

## *Speak*

### **Description:**

A traumatized teenage girl begins high school after being sexually assaulted by a peer at a party the summer before. . More information about the movie can be found on IMDB: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0378793/>

*PLEASE NOTE: There is a brief graphic depiction of the rape in the middle of the film.*

### **Discussion questions:**

- There is often a great deal of silence around the issue of sexual violence and survivors' experiences. How does the theme of "speaking" or communication between the characters show up throughout the film?
- How does speaking up in other situations eventually help Melinda to talk about her rape?
- How do you think speaking out about sexual assault can end this type of abuse?
- What was the turning point for Melinda to finally begin to tell her story?
- Survivors use many coping skills to help themselves following the experience of an assault. What does Melinda do to express how she feels before she is able to talk about it?
- What is the significance of the subject she chooses for her extra credit history paper?
- What is the significance of the hospital? Why does she go there?
- Sexual violence is fundamentally about perpetrators trying to exert power and control. In what ways does Melinda's perpetrator try to control and intimidate her after the attack?
- Research has suggested that some perpetrators of sexual violence are also violent in other area of their lives. How does Andy continue his controlling or abusive behavior in his other relationships?

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- The first person that someone tells about an assault often has a major impact on whether that survivor tells anyone else or how they seek support. When Melinda tells Rachel about the rape how does Rachel respond? What could she have said/done differently?
- Survivors can experience very different reactions from different people in their lives. Who supports Melinda speaking up for herself and who reinforces her silence? How do they do this?

