



Cinema/Chicago Education Program Screening : *Trust*  
Director : David Schwimmer  
104 minutes  
In English, rated R

**Please use the below synopsis, study ideas and questions, and helpful websites to lead your students in preparation and post-screening discussion. Following the film, students in the audience are required to respond to the screening with a one page essay that is sent to Cinema/Chicago.\***

**Synopsis:** After carefree teenager Annie's life is shattered by an online sexual predator, her parents (Clive Owen, Catherine Keener) struggle to help her pick up the pieces. As anger and disbelief drive her father's desire for revenge, Annie is left to contend with her feelings of guilt and shame. Commanding performances by an ensemble cast drive this fiercely honest look at the devastating aftermath of rape. Directed by Chicagoan David Schwimmer and based on the acclaimed Lookingglass Theatre production.

#### **Study Ideas/Questions**

1. Annie uses her computer to chat and email Charlie, and her cell phone to talk and text with him. Do you think that electronic communication and websites like Facebook and MySpace have improved the way we communicate or hurt it? Do you think it's appropriate to form relationships over email and chat?
2. Annie's parents put some restrictions on her computer and phone usage (no phones at the dinner table), but also give her a brand new computer for her birthday. Do you think Annie's parents could have stopped her from communicating with Charlie? Do you think they are at all to blame for what happens to her? Who is to "blame" for what happens to Annie?
3. Why do you think Annie continues to communicate with Charlie even when she finds out (again and again) that he is older than he originally claimed?
4. Annie's friend reports the assault to the school principal. What would you do if you knew a friend or classmate had been abused, assaulted or raped? Would you tell an adult? Why or why not. Why do you think Annie is so angry that her friend "told on her"?
5. Annie denies that her encounter with Charlie was rape and berates her father for interfering with her sex life. She isolates herself from her parents

- and insists that Charlie loves her. Why do you think she behaves this way?
6. When Annie's classmates find out about her situation, they all turn against her, calling her a whore and creating a slanderous MySpace page about her. Does this paint a realistic portrait of high school and the behavior of students? How does this bullying and teasing effect Annie/victims of sexual crimes?
  7. How would you define "sex crime"? Is sexual harrassment a sex crime? Why or why not.
  8. Do you know someone who has been the victim of a sex crime? What resources exist in your school, neighborhood or city to teach prevention and/or provide support for victims?
  9. Annie's father becomes obsessed with catching Charlie, but forgets about his daughter's health and privacy. Do you feel he is justified in his actions? What could he do to support Annie?
  10. What makes Annie realize that Charlie did take advantage of her? What is her reaction? Why do you think she reacts this way?
  11. Why is what happens to Annie considered rape? Why is it illegal for an adult to engage in sexual behavior with a minor?
  12. At the end of the film, we see that Charlie is a husband and father. Why do you think the filmmaker chose to show us this? What is the message that is being sent?

### **Useful websites**

Chicago's Rape Victim Advocates: <http://www.rapevictimadvocates.org/>

Microsoft Project site regarding online predators:  
<http://www.microsoft.com/security/family-safety/predators.aspx>

Information (including trailer) for Trust: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1529572/>

Information about Cinema/Chicago's Education Outreach Program:  
<http://www.cinemachicago.org/education/>

\*Teachers who do not facilitate the completion of this requirement will not be invited to attend future Education Program Screenings

