

5-15-2009

## The Confessional

Jennifer Ledet  
*University of New Orleans*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td>

---

### Recommended Citation

Ledet, Jennifer, "The Confessional" (2009). *University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations*. 910.  
<https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td/910>

This Thesis is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by ScholarWorks@UNO with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Thesis in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UNO. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@uno.edu](mailto:scholarworks@uno.edu).

The Confessional

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts  
in  
Film, Theater, and Communication Arts  
Film Production

by

Jennifer Ledet

B.A. University of New Orleans, 2004

May 2009

©2009 Jennifer Ledet

## Acknowledgements

Filmmaking is definitely a collaborative process, and there are numerous people without whom *The Confessional* would never have been made. My producer, assistant director, and sister Katie Ledet was exceptional and essential to every phase of this project. She pushed and focused me when I was overwhelmed by all of the details. Katie also personally contributed a great deal to the film, from running the set during filming to creating confessions for the opening sequence to solving every problem that came our way.

Jen Suran, my editor, was incredibly dedicated to this project. She devoted large amounts of time to the post-production of *The Confessional*, and freed me to concentrate on the creative aspects while she took care of the details.

The entire crew of *The Confessional* was hard-working and enthusiastic. The actors – Katryn Schmidt, Joe Fredo, Lorne Boni, and Kathleen Johnston were wonderfully professional and committed to the film. The cast and crew elevated the quality of this project significantly.

My husband, Chase Bouzigard, not only financed this project but also encouraged me throughout graduate school. He gave me the confidence and support that I needed to complete this endeavor.

My parents, Britt and Florence Ledet, always exposed me to new and exciting experiences. They helped to feed my curiosity and discover new interests. I have no doubt that it was this intellectual freedom that I enjoyed since childhood that lead me to filmmaking as a means of creative expression.

I began attending the University of New Orleans in 2001 as an undergraduate. When I graduated in 2004, I realized that I'd only begun to scratch the surface of the learning opportunities that UNO's film courses offered. The professors of the Department of Film, Theater, and Communication Arts present high-quality, instructive filmmaking classes that focus on creating filmmakers with flexibility and self-reliance. In particular, the classes that I took with the professors on my thesis committee, J. Stephen Hank, Robert M. Racine, and John Hampton Overton directly informed the making of this film. Their help throughout the process of making the film and writing this thesis was invaluable.

# Table of Contents

Abstract.....	vi
Chapter 1.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2.....	3
Writing.....	3
Directing.....	3
Cinematography.....	7
Production Design.....	10
Editing.....	11
Sound.....	15
Technology.....	18
Chapter 3.....	23
Influences on Story.....	23
Chapter 4.....	32
Analysis.....	32
Chapter 5.....	36
Conclusion.....	36
Bibliography.....	39
Appendices.....	40
Appendix A: Shooting Script.....	40
Appendix B: Shot Lists.....	53
Appendix C: Call Sheets.....	58
Appendix D: Continuity Notes.....	61
Appendix E: Examples of Confessions in the Opening Credits Sequence.....	63
Appendix F: Stills From <i>The Confessional</i> .....	68
Appendix G: Production Stills.....	72
Appendix H: Survey Responses.....	82
Appendix I: DVD Cover Art.....	91
Vita.....	93

## Abstract

This paper is an examination of the production of the thesis film *The Confessional*. Each of the key areas of the production are examined, including the writing, directing, production design, cinematography, editing, sound, and technology. In each of these areas, many choices came together to form the final version of the film. The paper also includes an analysis of the success of these decisions, based on research and audience feedback.

Short Film  
Narrative  
The Confessional  
Graduate Thesis  
Thesis Film

# Chapter 1

## *Introduction*

My goal in making *The Confessional* was simple. I wanted to make a film and learn everything I could about the filmmaking process. Making a narrative short encompasses all of the skills of filmmaking, from storytelling and character development to cinematography and editing. I was able to learn many areas of filmmaking of which I only had a surface understanding before. Although I'd been involved in film projects before, this is the first time I'd taken a major project from beginning to end. On past projects I'd been more specialized, usually working in the lighting or camera department. As director of *The Confessional*, I expanded my involvement to include production and post-production sound, editing, visual effects, directing actors, and production design.

This thesis document will be a chronicle of my education on this film. It details the decisions that I made throughout the filmmaking process and the effect that these decisions had on the film. It also explains my reasoning behind the decisions, whether practical or creative. I also examine the process of troubleshooting the various unexpected problems that arose at every phase of the production of this film.

The most important lesson that I learned on this film was that moviemaking is not a solo task. Films are made by teams of people working together, not by an all-powerful auteur. Collaboration can include difficulties, and this project was no exception. In a few points in *The Confessional*, I wished that I had exerted more control to make my vision come across more exactly. However, in most areas, I was surprised by the creativity and ingenuity that my collaborators injected into the process. Having a crew that was capable



of problem-solving and flexibility was invaluable to *The Confessional*. I think that the best way to ensure a successful film project is to hire the best talent for every role on-set.

In the development of the story of my thesis film, I went through many different story ideas. I wanted to create a story through which I could explore the language of film. I wanted to explore something with an interesting premise, and something that would have a very definite structure of beginning, middle, and end. I also was interested in the suspense genre and creating a story where the protagonist was threatened by a mysterious force.

For several years, I'd been interested in online community art projects – particularly those focused on the Internet's knack for preserving anonymity. This anonymity allowed for people to share their secrets without the consequences that might affect them in real life if they confessed their secrets. One of these projects in particular, named *Postsecret*, was integral to the development of *The Confessional*. *Postsecret*<sup>1</sup> is a website that records postcards submitted by the anonymous public. These postcards expose artistic, poignant, and enigmatic personal revelations. I decided to set my film against the backdrop of a *Postsecret*-like community art project called *The Confessional*.

*The Confessional* is a story about secrets – what happens when you share them, keep them, and become obsessed with them. People deal differently with their secrets, and in *The Confessional* we see the consequences of a woman, Arlene Kane, who refuses to deal with them. She is trapped by her secrecy and introversion. As Arlene's real-life counterpart wrote in the introduction of his book, *Postsecret*<sup>2</sup>, "When we are keeping a secret, that secret is actually keeping us."

---

<sup>1</sup> *Postsecret* is both a website and the title of the first book based on the website.

<sup>2</sup> *Postsecret* book by Frank Warren, New York: Harper Collins, 2006.

## Chapter 2

### *Writing*

Out of all of the aspects of filmmaking that I needed to work on for this project, the one that I had the most trepidation about was writing the script. I knew that I'd be working on this film for a while, and I wanted to be sure that the story would be strong enough to devote that amount of time and effort to. In my film courses, I'd devoted more time to more technical aspects of filmmaking rather than writing and story development. I decided to research story and form, and to base my screenwriting on the outcome of that research. A complete explanation of that process can be found in Chapter 3 of this thesis, "Influences on Story".

### *Directing*

Since *The Confessional* is very focused on character, I needed to find actors with experience and range to bring their own insights and thoughts into their performances. I had two open casting calls, but, with a few exceptions, I was disappointed in the actors that auditioned. There were skilled actors present, but not many who represented the demographic categories that I needed to fill.

I decided to go a different route. At the UNO film festival, I watched the performances carefully and took note of actors who might fit my needs. I found my lead in Katryn Schmidt, who had been in several UNO productions – *Matrimony*, *Circulation*, and *Johnny Moz and the Go Construct*. Her characters in *Matrimony* and *Circulation* had some of the melancholy and mysterious notes that I wanted in Arlene, and her performance in *Johnny Moz* showed her range as an actor. Conversations with Katryn proved her to be an intelligent and perceptive actor.

Once I had cast Katryn as Arlene, I began to look for her foil, Bree. Kat Johnston, who had auditioned at my casting calls, stood out at once. I wanted someone who came across as friendly and identifiable, and in every production that I saw her in, Kat played this role. She was often cast in student films as the “everywoman” – a proxy for the audience in the world of the film. From having classes with Kat, I knew that her brains and affability would make her fun to work with. Another bonus was that she and Katryn Schmidt were somewhat similar in looks. They are both brunette and about the same height and weight. This surface similarity allowed me to play up their differences in other ways, for example, through wardrobe and personality.

A surprise to me as I was casting was someone that I knew as a filmmaker, but didn’t at first realize his range as an actor. Lorne Boni was enrolled in the MFA film production program at UNO, but once I saw his work in the UNO filmmakers’ *The Fence*, I realized his acting talent. Lorne’s wit and sarcasm also let him be a match for the formidable Arlene in the almost adversarial back and forth relationship of interviewer/interviewee. The interviewer needed to be someone who could believably be a match for a subject with no intention of giving honest answers. Lorne was a perfect fit for the role of Gregory.

My final casting decision was also the one I was most worried about. Matt’s character alternately serves as a mysterious stalker, a threatening menace, and a vulnerable abandoned son. He needed to be in an age range in which he could plausibly be Katryn’s son (if she had him at a very early age), but still be old enough for the audience to believe that he’d lived a life full of trials.

I found Matt in Joe Fredo. Joe played the lead in Kevin Hughes' *Exit 480*, and as soon as I saw it I was impressed with him. *Exit 480* is completely reliant on Joe's performance, and he played a normal man in extraordinary circumstances wonderfully. When I left the theater after a set of films, everyone in the lobby was talking about his performance in *Exit 480*. What a lot of people were saying was exactly what I needed for Matt in my film – that Joe made them feel compassion for a character who could otherwise have been completely unlikable. Since Arlene's and Matt's interaction was so vital to the story, I had them do a read through together. Seeing Joe and Katryn working together confirmed that they were the right actors for the parts. They each would listen to and observe the others performance and let it shape their own.

My approach to directing the actors was to collaborate with them in creating the characters. I explained to the actors my idea of the character, and listened to their ideas about who they thought they were. I wanted to have lots of choices in the editing room, so I wanted to have multiple takes of every shot in order to give the actors a chance to make different choices or to add subtle changes in their performance. Since I wanted the final question of the film to remain somewhat ambiguous, I also wanted multiple takes so that I could choose between different performances that suggested alternate interpretations of the scene.

In Phil Karnell's *Performance and Direction* class, I learned how important communication between the director and the actors is. It is important that the director understand how she wants the script to translate to the screen. It is more important, however, that the director express this desired translation clearly to the actors. My natural instinct was to results-oriented direction, that is, to tell the actors the emotions or

expressions that I wanted to have in the final performance. In order to combat this natural instinct, I did a lot of preparation before talking to the actors. I went through the script and annotated my copy with the language that I wanted to use in my communication with them. By thinking this through ahead of time, I was able to prevent myself from slipping and “tainting” the actors’ performances by saying something that wasn’t useful to their performance like, “do it with more anger this time.”

I like to allow the actors to explore their characters and to bring their own insights and actions to their performances. Rather than relying on my personal interpretation of the character, I find that exploring the characters in league with the actor makes the character more three-dimensional and nuanced. Blocking the actor’s movements in rehearsals brought physicality to the character study. One scene in particular was shaped in a large way by ideas that came out of rehearsal. The climactic scene where Matt holds Bree hostage and confronts Arlene was a complicated scene in several ways. The camera was in constant motion, the physical positions of the actors had to be exact, and it was also the most emotionally complex scene of the film. Through rehearsal, the actors and I discovered the best ways to physically orient them in the scene. This physical orientation led to interesting character discoveries. For example, Kat Johnston suggested that she fight back against her attacker. This suggestion changed the scene in a fundamental way. It made it more dynamic and exciting, and also made the danger seem more real – by trying to escape and failing, the audience can realize how much danger the women are in against this powerful assailant.

In this climactic scene, the actors’ performances took priority over the production schedule and technical issues. Since the scene took so much emotional focus, it was

difficult for the performers to stop the scene and then start again when the camera was reset for the next shot. After the first take, I realized this, and we needed a new plan. My director of photography, Allen Myers, and I decided that we could take the whole scene at once by keeping the camera in constant motion. I was worried that this would leave me with footage that was impossible to cut together, but my talented dolly grip and camera operator (Zach Vaughn and Kevin Hughes) were able to get smooth, seamless footage of these shots. The solution allowed for the actors to build to their emotional climax, rather than having to start and stop constantly.

### ***Cinematography***

I chose to shoot *The Confessional* on the Sony Betacam SP. In the course *Special Topics in Visual Effects* with Robert Racine, I'd used the Betacam, and I was struck by its sharp definition and saturated colors. For one project in that class, I'd superimposed footage from the Betacam over footage from the DVX 100. With this side by side comparison, the Betacam's superiority was obvious to me. Shooting with the Betacam did have some drawbacks. Fewer people at UNO had used the Betacam, so my camera department all needed to be trained to use it specifically for this project. This ended up not being much of a problem, though, because many of my crew members were eager to use a different camera than what they'd been used to in the past. I also chose to embrace, rather than hide, the characteristics of this video camera. For example, I kept the Betacam's native 4:3 aspect ratio rather than cropping it to 16:9, and I chose not to add any film grain effects. Although several people suggested these ideas to me when they saw the quality of my uncompressed footage, I decided that *The Confessional* benefitted

from these aspects of the video look. I think that the “slick” look of the video reminds me of the glossy pages of *The Confessional* book itself.

Allen Myers and I had worked together on several film projects at UNO, and I knew that we would be able to work together well. I also trusted his ability as a director of photography. He and I agreed on a look for the film. We decided on mostly low-key lighting, but a vibrant color palette. Much of the film takes place at night. In these scenes, we wanted the light to have a blue or purple tint to it to add mystery and melancholy to the visuals. Although Allen and I chose this palette instinctually, I was interested in why we both gravitated towards blues and purples for this film. I found some interesting possibilities in the aptly named, *If It's Purple, Someone's Gonna Die: The Power of Color in Visual Storytelling*<sup>3</sup>. This book identifies blue as “the detached color” (Bellantoni 81) and purple as the color that hints at deception, death and change. I decided to echo these color choices in the production design.

We used a variety of techniques for this moody lighting. In some cases, we put ¼ CTB gels on the lights on set, and in some cases we would white balance on a card that was a coral color. This would take out the pinkish tones and enhance the colors that we wanted. In some cases, we decided to simply light the scene without color on-set, and to add the desired tint to the shots with Avid Color Correction in the post-production phase.

In all of the stalking scenes, we decided to use a darker, higher contrast look. We created pools of light and shadow. This created areas of interest within a frame. In the first courtyard scene, Arlene is standing in an area of light surrounded by darkness. The

---

<sup>3</sup> Patti Bellantoni, *If It's Purple, Someone's Gonna Die: The Power of Color in Visual Storytelling*. Focal Press, 2005.

audience can't feel safe in this scene, because they don't know what is lurking in the shadows around her.

I made liberal use of a moving camera in *The Confessional*. Since half of the movie is in an office setting during an interview, I wanted to add visual interest to the shots by subtle, smooth camera movements. A rationale for this approach comes from *Cinematography: Theory and Practice*<sup>4</sup>: "Camera movement associated with first or second person point-of-view is very involving and engaging. We are drawn in because we constantly strive to reorient and 'place' ourselves in the scene" (Brown 60). The moving camera in the interviews serves to place the audience in the interview as a present third party. I also chose to move the camera towards each of the subjects in these shots. In this way, the audience feels as if they are getting to know Arlene as the camera physically moves closer to her.

In the climactic scene with Arlene and Matt's confrontation, the camera moves mimic those in the interviews. This time, though, the camera moves help to reveal Matt's character. I wanted to leave Matt in silhouette for as long as possible, and have the audience see Arlene from his perspective. The camera moves in this part visually emphasize the idea that he has been watching her secretly.

The shot size also progresses throughout the interviews. In the initial interview scenes, the characters are framed in long shots, keeping each other and the audience at arm's length. By the final interview, the shots have progressed to close-ups and extreme close-ups (particularly of Arlene). As the questions in the interview become deeper and more invasive, the frame doesn't give Arlene any room to breathe or to escape.

---

<sup>4</sup> Blain Brown, *Cinematography: Theory and Practice*. Focal Press, 2002.



## ***Production Design***

The production design of *The Confessional* afforded me the opportunity to visually allude to the themes of the film. Arlene's obsession with secrets and isolation are evident in her surroundings. Her office wall is tiled with her favorite confessions. The film starts with Arlene staring at the wall of confessions. Many of the confessions in the film, whether on the wall, in the credits, or featured in other ways are aspects of Arlene's character. A few examples are "No one knows the real me", "I've never told anyone about what I did to you.", and the very first confession in the film, "I'll never confess my secret... I deserve the pain."

The look of the confessions themselves contributed a lot to the overall look of the film. Although they have many different colors and looks, certain themes recur. Secrecy, solitude, and obsession are visually represented in many of the confessions. See the appendix for examples.

The locations were dressed to show that Arlene doesn't have any place in her life for anyone but herself. All of the art shows empty locations. There are no photos of friends or family. Arlene's life is overwhelmed by her collections. Her office and home are in chaos. The clutter in her environment reflects her inner turmoil. The constant disorder of her environment allows her to be diverted from her inner thoughts. She can't be still – if her distractions abated, she'd have to acknowledge her past and feel the pain that she's ignored for years.

As I mentioned in the section on cinematography, I'd decided that blues and purples should be more prominent in the film. Blue connotes a disconnection from reality, and purple suggests deception. Arlene only wears blue and purple – as though

she's removed herself from the rest of humanity. Bree serves as Arlene's foil in the film. She's warm and human, and, at least visually, is Arlene's opposite. She dresses in a variety of hues.

## ***Editing***

The editing of *The Confessional* was a long, involved process. It was also my closest collaboration with another crewmember. I met my editor, Jen Suran, when she worked with my sister, Kathleen Ledet, on a documentary, *Weeding by Example*. In the course of their working on *Weeding by Example*, I was impressed by Jen's technical prowess, familiarity with Avid, and collaborative abilities. I knew from the start that I was going to need to work closely with an editor on *The Confessional*. Although I might have been technically capable of editing the film on my own, I didn't want to be so involved in the technical minutia that I failed to see the overall flow and structure of the film.

Having another person edit also gave me another bonus. I would be able to see the footage through someone else's eyes – someone who was not on-set, was unbiased by production difficulties, and whose fresh outlook might contribute ideas to the edit that I, having developed the material from the beginning, might not have thought of. I allowed Jen to make the first assembly edit with little direction from me. Throughout this process, she introduced much of the editing language that the film uses. A specific example of this is the frequent use of jump cuts throughout the film.

Originally, I thought that much of the film's editing should be at a more languid pace; however, I found that the jump cuts in the assembly edit made certain scenes more suspenseful. For example, when Arlene listens to a threatening message in her office, the

jump cuts added a sense that the danger to her was more present. I decided to develop the use of this device throughout the film. As we integrated jump cuts more into the fabric of the film, I found that they made scenes that would otherwise have been blah seem jarring to the viewer. By adding this element, the audience feels off-kilter and can identify with the unusual circumstances Arlene finds herself in. They made the disturbing outside force (who is largely off-screen in the film) seem to be a more tangible on-screen presence.

Once I saw the first assembly of the film, certain flaws were immediately apparent. This first cut, with some stylistic exceptions, was mainly straight from the script using circled takes. The interscene editing (and therefore, the film's cohesiveness) was nonexistent. The story was confusing. The two time periods that the movie inhabits (the past where the main action takes place, and the present with Arlene and an interviewer) were unclear. Scenes that took place in the past had little to do with the scenes that they cut to in the present. The pacing was uneven. One scene might be very suspenseful, but the next scene might be inappropriately casual. Worst of all, the overall structure wasn't what I'd hoped to achieve. Rather than having the scenes build upon each other to a climax, the film seemed to meander without a specific destination in mind.

Although I should have realized and addressed these problems in the screenplay stage, I was now stuck with trying to fix them in the editing stage. It took many hours and many versions of the film before it finally got to a point where, I think, the film's overall structure is strong, the scenes build on one another, and the flashbacks relate to their present day counterparts.

To fix the problems with the story, my first task was to reorganize the main plot. I had always intended for the opening credits sequence to explain the world of *The Confessional* – the fact that people sent in their confessions to someone who collected them for publication. Since it was confusing, I needed to add a voiceover to the beginning of the film – something I had been hoping to avoid. I also realized that I needed to introduce the antagonist earlier. I did both of these by adding answering machine messages that bookend the title sequence. Arlene’s is an outgoing message explaining what her confessional project is to callers to her line. Matt’s voiceover, which opens the film, is a message he left on this confessional line that becomes a threat.

The next problem to address was pacing. I realized that my flashback scenes all followed a pattern – Arlene is threatened by a mysterious stalker, then the threat abates. I realized that this created a rise and fall pattern of tension rather than the building of tension that I’d had as my goal. I addressed this by changing the position of a key scene. Originally, the scene where Arlene is in her car and Matt is watching her happened near the beginning of the film. I realized that this scene could help to build to my climax, so I moved it to be the scene right before Matt confronts Arlene. Now, rather than Arlene noticing a note that Matt left for her in her car, she hears him attack Bree and rushes to her aid.

The scene in the car had very specific problems as well. With its new placement, the entire climax hinged on the suspense that this scene built. Since it was shot differently than it was used in the film, however, I didn’t have as much footage as I needed to properly build the tension in the scene. If I could have done one thing in production

differently, it would have been to shoot more angles and cutaways in that scene. As it is now, most shots in the scene employ every single usable frame of footage.

Although less action happens in the framing story, I wanted these scenes to match the intensity and pace built in the flashbacks. One way that we did this was to shorten the shots in the interviews as they progressed. Another was to use physical distance from the camera. In the opening interview scenes, there are more long shots. There's more distance between the audience and the action. As the interview progresses, the shots become closer and closer. The last interview scene before the climax is completely comprised of close-ups.

Once the major structural problems had been addressed, Jen and I began to work on interscene editing – making the flow from scene to scene better. For clarity, I added the legend “Two weeks earlier” to the first flashback to orient the audience. Between each flash from past to present, I used a “whooshing” sound effect similar to one used between flashbacks in the television series, *Lost*. We made liberal use of “L cuts” between the interview scenes and the flashbacks. An “L cut” is any cut from one shot to another where the visual transition does not occur coincidentally with the audio transition. We'd often start a piece of dialog from an interview before the picture cut away from the flashback. In this way, we'd prepare the audience for the scene change to come. Another moment that helped interscene transitioning was the use of a graphic match to show the importance of an item Arlene receives. One flashback ends with a close-up of a package that she's received. We cut to a close-up of the same package in her office during an interview. The shot then reveals what is in the package – a threat in the form of a confession that reads “I've always wanted to kill my mother.”

## ***Sound***

Sound on *The Confessional* at every step of the process was a particularly difficult matter. In film, the soundtrack is possibly the most important aspect. Audiences won't forgive low-quality sound in a low-budget film. Although picture problems can be explained away as part of the "look" of the film, mistakes in sound will just seem "wrong". Because of this, I wanted to get someone very experienced in production sound to be my location sound mixer. This turned out to be more difficult than I'd expected. Although recording clean sound is a vital part of the filmmaking process, I think that its lack of glamour makes fewer student filmmakers interested in following it as a specialty. Finally, I was able to get Jeffrey Hartwick, someone I knew to be experienced in production sound, to agree to work on *The Confessional*.

We'd planned to shoot in the Performing Arts Center and Jeff had a plan for handling the acoustics in the room we were to shoot in, but at the last minute, a problem with the location arose two days before shooting and one day before we were set to dress the set. A junior high orchestral competition was scheduled in the same building for the entire weekend of the shoot. Although we'd scheduled (and reserved) use of the rooms weeks in advance, no one told us that the rooms were previously reserved. This gave us almost no time to find another location. Luckily, assistant director Katie Ledet was able to find a replacement location within hours with the help of Dr. Kevin Graves in the Liberal Arts College.

Although the new location was adequate, it presented new problems. The acoustics were sharp and sometimes had a small amount of echo. We used at least two microphones (boom and on-board) for the entire shoot, and sometimes supplemented this

with wireless lavalier microphones. Changes to the set itself that were necessary due to the location change (office chair, desk, location of windows) also caused problems with the soundtrack. Squeaks from the chair, scraping from the desk drawer, and outdoor noises recorded by the powerful microphone through windows all needed to be removed in post-production.

Jen Suran, my editor, also took on the role of post-production sound. She and I were able to address many of the problems by finding substitute clips of the dialog in alternate takes and from other recorded sources (like the on-board microphone). Problems throughout the entire soundtrack were addressed when we began working on-line in Avid Nitris. We were able to use customized equalization to fix multiple soundtrack issues. Avid Nitris has several default equalization modules. One of these, the “humbuster”, improved the soundtrack dramatically by removing the low frequency hum that cropped up throughout the film. We were able to customize this equalization setting to also remove a periodic high frequency hiss.

*The Confessional* uses many sound effects and additional dialog. We recorded some of these on-set or in post-production, such as the ring of the various phones, answering machine beeps and messages, footsteps, Bree’s off-screen scream, and doors opening and closing. I found many of the additional sound effects that I needed on several websites that provide professional-quality sound effects: Soundsnap, SoundClick, and Freesound.

There are five answering machine messages in *The Confessional* – one from Matt, one from Arlene, and three from anonymous callers. Matt and Bree also have phone conversations with Arlene. It took a while to find the right technique to make these calls

truly sound like telephone calls instead of clean audio tracks recorded on-set or in a studio. I tried many experiments to get this right. After failing to find any equalization settings that I was happy with in Avid, I tried an unorthodox technique – recording the actors’ dialog over speakerphone. Although this sounded very authentic, it ended up not being clear enough. In particular, some of the dialog was unintelligible. One member of a test audience specifically picked out which dialog was recorded with this technique and which wasn’t. He said that the audio in these parts was hard to hear and confusing.

I decided to sacrifice the authenticity of the sound of the phone dialog for story clarity. I still didn’t want the audio to sound too “clean” and thus be mistaken for voiceover instead of a phone message. Again, Avid Nitris provided the solution. One of the “telephone” equalization pre-sets clipped the high and low vocal frequencies and gave the actors’ voices just the timbre I was looking for.

Once all of these problems were addressed in post-production, Jen and I were able to use the technology available to more creative sound pursuits. One interesting example is the transitional sound effect that we used to move in time from past to present or vice versa. We modeled this sound effect to progress through the speakers from left to right when moving forward in time and from right to left when moving backward through time. It’s a subtle effect, but I think that it helps the bridge between time periods even further.

Finally, we were able to focus on adding music to the soundtrack. I used two main types of music in *The Confessional* – songs and background music. I chose songs from the same artist, pianist Ehren Starks, to unify the piece and to suggest that Arlene has come full circle. By the end of the film, Arlene’s world is largely the same, but she



herself has changed in it. I used the music in the opening and closing credits as a cue to the emotional mood of the film as a whole and of that moment in the film in particular.

The song at the beginning, *No One Will Ever Know*, helps to set the melancholy mood of the film and of many of the confessions that the audience is reading while it plays. *Tunnel Systems*, the song at the end of the film, has a different feeling to it. Although it is still has an undertone of sadness in it, it is slightly more hopeful. Its steady tempo also helps the song to give a feeling of “life goes on”. The background music throughout *The Confessional* is placed to emphasize the emotions of the scenes in which it appears. In much of the film, I used the music of the *Becerra String Quartet* to build tension. This piece of music is slow, strange, and mysterious, and fit the tone of *The Confessional*. In those places where the *String Quartet* was not sufficient, I used other classical pieces that feature plaintive strings – particularly andante movements of Bach’s *Violin Concertos*.

After Matt is shot by the police, I wanted to give a sense of time stopping for Arlene. I used another piece of music by Ehren Starks to achieve this. The slow, wistful tone of *Amnesia* served as a counterpoint to Katryn Schmidt’s intense performance. Again, the steady tempo lends the impression that, despite the pain she’s feeling at this moment, life will go on for her. In fact, the pain that Arlene feels in this moment is the pain that she hasn’t allowed herself to express for years. By this catharsis, she can finally accept her past – but not allow it to consume her.

## ***Technology***

Technology was used in every aspect of *The Confessional*. I wrote the screenplay in Final Draft. Katie Ledet, my assistant director, and I used Movie Magic Suite to create

breakdown sheets and prop lists and Microsoft Excel to create call sheets. I also made a website, (<http://confessionalfilm.blogspot.com/>) to keep the crew updated and apprised of all meetings, dates, and news about the production.

*The Confessional's* post-production made use of a myriad of software programs. We used three different versions of Avid non-linear editing software – Avid Xpress Pro HD, Avid Media Composer, and Avid Nitris. The ability to edit non-linearly was indispensable. It allowed me to restructure the entire film easily. This capability was essential because I could try out ideas immediately. Within minutes I'd know whether an idea was valuable or a mistake. It also allowed me the freedom to try offbeat ideas that I might not have bothered with otherwise. Digital effects like fades and dissolves were easy to add and change, allowing for trial-and-error in deciding their particulars.

From the very beginning of the development of *The Confessional*, I knew that I would need some way to show the audience what, exactly, went into Arlene Kane's books. I thought that an opening sequence could show clearly the nature of the Confessional project and also introduce some of the themes of the film. I decided to use Autodesk Combustion 4.0, a special effects program that allows for image creation, manipulation, and animation to create this title sequence.

The title sequence took a good bit of time and trial and error. My concept for it was to feature confessions from Arlene's book. Each of these confessions would relate to a character or concept in the film itself. I wanted the confessions to start off simply, giving the audience plenty of time to read and understand them. As the title sequence progressed, I wanted an overwhelming number of confessions to coalesce on-screen,

finally ending with only one – the threatening confession that, in the film, allows Arlene to identify her stalker.

The first step was to create the confessions themselves. Some of these (notably the final confession – “I’ve always wanted to kill my mother”) are featured confessions in the film itself. Most of them, however, were created specifically for the title sequence. This allowed me to decide and control exactly the tone and look that I wanted to establish with the titles. Katie Ledet volunteered to help create the featured confessions. She and I produced these in a number of ways. Since each confession was meant to be created by a different person, I didn’t want one technique or style to dominate them. I decided on the text of the confessions, then had as many people as possible write them so that I could have a variety of handwriting samples. I scanned art, photos, and handwriting into Adobe Photoshop CS2, and composited them into the finished confessions. In some cases, Katie created the entire confession with real materials and we scanned the whole thing in to make it look more authentic.

Once the confessions were made and saved in uncompressed TARGA format, I imported them into Autodesk Combustion. It took a while before I developed the look that I was going for in the animation of the images. At first, the movement seemed “mechanical” or too “flat”. I wanted smooth, organic movement that looked professionally done. I eventually found that I could achieve the look that I wanted by making sure that, from fade in to fade out, the image was always moving. If an image started moving after it was already on-screen, it seemed jarring and artificial. I also learned that the movement looked better if the size of the picture was changing at the

same time. This gives the impression that the confession isn't just moving horizontally, but it is also moving toward and away from the camera.

The first few confessions were animated minimally – slow movement and growth, with a single image on-screen. Between these first few confessions, the names of the cast and crew (with movement and shadows also animated in Combustion) appear on their own title cards. As the sequence progresses, the titles overlap the images. I also integrated footage of the wall of confessions in Arlene's office into the title sequence to relate the animated confessions to the filmed confessions in the film itself. Examples of confessions and of their presentation are presented in the appendix.

I also used effects from Avid Nitris to fix specific problems with certain shots. At the climax of the film, Arlene falls to the ground in grief. However, in this shot, a fluorescent yellow piece of tape (her mark) was visible on the ground. I used a cloning tool in Avid Nitris to remove the tape from the shot. Another tool I used was the ability to add shadows. A few shots in the confrontation scene had lighting brightness levels that didn't quite match when they'd been cut together. I used an effect in Avid Nitris to create a shadow in the first shot to match it to the second. The effect was as if I had had a flag in front of the light on-set that had created the shadow.

Finally, I used Avid Nitris for color correction. I went scene by scene, matching colors and adding the blue and purple cast that my director of photography and I had decided on. Working on the title sequence led me to an unexpected new idea. I had originally chosen to use the Betacam SP because of its higher resolution and very saturated color profile. When I brought footage of the confessional wall into Combustion, however, I realized that the many, bright primary colors made the shots look cartoonish

and didn't establish the mood that I was going for. I experimented with the Discreet Color Corrector, and found that I preferred the shot when I decreased the saturation and adding a touch of contrast. I decided to add this same correction to the entire film. Although more muted, the colors were still intense, and the added contrast helped to make particular scenes darker.

## Chapter 3

### *Influences on Story*

When I began thinking about what kind of film I wanted to do for my thesis, one of my first thoughts was to make an adaptation. I love literature, and have studied adaptations of classic stories into other genres including film. Exploring the techniques of adaptation – what elements to preserve from the source material, what to change, and how to project the underlying theme of the original story was something I wanted to try.

My first idea was to adapt a story from the 2000 winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction *Interpreter of Maladies*<sup>5</sup> by Indian American author Jhumpa Lahiri. The story I was interested in adapting, *This Blessed House*, is about a Hindu couple who move into a new house. As they settle in, they discover Christian artifacts from the previous family who lived there. I thought that this story would fit nicely set in post-Katrina New Orleans, where a young family renovating a destroyed home discovers pieces of the lives of the family who lived in the house before the storm.

*This Blessed House* proved difficult to work with for a short film, however. The languid pace of the story, its focus on the characters' inner lives, and the lack of a structured plot were all elements that made the story a wonderful read. However, these same elements would have made a film version difficult. As I worked on this story, I realized that, in adapting it, I would have to change many of the elements that make the story worthwhile. *This Blessed House* still was an influence on the story of *The*

---

<sup>5</sup> Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies*. New York: Mariner Books, 1999.

*Confessional*. The tone of the story, and its emphasis on character and mystery appealed to me.

I realized that I needed inspiration from something less specific than I'd have more freedom to work with. I've been very interested in community art projects, where the public at large is invited to participate or even to wholly create a venture based on its own rules. *The Confessional* is based on a community art project called *Postsecret*<sup>6</sup>, in which people anonymously mail in their deepest secrets. The idea of anonymous secrets is a fascinating one, and I instantly thought that it would make a good basis for a short film. The idea of someone telling a secret implies two parties – the one who tells the secret, and the one who listens to the secret. I decided to make the world of *The Confessional* more intimate than that of *Postsecret*. Rather than the world at large being the observer via the internet, I decided to make the principal audience of these secrets one person – a voyeuristic collector.

I began to think about the kind of person who starts a project like *Postsecret*. I imagined a person obsessed with secrets, and whose private voyeurism had led to a career of collecting and reveling in other people's innermost thoughts. Such a person would undoubtedly have a secret of her own, and that revelation gave me the basis for the story.

The world of *The Confessional* (the community art project represented in the film) is an amalgam of many community art projects that I found fascinating. When I first came up with the idea for *The Confessional*, *Postsecret* had not yet released its first book.

---

<sup>6</sup> Frank Warren, *Postsecret*. <<http://postsecret.blogspot.com/>>.

The idea for the publication aspect of *The Confessional* came from *Found Magazine*<sup>7</sup>, a print magazine that publishes found objects that give glimpses into people's lives. I learned about a third public forum that influenced *The Confessional* while listening to *This American Life*<sup>8</sup> one Sunday on my drive to New Orleans. The episode, entitled *Apology*, had a segment that focused on *The Apology Line*, an answering machine that recorded people's anonymous apologies. It was hard to listen to some of the calls from *The Apology Line*, because the audience can make more of a connection to the caller. Unlike some of the other projects, you can hear the emotion in the caller's voice as they confess something that they've never told anyone before. You can actually hear the self-hatred, anguish, and despair in their voices on the tapes. The raw emotion from *The Apology Line* became a vital aspect of *The Confessional*. Audio confessions could put a human voice to the confessions, making them more personal and less abstract.

In order to have an entity like *The Confessional*, an audience for it must exist. The role of the audience is magnified in a newer form of community art project. There have recently been a category of viral web based videos that have formed a new kind of narrative – one that depends on its audience to tell the story. One of them, entitled *lonelygirl15*<sup>9</sup>, influenced the story of *The Confessional*. The plot of *lonelygirl15* involves a young girl (named Bree, the namesake of *The Confessional's* Bree) who makes video blogs and posts them on YouTube. Eventually, an audience member with knowledge of her secret past becomes involved in the story. This concept lead to the creation of the

---

<sup>7</sup> Jason Bitner, *Found Magazine*. 2001-2008.

<sup>8</sup> *This American Life*. Apology. PRI. WBEZ Chicago. 5 November 2004.

<sup>9</sup> Miles Beckett and Greg Goodfried. lonelygirl15. <<http://www.lg15.com/>>.



character of Matt, part of *The Confessional's* audience who became involved in it directly.

I culled aspects of these projects into my fictional project of *The Confessional*. *The Confessional* has audio confessions like the *Apology Line*, a published format like *Found Magazine*, mailed in expressions of emotion like *Postsecret*, and direct audience involvement like in *lonelygirl15*. I decided to expand the scope of each of these projects for *The Confessional*. Whereas *Postsecret* requires a postcard-sized secret there are no limits to the art sent in to *The Confessional*. *The Apology Line* is specifically about requests for forgiveness, but callers to *The Confessional's* line have carte blanche. I wanted for the diversity of *The Confessional's* submissions to make the project seem intricate and captivating.

These projects showed me an aspect of people that I had never really thought about before – the fact that people have a need to express their innermost feelings and regrets. Almost as fascinating is that there is a market for these professions of guilt or hurt or remorse. I think that people like participating in projects like *Postsecret* and *The Apology Line* because their feelings of empathy and compassion towards the people who confess in these forums reminds them that others might feel that same empathy and compassion towards them despite their transgressions. It starts people on both sides of the project on the path to healing the hurts that they've held on to.

These projects also boil us down to our most basic level. When you look at someone, you can see their face – which shows their specifics, age, gender, etc. When you see or hear someone's confession, you instantly get to their innermost self. On this level, humans are more identifiable. We can see our similarities with more ease.

The characters in *The Confessional* are defined by their relationships with secrets. The protagonist, Arlene Kane, is obsessed with them. She collects other people's secrets and publishes them in a series of books that give the film its title – *The Confessional*. She keeps everyone, including those who send her their innermost thoughts, at arm's length. Because she can't deal with her own regrets, she pretends that her life is an open book, that she has no secrets.

Bree, Arlene's co-worker, is her opposite. Whereas Arlene Kane is defined by her enigmatic ways (even her name is derived from the word "arcane"), Bree is open and friendly. She can't understand why people have so many secrets to send in to *The Confessional*, and she doesn't understand how Arlene can detach from the people behind the confessions. Bree, as Arlene's foil, represents who Arlene could be in a different world.

Once I had a first draft of the script, I asked for feedback from my writing group in the *Film Development & Planning* class. This was a briefer, simpler version of the final film. There were only two characters, Arlene and Bree, and I hadn't allowed enough time or exposition to explain what *The Confessional* itself was. One comment that I got several times was the fact that the story was confusing. I enlisted MFA Screenwriting Student Joshua Lane to help me out with the screenplay. Josh and I had several classes together, and I knew that we agreed on many aspects of screenwriting. Also, several of his screenplays had the same mood that I was going for with *The Confessional*.

Josh took my 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of *The Confessional* and wrote a draft of his own. In this draft, he introduced the character of Gregory, the interviewer. By introducing the framing story, Josh brought a clarity to the script that it had been lacking. I also liked the idea that

the interview could serve as a metaphorical confessional, with Arlene in the role of penitent and Gregory in the role of priest. It also allowed me to have a moment at the end where Arlene faces the choice of whether to literally confess – and perhaps receive absolution.

The reporter investigating Arlene, Gregory, is similar to her. However, in this particular situation, Arlene has gone from being in control – from being the one seeking out others’ secrets – to defending her own secrets and her almost perverse collection of them. Gregory knows that there’s more to her and her story than she has let on previously, and he intends to find out what it is. He serves as the metaphorical confessor – the priest in her confessional. Once Arlene has confessed to him, only someone like her, who understands her, can offer her the absolution she hungers for.

I decided to take Josh’s draft and develop the story still further. For many years, I’ve been interested in the idea of the hero’s journey – a story pattern that shows up in different stories in different cultures. The idea of the hero’s journey was articulated by Joseph Campbell in *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*<sup>10</sup>. Campbell describes this monomyth, “A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man” (30). This pattern has been adapted to nearly every genre of storytelling, with notable examples in film. George Lucas deliberately adapted Campbell’s research on the monomyth in writing *Star Wars*. The plots of the films *Jaws*, *The Lion King*, and *The Matrix*, along with many others, are all archetypical examples of this structure.

---

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972.

Since I've been fascinated with the idea of a monomyth linking stories in different time periods and in different media, I decided that I wanted to try to implement the stages of the hero's journey into the story structure of *The Confessional*. This was less straightforward than I originally thought, however. Since Campbell's book describes a hero with a thousand faces (as opposed to the heroine), I found the stages of the journey to be too goal-oriented and quest-like to be useful for *The Confessional*.

I found the solution in a valuable reference book by Victoria Lynn Schmidt, *45 Master Characters*<sup>11</sup>. In this book, Schmidt describes archetypal characters and their place in narratives and in the monomyth. However, she describes a variation on the monomyth for female protagonists – the feminine journey. According to Schmidt, "The feminine journey is a journey in which the hero gathers the courage to face death and endure the transformation toward being reborn as a complete being in charge of her own life" (199). Once I read about this feminine journey, I realized that this was the path that Arlene Kane was taking.

Once I'd decided that the feminine journey was the model for *The Confessional*, I knew several key points in the plot. I knew that Arlene needed to start out in denial, thinking that she didn't need anyone else but herself. She thought that her self-reliance was her strength. Something would need to disabuse her of that misapprehension. She would then go through a series of trials, each more disorienting than the last. These ordeals would turn her familiar world into one of uncertainty and fear. Finally, Arlene needed to realize that what is important is her connection to others. She would end the film physically where she was at the beginning, but with the knowledge that she can

---

<sup>11</sup> Victoria Lynn Schmidt, *45 Master Characters*. Writer's Digest Books, 2001.

never be the same. “Where she was tough and unfeeling she is now caring and considerate. She now embodies the opposite of her former coping strategy” (Schmidt 236). Whereas the typical monomyth ends with a tangible reward and a change in the world at large, the feminine journey ends with the protagonist finding solutions within herself and in her connections to the world.

The feminine journey starts with the protagonist in a kind of trap. She is fine, but is contained. She is living in a normal world with an illusion of perfection. At some point, a catalyst reveals to her that her perfect world is, in fact, an illusion. Her illusions shattered, she enters the special world of her transformation. In *The Confessional*, Arlene’s life in Act One is normal and seemingly perfect. She is successful and well-known for collecting, editing, and publishing confessions that people send to her. She doesn’t identify with the people who send her their confessions. She vicariously enjoys reading their innermost thoughts while ignoring her own. Arlene is shut off from the world and from herself.

Arlene’s illusion of the perfect world is shattered when someone calls the anonymous confessional line and threatens her. She can no longer pretend that she is different from those whose secrets she publishes. She herself has secrets, and she can’t stand the thought that they might be revealed publicly.

In Act Two of the feminine journey, the protagonist has been thrust into circumstances beyond her control and must decide how to deal with them. Arlene tries to deal with these problems the way she always has in the past – by denying them. In the interview, Arlene denies the reporter any chance to connect with her or to get honest answers from her. In the flashbacks, she avoids dealing with the person desperately trying

to contact her. When she finally does speak to him, she denies having anything to hide. However, Arlene's normal coping mechanisms fail her this time. The mysterious man stalking her will stop at nothing to make her listen to him. Finally, when he kidnaps her one friend, Bree, she knows that things are definitely not in her control.

At the beginning of Act Three, the female hero realizes her connection to others. In *The Confessional*, this happens with a clear danger to her lone prospect of support and attachment. Arlene's friend Bree is held at gunpoint. During the confrontation with Matt, she realizes that he is a literal manifestation of the secret she's kept all these years. Matt is her son, his life ruined by her irresponsibility. At the moment of truth, Arlene chooses rebirth (the next step in the feminine journey). She finally experiences true regret and remorse. She tells Matt sincerely, "I'm sorry." When Matt is killed, she suffers all of the grief and anguish that a mother would feel for a lost son – and also the pain of her wasted life.

Act Three ends with Arlene back to her normal world. Although she's changed, she still resists showing that change in public. Gregory, her confessor, tells her the terms of her atonement – she must reveal who Matt was so that he could be identified. The film ends on Arlene's face, unsure whether she'll choose salvation or secrecy.

## Chapter 4

### *Analysis*

Throughout the production of *The Confessional*, I relied on the opinions of others. During the post-production phase, the opinions of outside voices became more important than ever. I asked anyone who was available to watch and give me their opinions throughout the post-production process. I got feedback from these audience members through discussions after the viewing, and I took many of their opinions, reactions, and criticisms into account while finishing the film.

*The Confessional* has a story made complex by the flashback/interview structure and also by the intricate world of Arlene's Confessional Project. Since I was so closely involved with the material, I relied on outside opinions about the clarity and intelligibility of each cut. Many of my decisions in the final cut were based on this feedback.

I decided to formalize this process of feedback for the final version. I created a survey that I gave out to anyone who watched the final film. I used this feedback to measure the progress of the final cut from the original version. I've included the responses to this survey in Appendix H.

Although from the beginning I'd planned an opening credits sequence to introduce the Confessional Project, its form changed markedly from my original concept. From the reactions that I got from the people that watched these early cuts, I realized that this opening sequence was crucial to the audience's understanding of the film. Before this sequence was added to the film, audience members said that they didn't understand that Arlene collected secrets until well into the film. They also didn't understand her relationship to the person threatening her. This feedback helped me to develop several

key points in the opening sequence. First, I decided to begin the film with an audio confession from Matt. I thought that this would increase suspense throughout the film. By introducing Matt as a threat early in the film, the audience would know that the threat he presents exists, and therefore their suspense would be heightened. It also increases Matt's perceived presence in the film. It connects the threat to Arlene to The Confessional itself and to secrets in general.

Similarly, I decided to have Arlene's answering machine recording in which she explains The Confessional end the opening sequence. I had hoped to avoid this type of "voiceover" explaining things to the audience. I wanted instead to show the world of The Confessional visually. However, based on several people's feedback, I decided to add this voiceover for the sake of clarity. Adding this answering machine message gave me two other opportunities. Firstly, I was able to use this to bridge the opening sequence with the beginning of the film. Secondly, since I was now going to add it anyway, I used this dialog to more overtly refer to the themes of the film. In this message, Arlene mentions secrets, regrets, fears, and the human conscience. I think that this helped to set the tone for the film to come.

The feedback that I got from the people who screened the final version of the film was much more favorable than the feedback that I got while the editing was in-progress. Audiences seemed to like the concept of the film -- one survey participant said, "Brilliant -- someone with so much to hide being so interested in the secrets of others." This was one of the major characteristics of Arlene Kane that I hoped came across in the final film.

One of the things I focused the most on fixing based on early feedback was the confusing nature of the film's structure. This seemed to be successful in the final version.



In general, audiences rated the plot as easy to understand. However, there were still particular moments of confusion. One audience member mentioned that “a few of the flashbacks took a few seconds before I realized they were in the past”. This was something that, from the beginning, I knew I needed to address in the final cut. To show a change of time period, we’d shot the past and present with different lighting schemes and from different angles. These subtle differences weren’t enough to suggest the differences of these scenes to everyone, though. I added a title card to the first flashback, indicating that this scene was in the past. I also added a “wooshing” sound effect that plays at every time shift. I hoped that this would be a subtle indicator of the different time periods of the scenes.

One commenter in particular mentioned that he thought that the title card “two weeks earlier” that designates the flashback was unnecessary. However, another indicated that it was still “slightly confusing at the first ‘flash-back’ sequence”. In earlier cuts, I’d left out any title cards explaining the time difference, but I decided in the final cut to err on the side of clarity and leave the “two weeks earlier” in.

The surveys did point to several places where I could have improved the film. One thing that a number of respondents pointed out was the darkness of the confrontation scene. Although I did want for that scene to be dark visually, the results were too dark to show up favorably on some televisions. Brightening the shots in Avid or Combustion made the shots look noisy or washed out. If I were to re-shoot these scenes, I’d light them with a larger light (a 2K instead of a 1K). Although this probably would have resulted in a brighter image than I wanted, darkening the image in post-production would have given better results than trying to lighten the image.

Another thing that some commenters mentioned was confusion or doubt about the relationship between Arlene and Matt. One said “I didn’t think there was enough of an age gap. Even if she was fourteen when he was born, I thought she looked too young to be his mother.” In reality, Katryn Schmidt and Joe Fredo, who portray Arlene and Matt, have about a ten year age difference. Katryn was playing a character a few years older than she is, and Joe was playing a character a few years younger. I’d decided to use these actors despite this possible problem because of the quality of their performances. Another reason that I thought this casting could work is the ambiguity of the nature of their relationship. Neither character is completely sure whether they are, in actuality, the other’s long-lost family. Arlene never admits that either the secret in the book is hers or that she suspects that Matt could have been her son. The audience has no idea how Matt decided that Arlene was to blame for his hellish life or how he tracked her down.

Whether or not Matt and Arlene are actually related can be decided in the mind of each audience member. If they are not, Arlene still serves as a proxy for the mother that Matt wants revenge on, and Matt is the son that Arlene needs to apologize to. This uncertainty gives an “out” to audience members who might think that they are too close in age to be actually mother and son. That being said, I haven’t found anyone yet who has seen *The Confessional* who didn’t think that Arlene was actually Matt’s mother.

Although there are many things that I would do differently if I were to start production of this film today, I do think that it was a success based on the goals I set out to achieve. I wanted to learn as much as I could about every aspect of the filmmaking process, and I definitely did. Now that it’s finished, I am satisfied with the result of the final version of *The Confessional*.

## Chapter 5

### *Conclusion*

There were many lessons that I learned the hard way on *The Confessional*. I wanted to keep the production days to a minimum to keep both costs and superfluous footage to a minimum. I think that a three day production schedule was too tight for this film. Although we got all the scheduled shots, the tight schedule kept me from being more flexible on-set. Had I had this flexibility, I might have realized the need for certain shots I lacked later – like inserts and cutaways in the car scene.

Although I tried to solve all of my story problems in the screenplay stage, I should have rewritten the script a few more times. I think that going through it again and again would have eventually made me realize that the action between the framing story and the flashbacks didn't build to a satisfactory climax. Addressing this story problem was the most complicated thing I faced in making *The Confessional*, and extended the post-production period by months and months. In retrospect, I think that if I had postponed shooting the film and taken a few more months for rewrites, I would have had a shooting script that more closely resembled the final cut of the film. This one change would have made a huge difference in the complexity of the editing stage.

Another thing that I have to mention in relation to difficulties in completing *The Confessional* is a series of hurricanes. The first in this series, the unforgettable Katrina, didn't directly impact the production of *The Confessional*. However, Katrina's impact indirectly affected my entire time in graduate school. Katrina kept me from having a semester to devote totally to the development of my thesis without having to concentrate

on other classes. This luxury would have given me the time I needed to write and rewrite and address the story problems in the film.

Hurricanes Gustav and Ike directly delayed the post-production of *The Confessional*. In August of 2008, I was in the last stages of completing the film. I had the final structure worked out and the opening sequence nearly complete. Hurricane Gustav hit in early September. I evacuated on September 1. My home was damaged in the storm, and there were no basic services. Because of the delays caused by Hurricane Ike, which hit on September 13, I wasn't able to return home until halfway through the first week of October. The loss of this crucial month discouraged me. Although I finished my offline work and moved to uncompressed editing in October, these delays had cost me another semester. Although I did have many setbacks during the production of *The Confessional*, I am satisfied with the final product. I think that the final film reflects my intentions to tell a story about secrets, deception, and eventual liberation.

This film was an incredible learning experience. Before I started working on this project, I didn't realize what a comprehensive and complex process making my thesis would be. Every step of the process had problems, delays, and obstacles, but at every step I had a dedicated crewmember helping me along. Filmmaking is a collaborative process, and I came to appreciate that more and more as the course of making *The Confessional* progressed. Most of the hard things came about from me trying to take on or control too many of the minute details on my own. When I brought in help, these problems usually were solved quickly.

Since I relied so heavily on my crew, I also learned the importance of finding talented and eager crewmembers. My crew was excited to work on this project, and was

generally willing to take on whatever role I required of them. Many were first-time crewmembers who were learning their roles on-set as they went. I found these first-timers enthusiastic and hard-working, and I was particularly satisfied with their efforts.

## Bibliography

- Apology. *This American Life*. PRI. WBEZ Chicago. 5 November 2004.
- Beckett, Miles and Greg Goodfried. lonelygirl15. <<http://www.lg15.com/>>.
- Bellantoni, Patti. *If It's Purple, Someone's Gonna Die: The Power of Color in Visual Storytelling*. Focal Press, 2005.
- Bitner, Jason. *Found Magazine*. 2001-2008.
- Brown, Blain. *Cinematography: Theory and Practice*. Focal Press, 2002.
- Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972.
- Jaws*. Director Steven Spielberg. Universal Pictures, 1975.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of Maladies*. New York: Mariner Books, 1999.
- The Lion King*. Directors Roger Allers and Rob Minkoff. Walt Disney Pictures, 1994.
- Lost*. Executive Producers Damon Lindelof and Carlton Cuse. ABC, 2001-2009.
- The Matrix*. Directors Andy Wachowski and Larry Wachowski. Warner Bros., 1999.
- Schmidt, Victoria Lynn. *45 Master Characters*. Writer's Digest Books, 2001.
- Star Wars*. Director George Lucas. 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 1977.
- Warren, Frank. Postsecret. <<http://postsecret.blogspot.com/>>.
- Warren, Frank. *Postsecret*. New York: Harper Collins, 2006.
- Weston, Judith. *Directing Actors: Creating Memorable Performances for Film and Television*. Studio Central: Michael Wiese Productions, 1996.
- Weston, Judith. *The Film Director's Intuition: Script Analysis and Rehearsal Techniques*. Studio Central: Michael Wiese Productions, 2003.

## Appendices

### *Appendix A: Shooting Script*

FADE IN:

1. INT. ARLENE'S OFFICE, PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

The walls of the office are tiled with collages, photos, and drawings with words emblazoned on them.

A large bookshelf stands in the corner. On its shelves, large leather-bound books that read *The Confessional* on the spine. The books start at Volume 2.

ARLENE KANE, early-to-mid-thirties and meticulously dressed, turns from the collaged wall to her desk.

The desk has a large phone with multiple lines. The message light blinks.

Papers are stacked neatly. A LARGE MANILA ENVELOPE with a large, visible return address is on the top of the stack.

GREGORY, a reporter in his late twenties, sits across from Arlene's desk. He pulls a tape recorder out of his briefcase.

GREGORY

No objections?

Gregory doesn't wait for Arlene to answer. He puts the tape recorder on the desk and presses record. The recorder is close to the MANILA ENVELOPE.

Arlene sits in her chair.

ARLENE

It's a little late for an interview.

GREGORY

For this story, I would've come later.

Arlene glances at him. Gregory smiles at her.

ARLENE

I don't think there's anything left  
to tell.

GREGORY

I find it hard to believe that the  
Queen of Secrets told the whole truth.  
Gregory opens a notepad. He pulls out a pen.

ARLENE

I don't collect secrets. I catalogue  
confessions.

Arlene looks Gregory in the eye.

ARLENE (CONT'D)

There's a difference. I wouldn't have a  
business if I collected secrets because  
there would be nothing to collect.

Gregory smiles at her and begins writing.

2. INT. ARLENE'S OFFICE, SIX MONTHS AGO - NIGHT

Arlene, much more relaxed looking, sits at her desk with a  
pen and notepad.

Also on the desk, a box full of mail. All pieces addressed  
to "The Confessional." None with return addresses.

The phone blinks messages. Arlene yawns and presses play.

GIRL'S VOICE

I just wanted to confess that I  
cheated on my Physics final. I got  
an A, but I shouldn't have.

Arlene shakes her head.

ARLENE

At least you cheated well.

BREE, mid-twenties, strolls in with a cup of coffee. She  
hands it to Arlene.

Arlene sips the coffee, then puts it on her desk.



OLDER MALE VOICE

I don't know why I'm doing this.  
I guess I have to get it out.  
I've been having an affair for  
the past two years.

Arlene glances at Bree.

OLDER MALE VOICE

With my wife's sister.

Bree giggles.

ARLENE

It happens more than you realize.

BREE

I just don't know how you get used to them.

Bree looks at the collaged wall for a moment.

BREE (CONT'D)

Well, I'm heading out. See you tomorrow.

Bree leaves. Arlene waves bye.

Arlene notices the door's still open. She closes it.

The PHONE RINGS. Arlene puts her coffee on the floor.

She grabs the box of mail and sits on the floor. She dumps  
the box on the ground. RING!

She opens a piece of mail and reads it.

RING! Arlene waits for the message. BEEP!

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

I just wanted to let you know, I know.  
I saw you in the parking lot this morning.  
You're very pretty.

Arlene rushes to her desk.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)

I like your long, dark hair and--

Arlene grabs the phone. DIAL TONE.

Arlene locks the door and returns to the mail. The phone RINGS again. Arlene stares at it.

BEEP!

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)  
I was hoping you'd pick up this time  
Arlene. But we'll meet soon enough.

Arlene gathers her things. Quickly. She fumbles through her purse and pulls out her keys and her cell phone.

She turns off the light as she rushes out.

3. EXT. COURTYARD OF ARLENE'S OFFICE, SIX MONTHS AGO - NIGHT

Arlene almost sprints through the courtyard. She stops. The light is on in her office.

A DOOR SLAMS. Arlene starts dialing 9-1-1.

A shadow stands at the entrance of the courtyard... Bree steps into the light. Arlene exhales. Bree walks to her.

BREE  
Forgot my phone. Leaving early tonight?

Arlene slides her phone into her purse.

ARLENE  
Yeah. I think I need some rest.

BREE  
Yeah, you look like it.

Bree and Arlene walk out of the courtyard and toward the parking lot.

4. EXT. PARKING LOT OF ARLENE'S OFFICE, SIX MONTHS AGO - NIGHT

Arlene watches Bree climb into her car. She checks the parking lot. Nobody.

Arlene climbs into her car.

5. INT. ARLENE'S CAR, SIX MONTHS AGO - NIGHT

Arlene locks the door. She puts her key in the ignition. She begins to back up her car.

Arlene looks in her rearview mirror. A SHADOWY FIGURE flashes by. She turns to look. Nobody.

Arlene slowly turns her head back and notices a "Confessional-like" card in the passenger seat.

It reads: "Call me now or your secret won't stay that way. 555-9546."

Arlene stares at it.

6. INT. ARLENE'S OFFICE, PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Arlene walks in. Gregory is looking at the Confessional wall. Arlene puts a cup of coffee on her desk. She sits in her chair.

GREGORY

What's your favorite confession?  
The dirtiest. Most memorable?

ARLENE

I don't have a favorite. I tend not  
to add judgment to the material.

GREGORY

Why not?

Gregory sits in his chair. The MANILA ENVELOPE is visible on Arlene's desk. It is now open and a confession peeks out from under it.

ARLENE

I wouldn't be sane if I did.

Arlene stares at him.

GREGORY

But, how do you know what makes a  
good confession? This is a business,  
isn't it?

ARLENE

But not because I choose the best confessions, but because everyone has a need to confess and a need to hear other people confess. Reminds us we're human.

Arlene stares at the open ENVELOPE.

7. INT. ARLENE'S LIVING ROOM, SIX MONTHS AGO - DAY

The living room is messy. Cluttered. Papers everywhere. Volumes strewn about.

Arlene clears off space on the sofa.

She picks up her phone, dials the number and waits.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

Hello?

Arlene hesitates.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Ms. Kane?

Arlene hangs up the phone. She sighs. RING! RING!

ARLENE

Leave me alone. I have nothing to hide! So, just leave me alone.

BREE

Arlene?

Arlene throws her head back.

ARLENE

Bree.

BREE

What's going on? Are you okay?

ARLENE

It's nothing.

A KNOCK on the door. Arlene stares at the door. It's unlocked.

ARLENE (CONT'D)  
Can you stay on the phone for a while?

BREE  
Of course. Are you sure everything's okay?

The KNOCK turns to BANGING. Arlene sneaks to the door. She reaches out for the lock.

The BANGING becomes POUNDING.

BREE (CONT'D)  
Arlene? You still there?

Arlene backs away from the door.

BREE (CONT'D)  
Arlene??

The POUNDING stops.

ARLENE  
Sorry, I'm here. Dropped the phone.

Arlene looks around. She grabs a baseball bat from the corner.

BREE  
Do you want me to come over?

Arlene walks to the door. She unlocks the door.

BREE (CONT'D)  
Arlene?

She puts the phone on the ground.

BREE (CONT'D)  
Arlene? Answer me. What's going on?

Arlene swings the bat back. She grabs the door handle.

BREE (CONT'D)

I'm calling the police.

Arlene raises the bat and opens the door. Nobody. A LARGE MANILA ENVELOPE from the post office sits on the doorstep. She shakes her head.

8. INT. ARLENE'S OFFICE, PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Arlene shakes her head. Gregory leans in closer.

ARLENE

I have nothing to confess.

GREGORY

So, you've never put anything in one of your volumes?

Gregory's cup of coffee is empty, and near it, the ENVELOPE and confession are still visible.

ARLENE

I'm not doing this to help myself.  
I'm here to listen to people's problems.

GREGORY

What about your own problems?

ARLENE

Everybody knows my problems.

Arlene fidgets with the ENVELOPE and confession on her desk.

GREGORY

Don't be so sure of that.

Arlene glares at Gregory.

9. INT. ARLENE'S OFFICE, SIX MONTHS AGO - NIGHT

Arlene gathers her things. She throws on her coat and pulls out her keys from her purse.

She hesitates. She grabs her cell phone.

As she reaches to turn off the light, her cell phone rings. She looks at the LCD screen. It's Bree.

ARLENE

Hey Bree.

Heavy breathing on the other line. A CRY.

ARLENE (CONT'D)

Bree! Listen you bastard. If you hurt her, I swear I'll-

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

Do what? We're in the parking lot. Call the cops and you'll both regret it.

Arlene hangs up the phone. She opens it and stares at the dial pad.

10. EXT. COURTYARD OF ARLENE'S OFFICE, SIX MONTHS AGO - NIGHT

Arlene steps into the courtyard. She looks around. Nobody.

A CRY! Footsteps shuffle. Out of the shadow, Bree, crying and held in a choke-hold, appears. She's holding Volume 1 of *The Confessional*. Her assailant is still masked by shadow.

Arlene rushes over to them.

ARLENE

Just leave her alone. You want me.

MATTHEW, late teens, steps into the light. He has a gun, which he points at Bree.

ARLENE (CONT'D)

Bree, I'm sorry.

Matthew laughs.

MATTHEW

An apology. I've been waiting a long time for that.

Arlene glares at Matthew.

ARLENE  
Whatever I did. It isn't worth this.

MATTHEW  
Don't recognize me?

Arlene shakes her head. Matthew presses the gun closer to Bree's temple.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)  
Toss it to her.

Bree shakes her head and cries. Matthew tightens the choke hold.

Bree throws the book at Arlene. It hits the ground. Arlene stares at it.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)  
Read the first confession.

ARLENE  
No.

Matthew cocks the gun. Bree CRIES.

Arlene picks up the volume and opens it. She stares at Matthew.

MATTHEW  
Read it.

ARLENE  
"When I was fourteen, I got addicted  
to various drugs. And, I got pregnant."

Arlene stops reading. Matthew looks at her.

MATTHEW  
Finish it.

ARLENE  
"I couldn't stop. They took my son  
away from me..." Why are you making  
me read this?



Arlene closes the volume. Matthew releases Bree. She staggers around.

ARLENE (CONT'D)

Run, Bree! Get out of here.

Bree runs away. Matthew points the gun at Arlene.

MATTHEW

Want to hear my confession?

Arlene looks away.

ARLENE

No.

Matthew puts his face in hers.

MATTHEW

I've always wanted to kill my mother.

Arlene is frozen.

The gun shakes in Matthew's hand.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Think that one's good enough for your book?

ARLENE

You're mistaken. I'm not who you think I am.

Matthew points the gun into Arlene's forehead.

MATTHEW

My mother was a coward. Made her son an addict before he was even born. Left him no chance. No family. No future.

Arlene looks down. Both are frozen for a moment.

ARLENE

I'm sorry.

Matthew pulls the gun away.

POLICE SIRENS SQUEAL in the distance. Matthew still doesn't move. He looks at Arlene.

The SIRENS get closer. Matthew panics. He looks for an escape.

ARLENE (CONT'D)

Don't run.

Matthew looks at Arlene again and then turns and runs.

Arlene starts to follow Matthew, but then stops.

BANG!

Arlene looks up in tears.

11. INT. ARLENE'S OFFICE, PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Gregory stares at Arlene.

ARLENE

Any more questions?

Gregory turns off the tape recorder.

GREGORY

Was the kid your son?

Arlene looks at him. She stares at the Confessional wall.

Gregory leans forward. He touches Arlene's arm. She looks at him.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

You don't have to tell me. It's okay. I wouldn't tell me.

Arlene smiles at him.

ARLENE

No. I didn't know him at all. No connection.

GREGORY

It's a shame they haven't been able to identify him yet.

ARLENE  
Definitely. A shame.

Gregory nods and stands. He leaves.

Arlene glances at the edge of the ENVELOPE. She slides the confession out from under it. It's Matthew's.

Arlene closes a volume over the confession. She looks at the Confessional wall.

FADE OUT

## *Appendix B: Shot Lists*

### **DAY 1: 26 shots (8AM – 8PM)**

#### ***LOCATION: Sarah's apartment***

1. **7A** – Dolly Shot: WS of Arlene on sofa DOLLIES to CU when knock becomes pounding
2. **7B** – CU of Arlene working and looking at phone (entire scene until she moves to door)
3. **7E** – INSERT of Arlene grabbing bat
4. **7F** – MS of Arlene's torso walking to door with bat, opening door, and reacting
5. **7G** – INSERT of Arlene turning door knob
6. **7H** – MS of Arlene opening door (reverse shot of 7G)
7. **7I** – INSERT of large manila envelope on doorstep
8. **7C** – INSERT of Arlene's phone

**LOCATION MOVE at 12:00-12:30 PM and then LUNCH starts between 12:30-1:00 PM**

#### ***LOCATION: Liberal Arts 156***

1. **2F** – INSERT of Confessional wall
  2. **2C** – INSERT of phone and Arlene pressing play (all messages)
  3. **2J** – Dolly shot: Dolly in to CU of Arlene's face
  4. **2G** – WS of Arlene sitting on floor
  5. **2H** – MS of Arlene looking at mail
  6. **2K** – WS of Arlene grabbing the phone and then getting stuff together to leave
  7. **2L** – INSERT of Arlene turning off light switch
  8. **2I** – INSERT of phone from Arlene's POV on the floor
  9. **9A** – WS of Arlene getting stuff together to leave (entire scene)
  10. **9C** – CU of Arlene as she has phone conversation with Matthew
  11. **9B** – INSERT of cell phone saying "Bree"
-

12. **1A** – Various shots of the Confessional wall
13. **1B** – Zoom out from Confessional wall to CU of Arlene looking at wall
14. **11H** – Dolly shot: WS of Arlene closing Confessional book and looking at Confessional wall DOLLIES to CU of Confessional book
15. **11G** – INSERT of Matthew's Confession and Arlene closing book
16. **1D** – INSERT of bookshelf with Confessional volumes on it
17. **1G** – INSERTS of desk items (including Manila Envelope)
18. **6E** – INSERT of manila envelope

## **DAY 2: 27 shots (11AM – 11PM)**

### ***LOCATION: Liberal Arts 156***

1. **1H** – Dolly shot: INSERT of Gregory putting tape recorder on desk and pressing record
2. **1I** – Dolly shot: MS of Gregory (entire scene)
3. **6B** – Dolly shot: MS of Gregory (same as 1I)
4. **8B** – Dolly shot: MS of Gregory (same as 1I)
5. **1K** – Dolly shot: CU of Gregory (entire scene)
6. **8C** – Dolly shot: CU of Gregory (same as 1K)
7. **11A** – Dolly shot: CU of Gregory (same as 1K)
8. **11D** – Dolly shot: Gregory's hand reaching for Arlene
9. **11F** – Dolly shot: WS of Gregory leaving, manila envelope in foreground

### **LUNCH at 3:00 PM**

1. **1L** – Dolly shot: MS of Arlene (entire scene)
2. **6C** – Dolly shot: MS of Arlene (same as 1L)
3. **11B** – Dolly shot: MS of Arlene (same as 1L)
4. **1J** – Dolly shot: CU of Arlene (entire scene)
5. **6D** – Dolly shot: CU of Arlene (same as 1J)
6. **8A** – Dolly shot: CU of Arlene (same as 1J)
7. **11E** – Dolly shot: CU of Arlene (same as 1J)
8. **1C** – WS of Arlene looking at Confessional wall and Gregory walking in and sitting down
9. **6F** – Dolly shot: WS of Gregory looking at Confessional wall
9. **1E** – MWS (Punch in) of Arlene looking at Confessional wall and Gregory sitting down
10. **1F** – Overhead shot of Arlene near desk
11. **6A** – Overhead of Arlene and Gregory (same as 1F)
12. **11C** – INSERT of tape recorder as Gregory turns it off

### **LOCATION MOVE at 8:00 PM**

### ***LOCATION: PAC Parking Lot***

1. **4A** – XLS of Bree and Arlene walking into parking lot (entire scene?)

2. **4B** – OS of Arlene watching Bree drive away and then Arlene getting into her car
3. **5A** – OS of Arlene in car with shadowy man in rearview mirror
4. **5B** – CU of Arlene through front windshield turning to look at shadowy man running by in rear windshield and then of Arlene noticing Confessional card on passenger seat
5. **5C** – INSERT of Confessional card on passenger seat

## **DAY 3: 17 shots (3PM – 3AM)**

**LOCATION: Liberal Arts 156**

1. **2B** – WS of Arlene at desk (entire scene)
2. **2D** – CU of Arlene at desk (entire scene)
3. **2E** – CU of Bree (entire scene)
4. **2A** – Transition from Sc. 1 to Sc. 2: Zoom out from notepad to reveal OS of Arlene at desk
5. **7D** – CU of Bree on phone with Arlene
6. *RECORD ACTORS' CONFESSIONS & PHONE CONVERSATIONS / GET ANY OTHER SOUND BITES / MOVE EQUIPMENT, SET UP, & PRACTICE NIGHT SHOTS*

**DINNER starts between 7:00-7:30 PM**

**LOCATION: Courtyard between LA 156 and LA 120**

1. **3A** – WS of courtyard as office light goes off PANS down to Arlene walking and looking at light on in office then PANS to office with light on
2. **3B** – CU of Arlene turning to look at light, turning to call 911. Shadow appears behind, and Arlene turns to see Bree as Bree steps into light
3. **3C** – Two-shot of Bree and Arlene (through end of scene)
4. **10A** – Dolly shot: WS of Arlene stepping into the courtyard
5. **10D** – Dolly shot: MS of Arlene (entire scene)
6. **10F** – Dolly shot: CU of Arlene (entire scene)

**MIDNIGHT SNACK**

1. **10B** – Dolly shot: MS of Matthew and Bree (entire scene)
2. **10E** – Dolly shot: CU of Matthew (entire scene)
3. **10C** – Dolly shot: INSERT of Confessional book in Bree's hand
4. **10G** – Dolly shot: INSERT of Confessional book on ground
5. **10H** – Dolly shot: Master shot of entire scene
6. **10I** – MCU of Arlene starting to go after Matthew and stopping and then reacting to gun shot



## Appendix C: Call Sheets

### The Confessional

<b>CREW CALL</b>		<b>DAY: 1 of 3</b>	
<b>7:30am</b>			
<b>Director:</b>	Jennifer Ledet (985) 696-1648	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Fri. 6/8/2007</b>
<b>Producer:</b>	Kathleen Ledet (985) 691-3085	<b>Weather:</b>	88°/75° (30% rain)
<b>UPM:</b>	Jessica Latour (504) 289-1397	<b>Sunrise:</b>	5:59 AM
<b>1st AD:</b>	Kathleen Ledet (985) 691-3085	<b>Sunset:</b>	8:00 PM
<b>2nd AD:</b>	Chris Buller (504) 512-0142	<b>Shooting Call:</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>
<b>NO VISITORS TO SET WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL FROM PRODUCTION!</b>			
<b>ALL CELL PHONES &amp; PAGERS OFF</b>			
<b>*MEET IN PARKING LOT IN FRONT OF LIBERAL ARTS AND EDUCATION BLDG. at 7:30 AM.*</b> <b>***OUR CARPOOLS TO SARAH'S APT. WILL LEAVE AT 7:45 AM SHARP!***</b>			
<b>Scene Description</b>			
	<u>Sc. #</u>	<u>Cast</u>	<u>Int/Ext D/N</u> <u>Location</u>
Living room (Past) - Arlene calls Matt, talks to Bree, & gets envelope	7	1	INT/DAY      Sarah's apt.
<b>LOCATION MOVE between 12 &amp; 1 PM to LA 156</b>			
<b>**LUNCH starts between 12 &amp; 1 PM in LA 120</b>			
Courtyard (Past) - Arlene sees light in office and sees Bree	2	1	INT/NIGHT      LA 156
Office (Past) - Arlene is leaving, Matt calls (he has Bree)	9	1	INT/NIGHT      LA 156
Office (Pres.) - Arlene looks at Confessional wall	1	1	INT/NIGHT      LA 156
Office (Pres.) - Arlene closes book over the envelope & looks at wall	11	1	INT/NIGHT      LA 156
<b>Crew Parking:</b> Parking lot in front of Liberal Arts and Education Building ; Car pool to & from Sarah's apt.			
<b>Smoking Area:</b> Outside of Sarah's apt. ; LA Courtyard			
<b>Craft services:</b> Located in Sarah's kitchen ; LA 120 for lunch and after lunch			
<b>Hospital:</b> Touro Infirmary / 1401 Foucher Street / New Orleans 70115 / Phone # 504-897-7011			
<b>Talent: Call Times - Make-up Hair Times / On set</b>			
<u>NAME</u>	<u>CHARACTER</u>	<u>CALL TIME / in MU HAIR</u>	<u>#</u> <u>ON SET</u> <u>Remarks</u>
Katryn Schmidt	Arlene	7:30 AM / 8:00 AM	1      8:35 AM      Day 3, 2, 4, 1
<b>Special Instructions</b>			
<b>PROPS:</b>	Scene 7 - home phone, baseball bat, manila envelope Scene 2 - office phone, coffee cup, box of mail, mail, purse, keys, cell phone Scene 9 - purse, keys, cell phone Scene 11 - manila envelope, Matt's confession, The Confessional book		
<b>WARDROBE:</b>	Scene 7 - Day 3      Scene 9 - Day 4 Scene 2 - Day 2      Scene 1 & 11 - Day 1		
<b>Advanced Schedule:</b>			
<b>Day 2 of 3</b>	<b>Sat., June 9, 2007 at 11 AM</b>	<u>Sc. #</u>	<u>Cast</u> <u>Int/Ext D/N</u> <u>Location</u>
Office (Pres.) - Gregory begins to interview Arlene		1	1,2      INT/NIGHT      LA 156
Office (Pres.) - Gregory looks at wall; they talk of "confessions"		6	1,2      INT/NIGHT      LA 156
Office (Pres.) - Interview continues; they talk of "problems"		8	1,2      INT/NIGHT      LA 156
Office (Pres.) - Interview ends; Gregory leaves		11	1,2      INT/NIGHT      LA 156
Parking lot (Past) - Bree and Arlene gets into their cars		4	1,3      EXT/NIGHT      PAC parking lot
Car (Past) - Arlene sees shadowy figure in mirror and notices card		5	1      EXT/NIGHT      PAC parking lot
<b>***Soylent Green is people!***</b>			

## The Confessional

<b>CREW CALL</b>		<b>11:00am</b>		<b>DAY: 2 of 3</b>	
Director:	Jennifer Ledet	(985) 696-1648	Date:	Sat. 6/9/2007	
Producer:	Kathleen Ledet	(985) 691-3085	Weather:	88°/75° (40% rain)	
UPM:	Jessica Latour	(504) 289-1397	Sunrise:	5:59 AM	
1st AD:	Kathleen Ledet	(985) 691-3085	Sunset:	8:00 PM	
2nd AD:	Chris Buller	(504) 512-0142	Shooting Call:	12:00 PM	
<b>NO VISITORS TO SET WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL FROM PRODUCTION!</b>					
<b>ALL CELL PHONES &amp; PAGERS TO VIBRATE</b>					
<b>***MEET IN LA 156 AT 11 AM!***</b>					
<b>Scene Description</b>					
	<u>Sc. #</u>	<u>Cast</u>	<u>Int/Ext D/N</u>	<u>Location</u>	
Office (Pres.) - Gregory's side of Interview scenes	1,6,8,11	1,2	INT/NIGHT	LA 156	
<b>** LUNCH starts around 3 PM to LA 120</b>					
Office (Pres.) - Arlene's side of Interview scenes	1,6,8,11	1,2	INT/NIGHT	LA 156	
<b>LOCATION MOVE between 7 &amp; 8 PM to PAC PARKING LOT</b>					
Parking lot (Past) - Bree and Arlene gets into their cars	4	1,3	EXT/NIGHT	PAC Parking Lot	
Car (Past) - Arlene sees shadowy figure in mirror and notices card	5	1	EXT/NIGHT	PAC Parking Lot	
<b>Crew Parking:</b> Liberal Arts Parking Lot (near Fine Arts building) ; Children's Center Parking Lot					
<b>Smoking Area:</b> LA Courtyard ; near PAC building					
<b>Craft services:</b> LA 120 ; near PAC building					
<b>Hospital:</b> Touro Infirmary / 1401 Foucher Street / New Orleans 70115 / Phone # 504-897-7011					
<b>Talent: Call Times - Make-up Hair Times / On set</b>					
<u>NAME</u>	<u>CHARACTER</u>	<u>CALL TIME / in MU HAIR</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>ON SET</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Katryn Schmidt	Arlene	11:00 AM / 11:10 AM	1	11:40 AM	Day 1, 2
Lorne Boni	Gregory	11:00 AM / 11:05 AM	2	11:30 AM	Day 1
Kat Johnston	Bree	7:00 PM / 7:10 PM	3	7:40 PM	Day 2
<b>Special Instructions</b>					
<b>PROPS:</b>	Scene 1 - office phone, tape recorder, manila envelope, notepad, pen Scene 6 & 8 - office phone, tape recorder, manila envelope, notepad, pen, coffee cup Scene 11 - office phone, tape recorder, manila envelope, notepad, pen, coffee cup, Matt's confession, The Confessional book Scene 4 - Arlene: purse, keys, cell phone / Bree: purse, keys Scene 5 - purse, keys, cell phone, Matt's card with phone number				
<b>WARDROBE:</b>	Scene 1, 6, 8, 11 - Day 1 Scene 4 & 5 - Day 2				
<b>Advanced Schedule:</b>					
<u>Day 3 of 3</u>	<u>Sun., June 10, 2007 at 3 PM</u>	<u>Sc. #</u>	<u>Cast</u>	<u>Int/Ext D/N</u>	<u>Location</u>
Office (Past) - Bree and Arlene listen to phone messages		2	1,3	INT/NIGHT	LA 156
RECORD SECRETS & PHONE CONVERSATIONS, ANY OTHER SOUND					LA 156
Courtyard (Past) - Arlene sees light in office and then sees Bree		3	1,3	EXT/NIGHT	LA Courtyard
Courtyard (Past) - Matthew confronts Arlene		10	1,3,4	EXT/NIGHT	LA Courtyard
<b>***We're gonna need a bigger boat...***</b>					

# The Confessional

<b>CREW CALL</b>		<b>DAY: 3 of 3</b>	
<b>3:00pm</b>			
Director:	Jennifer Ledet (985) 696-1648	Date:	Sun. 6/10/2007
Producer:	Kathleen Ledet (985) 691-3085	Weather:	88°/75° (30% rain)
UPM:	Jessica Latour (504) 289-1397	Sunrise:	5:59 AM
1st AD:	Kathleen Ledet (985) 691-3085	Sunset:	8:01 PM
2nd AD:	Chris Buller (504) 512-0142	Shooting Call:	<b>4:00 PM</b>
<b>NO VISITORS TO SET WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL FROM PRODUCTION!</b>			
<b>ALL CELL PHONES &amp; PAGERS OFF</b>			
<b>***MEET IN LA 156 AT 3 PM!***</b>			
<b>*NO ONE TOUCHES THE GUN ON SET TODAY EXCEPT FOR KEISHA AND JOE!!*</b>			
<b>Scene Description</b>			
	<u>Sc. #</u>	<u>Cast</u>	<u>Int/Ext D/N</u>
Office (Past) - Bree and Arlene listen to phone messages	2	1, 3	INT / NIGHT
RECORD SECRETS & PHONE CONVERSATIONS, ANY OTHER SOUND			LA 156
LOCATION MOVE between 6 & 7 PM TO LA COURTYARD			LA 156
** DINNER starts between 7 & 7:30 PM in LA 120			
Courtyard (Past) - Arlene sees light in office and then sees Bree	3	1, 3	EXT / NIGHT
Courtyard (Past) - Matthew confronts Arlene	10	1,3,4	EXT / NIGHT
<b>Crew Parking:</b> Parking lot in front of Liberal Arts and Education Building			
<b>Smoking Area:</b> LA Courtyard ; Circle area in front of Math building			
<b>Craft services:</b> LA 120			
<b>Hospital:</b> Touro Infirmary / 1401 Foucher Street / New Orleans 70115 / Phone # 504-897-7011			
<b>Talent: Call Times - Make-up Hair Times / On set</b>			
<u>NAME</u>	<u>CHARACTER</u>	<u>CALL TIME / in MU HAIR</u>	<u>#</u>
Katryn Schmidt	Arlene	3:00 PM / 3:05 PM	1
Kat Johnston	Bree	3:00 PM / 3:15 PM	2
Joe Fredo	Matthew	6:00 PM / 8:45 PM	4
<b>Special Instructions</b>			
<b>PROPS:</b>	Scene 2 - pen, notepad, office phone, coffee cup, (box of mail & mail must be visible on set)		
	Scene 3 - Arlene: purse, keys, cell phone / Bree: purse, keys		
	Scene 10 - Volume 1 of The Confessional book, gun / Arlene: purse, keys, cell phone		
<b>WARDROBE:</b>	Scene 2 & 3 - Day 2		
	Scene 10 - Day 4		
<b>SPECIAL NOTES:</b>	Scene 10 - Need to have police lights on set / Need to call campus police when gun is on set		
<b>***Fasten your seat belts, it's going to be a bumpy night!***</b>			
<b>Thank you for your hard work! You are all awesome!</b>			

## Appendix D: Examples of On-set Continuity Notes

FADE IN:

1. INT. ARLENE'S OFFICE, PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

The walls of the office are tiled with collages, photos, and drawings with words emblazoned on them.

A large bookshelf stands in the corner. On its shelves, large leather-bound books that read *The Confessional* on the spine. The books start at Volume 2.

ARLENE KANE, early-to-mid-thirties and meticulously dressed, turns from the collaged wall to her desk.

The desk has a large phone with multiple lines. The message light blinks.

Papers are stacked neatly. A LARGE MANILA ENVELOPE with a large, visible return address is on the top of the stack.

GREGORY, a reporter in his late twenties, sits across from Arlene's desk. He pulls a tape recorder out of his briefcase.

Any GREGORY  
No objections?

Arlene nods.

GREGORY doesn't wait for Arlene to answer. He puts the tape recorder on the desk and presses record. The recorder is close to the MANILA ENVELOPE.

Arlene sits in her chair.

ARLENE  
It's a little late for an interview.

GREGORY  
For this story, I would've come later.

Arlene glances at him. Gregory smiles at her.

ARLENE  
I don't think there's anything left to tell.

GREGORY  
I find it hard to believe that the Queen of Secrets told the whole truth.

Shot take  
1C (different than shot list description)

- 1 - starts w/ "Arlene" CS, she moves to her desk (light shines on her), end take with "Greg" saying "Any objections?"
  - problem with framing
  - dolly shot Right to Left
- 2 - ends on "Any objections?"
  - framing a problem
  - dolly shot right to left
- ③ - problem with framing
  - Jenny will have to use another shot (directa)

Shot take  
1E

- 1 - nothing shot, starts with "Greg" by door, camera out of focus
- 2 - cut, see lights + grip
- 3\* - went out of frame
- ④ - possible shadow of boom mike
- 5\*

Shot take  
1 I

- 1 - cut early (camera problems), Greg comes from LS to chair, recorder in RH, notebk + pen LH, Dolly shot Left to Right
- 2 - grabs recorder from pocket w/ RH, pen in RH + notebk in LH when writing
  - see stand shot + camera movement is awkward
  - Dolly shot L to R
- 3 - cut early, head cut off on screen

④ "Greg's" pen is in btwn middle + 3<sup>rd</sup> finger when listening to "Arlene"

camera movement is perfect

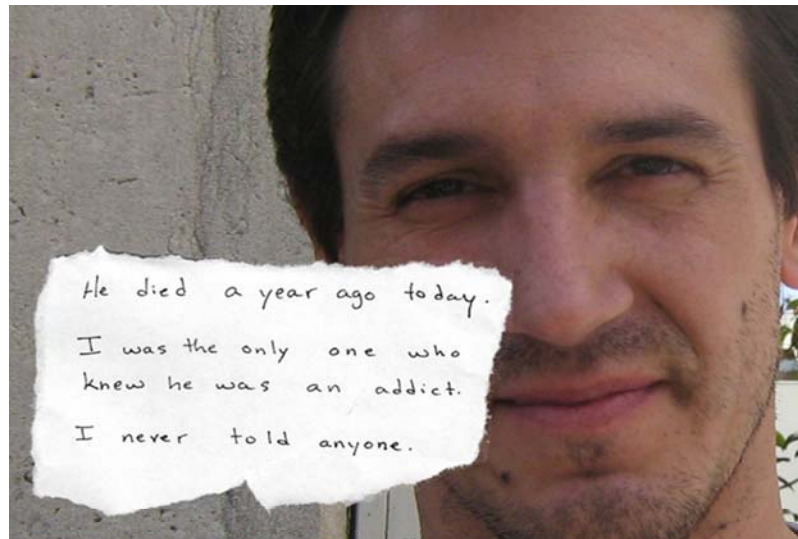
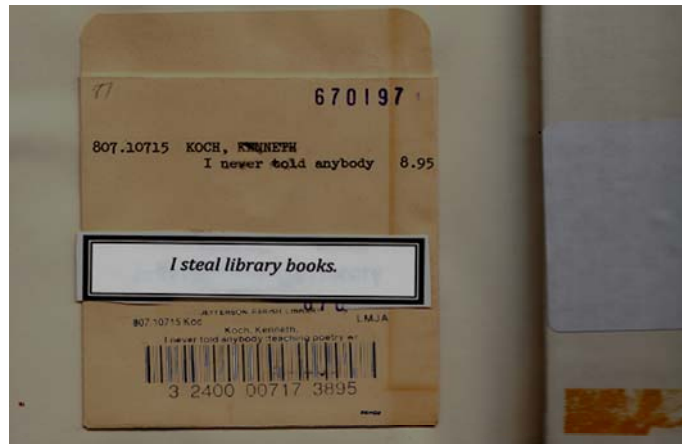
→ ⑤\* - walks in w/ pen in LH btwn 1<sup>st</sup> + 2<sup>nd</sup> finger, held pen btwn 1<sup>st</sup> + 2<sup>nd</sup> finger when listening to "Arlene"



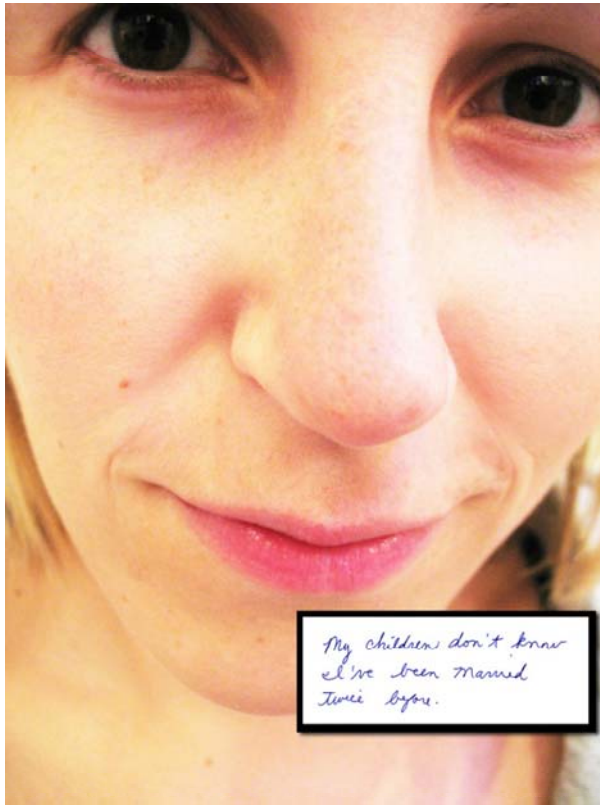
*Appendix E: Examples of Confessions in the Opening Credits Sequence*

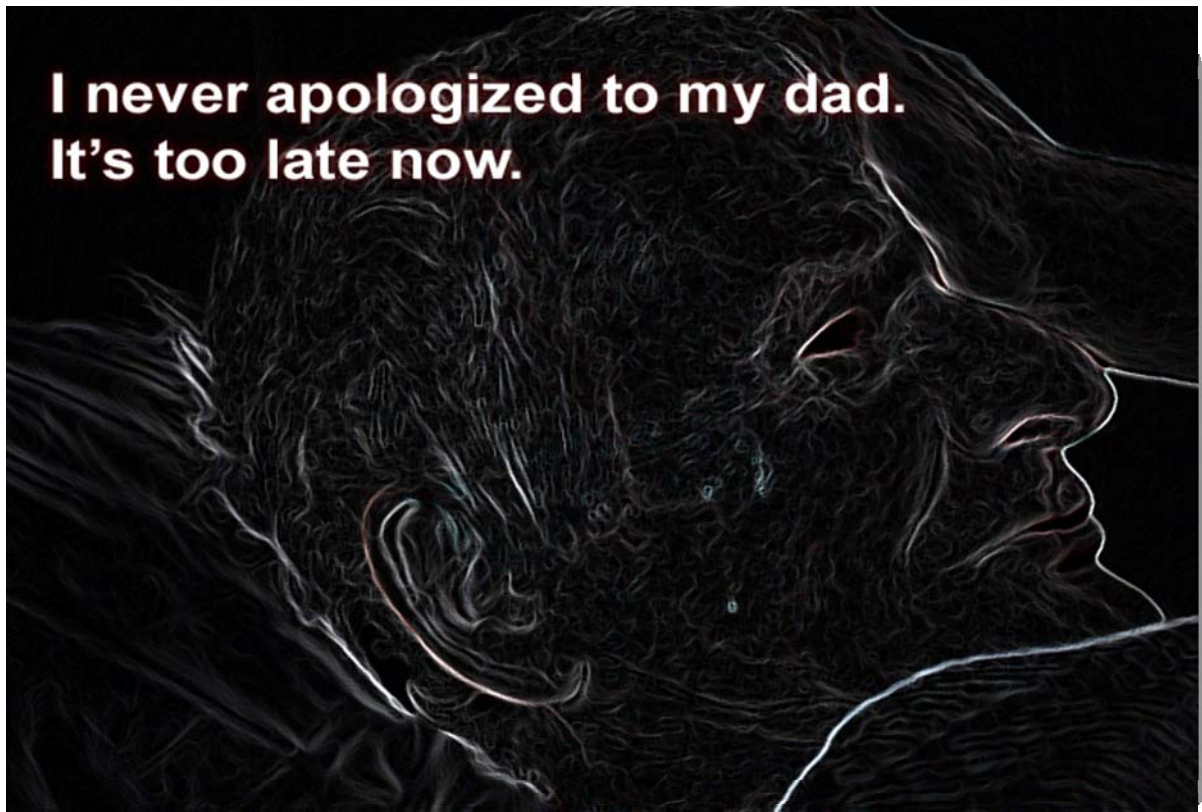
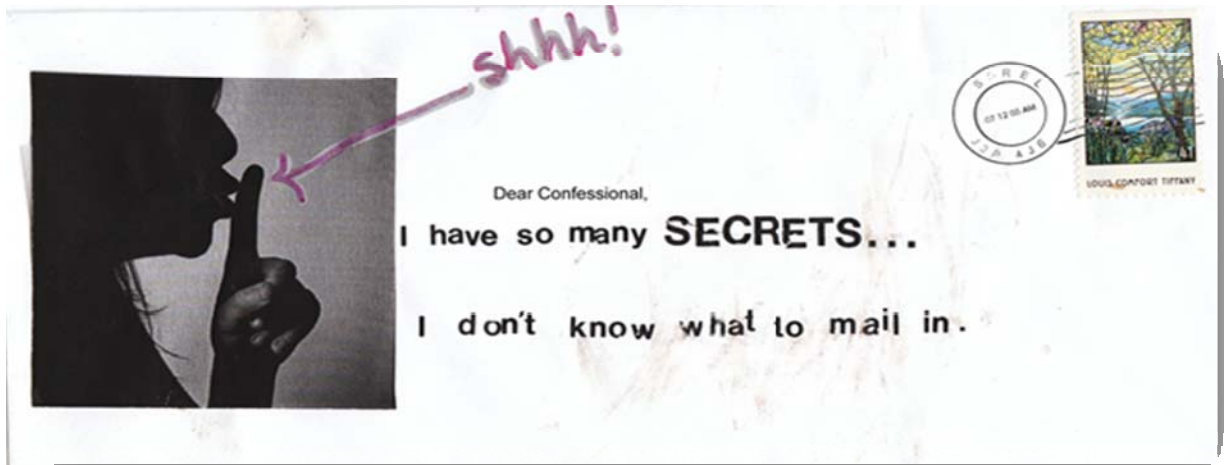












*Appendix F: Stills From The Confessional*









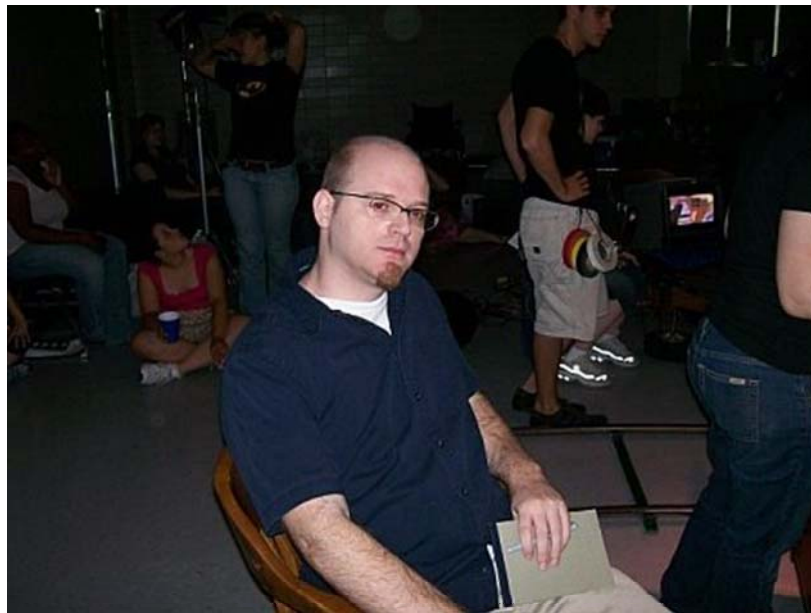


## *Appendix G: Production Stills*















## Appendix H: Survey Responses

Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story	5 4 3 2 1
Characters	5 4 3 2 1
Acting	5 4 3 2 1
Sound	5 4 3 2 1
Editing	5 4 3 2 1
Opening Titles	5 4 3 2 1
Music	5 4 3 2 1
Cinematography	5 4 3 2 1
Was the plot easy to understand?	5 4 3 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film?

Brilliant - someone with so much to hide  
being so interested in the secrets of others

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

Yes - From the very beginning you were able to  
understand the lead character's role. Improvements  
could only be I wish the film was longer.

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

No - lighting differences and mood make the  
transitions very easy to follow.

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

Very! Especially towards the end!

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

Beautiful editing! Great visual and audio quality -  
especially in high definition.

Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story	5 4 3 2 1
Characters	5 4 3 2 1
Acting	5 4 3 2 1
Sound	5 4 3 2 1
Editing	5 4 3 2 1
Opening Titles	5 4 3 2 1
Music	5 4 3 2 1
Cinematography	5 4 3 2 1 (3) DARK Lighting
Was the plot easy to understand?	5 4 3 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film? I liked the concept of the film.

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved? yes, I wouldn't change it.

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing? Not At All, I usually try to figure out the movie in the early stages. This one kept me guessing at first.

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful? yes, all the way till the end.

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*? gun shots at the end, could have been more realistic. The picture was a little dark in some scenes. Great job with the opening titles and the music.

Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story            ⑤ 4 3 2 1  
Characters      ⑤ 4 3 2 1  
Acting           ⑤ 4 3 2 1  
Sound           ⑤ 4 3 2 1  
Editing          ⑤ 4 3 2 1  
Opening Titles ⑤ 4 3 2 1  
Music           ⑤ 4 3 2 1  
Cinematography ⑤ 4 3 2 1  
Was the plot easy to understand?    5 4 ③ 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film?

I think it was a very interesting story, b/c even the  
confessional has a confession to be made.

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

Yes I think it was well-executed, ~~and~~ it was a little confusing  
at time, you could explain a little more about the main character

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

Yes, a little

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

Yes, definitely

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

I think it was great

(turn it into a movie!!!

I want to see it in  
theaters)

Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story (5) 4 3 2 1 - original!  
Characters (5) 4 3 2 1  
Acting 5 (4) 3 2 1 - lead actress was superb  
Sound (5) 4 3 2 1  
Editing (5) 4 3 2 1  
Opening Titles (5) 4 3 2 1 - exceptional!  
Music (5) 4 3 2 1  
Cinematography (5) 4 3 2 1  
Was the plot easy to understand? (5) 4 3 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film?

Good, original concept. The twist, or possible twist, in the last few seconds of the film has the viewer thinking and speculating long after the final credits.

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

Yes. Clever use of camera angles helped to keep the viewer engaged, and immersed in the story. A longer shot on the face of the lead actress in the final scene may have helped strengthen the "twist".

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

Slightly confusing at the first "flash-back" sequence, but then it made sense.

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

Yes. You were never sure exactly where the story was heading. The outdoor night scenes were well done, and added to the suspense.

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

Excellent use of sound effects, music, and editing to build suspense, and keep the viewer on edge. The opening titles were very, very well done, and helped immensely to start the story.



Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story	5 4 3 2 1
Characters	5 4 3 2 1
Acting	5 4 3 2 1
Sound	5 4 3 2 1
Editing	5 4 3 2 1
Opening Titles	5 4 3 2 1
Music	5 4 3 2 1
Cinematography	5 4 3 2 1
Was the plot easy to understand?	5 4 3 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film?

I found the concept to be interesting and well thought out.

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

It was well-executed because from the beginning I knew what was going ~~on~~ up to the ending where I found myself surprised.

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

No

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

very much so.

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

all around pleasing film, that kept me interested from beginning to end.



Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story	5 4 3 2 1
Characters	5 4 3 2 1
Acting	5 4 3 2 1
Sound	5 4 3 2 1
Editing	5 4 3 2 1
Opening Titles	5 4 3 2 1
Music	5 4 3 2 1
Cinematography	5 4 3 2 1
Was the plot easy to understand?	5 4 3 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film?

Strong concept, nice play on current pop culture.

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

I thought the music was a little too intrusive. Except for the credit sequences, I thought it should have been more subtle.

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

Not at all. In fact, I thought the "Two weeks earlier" title card was unnecessary.

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

Yes. The structure lent itself well to the suspenseful elements.

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

I didn't think there was enough of an age gap. Even if she was 14 when he was born, I thought she looked too young to be his mother.

Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Number 5

Story	5 4 3 2 1
Characters	5 4 3 2 1
Acting	5 4 3 2 1
Sound	5 4 3 2 1
Editing	5 4 3 2 1
Opening Titles	5 4 3 2 1
Music	5 4 3 2 1
Cinematography	5 4 3 2 1
Was the plot easy to understand?	5 4 3 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film?

Yes

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

Yes! The lighting at night was too dark.

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

Not really

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

YES!!!!

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

I really It was very suspenseful + scary, and I love  
**LOVE** it A LOT!!! It kept me on the  
the ~~music~~ edge of my seat! I also love the picture  
music.

Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story	5 4 (3) 2 1
Characters	5 (4) 3 2 1
Acting	5 (4) 3 2 1
Sound	5 4 (3) 2 1
Editing	(5) 4 3 2 1
Opening Titles	5 (4) 3 2 1
Music	(5) 4 3 2 1
Cinematography	5 (4) 3 2 1
Was the plot easy to understand?	5 (4) 3 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film?

IT WAS A REASONABLE STRAIGHT UP THING

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

I THINK THAT IT WAS WELL DEVELOPED FOR THE LENGTH

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

NO

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

NO, THE FRAMING ~~THE~~ STORY ERASED MOST OF  
THE THREAT

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

I THINK IT WAS A VERY PROFESSIONAL STUDENT FILM

Overall - I really liked it.

Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story (5) 4 3 2 1 ← Possible for these types of feelings to surface.  
Characters (5) 4 3 2 1  
Acting 5 (4) 3 2 1 —  
Sound (5) 4 3 2 1  
Editing (5) 4 3 2 1  
Opening Titles (5) 4 3 2 1  
Music (5) 4 3 2 1  
Cinematography 5 (4) 3 2 1 — Several scenes — the screen was very dark; but this may be to correlate to the "dark" plot.

Was the plot easy to understand? (5) 4 3 2 1

Would need to re-watch - wasn't sure when the reporter started interview.

What did you think about the concept of the film?

Very good, suspenseful; I believe everyone has deep, dark secrets that they are too embarrassed to share and anonymous sharing would allow someone to face their secret — maybe get beyond it.

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

In one spot - wasn't sure if "the boy" shot himself or police shot him. If police, I believe they would have shouted out something like

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

No - I understood "drop your gun."

it. why did she deny (to reporter) that the boy was her son?

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

Yes - I was waiting to see what was coming next - I got "nervous" when she opened the door (holding the body).

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

would like to hear "the boy" ask, "Why did you give me up, why didn't you want me?" something along those lines.



Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story (5) 4 3 2 1 *compelling*

Characters (5) 4 3 2 1

Acting (5) 4 3 2 1

Sound 5 (4) 3 2 1

Editing 5 (4) 3 2 1

Opening Titles (5) 4 3 2 1

Music (5) 4 3 2 1

Cinematography (5) 4 3 2 1

Was the plot easy to understand? 5 4 (3) 2 1

*A few of the flashbacks took a few seconds before I realized they were in the past.*

What did you think about the concept of the film?

*A very interesting concept - I was drawn into the film first by the title, then the confession in the beginning credit sequence and finally by the characters themselves.*

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

*Yes - The indication of the flashbacks in one or two instances as mentioned before.*  
*In the night shot - I wanted to see the guy and ~~his~~ the girl he captured a little sooner.*

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

*Only the flashbacks and only for a few seconds.*

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

*Yes - but not overdone for this film.*

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story	5 4 <u>3</u> 2 1
Characters	5 4 <u>3</u> 2 1
Acting	5 4 <u>3</u> 2 1
Sound	5 <u>4</u> 3 2 1
Editing	5 4 3 <u>2</u> 1
Opening Titles	<u>5</u> 4 3 2 1
Music	<u>5</u> 4 3 2 1
Cinematography	5 4 <u>3</u> 2 1
Was the plot easy to understand?	5 4 <u>3</u> 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film?

The concept was good but more could be brought out to make one feel the need to think that others to have a right to think and act differently

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

The film constructing may need a bit more direct meaning of a confession. but I found it very moving and very meaningful!

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

yes, a bit, but very suspenseful and full of sense making approaches.

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

The film was suspenseful.

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

The title "*The Confessional*" is all inspiring and too this title could bring out the best of a person who needs to mend something buried deep in their minds that bothers them. Sometimes valuable time and effort are wasted away over a minor error. "*The Confessional*" could preface one of this minor error.

Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story	5 4 <u>3</u> 2 1
Characters	5 4 3 <u>2</u> 1
Acting	5 4 <u>3</u> 2 1
Sound	5 4 <u>3</u> 2 1
Editing	5 <u>4</u> 3 2 1
Opening Titles	<u>5</u> 4 3 2 1
Music	5 4 <u>3</u> 2 1
Cinematography	5 <u>4</u> 3 2 1
Was the plot easy to understand?	5 <u>4</u> 3 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film?

*Liked the concept but I don't think those without knowledge of Post Secret could understand her profession.*

*Otherwise, it was great!*

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

*Seems like ~~there~~ there was scenes of the past missing and more backstory.*

*Music was repetitive, and Brie acting was very bad.*

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

*Yes! It took me forever to get use to that weird transition noise that signaled going back in time.*

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

*Yes, but the ~~question~~ question should be did the suspense pay off ???*

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

*~~the~~ Maybe more care should be spent to make sure the script is solid so there would no possible confusion*

Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story	5 (4) 3 2 1
Characters	5 (4) 3 2 1
Acting	5 (4) 3 2 1
Sound	(5) 4 3 2 1
Editing	(5) 4 3 2 1
Opening Titles	(5) 4 3 2 1
Music	5 (4) 3 2 1
Cinematography	(5) 4 3 2 1
Was the plot easy to understand?	(5) 4 3 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film?

I like that it had meaning behind it.

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

yes, i wish could have gotten to know the lead character better.

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

No

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

yes

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

I loved the begin with all the confessions. Before the movie started.



Please rate *The Confessional* in the following areas (with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor):

Story	5 (4) 3 2 1
Characters	(5) 4 3 2 1
Acting	5 (4) 3 2 1
Sound	5 (4) 3 2 1
Editing	(5) 4 3 2 1
Opening Titles	(5) 4 3 2 1
Music	(5) 4 3 2 1
Cinematography	5 (4) 3 2 1
Was the plot easy to understand?	5 (4) 3 2 1

What did you think about the concept of the film?

I'M A BIG FAN OF POSTSECRET, SO THIS MOVIE WAS A SUPER COOL CONCEPT. SUPER WAY TO MAKE A STORY OUT OF A GOOD IDEA.

Do you think that the concept was well-executed? How could it be improved?

YEAH, JUST WISHED THAT THERE WAS MORE OF THAT QUIRKY OFFICE ASSISTANT!

Did you find the film's structure to be confusing?

AT FIRST, BUT THE COLOR DIFFERENCE AND SOUND EFFECTS HELPED SORT THAT OUT.

Did you feel that the film was suspenseful?

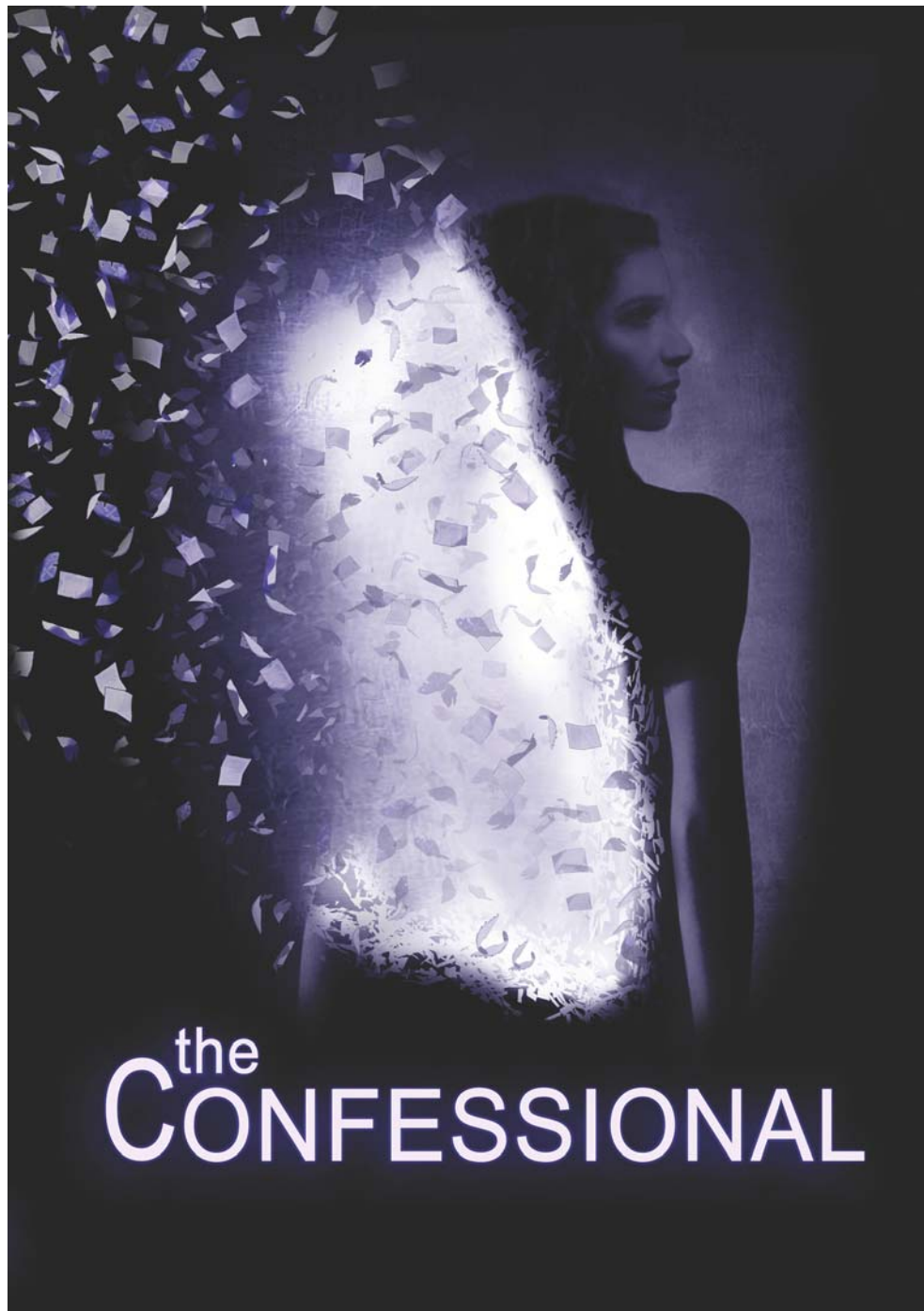
SUPER SUSPENSIFUL!

ESP. APARTMENT AND COURTYARD SCENES

Do you have any other comments about *The Confessional*?

LOVED THE JUMP CUTS !!

*Appendix I: DVD Cover Art*





Arlene Kane is obsessed with other people's secrets. She is the creator of *The Confessional*, a project that studies the human conscience and its need to confess the truth. Strangers send her their deepest fears, wishes, and regrets, but Arlene confesses her past sins to no one.

When a mysterious stranger appears, and a reporter starts looking for answers, Arlene must relive the secrets she has been hiding from and face the truth she has denied for so long.

#### THE CONFESSIONAL

KATRYN SCHMIDT LORNE BONI KAT JOHNSTON JOE FREDO  
DIRECTED BY JENNIFER LEDET PRODUCED BY KATHLEEN LEDET  
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY ALLEN MYERS EDITED BY JEN SURAN  
© 2008 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

NTSC



Color

Approx. 17 Mins.

1.33:1 Aspect Ratio

English

Not Rated

## **Vita**

Jennifer Rachel Ledet was born in Alta Loma, Texas, on September 27, 1979. She graduated from South Lafourche High School on Bayou Lafourche in South Louisiana in 1997. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Film, Theater, and Communication Arts from the University of New Orleans in 2004.