rehearsal period, I think this was better. But knowing what I know now, I would have adjusted the way I directed these actors even earlier in rehearsals.

Some actors also showed inexperience when it came time for notes. It became apparent to me who was reading the emails and the notes that I sent out and who was not. Because of this, there were several times the whole cast was asked to stay after rehearsals or dress rehearsals to discuss the notes so that I could ensure they were addressed before the next evening’s rehearsal.

Some of the actors struggled in the beginning and throughout the process when developing their characters because of personal experiences relating too closely to that of their character’s in the script. This is something I noticed in cast members during Antigone. While connecting to the story was not an issue in Antigone as much as personal problems were, I placed it as a goal for myself when moving into Boy Gets Girl. One actor opened up to my advisor privately, and another addressed the rehearsal room openly about their hesitations. Though I failed to recognize the problems immediately, I do feel like I was able to better direct these actors after diagnosing the problems, doing so by altering the way I worked with them using positive reinforcement.
These actors then blossomed more quickly and we were able to try new concepts in rehearsal.

Finally, I recognized a problem with work ethic for one actor in particular. I believe they are very talented, and I think they can go far in the professional world, but I say that based on talent alone. Granted, I knew going into this show and this casting that this actor had a reputation for attitude problems during previous productions at SIU – but was one of only two people who gave me what I was looking for in callbacks for a particular character, so I was willing to take the risk. I do believe they gave a great performance, and I believe I pushed them further as an actor into a place of self-recognition then I had seen from them in previous SIU productions, but I don’t think their character ever became the fully developed character that it needed to be. The following are some causes I observed that led to this:

1) First, there was one rehearsal about mid-way through the process that I kept pushing and pushing, trying new things, engaging in conversations, improv exercises, et-cetera – anything I could think of to get them on the right path of finding the fear needed for production. Toward the end of this particular rehearsal, after I had exhausted all efforts, the actor made a comment that they were holding back and doing so on purpose. I couldn’t believe I heard this. As an actor I don’t know why you wouldn’t give your director what they were asking for and, two, I was at my wits end thinking it was me as a director having an amateur dilemma. In response to this, I reminded all actors present, so as not to single out this one individual, that they need to continue to build on work done in previous rehearsals so we grow stronger and better,
but that I could not take them any further if I felt the need to keep going back, thinking we weren’t grasping previous work.

2) Additionally, there were times that the actor went behind my back to tell stage management, for example, that they saw their character going a different direction than what I was directing. Their own interpretation of their character began to creep into performances. To combat this, I first asked stage management to kindly inform the actor that they should address all questions or concerns of characterization to their director. But when in the rehearsal space, I would never discourage an idea that disagreed with my own. I would offer the actor a choice – to try playing the line, moment, or scene as they envisioned it, and then have them run it again as I envisioned it. I would then ask questions of the actor as to which felt more natural or in line with the concept of the show. More often than not, once we worked through the moment, the actor chose my direction. However, the few times they did not, there were two possible outcomes. First, if I liked what they had done better than my own idea, we would keep the moment for performance. Or, second, as what occurred with this actor, I would simply give them the note to revert back to the way it was directed and continue on with the evenings work. However, in performance, when it kept creeping in, I felt I had no control over the actor’s final delivery (to be discussed further in Chapter 4).

3) Another instance came during Cue to Cue, when, after a less than glamorous run, the actor admitted that they couldn’t “do this” time after time and that they were drained from the day. My response was “What about performance
days? What about days where you’re in class or work all day and then must give a performance? Can you ‘do it’ then?” I was worried the actors were not taking their own health – both physical and mental – into consideration and taking care of themselves.

After considering these causes, I am reminded of when my advisor commented in our meeting concerning casting that there will always be one that you regret casting. While I am not disappointed with the actor’s performance, I do believe they could’ve done more with characterization which, in turn, would have allowed more room for their castmates to grow.

**Read Through and Tablework**

In the first two days of rehearsal, we were scheduled for read throughs and dramaturgical discussions. On the first evening, after quick introductions, company rules review and designer presentations, we completed a full read through of the script, pausing for a break at intermission. After the read through, I began to facilitate a discussion with the cast, beginning with asking them about their first reactions about the script. Kristin Doty (Theresa) said that her first reaction was anger, but by the end it was sadness. Chad Ferriel (Tony) said that he thought about suffocating because we don’t know how many lives Tony has ruined.

I then briefly discussed with them my own reactions to the play and some of the reasons I connected with it so strongly – specifically, thinking about the lines from both Beck and Theresa discussing what they were “supposed to do” as women and the social conditioning for women where I grew up in Alabama, as well as nationally. I also shared that I wanted to focus this show on objectification, specifically looking at current
political topics, our president, and the recent Women’s Marches all around the country, and relating back to my process for last year’s production of *Antigone* and its subtle connections to the Black Lives Matter movement.

When discussing the dramaturgy packet, Oehme told the actors to immerse themselves in the time period as much as possible. I made sure to point out that the early 2000s were pre-social media and that one issue we would have is showing the audience how threatening receiving a letter can be. During the year 2000, the internet was not the place we recognize it to be today. People didn’t try to hide who they were, and everyone shared everything. Oehme and I both shared stories of our undergraduate colleges sharing photos and contact information for all students on campus through their websites, accessible by anyone on the internet – which eventually led to several incidents of cyberstalking for the both of us.

On the second evening of read throughs, we started rehearsal with a warm-up exercise led by Oehme – the same one led during callbacks. Throughout, I periodically asked the cast questions about their characters and the thoughts they had while they were doing the warm-up exercise. Afterward, we began an additional read through of the script, running scene-by-scene. But this time, we would pause after each scene for questions and a discussion, rather than waiting until the end. Additionally, I allowed the actors to do the read through on their feet, allowing them the freedom to move around the space and interpret their emotions physically.

The questions I asked the actors after each scene were thoughts I had jotted down in my script during the read through, either about their thoughts on the scene, their character, or the choices they or their character made. I made sure to ask them
why they thought the characters said what they did and asked them to think about background stories. I also asked the actors what they thought about specific lines from the script, like buying guns for protection or about Theresa having to change her name.

**Forum Theater Exercise**

Throughout my thesis, I was able to carry my study of *Boy Gets Girl* into other classes and projects, which allowed for different entry points into research and rehearsal techniques. Through the Theories and Conventions course, after studying Augusto Boal, I developed a Forum Theater project to use on the third night of rehearsals. In connection to my production and the societal issues that the playwright raises, this project focused on stalking, objectification of women, and pornography to develop a Boal inspired Forum Theater piece that was performed and participated in by the cast as part of the rehearsal process.

One of Augusto Boal’s most well-known theories revolves around “Forum Theater”. This type of theater is to be performed with the intention of changing the mind and the world of the spectators. The goal of these performances is to stage a scene and solicit an emotional response from the audience, causing them to stop the scene, step in and participate in the performance, changing its course. It is, therefore, up to the viewer to choose when and how to participate (Boal 1979 139). Boal developed this form of theater as a way to break the fourth wall between actor and spectator and to bring awareness to political topics during a time when theater was being silenced.

Augusto Boal, in his book *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, describes his Forum Theater as follows:
Forum Theatre is a theatrical game in which a problem is shown in an unsolved form, to which the audience, … spect-actors, is invited to suggest and enact solutions. The problem is always the symptom of an oppression, and generally involves visible oppressors and a protagonist who is oppressed. In its purest form, both actors and spect-actors will be people who are victims of the oppression under consideration; that is why they are able to offer alternative solutions, because they themselves are personally acquainted with the oppression. After one showing of the scene, which is known as ‘the model’ (it can be a full-length play), it is shown again slightly speeded up, and follows exactly the same course until a member of the audience shouts ‘Stop!’, takes the place of the protagonist and tries to defeat the oppressors (xxiv).

This type of theater came about as a means of political expression in order to show people how to change their world.

Early in my rehearsal process, a guest speaker from The Women’s Center in Carbondale, Illinois visited with the cast to discuss some of the issues raised in Boy Gets Girl and talked about their importance and implications in society today. Following the lecture, we read scripts that I had developed as part of my Theories and Conventions final using combined pieces from Gilman’s text. Utilizing Boal’s idea of Forum Theater, I allowed the actors the freedom to choose when and how to change the course of events to create the scene they wish in accordance with their desired outcome. With the age of social media well upon us, the bystander effect is stronger than ever – choosing to record a video or take a selfie over the need to get involved. My
hope with this exercise was to encourage students to take a stand when they see an injustice.

The bystander effect has been well researched and documented since the Kitty Genovese murder of the 1960s. However, in the era of social media, our understanding of this phenomenon is rapidly changing. “If you consider that social media platforms … resemble massive online rooms full of people, they present the perfect conditions for the bystander effect to take hold” (Social Media And The Bystander Effect). In a project led by Brian Solis to help raise awareness of Malaria in Africa by soliciting ten-dollar donations for the purchase of bed nets, Solis found that most people felt led to share the information rather than donate themselves, which “essentially accomplish[ed] just one of the two goals.” When conducting research to uncover why people chose this route, Solis found that “people believes that their act of sharing was worth much more than a $10 contribution.” His research showed that people honestly believed that their influence by digital means or other social media capital was equal to tens or hundreds of donations from other individuals through their connections. “This inflated sense of net worth in social, if not reassessed individually, will only bankrupt the real nature and value of the network effect,” according to Solis (Social Media And The Bystander Effect).

Carrie Goldberg, a lawyer in Brooklyn who specializes in cyber harassment and sexual consent litigation, says that she has seen an increase in the involvement of technology and social media in recent cases. “But the bystander effect among young people is bumping up against competitive attitudes on social media, where some engage in a culture of one-upping their friends. This plays out on apps like… Snapchat
with risqué and pornographic images” (Kingkade).

In the summer of 2014, an officer with the Dallas police department witnessed a large group of bystanders on the highway reach for their iPhones and Androids to videotape a couple burning alive in their vehicle rather than attempting to or calling for help, “the ‘perversion of social media,’” as he called it (Calvert). “[T]he video vultures on that Dallas highway are symptomatic of our voyeuristic culture: we’d rather watch others than interact with them” (Calvert). Some scholars believe that the internet has desensitized us to such graphic images or has lessened our empathetic skills. “The late professor Clifford Nass of Stanford University asserted that ‘the ultimate risk of heavy technology use is that it diminishes empathy by limiting how much people engage with one another, even in the same room’” (Calvert). Millennials and younger generations are the most impacted by this effect.

Therefore, the actors were asked to first present a model performance. At its conclusion, a discussion took place, asking participants and the spect-actors if they agreed with its outcome. “At least some will say no” (Boal 1979 139). They were then told that the scene will take place again, exactly as it had before. However, the spect-actors have the right to say “Stop!” and replace any of the actors, leading the scene in the direction they felt was more appropriate (Boal 1979 139). They must maintain the original physical actions of the actors that they replace. Further, they are not allowed to come on stage and simply talk. Rather, “they must carry out the same type of work or activities performed by the actors who were in their place” (Boal 1979 139).

The goal of the project was to solicit real, visceral responses to the topics of
stalking, pornography, and objectification from the students in the cast by asking them to participate and change the outcome from the model performance. Once the scenes were completed, we engaged in an open, honest conversation about the performance and how the actors felt about it, the circumstances and how they felt about the outcome – both about the SIU campus and in the United States, as well as in *Boy Gets Girl*.

The use of this activity in the rehearsal space not only helped to create comradery amongst the cast, but also created an environment where students are able to have honest conversations about difficult topics. It allowed for a safe space in rehearsals for the group to not only understand each other and possibly a different perspective than their own, but it allowed them the freedom to express themselves through their art.

As a director, this exercise also allowed me to understand how a new generation of younger actors react and respond to heavy emotional topics. By studying their responses, perspectives and participation to the Forum Theater exercise, I gained a better understanding of how to direct them in the subsequent rehearsals when they would not be able to change the outcome. As discussed earlier, I was not always able to recognize the actors’ deep connections to the text, but I was able to recognize most and change my course of directing when recognizing other issues.

**Dialects**

Since the play takes place in New York City, I asked the department’s Speech and Dialect professor Susan Patrick Benson to come to rehearsals and work with the students in the cast on dialects. Something I learned prior to Benson’s arrival was that there is not just one New York dialect, but that it can vary based on the character’s
background or even the neighborhood. Therefore, I asked the dramaturge to scour the script to make a list for context clues about specific traits that might influence dialect – including neighborhoods, childhood, religions, or even profession. The following was submitted by Oehme:

Table 3.3 – Dialect Influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theresa Bedell</td>
<td>Theresa and Tony probably both have Midwestern accents, with Theresa’s being more educated. Tony was educated in Michigan; Theresa in Indiana. She is a Yankees fan, though, so she could have a hint of New York from living there for a while and it would make sense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Ross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard Seigel</td>
<td>He uses Yiddish, so I am guessing he would have a New York Jewish/Yiddish accent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercer Stevens</td>
<td>No real cue to an accent that I could see except that he is educated and currently living in New York.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet</td>
<td>As far as accents go, Harriet never mentions any background history. She is only 21 and used to work for another New York based magazine, so is most likely from the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detective Beck</td>
<td>Hunter College is in New York, so I would imagine Beck would have a version of a New York accent. The college is in Lennox Hill, near the Upper East Side, but no mention if that is near where she grew up. But between school and work, a brusque New York accent is probable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the previous information in hand, I spoke with Benson one-on-one about each character in particular. With her guidance and expertise, I decided upon the following accents:
Benson was invited to multiple rehearsals to work with the students on dialects. Some of them had never had a dialect class with Benson in their time at SIU, and for some it was like second-nature. Regardless, I had each of them learn the dialect that I could then manipulate for the show. I wanted all of the actors to learn a very heavy New York dialect so I could scale each of them back to a point that fit with their characters. For example, I had the actors playing both Tony and Theresa learn the New York dialect even though these characters were not native New Yorkers. However, they each have lived there long enough that they have picked up some of the pronunciations or slang of the city, so these characters were scaled back the most.

What I knew I did not want from the dialects is something that would be too difficult for the actors and would draw their focus away from their performance. Additionally, I did not want something that was too thick that might distract the audience as well. Therefore, Benson recommended a compromise – that the actors pronounce specific words a certain way to give the illusion of a New York accent, but it’s not too distracting for an audience member to follow what is being said. This is the dialect that carried into the final performances.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Dialect Choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theresa Bedell</td>
<td>Midwestern, mixed with slight New York pronunciations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Ross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard Seigel</td>
<td>New York, Jewish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercer Stevens</td>
<td>New York, general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet</td>
<td>New York, young and “city”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Kennkat</td>
<td>New York, brassy like Marty Hodas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detective Beck</td>
<td>New York, general</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rehearsals

All in all, the rehearsal process was very smooth. With the exception of the first three days being dramaturgy and exercise focused, my process generally remained the same. I like to do basic blocking first, while the actors still have scripts in their hands. Then, as they are getting off book, we begin to add layers with stage business, props, transitions, costume pieces, and a deeper look into subtext and characterization. The rehearsal process is where I feel I grew the most as a director on this project. However, something that I would tweak for my next production is to begin bringing in the subtext and characterization sooner. Though we had it here through our exercises in the early rehearsals, I let it get lax when moving into the basic blocking rehearsals. That is something I need to adjust and review for my own directorial process in future projects.

There were some other overarching goals that I have recognized from past performances that I wanted to address during the Boy Gets Girl rehearsal process. They are as follows:

First, I have stated before that I prefer to jump into blocking as quickly in the process as possible. However, because of observations made through Antigone and because it was a goal I set for myself on this production, I chose to begin the rehearsal process with several days of read through and discussions, as well as guest speakers and lecturers. This allowed for us to have a deeper dramaturgical understanding of the text before getting it up on its feet. These rehearsals led to some larger discoveries throughout the rehearsal process, especially for Ferriel in discovering who Tony is and why he is that way. However, sometime during the rehearsal process, I began to feel the actors were burning out and characterization was slipping, so saving some of this
work for later would have been helpful. But, on the Friday evening rehearsal before the school closed for Fall Break, a night I anticipated focus would be waning, I scheduled a night of character work, full of discussions and discoveries, rather than running scenes or blocking. I feel this evening was successful in its purpose.

The one thing that I would’ve changed about the rehearsal process is the length. As previously stated, it became apparent to me that the cast was getting burned out. This was my reasoning for not having but one weekend of rehearsals. I thought because of scheduling conflicts with other productions that I needed to start the week prior to the original start date for those dramaturgical days, but in retrospect, I wish I had waited until the following Monday. On the one Saturday rehearsal that was called, the work I did in the first half with Doty and Young was productive, but when it got to the run, it felt like a waste of time as there was no focus, subtext or characterization, but rather, it felt like a dry run of the show. On the Sunday of tech weekend there is normally an afternoon tech rehearsal in addition to the evening on the day after Cue to Cue. Since the designers did not need the space for working, priority was given to me. Based on the less than stellar run I had seen the evening of Cue to Cue, it was apparent that (to be discussed later) while calling the Sunday afternoon rehearsal might make me feel better, it would have been a waste of everyone’s time because they would not have been focused and the evening performance would have also suffered. Recalling that one called Saturday rehearsal, I decided to give the actors the time off instead. Seeing the rehearsal on Sunday night, I knew I made the right call.

In addition to previously discussed problems, such as design choices or actor burn outs, there were a couple of other problems during the rehearsal process that
warrant addressing. They are as follows:

I recognized early in the process that overlapping casting with another production was not a wise choice when it came to Theresa, someone who rarely leaves the stage. Though Doty picked up her part very quickly and was able to jump right in on the night she returned, the first two and a half weeks of rehearsals were done with minimal presence of our leading lady. Though I was able to work out a schedule with Tom Kidd, director for *Spring Awakening*, I didn’t look closely enough at my own schedule to ensure the other cast members each had nights to work with Theresa. For example, at the end of the two weeks, Seth Lerner (Howard) commented that he would be excited when Doty returned because he had not yet worked with her. I should have recognized this scheduling error for both actors’ sakes. Additionally, there were other cast members who were working on crew for the musical or were involved with another production in the Kleinau Theater, the performance space for the Communication Studies Department. All in all, overlapping productions is not an easy feat when it comes to scheduling, both for the actors doubling productions, as well as for their scene partners. I would like to look into alternative casting in future productions as overlapping not only wears down on an actor but can become an issue for the director’s work in rehearsals.

This show severely suffered from problems with consistency. Though this will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 4, I believe it warrants mentioning here, as it was not just a problem of performance, but in rehearsals as well. A common problem in educational rehearsals, in my opinion, is the actors not doing their homework – remembering work done in previous rehearsals and bringing that into the next call as well as working on their parts on their own time, outside of rehearsal. I believe that was
not always the case for consistency problems with this production. Rather, I feel the inconsistency could be contributed to the long rehearsal process and burn outs discussed earlier.

Many items worked well in rehearsals, too. Some amazing discoveries were made by actors or crew members and by me that deserve recognition. They are as follows:

There were many scenes that called for the actors to be seated for most, if not throughout the entire scene – the dates in bars and restaurants, interviews in Les’s office, and a majority of scenes occurring in Theresa’s office. In early rehearsals, where I spend time merely staging rough blocking and movement patterns, there was not a great deal happening and these scenes looked flat. So, the addition of stage business became extremely important. Additionally, one change I thought worked well, for example, was the decision to eliminate chairs in the first scene. In early rehearsals, the first and third scenes of the show (the bar and the restaurant, respectively) looked very similar with rough blocking. Therefore, I chose to do away with the chairs in the first scene for the blind date at the bar (see act 1, scene 1 and act 1, scene 3 in Appendix C). I thought about many of the bars I frequent and how people spend a majority of their time standing if they are not seated directly at the bar counter. This allowed for a different approach and different stage business, as well as a different feel for the scenes in general.

As previously mentioned, for read through rehearsals, I asked the actors a lot of questions. They concerned character choices, acting choices, lines, subtext, movement, status, environment, situations, or anything I could think of as we were
working the scenes. I continued this questioning throughout the rehearsal process, keeping record of them, and some of the answers received, in my script. The goal was not always to come up with the correct answers but to get us questioning the script and the characters. Remember, as Zavadski stated, “Each person is the sum of his thoughts, his feelings, his actions, and his inner world. My first task as a director, therefore, is to help the actors create the inner world of the part” (Mitchell 304-306). This process helped create deeper, more rich characters than I have in the past productions.

Lastly, I took plenty of time as a director to refocus and recommit myself to the project. When I would get burned out, frustrated, tired, or unmotivated, I would always go back to the text. This is a piece of advice from my advisor very early in my time at SIU – to always go back to the script and take the time to simply read it. By doing so, you can recommit yourself and find new directions or entry points for discoveries to motivate yourself for the next rehearsal. Therefore, I made it a goal from the beginning to set aside time to do this – at least once a week or as needed – and I mostly adhered to this goal.

**Technical and Dress Rehearsals**

Cue to Cue was fairly standard, though this was my first time in a Cue to Cue as a director. Because I have sat through every other Cue to Cue since my arrival at SIU in the fall of 2015 – totaling twelve previous experiences – I knew what to expect even though my role in the space had changed. It was a smooth process, which I attribute to my close working relationship with designers throughout the process as well as the
production stage managers preparedness. Because we had discussed cues before today’s tech, nothing was new, surprising, or the first time I had encountered it.

We were able to make it through cueing the entire show with time to spare in the second session of the day, allowing us a longer dinner break and a full tech run during the evening session, rather than on Sunday. As I stated earlier, this run wasn’t up to par with previous runs because the actors had been working all day, but I wasn’t any less pleased with this run. Afterwards, I asked the actors to convince me that they didn’t need to come in for a run tomorrow afternoon, though I had every intention of letting them have the next afternoon off. At this time, I also made the decision not to send them my full notes. I was pretty sure almost all of what I had noted would be corrected when they were rested and refocused by Sunday’s run through. I stressed that I was not disappointed by the run itself but that I had seen better from the actors, so I knew we could do better.

On Sunday, we had a second tech run of the show with tech notes afterwards. They were back to having a great show. I knew giving them the afternoon off was the right call, but I wanted them motivated to come in and justify this decision. My advisor was also present this evening and offered some notes as well. I went over Ojewuyi’s notes from the run with the cast as well as my own general notes for the actors. Overall, I was pleased with this show, and I knew at this moment that by opening it will be everything I hoped it would be.

On First Dress, the run was, again, beginning to slip and not as strong as the last night’s run, but I had previously anticipated that with the addition of costumes. The good news, however, was that this meant that the actors had not yet peaked. After this
run, I staged the bows with the actors and lighting. I was hesitant about these at first. I had previously discussed the idea of not having a curtain call because, both the sound designer and I, wanted that moment at the end of the production to sit and linger with an audience. In the end, I asked the advice of my advisor, who insisted I include them. Working with the lighting and sound designers after first dress, I liked what curtain call accomplished. I did not have the actors bow, but just come out and stand, somber, on stage. In the end, Tony was blocked to stand behind Theresa. While the other actors left the stage, these two were left alone, silhouetted in a blue special, before they exited (see production photos in Appendix C).

Second Dress’s run was also not as strong as previous ones. The cast was starting to slip into the trap of not playing the fear that we had searched for in rehearsals and into a place of anger. The actors said they felt it, too. I reminded them in their notes as well as verbally to remember the fear, their objectives, and their stakes. I then went through their notes from the run. This was the night it became clear that some of the cast were not reading the notes being sent to them, because some notes had been repeated for several days, despite my including them. So, I decided to go over all of the notes in person with the entire cast. Since Final Dress is the last day they would receive notes from me (to be discussed later in this chapter), I took advantage of this time with them and no longer assumed they would do this work on their own time.

At Final Dress, I finally felt like the show was ready. I had a glimpse of what they were capable of with a previous run, but this night was the night that I was truly content with where the show was and with putting it in front of an audience. Honestly, that feeling had very little to do with the actors and crew and more so myself. One thing I
have struggled with as a director is confidence – confidence in putting my work in front of an audience, in my worthiness of being a director, and a lot of nerves. I have worked hard on these personal issues during my time here at SIU, but a thesis production carried more weight than the previous ones. However, I can say that I was not as much of a wreck as I had anticipated, which does speak volumes to the actors, crew, stage management and designers, as well as in taking a step back and looking at my own work. I was proud of this production and I knew the show was ready, and I was ready to showcase my work.

**Performances**

I firmly believe that it took the show right up until opening night to be “performance ready”, and I feel the four performances were a great success! My individual performance assessments are as follows:

At first, I thought Thursday night’s performance may have been their peak performance, which is both good and bad. It was good because that means they did not peak too early, something that I thought happened with both *The Bear* and *Antigone* and that I recognized as something to watch out for during this production. The opening night crowd received a fantastic and captivating performance. I have told my actors that if they could keep my attention or make me cry – someone who has seen and read this play too many times to count – then they have really given a spectacular performance. It was a strong performance that left the audience uncomfortable, which is the exact outcome I was aiming for. But if Thursday had turned out to be their peak, then that is bad because Friday’s show would not only have been a “second night slump”, but also the day after peaking. Up until this day, it was their best performance, but they had
more to come as the weekend progressed. Although they had small audiences for over a week prior during tech and dress rehearsals, a real audience was exactly what they needed.

On Friday, I discovered that my predictions from the Thursday night performance were correct. This performance was indeed a “slump”. However, it would be unfair if I didn’t say that my assumptions are nit-picky as a director who had to watch her own show to be able to write about it. I have a hard time switching off “director” in favor of “audience member” when watching my own productions. Before I came to SIU, I never watched my own performances for this very reason. Instead, I would listen at the door and gauge success audibly based on the audience’s reactions. So, I made sure to do this on this evening as well. Since I was sitting up in the stage manager’s booth in the mezzanine, it was easy for me to watch audience member’s reactions. Though I was not as captivated by the performance as I had been the night before, the audience was still engaged and enjoyed the production. However, there were some major line flubs that caused the actors to lose focus. For example, in act 1 scene 5, Young and Doty dropped a large portion of lines. Though it was very apparent to me that this was happening, I had a hard time figuring out if the audience caught it as well. Though the actors eventually circled back around and picked up what they missed, I was disappointed. In order to correct this, I simply gave the note to the stage manager who passed it on to the actors. But all in all, it was not a bad performance.

Very early in Saturday’s performance, it became apparent to me that this was their best performance yet; no doubt about it. The actors were focused, stayed in character, paid attention to the arc of the story and everything I had asked for during
the two months of rehearsals. The crew was quick and quiet. I was very happy with this performance. I myself became scared and uncomfortable, even though I knew what was to come. It was a beautiful performance all around. There were a few flubs, like a picture falling off the wall when Young (Les) touched it, but he remained in character and moved on. Though a stellar performance is something to celebrate, I was concerned for Sunday’s performance becoming another slump, much like what I witnessed going from Thursday to Friday.

On Sunday, I was right again. Because Saturday night was their best run to date, Sunday was the downfall performance I was expecting. I think Sunday was just as weak as Friday, but in a different way. Friday was just suffering from the phenomenon known as “second night slump.” They were still focused and in character, but energy and stakes were low. On Sunday, there was a lot of breaking character and concentration. One example was when the letter from Tony fell on the floor and Doty (Theresa) who touches it next couldn’t find it. Then Taylor Smith (Beck), who picks it up in the next scene, didn’t have it either. Both of these women briefly broke character and showed the audience their mini-panic that the prop couldn’t be found. Doty even did it audibly in the scene change, calling out for Lampley (Mercer). Eventually they both moved on and continued without it. It is possible that I am the only one who noticed this, because I know what it should look and sound like, but it was sloppy. Additionally, I recognize this as another error on my part. Because something like this never occurred in a rehearsal, we did not have a contingency plan on what to do if it did. Once again, though, that’s not to say that it wasn’t a good performance. Like Friday, it was easy for me to watch audience members’ reactions because I once again sat in the mezzanine. Though I
was not as captivated as I had been with Saturday’s performance, the audience was engaged and enjoyed the production.

**Performance Evaluation**

Because performances were selling out, I did not want to take a ticket away from potential audience members, so I chose to sit in the booth for the Friday and Sunday performances when I did not have guests present. However, I cannot help but wonder if the two performances I thought were “slumps” had any connection to the fact that I was sitting in the mezzanine. Though there were noticeable mistakes and other items I as the director would have noted for the actors had these been rehearsals, I had never sat in the booth before those evenings, and I feel that it may have influenced my viewing of the performances.

In the past, I have not administered notes to a cast once the performance opened. My reasoning is two-fold: first, as I have said before, prior to coming to SIU, I did not watch my own performances and, second, each show I have directed at SIU before *Boy Gets Girl* had only one performance, so there was no need to do so. So, I followed what I had observed as a stage manager or assistant director, or simply by observation through my assistantships at SIU, and chose not to administer notes to the actors during the run of the show. The only exception to this rule was on the one night where Les and Theresa jumped lines in act 1, scene 5, and I asked that they run these lines quickly before the next show. In retrospect, I feel as though I should have done more to bring awareness to the actors for certain trouble spots. They did not need pages of notes, like what directors are used to giving in rehearsals, but pointing out certain moments that could have used a revisit should have been done – even if as
simple as putting a bullet point in the actor section of the rehearsal report. Because of this, it would be my recommendation that future second year directing projects receive more than one performance for their heightened language production.

As a whole, the production process was quite a learning experience and one I will never forget. I will now explore what I believe to be both the successes and failures of the entire production process, as well as goals for future productions, in Chapter 4.
CHAPTER 4
POST PRODUCTION PROCESS

Concept and Vision Success

Feminism is a wide-ranging term that focuses its attention on the imbalance of genders because of the “patriarchal backbone” that founded American society. Feminism seeks to unravel this construct and “level the playing field”. In the southern states feminism is gaining momentum, but southern women who are endorsing “feminism,” “or women’s rights if they have an aversion to the name,” continue to “speak ill of women of color or transgender women behind closed doors,” while shouting for equality for all women in the streets (LaFave). So, while a feminist from the South may seem like an “anomaly”, this production was my opportunity, as a southern feminist and a female director, to make a stand for all of women’s rights.

As discussed, the original inspiration for the production stemmed from the Women’s Rights marches that were happening all around the country at the time I was pitching plays for my thesis production, beginning in October of 2016. Thinking about the then-candidate Donald Trump’s stance on women’s rights and how women’s activist groups were already beginning to protest him before he even took office, I saw links and comparisons between their stories and that of Theresa – specifically her inability to make choices for herself. This is where the concept of “objectification” began. My goal was not to direct a performance that was a chanting or sign wielding protest piece against the Trump administration. However, using this as an inspiration that equal law applies to everyone, I feel our production was successful in portraying that message by making the audience uncomfortable with the outcome and recognizing that the laws
protecting women are ambiguous and full of loopholes.

As discussed in Chapter 1, another inspiration for this production came from act 2, scene 3, in monologues by both Beck and Theresa. In this scene, both women discussed what they are “supposed to do” as women. Societal ideals still condition men to objectify women, and women are taught to be submissive or flattered when gazed upon or pursued. Having been raised in an area where I witnessed this ladylike conditioning firsthand, when I became older I began to question my own “conditioning.” Not long after I was married, public encounters quickly turned from polite conversation to questions if my husband and I were planning on having children. Growing tired of these questions, I began responding with “Why should I have children so soon after marriage?” or some similar question. Again, the response that I received more often than not was, “because that’s what you’re supposed to do.” Ironically, this response often came from women, revealing to me their own social conditioning. My production of Boy Gets Girl challenged patriarchal society and the minimizing of problems that women face.

Lastly, Boy Gets Girl served as a rehabilitation piece for me. As someone who was stalked, and knowing other women who had been through this – both in the cast and in the audience – this production awakened familiar feelings and allowed me to move past these negative experiences by helping others and bringing awareness to the ambiguity in laws surrounding stalking. During the talk back with audience members and cast following Thursday night’s performance, one student present asked me what was the hardest scene to approach and why? I answered that it was the voicemail scene (act 1, scene 7). I was always very open with my cast about the reasons I was
drawn to this play and one of those was personal experience closely related to Theresa’s in this moment. When I was an undergraduate, I was stalked by an unknown predator and received phone calls in the middle of the night where the man said things to me that were harassing, negative, or sexual. But approaching this scene was therapeutic for me, and I didn’t leave the space that evening in tears or panic, but moving on from my experience by “helping” another – Theresa – through this scene. This poised me, as well as other women who participated or were present, to begin thinking about political action, highlighting injustices, and calling for stronger litigation against harassment.

These were the three inspiration points I wanted to highlight through production, in staging, design, and dramaturgy, to not only make the audience uneasy by being right on top of the situation, but also uncomfortable with the progression and outcome of the play. In that sense, regardless of the nit-picky things I would have changed as far as design or casting is concerned, I believe this production was successful.

**Advisor and Committee Response**

Following the production, I met one on one with my advisor twice to discuss his thoughts on the production and the process collectively. In these meetings, our conversations mostly revolved around casting and characterization choices. We began discussing the men’s roles. Ojewuyi believed that Mark Young (Les) played his role very well, but that Seth Lerner (Howard) did not rise to the challenge. Using the same men, Ojewuyi would have put Young into Lerner’s role (Howard), Andrew Lampley (Mercer) into Young’s role (Les), and Lerner into Lampley’s role (Mercer). Even then, Lerner still would have been the weakest, which is why, I explained, I did not bump him up into one
of the bigger roles originally.

In Ojewuyi’s opinion, however, all of the actors were successful. His only reservations were with Kristin Doty as Theresa. From the first date (act 1, scene 1) with Tony, she was preemptive of the moments to come and was already treating him like a creep before he had a chance to speak. Theresa, Ojewuyi explained, should be presented first and foremost as a woman who is both professional and loveable. She goes to the bar ready for a date, giving him the benefit of the doubt. The audience should see her and fall in love with her, identifying with her. But Doty played a victim too soon. For example, in the moment Theresa has with Mercer and the story he was going to write about her situation, her objection came too soon and was not robust enough. This journey from writing the story to not writing it was limited by her own quick, single tactic approach.

While discussing characterization, we also spoke about Harriet. She is more than just a child; more than a dumb blonde, the stereotype that Gilman presents on the outside. For example, when we first encounter Harriet, she shares a story about her previous job. “Why is it there?”, Ojewuyi asked. It opens us to another part of her – one that is eager to please all the time.

Beck as a professional has a masculine front. Women in the force tend to portray this image to be viewed as “one of the guys.” But inside she’s a complete woman who, under the uniform, is capable of love and has desires of being loved. Gilman juxtaposes Beck to Theresa, who should be sweet and lovable on the outside, but who is pushed into the state of panic and fear, but they are not so different.
Every character has multiple layers of self. Ojewuyi asked his classes, specifically female students, what they thought of Les’s character. He was loved by the females because he was being himself, no matter what he said or how he objectified women, but he also had a shift that allowed for the audience to see beyond the things he says. That's what Doty was missing, Ojewuyi explained. He enjoyed her performance more once the knife started twisting, but before then she (and I) misinterpreted Theresa.

Following these meetings, a meeting with my committee was scheduled. Because Jacob Juntunen, a member of my committee, was overseas for the fall semester and missed both the production as well as this committee meeting, Dr. Anne Fletcher was asked to serve as his proxy for the meeting.

The first topic of conversation in my post-production committee meeting revolved around the length of the rehearsal process and the burnout that occurred, both with the actors and myself. I explained that I started the rehearsal process three days earlier than anticipated because of personal conflicts, production overlap, and a school wide holiday that all fell during the rehearsal period. The actors became exhausted. The committee asked if I gave them a few days off in the process. As discussed in Chapter 3, there was only one weekend rehearsal, but it was because of the work ethic on that Saturday that I recognized later that time off was more important than rehearsals. I was advised that, as the director, you have to feel secure enough in the work completed that when you observe that exhaustion, you give the actors a break. As a result, the performance you receive when they come back is worth more than those days of rehearsals. If you feel insecure, go work on other parts of the production and use the
schedule in other ways.

One design element that my committee pointed out as an area for growth is to explore color in a less literal incorporation. They used the example of my interpretation of the “grey areas” in the law being designed very literally in costumes and scenic in their respective color palettes. Upon suggestions from my committee, in future productions I should look at what color or other design elements do to enhance the designs and, subsequently, the plot.

Another design element in question was the scenic design. Some committee members didn’t think the skyscrapers worked and that they took us away from the literal, realistic place. Rather, if one looks across the spectrum of design possibilities from literal to three cubes, somewhere in between (drawing from the script), we could have gotten something that worked that was also something non-realistic. As a director, if you know what it is that you need of the design, then you start thinking about symbolically what is the essence of the production.

To move forward, the committee reminded me that directing is about overlapping. To be able to continue developing my own aesthetic, I need to overlap on Boy Gets Girl, just as I brought The Bear and Antigone into my thesis, while moving into future productions. This was not always the case with the thesis production. There were moments that could have improved further if I had taken time to go back to book reviews, coursework, projects, or meeting one on one with my advisor. Therefore, this thesis paper is about moving forward, too. I need to think about the experience – what was learned, what was gained – to move into future projects.

Finally, the committee meeting closed with compliments on the growth I have
made in the program. I was at the end of my fifth semester for my post production committee meeting, and Ojewuyi called attention to the fact that my “stage management brain” was approaching that of a director. With this production, I began moving away from my natural Type A personality, and began to be Type B, allowing room for creativity to reign. However, I was able to take the best parts of stage management – efficiency, time management, and organization – and use it artistically as part of the directing process. Fletcher used the example of the choice to add Tony into the scene change into act 2, scene 6, saying “I didn’t even remember that Tony wasn’t scripted into the scene change!”. In a previous meeting with Ojewuyi, he explained it by looking at my work with actors, and that being an area where I have grown tremendously. As always and especially in my first two productions, my work showed the hands of a stage manager, clean and organized but with little life. That had to do with a difficulty in knowing how to build characters and build subtext, he explained. But he could see that in this performance I have been able to transfer the skills from stage management to good use in directing.

**Additional Personal Reflection**

Thinking back to Ojewuyi’s comment about Doty’s characterization of Theresa, I began to think about how all of the characters, not just Theresa, were “playing the end.” For example, all of the actors were aware of the ending (Theresa moving and changing her name), and the actors all played that as an inevitable outcome. Though I worked to combat this in rehearsals as much as possible, this delivery began to sneak its way into performances. When witnessing this, I felt that I had no control over the actor’s final delivery – I could not stop them mid scene, as I do in rehearsals, and say, “No! That’s
not how we rehearsed the scene!”. I felt all that I could do was give them the note and hope it would be corrected the following evening. Therefore, as stated in Chapter 3, this show severely suffered from problems with consistency. Each performance was different, and I was unsure how to correct it. Even though I could stop the actors in rehearsal, explain that their performance was not as previously rehearsed, I was unable to keep them consistent from one rehearsal to the next as well. This is one area I will discuss later as a goal for future productions.

**Core Course of Study**

Whether directly related to the topic of directing, each course or project I have completed at SIU was useful as a budding director and every one influenced the directing of *Boy Gets Girl* in some form or fashion – from play analysis and understanding or analyzing a text from a playwright’s perspective, to discussing ideas and designs during the design or production meetings with my team, even to being ridiculously organized and efficient at time management thanks to my time as a stage manager. I honestly believe that every endeavor funneled into my leading *Boy Gets Girl*, and I pulled from each of them at some point throughout the production process.

During design courses like Costume Design and Lighting Design, I found it hard to separate myself from being a “director” to present my projects as a “designer”. While I had some knowledge of design to understand terminology, my previous experience was miniscule, and I feared that might be a hindrance in my understanding of designing. However, I find that I work the hardest in courses where I feel the least comfortable in my knowledge. I now had a new appreciation for the work that goes into the preparation before designs can be built – much like the work a director must do
before auditions can be held. As a director, not only could I better appreciate the work and the designs brought before me, but I was also better able to communicate with designers at meetings or one on one.

When thinking about the words of the scripts, I thought back on courses about playwriting or dramaturgy. While playwriting is still not my forte, I have come to appreciate the work and the thought processes behind what playwrights do. Every single word is carefully planned, chosen, and placed in just the right order to create a line or a moment. Nothing is accidental. By taking playwriting courses, I better understood the tactics used by Gilman and how to implement them into my directing. Then, during the New Play Workshop course, I was able to translate that work into a staged reading of a new play. Though I could work with the playwright one on one during this course, those skills could then be used on a production where a playwright was not present – asking questions of a playwright, even though Gilman was not present to answer them. Additionally, the Dramaturgy course helped me to be a better director by showing me how to conduct relevant research on my own and find things important to my directing and concept. I began the semester by doing the in-class assignments on *Boy Gets Girl*, which continued to inform my directing throughout the rehearsal process.

To think critically about a text, I underwent courses like Theories and Conventions or Contemporary Developments. This was the first time I had studied any kind of literary or performance theory as I did not study theater or English as an undergraduate many years ago. Studying the “ISMs”, theorists, and playwrights was incredibly helpful in cultivating the ability to identify the different styles in production and
recognizing them in texts. Also, as a director, I was learning that I am not bound to one theorist or ISM when doing my own productions, but understanding I can pull from more than one and how to do that successfully.

As I was beginning the fall semester and gearing up for *Boy Gets Girl*, I registered for a course in the Communications Studies department called *Staging Literature*, since its topic of study was directing. I found it valuable for my career path as it taught me new ways of directing, especially those unique to reader’s theater style productions that I was not yet familiar with – like off stage focus or the use of binders in staged readings, though I did a little of this work with directing a reading for last year’s Big Muddy New Play Festival. It gave me additional opportunities to continue working as a director (as well as a playwright) and to continue working with actors. The two large projects for the course were writing, casting, rehearsing, and performing a fifteen to twenty-minute scene. In the meantime, almost every day in class we were on our feet acting and directing scenes, improvising, using props, compiling texts, et cetera, giving me a lot of insight into being a performer as well.

As part of the Directing Studio and Advanced Directing Studio courses, I also completed several book reviews. Studying approaches from Artaud to Bogart, I found these book reviews as beneficial to my development as a director as the courses in which I was simultaneously enrolled. Each one of these books was chosen by my advisor and each seemed to come at a time when I needed it the most, beginning with Anne Bogart’s *A Director Prepares*. This book is a great text for all theater artists, not just directors. Through her experiences and, in turn, her book, Bogart addresses some truths, opinions, situations, and myths about directing. The seven points Bogart names
in each of the chapters offered me not just an insight as to how a director should interact with the actors, but how the work itself should interact with the audience – a characteristic often overlooked. This book taught me to embrace the characteristics of a work that one would often find as negative. Each one is, therefore, “an ally to the creative process” (Bogart 6). In addition, I have also come to appreciate the following three points by studying Bogart’s approach to the “creative process.” First, “[t]here is no disgrace in not knowing what you are doing and not having all the answers. But your passion and excitement about something will take you the distance through uncertainty” (Bogart 58). Second, “[w]e must trust ourselves to enter this abyss with openness… despite the unbalance and vulnerability” (Bogart 83). Lastly, “You must have a reason to do what it is you do because these reasons are felt by anyone who comes in contact with your work” (Bogart 119).

Directors often avoid thinkers like Artaud because his theories are not easily translatable from the page to the stage. Having only encountered Artaud for the first time through my studies at SIU, I was hesitant and skeptical at first how useful his theories would prove. However, it is through reading (and rereading) his theories that I came to welcome the following points by studying Artaud’s approach to theater, which I think proved most useful as I developed my uniqueness as a director: First, the subtext is most important. A director must not rely on what he or she sees written on the page alone. Second, I value the in-depth look into the importance of the actor for a successful portrayal. Third, directors should appreciate the newer works of art, both in theater and other mediums. As a director, Artaud’s work helped me to understand how to push the limits, even in realism, of the spectacle created on stage through the use of
lights, sounds, music, and gestures with the goal being to involve the audience as active participants intellectually and emotionally, rather than solely as spectators.

*Provoking Theater* by Kama Ginkas offered insight about his own beginnings, hesitations, and failures on his path to studying directing – a helpful anecdote as I was beginning my own career in study at the time of reading and now am looking into a future beyond graduation. As John Freedman puts it, “*Provoking Theater* collects the thoughts of a director who has spent thirty-five years as a professional working on getting it right” (ix). “Getting it right” is a phrase that hit home with me. Ginkas spent his lifetime perfecting the art of directing, proving that this is an art that is a constant learning process. We grow and we develop as we find our own voices. We make mistakes, but we do not consider these failures, but rather learning experiences. “[G]etting something right for Ginkas is a process, not a goal” (ix). Much like the work of Bogart, this book taught me to embrace the characteristics of a production that one would often find as negative and use it to continue to grow.

In Paul Woodruff’s book, *The Necessity of Theater*, I found an interesting insight into *watching* a performance or *being watched* in a performance. Woodruff calls it the art of being watched, indicating that there is a science behind or set of rules governing the process. Though watching (as an audience) and being watched (as performers) seems like a natural part of theater, if you don’t have one or the other you don’t have theater. According to Woodruff, this is often glossed over as an understanding that both events will occur simply because an audience shows up to a performance or simply by offering said performance. Through this book, however, I discovered that this is not necessarily the case. Using stories or anecdotes about toothless bears and even farts,
Woodruff’s ever-evolving definition of theater was interesting to read about. With so many different approaches to directing in theater, and even though Woodruff himself is a professor of philosophy and classics, his idea that the art of making theater not only rests on the performers or director, but also rides on the shoulders of the audience members to be “good” is a concept I hadn’t put much stock into until now. One thought-provoking observation when reading was that – over and over again – within the chapters the author said that the “art of theater is the art of finding human action worth watching for a measured time in a measured space” (Woodruff 19). The take-away for me was that the directors can do everything right and the performers could present a marvelous presentation, but the audience may not respond at all by not being engaged or empathetic, purely for their own baggage or other issues external to the performance. We as directors, therefore, must provide the right space, time allotment, and make the action on stage “worth watching” to combat this baggage. Lastly, Woodruff’s book aims to stress the importance – nay, the necessity – of theater as part of our culture as human beings. During a time when the arts are always the first to be cut when budget crises are looming over us, The Necessity of Theater reevaluates not just the very definition of theater and how it is a part of our everyday lives, but also how theater enables us to be better and more empathetic individuals.

**Artistic Growth**

During my first semester of study at SIU, I took my first ever directing course. This is the course I felt was my weakest, but understandably so. Coming into the program, I had a lengthy *curriculum vitae*, but my directing credits were minimal – with only a one act and a musical under my belt. However, I honestly felt that the three
scenes presented throughout the course progressively improved and were among the strongest of those presented in the class. I understood, however, that I still had a lot to learn – not just about process but about being confident in and understanding the decisions I make on stage. By the time I entered the Advanced Directing Studio course in the second semester, which continued through my fourth semester, I noticed a huge difference in the way I approached the projects I completed. I was well prepared from Research Methods and I used that as a jumping off place when preparing to write this thesis, but the process took longer than I had hoped. I recognize that I am a slow writer and this is the reason I began reading and researching over my first summer break for my next year’s directing project, Antigone – a skill I also carried into preparing for Boy Gets Girl, as well as when completing this paper. After a slow start in rehearsals, I feel The Bear was nothing to be embarrassed about. While the actors had trouble with consistency (a problem I also saw in Boy Gets Girl), I felt I showed a strong understanding of concepts previously learned in Directing Studio.

The Bear was not a stellar performance and I recognized how much I still had to learn as a director. I also think it had to do with how much I enjoyed the text before I began the process. With The Bear, while I enjoyed the script tremendously, it was not my original choice when picking a one act, and I was resistant to my advisor’s suggestion to produce a Chekhov play every step of the way. In retrospect, I now understand his comment about “you cannot ignore characterization in a Chekhov play.” But for Antigone, not only do I love the play itself, but it was something new and challenging, as I had never done a Greek play.

Finally, by the end of my fourth semester and during the final installment of the
Advanced Directing Studio course, my advisor and I began shifting my focus toward preparing for my thesis. It was time to go back and review my directing, collaborative, and class work up until that point and focus that knowledge on this final production.

In addition to book reviews and required directing projects, as part of the course of study at SIU for directing students, we are required to be an assistant director to our advisor’s mainstage production and I was fortunate enough to have this experience twice. My assignment as the Assistant Director for *Wife/Worker/Whore* was not as hands on as many others had been up to this point, but it was the most beneficial for me at that time as a student in directing. Yes, I had been in rehearsals previously, but because of my duties, I was unable to focus all of my attention on the director. This assignment allowed me to do that and to watch a style of directing other than my own. Additionally, because I was given the freedom to conduct a rehearsal and sit in on a production meeting in lieu of the director, it didn’t feel as if I was being underutilized. This was a helpful assignment to see the entire process from the eyes of a director, rather than a stage manager or properties master.

Then, in my second year of study, I was able to serve as Assistant Director for *A Nightingale for Dr. DuBois*. Once again, I love being in a rehearsal space with another director, as an Assistant Director or any other type of observer to the rehearsal process. It was interesting to see the differences in Ojewuyi’s approach between *Nightingale* and *Wife/Worker/Whore*. There was the difference in spaces, which had a major effect on blocking. I also found it interesting that the two productions I have assistant directed for Ojewuyi have been on new plays. I think that experience helped me in the New Play Workshop class and collaborating with Broke Oehme, the playwright, to direct the
staged reading of her full play, *Notes to Self*, and was especially helpful as I moved into directing *800 Days of Solitude: A Conjuring* for the Big Muddy Festival this year.

All in all, my three years at SIU gave me an opportunity to learn, grow, and understand who I am as a director. Directing *Boy Gets Girl* was a vastly different experience from *The Bear or Antigone*, and I attribute it all to the success of this department and its dedication to students as well as my own utilization of everything it has to offer. There are still areas of directing I recognize as weaknesses (to be discussed in the following section) but, when all is said and done, the growth I have made as an artist has surpassed anything I could have imagined. It goes beyond simply gaining experience and the old adage of “practice makes perfect,” but about thinking critically and asking the texts, “why?”

**Future Directorial Goals**

After reviewing the entire production process, as well as all other work completed during my tenure at SIU, I have recognized a few areas for potential growth when moving on to future productions – both in post-thesis shows currently in progress as well as beyond graduation. They are as follows:

First, I would like to continue my work with reading people and advancing my working relationship with actors. Because this was an area I recognized for growth from my previous projects, I feel I failed to improve as much as I would have liked in this area. Though both my advisor and committee congratulated me on my growth in building characters and understanding subtext, it is about understanding the actor – how they think, work, learn, and grow. But more than just working with the actors, there is still also room for building on characters – their personal histories and my own
interpretation of them. This can occur by remembering to look at breaking down the 
beats and investigating each one individually. Furthermore, I should begin looking at 
monologues as scenes and break them into the beats as I do for dialogue heavy 
scenes. This was a skill I drew on heavily as I moved into *800 Days of Solitude*, as it is 
exclusively written in monologue form.

In relation to the previous goal, I would like to do more work toward 
understanding consistency in rehearsals and performance, as this was a problem I 
realized as early as *The Bear*, but also in my thesis. I can do this in several ways, but, 
looking at the production process for *Boy Gets Girl*, I am certain that maintaining a 
short, but tight rehearsal process will help the actors not to become weary of the 
process, leading to a burn out. Additionally, it will become important to find ways to 
utilize rehearsal time that is not necessarily “rehearsing,” such as discussion, guest 
speakers, exercises, et cetera, that will help understand the world and the characters, 
but don’t get bogged down by running scenes over and over. This was a tactic I tried in 
this production, and it worked well at times, but I would like to reevaluate its 
effectiveness versus a shorter production process.

Also, I would like to delve more into designing and think of ways each design 
compliments the plot, rather than thinking about them in a literal fashion. Moving 
forward, every production should be better than the last. So, when thinking of the visual 
production, I was encouraged to venture beyond the conventional and ordinary and try 
new or crazy things. I should ask myself, “How can I serve the play and still come up 
with something beyond the traditional?” The answer can be derived from the script, but 
creativity and interpretation make it unique.
Lastly, I would like to focus on the pre-production work of a director. With *Boy Gets Girl*, as well as *The Bear* and *Antigone*, I was spoiled in that I had to write papers and conduct research before I could begin rehearsals. For my thesis, I discussed designs, conducted meetings, et cetera – all before auditions were held. All of this research gave me a wide breadth of knowledge to draw upon before I even moved into a rehearsal space with actors. However, because I was entering tech week for my thesis production, and my mind was heavily occupied elsewhere, when I began the pre-design process for my next project of *800 Days of Solitude: A Conjuring*, I did not spend the time conducting this research. Therefore, moving into rehearsals, I did not feel as secure as I had previously. I recognized that error and worked to correct it as the production progressed by continuing my reading and research throughout the process, even as we were approaching tech. But, for future productions, I am dedicated to making time for preproduction research, as I recognize luxuries such as dramaturgs or design meetings might not be a reality.

**Conclusion**

Though growing up in a male-controlled small town, and though I had previously begun to explore my own identity, the thematic concerns of *Boy Gets Girl* paralleled to my own awakening, as a feminist and as a director. This process helped me explore deeper thematic concerns in relation to society and understand how they affect me personally. Though my goal was to persuade audiences to see the “grey area” and issues surrounding laws protecting women, I also poised myself to be a stronger feminist, leader, director, and woman.

To say it has been easy would be a lie, but to say it hasn’t been an enjoyable
learning experience would also be a lie. With each post production evaluation that I have written, I feel like I keep saying the same thing – that I have grown as a director and that the experience has helped me “find my own voice.” While that has been true for each of my productions here at SIU, previous years cannot hold a candle to this particular show. Though I recognize that is part of the importance of doing a thesis production, I also think it speaks bounds to the growth I’ve made as a director in my time as a graduate student, as well as my own readiness and preparedness for the project. Though there were some design elements and casting or characterization choices that I would have done differently knowing what I know now, I believe this was a strong performance.

I’m not going to say it was a perfect production or that there weren’t times of disagreement, exhaustion, or regret, but I am very proud of the entire production process and the work I completed. I recognized with this performance that I show strong instincts for directing and the feelings of nervousness or inadequacy are finally leaving. I am still developing ways to articulate my concepts more clearly to actors, designers, and to the audience so as to communicate my ideas through the performance. This experience, as cliché as it may sound, has truly been a positive experience for my directorial growth and one that I will never forget. Boy Gets Girl has taught me a great deal about myself and I believe I can now proudly call myself a director.
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APPENDICES
## SCENIC LOCATIONS

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(Gilman 2001)
APPENDIX B
CHARACTER/SCENE BREAKDOWN

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(Gilman 2001)
APPENDIX C

PRODUCTION PHOTOS

Act 1, Scene 1
Act 1, Scene 2
Act 1, Scene 3
Act 1, Scene 4
Act 1, Scene 5
Act 1, Scene 7
Act 1, Scene 9
Act 2, Scene 1
Act 2, Scene 3
Act 2, Scene 4
Act 2, Scene 5
Act 2, Scene 6
Act 2, Scene 7
Act 2, Scene 8
Act 2, Scene 9
All items in Appendix C are public property of Southern Illinois University Department of Theater (https://siuc-theater.smugmug.com/2017-18/Boy-Gets-Girl).
APPENDIX D

SCENIC DESIGN

3D Model
Ground Plans

Wall Build

Platforms

Custom platform to hug the rotating automated 18" diameter platform, may be able to split into two mirror pieces (TD call)
Paint Elevations

Floor Elevation

Wall Elevation (Paint Lines)
Wall Paint (Texture and Color)
Final Set Photos

Theresa’s Office and Bar

Theresa’s Office and Les’ Office
Theresa’s Office and Theresa’s Apartment

Design items in Appendix D are used with permission from Christian Kurka, scenic designer (see Appendix L). All production photos are public property of Southern Illinois University Department of Theater (https://siuc-theater.smugmug.com/2017-18/Boy-Gets-Girl).
Fade Into You by Mazzy Star

I want to hold the hand inside you
I want to take a breath that's true
I look to you and I see nothing
I look to you to see the truth
You live your life, you go in shadows
You'll come apart and you'll go blind
Some kind of night into your darkness
Colors your eyes with what's not there

Fade into you
Strange you never knew
Fade into you
I think it's strange you never knew

A stranger's light comes on slowly
A stranger's heart without a home
You put your hands into your head
And then its smiles cover your heart

Fade into you
Strange you never knew
Fade into you
I think it's strange you never knew
Fade into you
Strange you never knew
Fade into you
I think it's strange you never knew
I think it's strange you never knew

Written by Hope Sandoval and David Roback/ © Capitol Records, Inc.
There is a Light That Never Goes Out by The Smiths

Take me out tonight
Where there's music and there's people
And they're young and alive
Driving in your car
I never never want to go home
Because I haven't got one
Anymore

Take me out tonight
Because I want to see people and I
Want to see life
Driving in your car
Oh, please don't drop me home
Because it's not my home, it's their
Home, and I'm welcome no more

And if a double-decker bus
Crashes into us
To die by your side
Is such a heavenly way to die
And if a ten-ton truck
Kills the both of us
To die by your side
Well, the pleasure - the privilege is mine

Take me out tonight
Take me anywhere, I don't care
I don't care, I don't care
And in the darkened underpass
I thought oh God, my chance has come at last

(but then a strange fear gripped me and
I just couldn't ask)

Take me out tonight
Oh, take me anywhere, I don't care
I don't care, I don't care
Driving in your car
I never never want to go home
Because I haven't got one, da...
Oh, I haven't got one

Written by Steven Morrissey and Johnny Marr/Copyright © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc
Creep by Radiohead

When you were here before  You're so fuckin' special
Couldn't look you in the eye  I wish I was special
You're just like an angel    But I'm a creep, I'm a weirdo.
Your skin makes me cry     What the hell am I doing here?
You float like a feather   I don't belong here.
In a beautiful world    She's running out again,
And I wish I was special  She's running out
You're so fuckin' special  She's run run run
But I'm a creep, I'm a weirdo.  Whatever makes you happy
What the hell am I doing here?  Whatever you want
I don't belong here.     You're so fuckin' special
I don't care if it hurts  I wish I was special
I want to have control   But I'm a creep, I'm a weirdo,
I want a perfect body    What the hell am I doing here?
I want a perfect soul    I don't belong here.
I want you to notice     I don't belong here.
When I'm not around
Possum Kingdom by Toadies

Make up your mind
Decide to walk with me
Around the lake tonight
Around the lake tonight
By my side
By my side
I'm not gonna lie
I'll not be a gentleman
Behind the boathouse
I'll show you my dark secret
I'm not gonna lie
I want you for mine
My blushing bride
My lover, be my lover, yeah

Don't be afraid
I didn't mean to scare you
So help me, Jesus
I can promise you
You'll stay as beautiful
With dark hair
And soft skin, forever
Forever

Make up your mind
Make up your mind
And I'll promise you
I will treat you well
My sweet angel
So help me, Jesus
(hey, hey, hey)
Give it up to me
Give it up to me
Do you wanna be
My angel?

So help me!
Be my angel
Be my angel
Do you wanna die?
I promise you
I will treat you well
My sweet angel
So help me, Jesus
Jesus
Jesus
Jesus

Written by Todd Lewis/ © Universal Music Publishing Group
Possession by Sarah McLachlan

Listen as the wind blows
From across the great divide
Voices trapped in yearning
Memories trapped in time
The night is my companion
And solitude my guide
Would I spend forever here
And not be satisfied
And I would be the one
To hold you down
Kiss you so hard
I'll take your breath away
And after I
Wipe away the tears
Just close your eyes dear

Through this world I stumble
So many times betrayed
Trying to find an honest word
To find the truth enslaved
Oh you speak to me in riddles
And you speak to me in rhymes
My body aches to breathe your breath
Your words keep me alive
And I would be the one
To hold you down
Kiss you so hard
I'll take your breath away
And after I
Wipe away the tears
Just close your eyes dear

Written by Sarah McLachlan/ © Nettwerk Records
Lyrics from https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/sarahmclachlan/possession.html.
Fitter Happier by Radiohead

Fitter, happier
More productive
Comfortable
Not drinking too much
Regular exercise at the gym, three days a week
Getting on better with your associate employee contemporaries
At ease
Eating well, no more microwave dinners and saturated fats
A patient, better driver
A safer car, baby smiling in back seat
Sleeping well, no bad dreams
No paranoia
Careful to all animals, never washing spiders down the plughole
Keep in contact with old friends, enjoy a drink now and then
Will frequently check credit at moral bank, hole in wall
Favours for favours, fond but not in love
Charity standing orders on sundays, ring-road supermarket
No killing moths or putting boiling water on the ants
Car wash, also on sundays
No longer afraid of the dark or midday shadows, nothing so ridiculously teenage and desperate
Nothing so childish
At a better pace, slower and more calculated
No chance of escape
Now self-employed
Concerned, but powerless
An empowered and informed member of society, pragmatism not idealism
Will not cry in public
Less chance of illness
Tires that grip in the wet, shot of baby strapped in backseat
A good memory
Still cries at a good film
Still kisses with saliva
No longer empty and frantic
Like a cat
Tied to a stick
That's driven into
Frozen winter shit, the ability to laugh at weakness
Calm, fitter, healthier and more productive
A pig in a cage on antibiotics

Written by Dan Rickwood, Jonathan Richard, Guy Greenwood, Thomas Edward Yorke/
© Warner/Chappell Music, Inc
Zombie by The Cranberries

Another head hangs lowly
Child is slowly taken
And the violence, caused such silence
Who are we mistaken?

But you see, it's not me
It's not my family
In your head, in your head, they are fighting
With their tanks, and their bombs
And their bombs, and their guns
In your head, in your head they are crying

In your head, in your head
Zombie, zombie, zombie-ie-ie
What's in your head, in your head
Zombie, zombie, zombie-ie-ie, oh

Du, du, du, du
Du, du, du, du

Another mother's breaking
Heart is taking over
When the violence causes silence
We must be mistaken

It's the same old theme
Since nineteen-sixteen
In your head, in your head, they're still fighting
With their tanks, and their bombs
And their bombs, and their guns
In your head, in your head, they are dying

In your head, in your head
Zombie, zombie, zombie-ie-ie
What's in your head, in your head
Zombie, zombie, zombie-ie-ie

Written by Dolores Mary O'riordan/ © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc
## Final Cue Sheet

### CUE SHEET V3

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<th>CUE</th>
<th>EFFECT/NAME</th>
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<td>Q1</td>
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<td>Pre Show Announcement</td>
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<td>Susan Recording</td>
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#### Act 1 Scene 1- Bar

| Q3    | Bar noise                    | 20:00  | pg. 5  | People talking and baseball game | BAR.wav            |
| Q4    | Theresa’s cell ring          |        |        | Nokia                           | Cell Phone ring.wav|
| Q5    | Visual cell out              |        |        | Cell phone out                  |                    |
| Q6    | Bar out                      | p.13   |        | 5 second fade out               |                    |
| Q7    | Scene 1 => 2 transition      | 0:40   | p. 15  | Office fade in                  | OFFICE.wav         |

#### Act 1 Scene 2- Theresa’s Office

| Q8    | Office noises out            | pg. 15 |        | Slow fade out                   | OFFICE.wav         |
| TeleCue 1 | Office phone ring           | pg. 17 |        | Practical (TeleCue)             |                    |
| TeleCue 2 | Office phone out            |        |        | Meg Visual                      |                    |
| TeleCue 3 | Office phone ring           | pg. 17 |        | Practical (TeleCue)             |                    |
| Q9    | Scene 2 => 3 transition      | 0:35   | p.20   | Fade into Music                 |                    |

#### Act 1 Scene 3- Restaurant

| Q10   | Restaurant background        | 4:46   | pg. 20 | Not an upscale place. Very faint Yankees game on. | Restaurant.wav    |
| Q10:1 | Restaurant out               |        |        |                                                 |                    |
| Q11   | Scene 3 => 4 transition      | 0:45   | p.26   | Office fade in                      | Restaurant.wav    |

#### Act 1 Scene 4- Theresa’s Office

| Q12   | Office noises out            | p.26   |        | Very quiet and should not underscore entire scene (No Harriet Phone Ring) | OFFICE.wav         |
| TeleCue 4 | Office phone ring         | pg. 26 |        | 2 rings. Practical (TeleCue)         |                    |
**Act 1 Scene 5- Les Kennats Office**

| Q14 | Scene 4 => 5 transition | 0:55 | p.31 | Music into Les Office | Porn music.wav |

**Act 1 Scene 6- Theresa's Office**

| Q15 | Scene 5 => 6 transition | 0:20 | p.38 | Office | OFFICE.wav |

**Act 1 Scene 7- Theresa's Apartment**

| TeleCue 5 | Home phone rings | 1:35 | pg.43 | Practical (TeleCue) 4 rings | Voice message 1.wav |
| TeleCue 6 | Home phone rings | 0:59 | pg.44 | Practical (TeleCue) 4 rings | Voice message 2.wav |
| TeleCue 7 | Home phone rings | 0:59 | pg.45 | Practical (TeleCue) 4 rings | |
| TeleCue 7.1 | SILENCE*** | 0:59 | pg.45 | *Visual with Theresa ripping cord from wall* | |

| Q19 | Answering machine w Tony's VO | 0:59 | pg.44 | Theresa's voice, beep, Tony's message 2 | Voice message 2.wav |
| Q20 | Answering machine w Tony's VO | 0:59 | pg.44 | Theresa's voice, beep, Tony's message 2 | Voice message 2.wav |

**Act 1 Scene 8- Theresa's Office**

| Q24 | Tony's SFX Out | 0:45 | pg.45 | | |
| Q25 | Tony's SFX | 0:45 | pg.47 | Underscoring leading up to "Hurt me" | Tony SFX.wav |
| Q26 | Scene 8 => 9 transition | 0:15 | Tony SFX | |

**Act 1 Scene 9- Theresa's Office**

| Q27 | Trans. Intermision | | | Music into intermission | |

**INTERMISSION**

**Act 2 Scene 1 Les Office**

| Q28 | Les Office noise | 0:55 | pg.51 | | Porn music.wav |
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### Act 2 Scene 2 - Theresa's Office

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### Act 2 Scene 5 - Theresa's Office

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### Act 2 Scene 6 - Theresa's Apartment

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### Act 2 Scene 7 - Theresa's Office

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<th>p.81</th>
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### Act 2 Scene 8 - Hospital Room

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<th>Q45 (Ryan Auto-Follow)</th>
<th>Hospital noises</th>
<th>0:30</th>
<th>p.8-84</th>
<th>Background. Establish the noise and fade out</th>
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<td>Toilet flush</td>
<td>0:16</td>
<td>p.8-87</td>
<td>Sound needs to come from USL</td>
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<td>Q47</td>
<td>TV turning on</td>
<td>0:04</td>
<td>p.8-87</td>
<td>Volume up on TV</td>
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<td>Q47.1</td>
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<td>0:15</td>
<td>p.87</td>
<td>Spanish on TV</td>
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<td>Jeopardy on TV</td>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>p.8-87</td>
<td>Needs to be the very beginning of the airing.</td>
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### Act 2 Scene 9 - Theresa's Apartment

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<th>p.8-88</th>
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<td>Long buzzer</td>
<td>0:45</td>
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<td>Add in Tony’s SFX (let sound linger)</td>
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<td>Apartment buzzer</td>
<td>0:01</td>
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<td><a href="#">Apartment buzzer single buzz.wav</a></td>
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<td>Mercer response</td>
<td>0:03</td>
<td>pg. 92</td>
<td>Mercer muffled through buzzer</td>
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<td><a href="#">Mercer Option 4n.wav</a></td>
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<td>END OF SHOW</td>
<td>2:29</td>
<td>pg. 94</td>
<td>Music-Zombie</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All items in Appendix F are used with permission from Daniel Bennett, sound designer (see Appendix L).
APPENDIX G

LIGHTING DESIGN

WYSIWYG Renderings

Act 1, Scene 1

Office Scenes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Call</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>House open</td>
<td>Pre show lighting</td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>House closed</td>
<td>8/0</td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Top of show</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>&quot;...fan or something&quot; - Theresa</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>End of scene 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Top of scene 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>&quot;...meeting you Tony.&quot; - Theresa</td>
<td>Zone 2 removed</td>
<td>0:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>&quot;...love life anymore.&quot; - Theresa</td>
<td>Zone 2 added</td>
<td>0:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>End of scene 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Top of scene 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>&quot;...I haven't look.&quot; - Theresa</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>End of scene 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Top of scene 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>&quot;...wanted to apologize&quot; - Tony</td>
<td>Zone 2 removed</td>
<td>0:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>&quot;No!&quot; - Theresa</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>&quot;...What you saying&quot; - Tony</td>
<td>Zone 2 added</td>
<td>0:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>End of scene 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Top of scene 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>&quot;...the hurry, exactly?&quot; - Theresa</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>End of scene 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Top of scene 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>&quot;Jesus!&quot; - Theresa</td>
<td>Zone 2 removed</td>
<td>0:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>&quot;All right.&quot; - Theresa</td>
<td>Zone 2 added</td>
<td>0:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>End of scene 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Top of scene 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>&quot;I mean it.&quot; - Tony</td>
<td>Pulse effect</td>
<td>0:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Theresa answers phone</td>
<td>Pulse effect stop</td>
<td>0:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Theresa turns off lights</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>End of scene 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>auto follow</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Top of scene 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>End of scene 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Top of scene 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>End of scene 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Intermision</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>End of intermission</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Top of act 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>&quot;Oh.&quot; - Theresa</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>&quot;...do you expect?&quot; - Theresa</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>End of scene 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Top of scene 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Howard exits</td>
<td>Zone 2 &amp; 5 removed</td>
<td>0:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>...off the phone.&quot; - Mercer</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>End of scene 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Top of scene 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>&quot;I don't know&quot; - Theresa</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>End of scene 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:03</td>
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## Final Cue List Continued

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<td>00:00:06:9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>End of scene 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>Top of scene 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>&quot;I mean, not mean, _&quot; - Harriet, Zone 2 removed</td>
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<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
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<tr>
<td>92</td>
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<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>Mercer turns on lights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>End of scene 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>Top of scene 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>&quot;...I feel it.&quot; - Theresa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>End of scene 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>Top of scene 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>&quot;or bluff.&quot; - Les</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>End of scene 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>00:00:06:2</td>
<td>Top of scene 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>Second buzzer, Pulse for 1:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>&quot;It's him!&quot; - Theresa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>&quot;What?&quot; - Theresa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>&quot;...Colorado Forty-Niners.&quot; - Mercer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>End of Act 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>Stage clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119.5</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>Curtain call up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119.1</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>Cast starts to exit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119.4</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>T &amp; T special</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>Auto follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>Curtain call out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>Post show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>Post show lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130</td>
<td>00:00:06:91</td>
<td>Talk back</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All items in Appendix G are used with permission from Noah Murakami, lighting designer (see Appendix L).
Color Palette

Boy Gets Girl Color Palette

Act I Warmer Colors

Act II Cooler Colors
Final Renderings and Fitting Photos

Theresa, Act 1
Theresa, Act 2
Tony, Acts 1 and 2
Mercer Acts 1 and 2
Mercer, Act 2 (continued)
Howard, Acts 1 and 2
Harriet, Acts 1 and 2
Beck, Acts 1 and 2
Les, Acts 1 and 2
Final Costume Plot

Theresa:

1:1 – Base look (shirt, grey pants, black boots) with leather jacket
1:2 – Same as above, remove jacket
1:3 – Same as above, add jacket during scene
1:4 – Same as 1:3
1:5 – Add vest, no jacket
1:6 – Same as 1:5
1:7 – NY Yankee Tshirt over base shirt
1:8 – Same as 1:7, add jacket
1:9 – Same as 1:7

2:1 – Different base look (Shirt with horizontal stripe, khaki pants, brown boots), green cardigan
2:2 – Base look, remove cardigan
2:3 – Base Act 2 look
2:4 – Base Act 2 look
2:5 – Base Act 2 look, Add Brook’s Brothers button up
2:6 – Not in scene - Off stage, changing base shirt to green one, add purple cardigan
2:7 – Base look with new green shirt and purple cardigan
2:8 – Same as 2:7, remove purple cardigan during scene
2:9 – Base look with green shirt, add denim jacket

Tony:

1:1 – Button-up shirt, khaki pants, brown shoes
Final Costume Plot Continued

1:3 – White button-up with tie, belt, brown pants, brown shoes

1:4 – Khaki jacket, Xmen Tshirt, jeans, converse sneakers

2:6 – Same as 1:4, change tshirt to solid grey

Mercer:

1:4 – Button up, cardigan vest, khaki pants, brown shoes

1:8-9 – Same as 1:4, remove cardigan vest, roll sleeves

2:2 – Button-up over Nirvana Tshirt, vest, brown shoes

2:4 – Khaki jacket, Nirvana Tshirt, brown pants, grey sneakers

2:6 – Same as 2:4, add button up

2:7 – Same as 2:6, add zip-up cardigan

2:9 – Same as 2:7, zip-up cardigan

Howard:

1:2 – Brown blazer, button up with tie, jeans, brown shoes, brown belt

1:6 - Same as 1:2, remove jacket, roll sleeves

2:2 - Same lower half, add different button up

2:5 – Same button-up, remove jeans and brown shoes, Add ripped pants, black shoes, grey blazer

2:6 – Same as 2:5, remove blazer, roll sleeves

2:8 - Same as 2:6, remove ripped pants, Add grey pants and khaki jacket

2:9 – Same as 2:8, remove khaki jacket

Harriet:

1:4 – Grey shirt, pink cardigan, pink with print skirt, stockings, grey heels
Final Costume Plot Continued

1:6 – Same as 1:4, remove cardigan, Add jean vest
2:4 – Black shirt, purple blazer, graphic purple/tan skirt, stockings, black platforms
2:5 – Same as 2:4, remove blazer, Add short sleeve cardigan

Les:
1:5 – Khaki blazer, button up, striped pants, tan reptile shoes
2:1 – Black turtle neck, Hawaiian shirt, khaki pants, black reptile shoes
2:8 – Hospital gown, heart boxers, hospital socks

Beck:
1:9 – Black suit jacket and pants, white button up, black shoes
2:3 – Same as 1:9, carrying jacket
2:7 – Same as 2:3, no jacket

All items in Appendix H are used with permission from Terry Baker, costume designer
(see Appendix L.)
APPENDIX I
PUBLICITY PHOTOS

Publicity Photo

Production Poster
All items in Appendix I are public property of Southern Illinois University Department of Theater (https://siuc-theater.smugmug.com/2017-18/Boy-Gets-Girl).
APPENDIX J

DRAMATURGY PACKET

Boy Gets Girl

Dramaturgy Packet
SIU Theater 2017
Kelley Jordan, Director
Brooke Oehme, Dramaturg
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*There are many serious issues that come up in this play, and dealing with them may take some help. Please feel free to come to Kelley or Brooke if feel the need to discuss anything. Additional services available at SIU for anyone who is in need. Please refer to the information on this page if you are in need.

Kelley’s Contact: kelleymcejordan@siu.edu; (205) 499-1698
Brooke’s Contact: boehme@siu.edu; (563)299-7586
Boy Gets Girl Dramaturgy Packet

Glossary
Words & Phrases

Unless otherwise noted, the definitions come from the Mirriam-Webster Dictionary online:
www.merriam-webster.com

Pg 8
Dodge Dart – a 1970s brand of car that was not afraid to go “Big car.”
Given Tony’s age, his car was probably one of these models

Chrysler Cordoba – luxury coupe car (1975-1983)
- “fine Corinthian leather”
  mentions a famous Cordoba commercial
  Commercial link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfKHBB4vt4c

Pg 9
Eugene Debs – socialist and labor organizer from Terra Haute, Indiana.

Pg 12
“I still follow Michigan football”
- In 1999, with Tom Brady on the team, Michigan was the #5 seed, with a 10-2 season. They won the Citrus Bowl. By 2001 they had dropped to a #20 rank, with an 8-4 season, and lost their bowl game 17-45

Pg 23
“go Dutch” - On dates, “going Dutch” means that, rather than the man paying for the full meal, both people pay half the bill.

Pg 26
Boilerplate - When businesses have to send the same types of letters multiple times (acceptance, rejection, legal forms), they have a standardized version of the letter that they fill in with the specific details for each new situation.

Pg 28
Prescriptive - To give orders, rules, or demands of how someone else should do something. When a writer becomes “prescriptive” in their feedback, their feedback is more like re-writing than commenting.
Giving “prescriptive” feedback is one of the worst things a professional writer would want to be, because it is not feedback so much as “this is how I would have written it….”

Pg 34
**Succubus** - a demon that takes on female form in order to have sex with men in their sleep

Pg 35
**Incubus** - A demon that takes the form of a man to have sex with a woman *Dramaturgy Bonus* – in 1999/2000 the band Incubus released [this song](http://www.pulitzer.org/), in case you want to hear what was on the radio around the time of the play.

**Fetishizing** – to fixate on something with irrational reverence or obsessive devotion, in particular relating to how the object makes you feel sexually

Pg 41
**Schmuck** - Yiddish for “penis” but used in American Jewish slang to mean an obnoxious or contemptible person (usually male).

Pg 56
**Voyeurism** – achieving some kind of gratification (usually sexual) from watching people without their knowledge. More than being “nosy” – voyeurs are often all about having power over people who are powerless, because they are unaware they are even being watched.

Pg 62
**Rolodex** – an office tool used to store names and numbers for contacts in a business. (Before these could be stored digitally)

Pg 65
**Fixate** – to focus attention on something to an obsessive or ruthless degree. Often tied to sexual gratification and/or physical violence in cases such as Tony’s.

Pg 67
**Pulitzer Prize** - [http://www.pulitzer.org/](http://www.pulitzer.org/) Named after 19th century journalist Joseph Pulitzer, who left money in his will to fund the awards, the prizes have been
awarded since the early 1900s. In journalism, prizes were to recognize "the most disinterested and meritorious public service rendered by any American newspaper during the preceding year"; "the best editorial article written during the year, the test of excellence being clearness of style, moral purpose, sound reasoning, and power to influence public opinion in the right direction"; and "the best example of a reporter's work during the year, the test being strict accuracy, terseness, the accomplishment of some public good commanding public attention and respect".

In 1999, the *New York Times* won an award for reporting on shady tech deals with China that opened security risks for the country, and the *Washington Post* won for a series on the “patterns of reckless gunplay by city police officers who had little training or supervision.”

Pg 73

“like I was Harrison Ford”

This is a reference to the movie *The Fugitive* (1993). In the movie, Ford’s character is convicted of a crime he did not commit, and he spends most of the movie literally running from U.S. Marshalls. [Here is a link](#) to one of the most famous chase scenes.

Pg 84

**Colostomy bag** - when part of the rectum or large bowel (colon) is removed, they often have to create an opening in the abdomen (called a stoma) where they attach a disposable bag to collect the fecal waste.

Pg 87

**Jeopardy**

Theresa mentions the fact that Les couldn’t even get the “easy” Jeopardy questions. Although Jeopardy in the 1990s & early 2000s was known for its difficult advanced rounds, SNL famously mocked how easy some of the Jeopardy questions could be with its [Celebrity Jeopardy](#) sketches.

---


Kinds of Beer Mentioned

Weiss Beer³ – in German “White Beer,” a paler type of beer than the typical dark stouts.

India Pale Ale – Called “India” because it was popularized by members of the East India Trading Company.

Miller High Life - “The Champagne of bottled beers” (slogan from 1959)  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pX1rgfoAgLg

Locations Mentioned

Terre Haute, Indiana – (TARE – uh HOTE), on the Wabash River in Indiana. Population around 60,000 people.  
http://www.terrehaute.in.gov/

Indiana Bloomington (University)⁴ – flagship university of Indiana University system. Indiana Bloomington campus is considered a “Public Ivy” university, which means it is one of the top public universities in the U.S.

Kuala Lumpur⁵ (Cu-ála Lumpúr)  

³ Weiss beer - http://berghoffbeer.com/blog/what-is-a-weiss-beer/  
⁴ Indiana Bloomington - https://www.indiana.edu/  
⁵ Kuala Lumpur - https://www.lonelyplanet.com/malaysia/kuala-lumpur
Other Companies & People


Chorus

Oh, the moonlight’s fair tonight along the Wabash,
From the fields there comes the breath of new mown hay.
Thro’ the sycamores the candle lights are gleaming,
On the banks of the Wabash, far away.

People Magazine – a weekly magazine often mocked by more serious journalists for its celebrity & entertainment-focused articles and sections.

W (Magazine) – called the “W” because it is the “Who, What, Where, When, and Why of the fashion & style world.”

Paramount Pictures – one of the Hollywood “Big Six” studios that produce million-dollar blockbusters such as the Mission Impossible series and Spongebob Squarepants. IMDB complete list

Movie News – Fictional entertainment tabloid, probably similar to E!


www.Nytimes.com


Tish Cornwall – Fictional person

Brooks Brothers – The Self-proclaimed “Destination for classic style,” Brooks Brothers is one of the oldest men’s clothing stores in New York.

www.brooksbrothers.com

Access New York – Fictional magazine, probably based off The New Yorker

5 W Magazine Online - https://www.wmagazine.com/
# Authors Mentioned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Books You May Know</th>
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</thead>
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| Edith Wharton         | 1862-1937   | *The Age of Innocence*  
                          | *The House of Mirth*  
                          | Edith Wharton’s house “The Mount”     |
| Theodore Dreiser      | 1871-1945   | *An American Tragedy* (1925)  
                          | *The Balzac* (1946)  
                          | *Dawn* (1931)     |
| William Dean Howells  | 1837-1920   | *The Wedding Journey* (1872)  
                          | *A Chance Acquaintance* (1873)  
                          | He became an assistant editor for the *Atlantic Monthly*, and while in New England made connections with authors like Oliver Wendell Holmes, Hawthorne, and Emerson.  
                          | He championed literary realism and wrote a bio of Abraham Lincoln (1860) for Lincoln to use on the campaign trail.  
                          | Claimed Nathaniel Hawthorne was an artistic influence, became friends     |
| Mark Twain* (born Samuel Clemens) | 1835-1910   | *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876)  
                          | *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884)  
                          | *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court* (1889)  
                          | *The Prince and the Pauper* (1881)  
                          | *On the Decay of the Art of Lying*     |
| Henry James**          | 1843-1916   | *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881)  
                          | *Washington Square* (1880)  
                          | *The Wings of the Dove* (1902)  
                          | *Daisy Miller* (1879)     |
| Sherwood Anderson     | 1876-1941   | Wrote a lot of short stories, most famous for a collection called *Winesburg, Ohio*.  
                          | Twain, Howells, and Whitman have all been called influencing artists for this work.  
                          |     |
                          | *As I Lay Dying* (1930)  
                          | *Sanctuary* (1930) – a story about a brutal Southern rape and its consequences     |

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7 Howells - [https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Dean-Howells](https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Dean-Howells)  
8 Mark Twain - [http://www.marktwainhouse.org/](http://www.marktwainhouse.org/)  
| **[Ralph Waldo] Emerson**<sup>12</sup> | Pastor who became a Transcendentalist poet after his wife died.  
*Nature* (1836)  
*The Divinity School Address*, which looked at the divinity of man and the humanity of Jesus |
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<thead>
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<td>“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”</td>
<td>1803-1882</td>
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| **[Henry David] Thoreau** | Emerson later gave Thoreau permission to use a piece of land to live on for 2 years – Walden Pond.  
Essay – “Civil Disobedience” (1847)  
*Walden* (1854) |
| Worked as a time for the live-in handyman of his friend, Ralph Waldo Emerson. | 1817-1862 |
| **[Nathaniel] Hawthorne**<sup>13</sup> | *The Scarlet Letter* (1850)  
*The House of Seven Gables* (1851)  
*Young Goodman Brown* (1835) |
| Met Emerson & Thoreau at the Brook Farm commune. Also friends with Melville. | 1804-1864 |
| **The Alcotts**<sup>14</sup> | Bronson 1799-1888  
Louisa May 1822-1888  
Louisa 1832-1888 |
| Bronson Alcott (father)  
Louisa May Alcott (daughter)  
Both were transcendentalists  
Died 2 days apart | Emerson loaned Bronson money to travel to England where a school known as the Alcott House was founded.  
Louisa May wrote *Little Women* (1868-1869) |
| **Walt Whitman**<sup>15</sup> | *Leaves of Grass* (1855)  
Ralph Waldo Emerson called *Leaves of Grass* “the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom that America has yet contributed.” |
| Poet, but worked as a freelance journalist after the Civil War | 1819-1892 |
| **Oscar Wilde**<sup>16</sup> | *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890)  
*An Ideal Husband* (1895)  
*The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895)  
Died in France after being accused of being a sodomite in England (homosexuality was illegal in England & Ireland). |
| Irish Playwright and Novelist  
His sister died at a young age, and he spent his life carrying around a lock of her hair in a decorated envelope.  
1882 – met Whitman on a trip to the US<sup>18</sup> | 1854-1900 |
| **Ernie Pyle**<sup>19</sup> | Worked for the *Evening Post* (New York)  
Covered World War II in England (1940)  
*Here is Your War: The Story of G.I. Joe* (1943)  
His stories were most popular with the troops |
| Indiana Native  
Journalist, studied at Indiana University | 1900-1945 |

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<sup>12</sup> Emerson - [https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/ralph-waldo-emerson](https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/ralph-waldo-emerson)

<sup>13</sup> Hawthorne - [https://www.biography.com/people/nathaniel-hawthorne-9331923](https://www.biography.com/people/nathaniel-hawthorne-9331923)

<sup>14</sup> Bronson Alcott - [https://www.biography.com/people/nathaniel-hawthorne-9331923](https://www.biography.com/people/nathaniel-hawthorne-9331923)

<sup>15</sup> The Alcotts - [https://www.britannica.com/biography/Bronson-Alcott](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Bronson-Alcott)

<sup>16</sup> Whitman and Emerson - [http://www.classroomelectric.org/volume1/belasco/blasascowhitman-emerson.htm](http://www.classroomelectric.org/volume1/belasco/blasascowhitman-emerson.htm)

<sup>17</sup> Oscar Wilde - [https://www.cmww.com/historic/wilde/biography/](https://www.cmww.com/historic/wilde/biography/)

<sup>18</sup> Wilde and Whitman - [http://www.oscarwildeinamerica.org/features/wilde-meets-whitman.html](http://www.oscarwildeinamerica.org/features/wilde-meets-whitman.html)

<sup>19</sup> Ernie Pyle - [http://www.anh.org/articles/16/16-01336.html](http://www.anh.org/articles/16/16-01336.html)
Transcendentalism

Many of these authors were Transcendentalists, who lived before the Civil War. The group began as an informal discussion group in Boston, but their influence began to spread as they sought to create an American literary tradition separate from the long-standing English tradition.

Their method of writing chose intuition over rationality and relied heavily on the experience of the senses. They were also anti-slavery and pro women’s rights. Many of the most influential artists lived at Brook Farm Commune in Massachusetts in order to try and live more fulfilling lives away from the confusion of city life.

Basic Beliefs of Transcendentalists:20
In 1842, Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote an essay called “The Transcendentalist” that outline some of the basic tenets of the Transcendentalist philosophy. Although it was never an official party, but rather a collection of authors, artists, educators, and social reformers, each Transcendentalist practiced these beliefs in different ways.

1. Transcendentalism is Idealism
   Sex, various appetites, and other physical needs were all accepted, but the true spirit of a human lived in ideas. Metaphysics, or the nature of the unseen, was a focus of their work.

2. Natural Supernaturalism, Cosmic Piety
   The Universe is one organism, and every part in it is important. Although some Transcendentalists were Christian or Unitarian, ultimately they worshipped an “over-soul” or ideal “supreme being” and were not tied to one religious system.

3. Optimism
   Although Transcendentalists acknowledged the existence of evil and darkness in nature and in the soul, they did not focus on it. Many of the Transcendentalists were friends with people like Edgar Allen Poe and Melville, who wrote of darker worlds. But overall, Transcendentalists were convinced that all parts of nature were essentially good.

4. Value was in Ideas, Not Things
   This was a pushback against consumerism. What truly mattered wasn’t how much stuff you had, but how you used your mind. A strong intellect and a curious mind was the greatest thing you could possess.

5. We can never really know the world around us
   Because we observe everything through a lens, the way we see the world is not always the way it is. Boy Gets Girl plays with this idea, and how the way Tony (and all the men) see the world vs. how Theresa sees the world.

“The landscape, the figures, Boston, London, are facts as fugitive as any institution past, or any whiff of mist or smoke, and so is society, and so is the world. The soul looketh steadily forwards, creating a world before her, leaving worlds behind.” Emerson, “The Over-Soul” (1838)

Best-Known Transcendentalist Publications
Walden – Thoreau; Little Women – Louisa May Alcott; Leaves of Grass – Walt Whitman

20 Depaul Overview of Transcendentalism: [http://condor.depaul.edu/dsimpson/awtech/ametrans.html](http://condor.depaul.edu/dsimpson/awtech/ametrans.html)
William Dean Howells made relationships with other authors mainly through his work as editor for *The Atlantic Monthly*. Emerson made most of his relationships through his time at the Brook Farm Commune with the Transcendentalists.

And while Mark Twain was not exactly a friend of Nathaniel Hawthorne, he was very close to Hawthorne’s son Julian. Twain and Hawthorne became well-known for their appreciation and critique of each others’ works. Howells and Hawthorne were friends because of shared literary interests, brought together by Howells’ travels through New England.
In the Year 2000

We are setting this play between Sept. – Nov. of 2000 in New York City. Here are some interesting tidbits to help you get a feel for the time.

Post Y2K but Pre-9/11

The Y2K scare defined the late 1990s. Everyone was afraid that all our computer systems would fail because they would assume that 2000 was actually “year 0” and that would mean all our computer data would be lost.

However, after years of trying to come to grips with the fear that all would be lost, nothing actually happened. (Well, one man was charged $91,450 in late fees at Blockbuster, but they didn’t actually make him pay.) This meant that the year 2000 had a “we survived!” mentality that made everyone feel a bit more free. It was also before 9/11, so terrorism was not really on our minds. We had little to fear but fear itself, which means none of us had our guards up, and (in looking back) it is easy to see how foolishly people left themselves open to be taken advantage of.

Movies

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone – yeah, Harry Potter movies were a new thing. Daniel Radcliffe was a little boy. And Emma Watson had frizzy hair.

X-Men – the film that started a franchise. And gave us Hugh Jackman as Wolverine.

Requiem for a Dream – Four people deal with their drugs and their addictions and talk about their dreams. Arthouse gold.

Memento – this movie is still known for the way it plays around with timeline as it told the story of a man with short-term memory loss who is trying to piece together the facts of his wife’s murder.

Snatch – Brad Pitt, Jason Statham, and Benicio Del Toro star in this movie about boxing promoters. Bradd Pitt has an unusual accent.

American Psycho – Can wealthy, handsome men still be murdering psychopaths? Christian Bale proves yes, yes they can.

Almost Famous – Movie about rock journalism, has one of the best scenes in any movie ever.

Erin Brokovich – pretty much made every woman who saw it feel like a badass. So in a way it was like Wonder Woman, but with more corporate corruption and lawyers.

Wanna get the 2000s feel? Go to this link to see a full list of 2000 movies
Music

Britney Spears – “Oops, I Did it Again”. While that in itself is noteworthy, Britney’s popularity led to this VMA Performance.

Eminem – Whose “Slim Shady” proved that the only look for white guys in their early 20’s was baggy jeans and a wifebeater.

Battle of the Boybands – So technically Backstreet Boys released Millenium in 1999, but when ’N Sync came out with No Strings Attached in 2000, it was officially on.

Other Songs for your “Best of 2000” Playlist:

Santana (Ft Rob Thomas) – Smooth
Nine Days – Absolutely (Story of a Girl)
The Baja Men - Who Let the Dogs Out
Blink 182 – All the Small Things
P!nk – Most Girls
Green Day – Minority
U2 – Beautiful Day
Macy Gray – I Try
U2 – Wonderful

3 Doors Down – Kryptonite
Destiny’s Child – Say My Name
Destiny’s Child – Independent Woman
Vitamin C – Graduation (Friends 4Ever)
DJ Casper - Cha-Cha Slide
Goo Goo Dolls – Broadway
Coldplay – Yellow
Creed – With Arms Wide Open

Music

Television

Here are some of the television shows that might help you get a sense of the time period. Remember that, particularly with sitcoms, this was an idealized expectation of reality, not what it was really like (Friends, in particular, was an unrealistic colorless New York)

Most Popular
Gilmore Girls (S1)
Friends (S7)
The West Wing (S2)
Sex and the City (S3)
Will & Grace (S3)

Workplace Shows
Suddenly Susan (S4)*
Frasier (S8)
CSI (S1)
Just Shoot Me (S4)
Ally McBeal (S4)*

Other
Buffy the Vampire Slayer (S4)
Survivor (S1)*
Ed (S1)*

*indicates you can find episodes or clips on Youtube. The other shows are mostly accessible on Netflix.

Watch RDJ & STING!
FADS

Visible Underwear – Sisqo’s “Thong Song” made it incredibly clear that underwear was an important part of the ensemble. But sheer shirts that showed bras, clear bra straps, thong belts, bustier dresses, and about a dozen other fashion styles of the time were focused on showcasing underwear.

Beanie Babies - These collectible toys were made by Ty Warner, and had been popular since 1994. But by 2000 they were understood to be worth hundreds, if not thousands of dollars. People were very careful guarding their valuable Beanie Babies, and even had plastic or glass display cases to showcase their collections. The “Millenium” Bear released in 1999 is worth up to $5,000 today.

The Internet

Instant Messaging – While social media wasn’t a thing yet (Facebook wouldn’t come around for 4 years), the most popular way for young adults to interact online was through Chat Rooms and Instant Messaging Services

ICQ – called this so that it sounds like “I Seek You,” this instant messenger service connected people around the world. While online chatrooms were popular, this was the first time that people were able to seek out people with similar tastes and hold one-on-one conversations. Also, it made little noises whenever you had a message. (It was a simpler time.)

AIM – AOL Instant Messenger took what ICQ was doing and made it better. The key with these online communications was that no one really protected themselves. Private and personal information was shared constantly, and it took several bad situations (stalking, attacks, thefts, etc) before people began warning of staying safe online.

Live Journal, Blogspot, Xanga, Blogger – Blogs were also a BIG deal. Everyone had a blog. Everyone. Thank god Instagram made people remember tha a picture is worth 1,000 words.

Deviantart.com – The internet was just becoming a place where people could develop online communities to share interests. Deviantart.com was launched as a place where new artists could post and share their work.

The Sims – this was the year the Sims came out. It would become the most popular PC game of all time. It also let you hook up characters and watch people die of guine pig disease.
Other Famous Stuff

Brad Pitt & Jennifer Aniston – they got married in June 2000, and then everyone believed in fairy tales (for like four years). Also, because shortening celebrity couple names into one name wasn’t a thing yet, everyone was much happier.

Cell Phones – So smartphones were not a thing yet. And Nokia was killing it selling their Nokia 3310. It both made and received calls (kind of), had a calculator, and also could hold mobile java games like Snake, and Space Impact. But you also butt-dialed everyone if you forgot to lock the screen.

PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) – The pre-cursor to the smartphone, PDAs were friends to businesspeople who needed help organizing their calendars, taking digital notes, and setting reminders for various tasks. They had a touch screen, but it required the use of a magnetic pen called a stylus. The most popular PDAs included the Palm Pilot and the Blackberry. They could not make phone calls or text people. But the high-end ones did have audio, document editing, and other features.

Cost of a Gallon of Gas - $1.26 (average) Fun fact, the first time I filled the van I owned in high school, I paid less than a dollar per gallon. When I was in college and it was over a dollar, I got really pissed.

Apple Computer “Flavors” – Apple iMacs had been gaining popularity through the 1990s, but they became the computer to have in 2000 when they released an “all-in-one” computer with a choice of color flavor options (strawberry, lime, blueberry, tangerine, and grape)

Other Links

Buzzfeed: “11 Reasons Why the Year 2000 Was the Best”
The People History: Facts about the Year 2000
Instant Messaging: 10 Old Instant Messaging Services That Used to Be Popular
YouTube: The Greatest Songs of 2000

[11] FTR: It deeply depresses me as a dramaturg to have to make a historical reference page for a period of time I actually lived in, but please know that almost all of this comes from the memories of your Director & Dramaturg, so if you have questions about any of it please let us know. We are young enough that our memories still work.
Women’s Rights – 2000 vs 2017

Over the past couple years, there has been much comparison between Donald Trump’s treatment of women and then-President Bill Clinton’s sex scandals. Women’s rights groups were quick to call out Trump’s sexist and objectifying comments. However, in 1998-1999, women’s rights groups defended Clinton during his impeachment trials, and in fact tried to lobby to get the charges dropped.

Why? Mostly, it had to do with the gains women enjoyed under Clinton. Although he was accused of infidelity and sexually-predatory behavior in his personal life, politically his administration did a lot to move the women’s rights agenda forward.

Clinton’s administration had a female Attorney General, a female Secretary of State, and had advanced pro-feminist issues such as abortion rights, affirmative action, and child care. Trump has appointed only 1 woman for every 3 men. While feminists felt Bill Clinton had issues with sexual behavior (Gloria Steinem said she thought he should go through sex addiction therapy) they did not think that Clinton himself was sexist.22

Women’s Rights in 1990s
1993 – “Take Your Daughter to Work Day” Debuts
1993 – Family and Medical Leave Act gives women the right to maternity leave
1993 – Marital rape legally recognized (finally!) in all 50 states
1993 – Ruth Bader Ginsberg is the 2nd woman appointed to the Supreme Court
1996 – Virginia Military Institute is required to admit women for the 1st time
1999 – Supreme Court rules that women can sue for punitive damages for sexual discrimination under Title IX. (Before this, women could not sue for sexual discrimination without proof of “injury”)

Women’s Rights 2017
Women’s rights groups have been against the Trump Administration since before he even entered office, stating not only the way Trump talks about women, but the fact that many of his appointed officials have a history of anti-women policies.

Title X – Bill signed to allow states to block Title X funding to groups that also offer abortions with non-federal funding, including Planned Parenthood.

Global Gag Rule – This forbids global agencies from providing clients with info about family planning and abortion services. More info here.

Cuts - to National Domestic Violence Hotline, Justice Department cuts that could impact funding for Violence Against Women programs, American Health Care Act coverage for things like birth control and domestic violence screenings.

Anti-Women Bias – Steve Bannon, Stephen Miller, and Pence have all publicly made statements that have been called out for being sexist or exclusionary.

What do Men Get that Women Don’t? article
“Take Back the Night” is a chance for college students to take a stand against sexual assault. Take Back the Night rallies started in 1975 in Philadelphia, as a protest for a female scientist who was murdered when walking home at night. In 1999 it became a nation-wide charitable foundation.23

How is it different from other feminist protests?  
The goal is to combine Reflection with Action in a single event.

Take Back the Night events must show:  
- Support for victims and survivors of sexual assault  
- A candlelit vigil or moment of silence  
- A safe space where victims can share their stories  
- A protest march or rally to draw attention to ongoing sexual violence

In addition, Take Back the Night rallies and events must be open to male, trans*, and queer survivors of sexual assault. Violence can happen to anyone, and the rallies intend to involve the whole community in finding solutions to violence where they live.

Other Similar Protests/Rallies in Existence Now:

**Walk a Mile in Her Shoes** - [http://www.walkamileinhershoes.org/](http://www.walkamileinhershoes.org/)
This is a male-based protest, where men walk a mile in high-heeled shoes to draw attention to issues of sexual violence.

**Slut Walk**24 - Open to women and men, this march aims to end victim-blaming by inviting participants to walk a protest march while wearing as little as possible.

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23 Why I Continue to Take Back the Night article [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/paulina-jonesterregrosa/why-i-continue-to-take-ba_b_5202552.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/paulina-jonesterregrosa/why-i-continue-to-take-ba_b_5202552.html)

Understanding a Stalker

There are a lot of issues that lead to abuse in a relationship, but Tony and Theresa’s situation is unique in that they did not really have much of a “relationship” before his negative behaviors began. The following is a short overview of some of the things that influenced Tony’s behavior, but we will also be having an educational liaison from the Women’s Center come and talk to you about the behaviors Tony exhibited and the reasons for them.

The “Dark Triad” is a psychological phrase for a specific combination of negative traits that could signal a person who is prone to try to act against others to achieve their own ends.

- Narcissism: Lack of empathy, pride, egotism.
- Narcissists will seek admiration and special treatment, and blame others for their problems.
- Machiavellianism: Manipulation, deception.
- Psychopathy: Impulsiveness, remorselessness, selfishness. Psychopaths are callous and insensitive.

Jonassen & Webster’s “Dirty Dozen” is an assessment (on a 7 point scale) that will help you rate yourself on the Dark Triad scale.

1. I tend to manipulate others to get my way.
2. I tend to lack remorse.
3. I tend to want others to admire me.
4. I tend to be unconcerned with the morality of my actions.
5. I have used deceit or lied to get my way.
6. I tend to be callous or insensitive.
7. I have used flattery to get my way.
8. I tend to seek prestige or status.
9. I tend to be cynical.
10. I tend to exploit others toward my own end.
11. I tend to expect favors from others.
12. I want others to pay attention to me.

Take the online version of this quiz [HERE](#).

Cruelty, whether physical or emotional, isn’t normal. It may signal what psychologists call the Dark Triad of Psychopathy, narcissism and Machiavellianism. Out of about every 25 individuals, an antisocial personality disorder. Their prognosis for recovery is poor, their potential for hurting you about 100 percent. So don’t waste your time asking, “why?” Nothing helps, much people with mental illnesses end up being repeat victims, and with people, even on their worst days, don’t seek satisfaction by inflicting pain. When you witness evil, if only the twenty out of a thousand people around you to see, wait for a distraction, then disappear.

Martin E. P. Seligman

**Indicators of Stalking Behavior / Red Flags**

- Persistent phone calls despite being told not to make contact in any form
- Waiting for the victim outside work/home/school
- Manipulative behavior
- Defamation: The stalker lies to others about the victim (eg reporting infidelity to victim’s partner)
- Threats to family, friends, property, or pets of the victim. (A threat to a pet is a particularly strong indicator that the stalker will turn violent)
- Objectification: allows the stalker to feel angry at the victim without experiencing empathy, because the victim is nothing more than an object.
The following article was published in 1998 in the *New York Times* in conjunction with a series on stalking. Feel free to compare the way the article discusses stalking with the more contemporary approach you hear about from the Women’s Center.

**Personal Health; Do’s and Don’ts for Thwarting Stalker**

By JANE E. BRODY AUG. 25, 1998

THOUGH stalking is often glamorized in movies and sitcoms, in real life it is anything but. For most victims, it is a waking nightmare characterized by constant fear and hypervigilance that triggers lasting emotional distress and sometimes results in bodily injury or even death.

Since one in 20 women* can expect to be stalked at some time during their lives, usually by men they once dated or married, it pays to know what to do if it should happen to you. Sometimes, men who have been rejected by women stalk to get revenge. These men, along with those who think “if I can’t have her, no one else will,” can be especially dangerous.

**BE FIRM** -- Experts say that in an effort to be kind and gentle, too many women give their stalkers mixed signals, leaving them with the belief that if they keep at it, they will eventually win the women they desire.

In his book "The Gift of Fear", Gavin de Becker says that "a rejection based on any condition, say, that she wants to move to another city, just gives him something to challenge." He suggests that women should "never explain why they don’t want a relationship, but simply make clear that they have thought it over, that this is their decision and that they expect the man to respect it."

Dr. Doris M. Hall, who questioned 145 victims of stalkers (83 percent of them women), also recommends firmness: "Once and only once, tell the person you want nothing to do with him. Don’t try to be nice; it can only work against you."

Dr. Hall, an expert on criminology at California State University at Bakersfield, emphasizes the importance of taking any stalking behavior seriously and dealing with it aggressively from the outset. "If someone’s behavior seems out of line, if it is making you uncomfortable, something’s up," she said. "You have a better chance of putting a stop to it if you don’t give it a chance to accelerate."

**CUT OFF ALL CONTACT** -- Dr. Hall compared stalkers with "naughty third graders."

"They don’t care what kind of attention they get," she said, "as long as it’s attention." Any kind of response on the part of the victim, no matter how negative, can be construed by the stalker as a sign that she is really interested and is trying to keep a relationship going.

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*This is the 1998 statistic (1 in 20 = 5%). Current numbers are closer to 15% of all women and 6% of all men. Source: Office of Violence Against Women. For the full Stalking Fact Sheet go to [http://victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center](http://victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center)"
Mr. de Becker, an expert on predicting violent behavior who advises stalking victims, wrote, "When a woman communicates again with someone she has explicitly rejected, her actions don't match her words."

He said that when an unwanted pursuer starts making persistent phone calls, sending messages, showing up uninvited at a woman's job, school or home, following her or trying to get her friends or family to help his cause, "it is very important that no further detectable response be given."

Mr. de Becker added: "He views any response as progress. If you call the pursuer back, or agree to meet, or send him a note or have somebody warn him off, you buy another six weeks of his unwanted pursuit."

Dr. Hall warns stalking victims to "never, ever meet with a stalker," even if he says it is only to say a final goodbye or to return the victim's belongings. It is most likely a lie and may escalate the problem.

Nor is sending the police to warn him off likely to do any good, Mr. de Becker says. Unless the pursuer has committed a crime that warrants his arrest, the police can do little more than talk, which may further embolden the stalker.

Even obtaining a restraining order can sometimes backfire. Court actions infuriate some stalkers and may provoke violent behavior. Mr. de Becker has found that court orders that are introduced early carry less risk than those introduced after the stalker has made a significant emotional investment or introduced threats and other sinister behavior. "A stalker who has been at it for years and who has already ignored warnings and interventions" is not likely to be deterred by a court order, he said.

**PROTECT YOURSELF** -- Under the auspices of the University of California at San Diego, the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse has developed a list of tips for self-protection against stalkers. While specific legal advice is likely to vary from state to state, the clearinghouse's practical advice can apply anywhere. Among the most important tips are these:

*Keep your address private.* Use a postal box (obtained through a mail box service or the post office) instead of a residential address on everything, including your driver's license and government documents. File a change-of-address card with the post office. Give your street address only to your most trusted friends and tell them not to give it to anyone else. Do not have anything mailed or shipped to your home address. Have your name removed from any "reverse" directories that list people numerically by phone number or address.

*Do not give out your telephone number.* Get an unpublished and unlisted phone number. Never print your number on checks. If asked for a phone number, give your work number. Get an answering machine that records messages on a microcassette and allows you to screen all calls. If your state has caller ID, order complete blocking on your number. If you are bothered by harassing calls, put a beep tone on your line to make callers think you are tapping the call. You might even add a warning on your outgoing message, telling callers they may be taped. Also, consider getting a cellular phone and keeping it with you at all times.
*Guard your E-mail.* If you are at risk of being stalked electronically, change your E-mail address to something that is hard to guess and do not enter any personal information into on-line directories.

*Keep a diary.* Record every stalking incident and the names, dates and times of every contact with the authorities. Save the tapes of phone messages and anything sent by the stalker in the mail or left at your home or workplace. Do not accept packages you did not order.

*Secure your home.* Trim the bushes around your house. Install a loud exterior alarm and motion-sensitive lights high enough so they cannot be removed by a person standing on the ground. Always lock your doors with dead-bolt locks. Also use window locks on basement and ground-floor windows. If you have sliding glass doors or windows, secure them with safety bars. Put locks on your fuse or circuit breaker boxes.

*Secure your car, van or truck.* Always keep your garage door and car doors locked and look carefully inside before entering. Do not use parking lots where you must surrender the keys; if you must, leave only the ignition key. Get a locking gas cap and a hood-locking device that is controlled from inside. Know the locations of the police and fire departments and busy shopping centers; if you think you are being followed, head directly to one of these. When you arrive, stay in the car and blow the horn to attract attention. When traveling to and from work, vary your schedule and your route. Never stop to help a motorist in distress -- phone for help.

**IF YOU’RE STALKED**

*You might:*  
Feel **fear** of what the stalker will do.  
Feel **vulnerable**, unsafe, and not know who to trust.  
Feel **anxious**, irritable, impatient, or on edge.  
Feel **depressed**, hopeless, overwhelmed, tearful, or angry.  
Feel **stressed**, including having trouble concentrating, sleeping, or remembering things.  
Have **eating problems**, such as appetite loss, forgetting to eat, or overeating.  
Have **flashbacks**, disturbing thoughts, feelings, or memories.  
Feel **confused, frustrated, or isolated** because other people don’t understand why you are afraid.

*These are common reactions to being stalked.*
THE PORN INDUSTRY & SEXPLOITATION

Les’ character is a portrayal of a kind of director that was very well-known in the 1970s. The 1970s and 1980s came to be known as “The Golden Age of Porn” (or “porn chic”) because the erotic movie industry achieved new levels of wealth and artistic value.

Directors in this “Golden Age” were focused on telling artistic and visually interesting stories, and often directed both regular commercial porn and artistic independent films. Andy Warhol was one of the first to do this when he directed *Blue Movie* in 1969, when he was already an established artist. Some of the best-known adult films from this period were *Deep Throat* (1979) and *The Devil in Miss Jones* (1973). These movies were so popular that *Deep Throat* was mentioned on *The Late Show* with Johnny Carson, and Roger Ebert gave *The Devil in Miss Jones* a favorable review.

One of the best known directors was **Radley Metzger**, an artist who had worked with Ingmar Bergman before deciding porn was more lucrative and moving on to direct more explicit films. Andy Warhol is rumored to have called Metzger’s work “outrageously kinky masterpieces.”

Another well-known director was **Russ Meyer**, who directed *sexploitation films* in the 1960s and 70s. His gravestone has the statements “King of the Nudies” and “I Was Glad to Do It.” His films celebrated “sex, buxom women, and the clumsy dopes who love them.” He believed that the porn industry was “mechanical and joyless” but that his movies were a portrait of life that celebrated all aspects of the female form and showing the thrilling portrait of a life without hangups.

These types of films are not home-made videos people self-post on streaming services. They are not celebrity sex tapes meant to help a star develop a “brand.” These were artistic pieces that aimed at telling a full and complete story through the medium of sex and erotica.

**Podcast with Marty Hodas** – “King of the Peeps”. This interview is a rare experience hearing from one of men who is responsible for peep shows in New York, explaining how he views erotica and art.
THE MALE GAZE

Basic Definition of “The Male Gaze” = the idea that visual arts (movies, photography, television, even advertising) are constructed to appeal to heterosexual males. Women are nothing more the objects of pleasure, and views of women are structured to appeal to men’s desire for women. Even if the woman is the protagonist in a story, the male gaze means that she is valued as good or bad in regards to how much pleasure men get from her.

The term was first coined by Laura Mulvey in a 1975 essay on visual pleasure in film, but has been discussed by feminist theorists such as bell hooks. The basic idea breaks down into three areas:

1) **How Men look at Women**
   Women are objects of desire. The camera is the male gaze, and will show its audience what the male would like to gaze upon.

2) **How Women look at Themselves**
   The woman will dress herself and act according to how she feels the male would like to gaze upon her. All choices made for male benefit.

3) **How Women look at other Women**
   Being a “good woman” means meeting the requirements males have for women. A woman is not a “good woman” if she doesn’t appeal to a man. To experience the world or appreciate visual arts, the woman must take on the opinion, likes and dislikes of a man.

Ways to recognize the Male Gaze in film and television:
- When watching movies or TV, notice how often the camera focuses on women’s body parts (breasts, legs, butt, etc) even when it is not needed for the story
- How often are the women “casually nude” or stripped down in a scene? For example, women are shown in the shower, or wrapped in a towel post-shower, more often than men.
- Are the women’s costumes designed to be functional or sexual? While real-life female police officers and doctors/nurses wear comfortable shoes and keep their hair out of their face, their TV counterparts are often shown with long silky hair in sexy high heels.
- Are the female characters fully-developed humans? If a female character does not feel like a full person with likes, dislikes, history, or opinions, the male gaze is showing.
- Are the female characters just eye candy? Often the camera will not even show a woman’s full body – for example, advertising has a whole trope of headless women. The Headless Women of Hollywood project is dedicated to calling this out.
#NotALLMen…but #YesALLWomen

Although this play was written too early to have actually been influenced by the #NotAllMen response to misogyny, the fact that Marshall’s response (distancing himself from the stalker, believing the woman’s story needs to be told from the man’s point of view) are both clear connections to the same type of thought that came up in 2014.(Each link is an article or comic)

**How did it start?**

Friday, May 23, 2014 – a 22-year-old man (who does not deserve the notoriety of being named) killed six people and injured fourteen others near the campus of the University of California, Santa Barbara. He then killed himself. His intended victims were women in a school sorority house, as he explains in a video he uploaded before the attack explaining his motives. He had also sent a lengthy autobiographical “manifesto” to his therapist that described his hatred of women, his not being able to find a girlfriend, his contempt for minorities, and his plans for retribution. He was angry these women wouldn’t sleep with him. And thus they deserved to die.

Although #NotAllMen had been a hashtag well before this event, the online community jumped all over it as a way to distance “Nice Guys” from misogynistic pigs. It kind of backfired on them.

In response to every article, tweet, and post that said “but not all men are like that!” women began to respond “But Yes all women have to deal with it.”

The ensuing war can still be seen on Twitter archives (please search, it is incredibly interesting), but if you look at enough you will begin to see the problem. The men were mostly those who had entered into a conversation where a woman was explaining a problem she was dealing with, and the interrupter had to remind her that “not all men” were like the Problem Male. But the interrupting male is still missing the point: interrupting the woman means he still is the problem.

Women don’t need men to tell them “not all men” are sexist. But if anything is ever going to change, those who aren’t need to listen when women are explaining what happens when they encounter the men who are.
Influencing Artists for “Status in Motion” Warm-Up Exercise

Viola Spolin (1906 – 1994)

Spolin has been called the “Grandmother of Improvisation.” Her book *Improvisation for Theater* introduced the process of improvisation as a system for actor training and rehearsal tools. This system was used when Spolin’s son, Paul Ellis, formed the improvisation company *The Second City* (Chicago), and has influenced other projects such as *Saturday Night Live* and *The Upright Citizens Brigade*.

Spolin’s system focused on helping actors stay focused and present in the moment. Through this type of focus, Spolin believed that actors could act spontaneously to achieve transformation (such as transforming an open space into another location, and random objects into props). Such transformation involves the entire group in a non-judgmental process that opens up the actors to making discoveries for themselves.28

Spolin’s system involved what she called “Side-Coaching”27 – a process that requires a director to stand outside the game/exercise, asking questions of the actors in order to get them to act and react without thinking or planning. This action/reaction allows actors to make new discoveries about themselves and their characters.

Keith Johnstone

A former Artistic Director with London’s Royal Court Theatre and professor at the University of Calgary, Johnstone founded the Theatre Machine, a well-known improvisational theatre company. Johnstone believes that the educational system was kills creativity, and created a system that would challenge this problem: Theatresports28.

Theatresports (which is the basis for shows like *Whose Line is It Anyway?*) involves competition between multiple teams, and relies on Johnstone’s theories of status and interaction between people of different levels of power: Masters & Slaves; Teachers & Students; Men & Women. When actors play with the way their characters gain and lose status/power throughout a scene, the actors take risks and learn to think creatively.

> “There are people who prefer to say ‘yes’ and there are people who prefer to say ‘no’. Those who say ‘yes’ are rewarded by the adventures they have. Those who say ‘no’ are rewarded by the safety they attain.”
> — *Keith Johnstone*

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28 Theatresports.org - [https://theatresports.org/keith-johnstone/](https://theatresports.org/keith-johnstone/)
Augusto Boal & Forum Theatre

Augusto Boal Bio
Augusto Boal (1939 – 2009) is a Brazilian theatre artist who founded the Arena Theatre in Sao Paulo. Prior to his theatrical experimentation, audiences were invited to discuss a play at the end of the performance. In so doing, according to Boal, they remained viewers and “reactors” to the action before them. In the 1960’s Boal developed a process whereby audience members could stop a performance and suggest different actions for the character experiencing oppression, and the actor playing that character would then carry out the audience suggestions. But in a now legendary development, a woman in the audience once was so outraged the actor could not understand her suggestion that she came onto the stage and showed what she meant. For Boal this was the birth of the spect-actor (not spectator). He began inviting audience members with suggestions for change onto the stage to demonstrate their ideas. In so doing, he discovered that through this participation the audience members became empowered not only to imagine change but to actually practice that change, reflect collectively on the suggestion, and thereby become empowered to generate social action. Theatre became a practical vehicle for grass-roots activism. This activism and Boal’s methodology became known as the “Theatre of the Oppressed” and took place in rehearsal as a practice called “Forum Theatre”.  

Practicing Forum Theatre
From The Rainbow of Desire: “Forum Theatre consists, in essence, of proposing to a group of spectators, after a first improvisation of a scene, that they replace the protagonist and try to improvise variations on his actions. The real protagonist should, ultimately, improvise the variation that has motivated him the most.”


Additional Info on Forum Theatre:
Centre Stage UK - http://www.beyondthedoor.co.uk/centrestage/forumtheatre2.htm  
Drama Therapy UK - http://www.dramatherapy.org.uk/forumtheatre/

Favorite Quotes
“Theatre is the art of looking at ourselves.”
“We are all actors: being a citizen is not living in a society, it is changing it.”
“Theatre is a weapon. For that reason it must be fought for.”

29 Adapted from Augusto Boal Biography, Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed  http://ptoweb.org/aboutpto/a-brief-biography-of-augusto-boal/
Theatrical Reviews for *Boy Gets Girl*

**Review: Strengths**

- **Intelligence**
  Nearly all the reviewers agreed that the play is intelligent. It does not assume that its audience needs to have all its references explained, and it is able to talk about literature and film in an adult way.

- **Realistic Escalation**
  The play follows a speedy but still realistic escalation of violence between Tony’s mind and his actions. The play shows an understanding of how real-world stalkers think and act.

- **Understanding of the nature of victimization**
  The play does a good job taking the audience through Theresa’s victim-hood. They see her go from a strong and confident young professional to being a woman who is unsure of the essentials of her identity.

- **Comic Relief**
  Between Les and Harriet, there are plenty of opportunities to lighten the mood in a heavy scene.

**Review: Weaknesses**

- **Didactic nature of Act II**
  One reviewer called it an “over-workshopped quality” where the second act has a tendency to sound as if everyone is giving a speech or an essay on the topic of stalking. Also, because each of the characters has a different perspective on gender and violence, it can feel like each character is simply a manifestation of an archetype.

- **Physical Absence of Tony**
  Gilman made this choice very carefully, and after much consideration she decided that she did not want Tony to be a part of the second act. In real-world stalking, the victim often does not see the stalker – they have to exist knowing that someone is watching them, following them, without being able to reciprocate and see the stalker.

The problem with this in a play, however, is that many reviewers feel this leaves something lacking in a live play. We keep seeing evidence of Tony, but not actually seeing Tony, and so it is difficult for the audience to actually feel that Tony is a real threat.

*Stage Raw*, By Terry Morgan, LA 2016; From “*Chicago on the Aisle*”
review [http://chicagoontheaisle.com/2013/02/18/review-of-boy-gets-girl-at-raven-theatre/]

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10 The Guardian Review - [https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2001/nov/08/theatre.artsfeatures1](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2001/nov/08/theatre.artsfeatures1)


**PRACTICE SELF-CARE**

Because the issues in this play will tend to be rather dark, it is important that you take the time for self-care. Here are some self-care tips.

**Basics of Self-Care**

1) Self-Care is needed in Mind, Body & Spirit  
   - **Mind** – You need to keep your mind active, learning new things.  
   - **Body** – Be mindful about what your body is telling you. Don’t let stress build.  
   - **Spirit** – Treat yourself like an artist. Feed your soul with art and beauty.

2) Self-Care isn’t “One and Done”  
   - If you want to stay healthy it is best to try some self-care every day.

3) It doesn’t take much time  
   - If you practice self-care every day, you don’t need to give it much time. Sometimes all you need is a few minutes to get your day back on track.

**Mind Care**

- *Keep a Journal.* In her book *The Artist’s Way*, Julia Cameron suggests doing "Morning Pages" where you spend 3 minutes at the beginning of the day writing your thoughts without editing. It will help clear your mind and diminish anxiety.

- *Learn Something New.* MentalFloss.com, Lifehacker.com, and TED.com all have videos, quizzes, and other activities to keep your brain active a few minutes a day.

**Body Care**

- *Eat well.* Comfort foods may be needed from time to time, but if you want your body to run well, you have to treat it well. SIU has a nutritionist if you need help.

- *Drink plenty of water.* Water will actually help you stay awake better than caffeine. Coffee is wonderful and magical, but water is necessary.

- *Get plenty of rest.* I know, I know…but try to get some sleep. If you can’t, here is a list of Yoga Poses that can help with sleep. (#5 is like taking a nap)

**Soul/Spirit Care**

- *Quality Time with Loved Ones* – Even five minutes a day with loved ones can help relieve stress. Touches such as hugs, kisses, and even hand-holding can also increase positive hormone production.

- *Dance it Out* – a one-minute dance party is a great way to raise your spirits

- *Unplug* – Once a week, try to disconnect from technology for a few hours. Take a walk outside, or watch some clouds, or meditate...time away from screens will help keep your sleeping and eating cycles on track.

**Happiness Test** – *Blue Zones* has a happiness test that will help you figure out how to increase your happiness on a daily basis.

**Videos to Make You Smile**

Buzzfeed video of happy facts: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZSKojnvmIE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZSKojnvmIE)  
And they made a sequel: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjRiRHw17xM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjRiRHw17xM)  
Bad Lip Readings: Whether you want to laugh at the NFL, the Inauguration, Twilight, or Star Wars, there is a Bad Lip Reading video that you will enjoy. (Watch with sound)
Student Care at SIU

Staying Healthy
This play contains many difficult themes, and some of the scenes may ask a lot from all our actors, both mentally and physically. We (your director, dramaturg, and production team) want to ensure that all actors and crew members stay healthy during the rehearsal and performance process.

To that end, please look below for contact information for a number of services offered at SIU and in the Carbondale community for those in need. Kelley and Brooke are also happy to talk with you if you have a need.

Saluki Cares:
The purpose of Saluki Cares is to develop, facilitate, and coordinate a university-wide program of care and support for you if you experience any type of distress—emotional, physical, financial, or personal. By working closely with faculty, staff, you, and your family, SIU will continue to display a culture of care and demonstrate to you and your family that you are an important part of the community. For information on Saluki Cares, call (618) 453-1492, email stucares@siu.edu or visit http://salukicares.siu.edu

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
http://she.siu.edu/counseling/ ; e-mail: sheinfo@siu.edu; phone: (618) 453-3311
Located on the 2nd floor of the Student Health side of the SIU Rec Center, SIU CAPS provides numerous services to students at low cost.
Some services include:
- Individual Counseling (45 minute sessions, $10 per session)
- Group Counseling (Mens groups, Women’s groups, LGBTQ groups)

SIU’s Sexual Assault and Violence Policy

Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1-800-273-8255

Women’s Center, Inc.
Victim Advocates – if you are in need of an advocate to help you deal with real-life situations or being the victim of domestic violence, please contact the Women’s Center. They have advocates to help you.
Community Education – we will have a chance to meet with one of the Women’s Center community educators to discuss the nature of stalking and how to deal with it. But if you want to learn about other education opportunities for educating RSOs, etc go to http://www.thewomensctr.org/

All items in Appendix J are used with permission from Brooke Oehme, dramaturge (see Appendix L).
## BOY GETS GIRL

**Projected Rehearsal Plan and Goals**

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>Block 1.2 Complete basic blocking for scene 1.2 Work through and run all blocked scenes missing Theresa. Added Kristin into 1.2, 1.6, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5 Ran scenes 1.4, 1.5, 1.9, 2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/3</td>
<td>Susan work dialects Susan work dialects Susan work dialects Susan worked dialects</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Block 2.8 Complete basic blocking for scene 2.8 Block 2.9 Completed basic blocking for scene 2.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Block 1.3 Complete basic blocking for scene 1.3 Block 2.8 Completed basic blocking for scene 2.8</td>
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<td>10/4</td>
<td>Block 1.7 Complete basic blocking for scene 1.7 Work Scenes as needed Line Run of Show</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Record 1.7 (Theresa) Record voicemails in 1.7 with Kristin Simultaneously record Mercer, Harriet, and Theresa Recorded Mercer (2.9), Harriet (Extra), Theresa (1.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Block 2.9 Complete basic blocking for scene 2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/5</td>
<td>Stumble thru show Stumble through show (off book) Publicity Photos Publicity photos downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OFF</strong></td>
<td><strong>BOOK</strong> Work scenes as needed Start and stop &amp; note work Stumble Through Show Stumble through show (off book)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/6</td>
<td>Work Act 1 Start and stop of Act 1 Character Work Character/Subtext development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Task Description</td>
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<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/7</td>
<td>FALL BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/8</td>
<td>FALL BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/9</td>
<td>FALL BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>Work Act 2 Start and stop of Act 2 Work 1.1, 1.3 Work on fine tuning 1.1, 1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/11</td>
<td>TBD Exercise / Work scenes as needed Work on fine tuning as needed Work 2.3, 1.9, 2.7 (Beck) Work on fine tuning 1.9, 2.3, 2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Run Through Show + Notes Designer Run of show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/12</td>
<td>Run Act 1 Work scenes as needed Work on fine tuning Act 1 as needed Work Act 1 Office scenes Work on fine tuning 1.2, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/13</td>
<td>Run Act 2 Work scenes as needed Work on fine tuning Act 2 as needed Work Act 1 Office scenes Work on fine tuning 2.2, 2.4, 2.5 Simultaneous Line Runs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/14</td>
<td>TBD TBD Work 1.5, 2.1, 2.8 Work on fine tuning 1.5, 2.1, 2.8 Work Through Show Start &amp; Stop of Show</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/15</td>
<td>TBD TBD OFF N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/16</td>
<td>Work Act 1 as needed Work on fine tuning Act 1 as needed Work 2.6, 2.9 Work on fine tuning 2.6, 2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work through show Start &amp; Stop of Show Simultaneous Interviews</td>
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## Projected Rehearsal Plan and Goals Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity 1</th>
<th>Activity 2</th>
<th>Activity 3</th>
<th>Activity 4</th>
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<tr>
<td>10/17</td>
<td>Work Act 2 as needed</td>
<td>Work on fine tuning Act 2 as needed</td>
<td>Run Through Act 2</td>
<td>Design run of Act 2</td>
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<td>Run Through Act 1</td>
<td>Designer run of Act 1</td>
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<td>10/18</td>
<td>Run full show + Notes Work scenes as needed</td>
<td>Designer Run of show</td>
<td>Work Through Show/Notes</td>
<td>Start &amp; Stop of Show</td>
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<td>10/19</td>
<td>Crew View</td>
<td>Crew View run of show</td>
<td>Warm-up Work 1.7/Run 2.9</td>
<td>Work on fine tuning 1.7 Run Through of 2.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Work scenes as needed</td>
<td>Work notes as needed</td>
<td>Crew View</td>
<td>Crew View run of show</td>
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<td>Notes</td>
<td>Notes w/ Line Runs</td>
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<td>10/20</td>
<td>Run Thru + Notes Scene change rehearsal OR Continue working scenes</td>
<td>Designer Run of show</td>
<td>Work Through Show</td>
<td>Start &amp; Stop of Show</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Run scene changes with crew OR Work on fine tuning as needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/21</td>
<td>Q2Q</td>
<td>Start and Stop of Cueing</td>
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<td>Q2Q</td>
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<td>2nd Tech Rehearsal</td>
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<td>10/23</td>
<td>1st Dress Rehearsal</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/24</td>
<td>2nd Dress Rehearsal</td>
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Projected Rehearsal Plan and Goals

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<tr>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>Performance</td>
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<td>10/26</td>
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<td>10/27</td>
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</tbody>
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APPENDIX K

PERMISSIONS


CC0 1.0 Universal (CC0 1.0)
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Christian Kurka, scenic designer

Re: BGG Scenic Design

Christian Kurka
Thu 11/9/2017 11:22 AM
To: Kelley Jordan <kelleymcjordan@siu.edu>

By all means publish away! It'll help me get some recognition lol

Thanks,

Christian A. Kurka
Department of Theatre
Southern Illinois University
cristian.kurka@siu.edu
217-828-2033

From: Kelley Jordan <kelleymcjordan@siu.edu>
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2017 11:06:27 AM
To: Christian Kurka
Subject: BGG Scenic Design

Greetings, Christian!

Thank you for the beautiful scenic design for Boy Gets Girl. I am in the process of collecting images for use in my written thesis and would like your permission to publish the 3D model, ground plans and paint elevations from your scenic design.

Kelley M. Jordan
kelleymcjordan@siu.edu
Re: BGG Sound Design

Daniel Bennett  <daniel.bennett1421@gmail.com>

Wed 11/15/2017 8:05 AM

to: Kelley Jordan  <kelleymcjordan@siu.edu>;

Kelley,

I give you permission to publish my sound documents for Boy Gets Girl. Thanks for letting me be a part of the team.

Best,
Daniel Bennett

On Thu, Nov 9, 2017 at 11:15 AM Kelley Jordan  <kelleymcjordan@siu.edu> wrote:

Greetings, Daniel!

Thank you for the beautiful sound design for Boy Gets Girl. I am in the process of collecting items for use in my written thesis and would like your permission to publish the sound cues and song list from your sound design.

Kelley M. Jordan

kelleymcjordan@siu.edu
Noah Murakami, lighting designer

Re: BGG Lighting Design

Noah Murakami
Thu 11/9/2017 12:03 PM

To: Kelley Jordan <kelleymcjordan@siu.edu>

Of course! I will upload the images of the renderings so you will have copies of them outside of the powerpoint this evening. If there is anything else that you would like that is not currently on box, let me know and I will try to get them on box for you.

Thanks,
Noah Murakami
(618) 304-6812
murakamin@siu.edu
noahmurakami.com

From: Kelley Jordan
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 11:18 AM
Subject: BGG Lighting Design
To: Noah Murakami

Greetings, Noah!

Thank you for the beautiful lighting design for Boy Gets Girl. I am in the process of collecting items for use in my written thesis and would like your permission to publish the light plot, cue sheet and WYSIWYG rendered images from your lighting design.

Kelley M. Jordan
kelleymcjordan@siu.edu
Re: BGG Costume Design

Terry Baker
Fri 11/10/2017 11:31 AM
To: Kelley Jordan <kelleymjordan@siu.edu>

Hey Kelley,

You have my permission to use any costume related paperwork that you need for your research.

On Nov 10, 2017, at 11:02 AM, Kelley Jordan <kelleymjordan@siu.edu> wrote:

Thank you, Terry!

May I have your permission to use your costume plot as well?

Kelley M. Jordan
kelleymjordan@siu.edu

---

From: Terry Baker
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2017 11:16:51 AM
To: Kelley Jordan
Subject: Re: BGG Costume Design

Hey Kelley,

Of course! You have my permission to use the renderings and fitting photos.
It was a great process and I'm glad the show was a success. Good luck with finishing your thesis!

Best,

Terry Baker
336.847.3611
www.TBakerDesigns.com

---

From: Kelley Jordan <kelleymjordan@siu.edu>
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2017 11:07:42 AM
To: Terry Baker
Subject: BGG Costume Design

Greetings, Terry!

Thank you for the beautiful costume design for Boy Gets Girl. I am in the process of collecting images for use in my written thesis and would like your permission to publish the final renderings and fitting photos from your costume design.

Kelley M. Jordan
kelleymjordan@siu.edu
Brooke Oehme, dramaturg

Re: BGG Dramaturgy

Brooke Oehme

Thu 11/9/2017 11:47 AM

To: Kelley Jordan <kelleymcjordan@siu.edu>

2 attachments (7 MB)
20170206_220709.jpg; 20170206_220703.jpg

Kelley,

Yes, you definitely have my permission to use anything and everything I wrote/gathered. I am not on my computer right now, but I will send those files when I am.

Also, here are the 2 pics I snapped of the talkback.

Thanks,

Brooke Oehme

On Nov 9, 2017 11:27 AM, "Kelley Jordan" <kelleymcjordan@siu.edu> wrote:

Greetings, Brooke!

Thank you for the wonderful job on dramaturgy for Boy Gets Girl. I am in the process of collecting items for use in my written thesis and would like your permission to publish the actor packet, program notes and talk back questions. Also, could you also send me the final.pdf of the lobby display and the pre-show lecture.ppt for use as well? Thank you.

Kelley M. Jordan

kelleymcjordan@siu.edu
VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Kelley McGahey Jordan
kelleymcjordan@yahoo.com

Birmingham-Southern College
Bachelor of Science, Business Administration, May 2009

Special Honors and Awards:
  Eugene R. Jackson Outstanding Graduate Student, Department of Theater
  Southern Illinois University, April 2017

  Christian H. Moe Playwrighting Award, Best Short Play
  Southern Illinois University, April 2018

  Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society and
  Golden Key International Honor Society
  Southern Illinois University, inducted November 2016

Thesis Title:
  DIRECTING REBECCA GILMAN’S *BOY GETS GIRL*:
  A SOUTHERN FEMINIST’S VIEW ON
  WHAT I’M SUPPOSED TO DO AS A WOMAN

Major Professor: Olusegun Ojewuyi