

Media as a Mirror

A SOCIAL ACTION
DOCUMENTARY



**A
REFLECTION
OF THE
QUEER
EXPERIENCE**

Kaitlyn Fung
IWL Policy Tracks: Media and
Communications & Human Rights
December 6, 2023



Institute for Women's Leadership

The Leadership Scholars Certificate Program is a two-year selective, interdisciplinary certificate program that prepares Rutgers undergraduate women to be informed, innovative, and socially responsible leaders.

Leadership Scholars design and implement social action projects to expand their understanding of issues and problems and to develop leadership skills.

This project gives Scholars the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained about leadership, advocacy, and social change with the practical and experiential knowledge they have developed about a particular policy issue or problem through the field site placement. It also further develops leadership skills by giving undergraduates the opportunity to *practice leadership through* action.

To find out more please visit the Institute for Women's Leadership's website at <http://iwl.rutgers.edu>.

The Problem



DIVERSITY OF REGULAR CHARACTERS OF PRIMETIME SCRIPTED BROADCAST, 2022-2023 SEASON

	# OF CHARACTERS	PERCENTAGES
STRAIGHT	591	89.7%
LGBTQ	70	10.6%

*two transgender characters are also straight

OF CHARACTERS

637

2021 - 2022



OF CHARACTERS

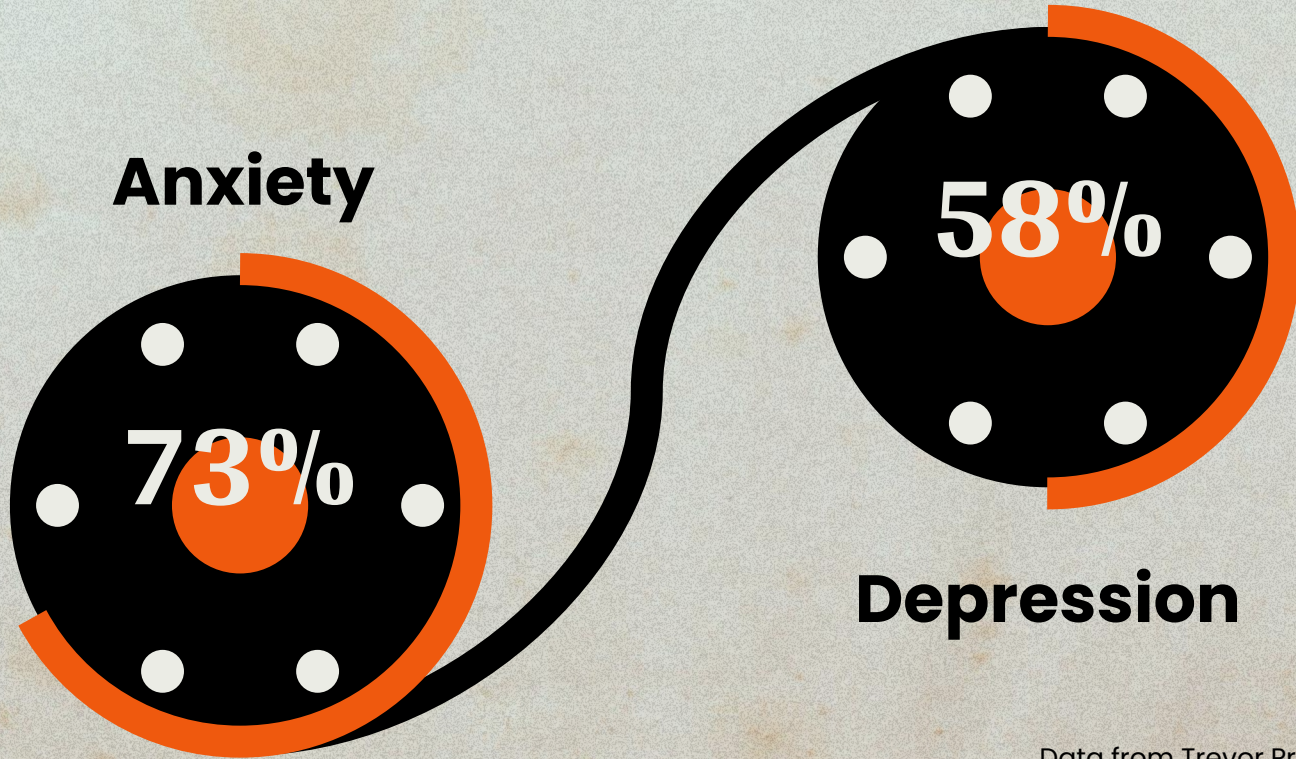
596

2022 - 2023



Tables from GLAAD's [Where We Are On TV 2022-2023 Report](#)

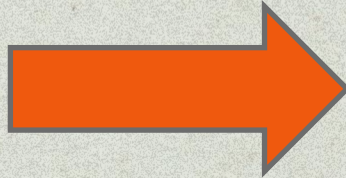
Mental Health Among LGBTQ+ Youth



Data from Trevor Project's ["2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health"](#)

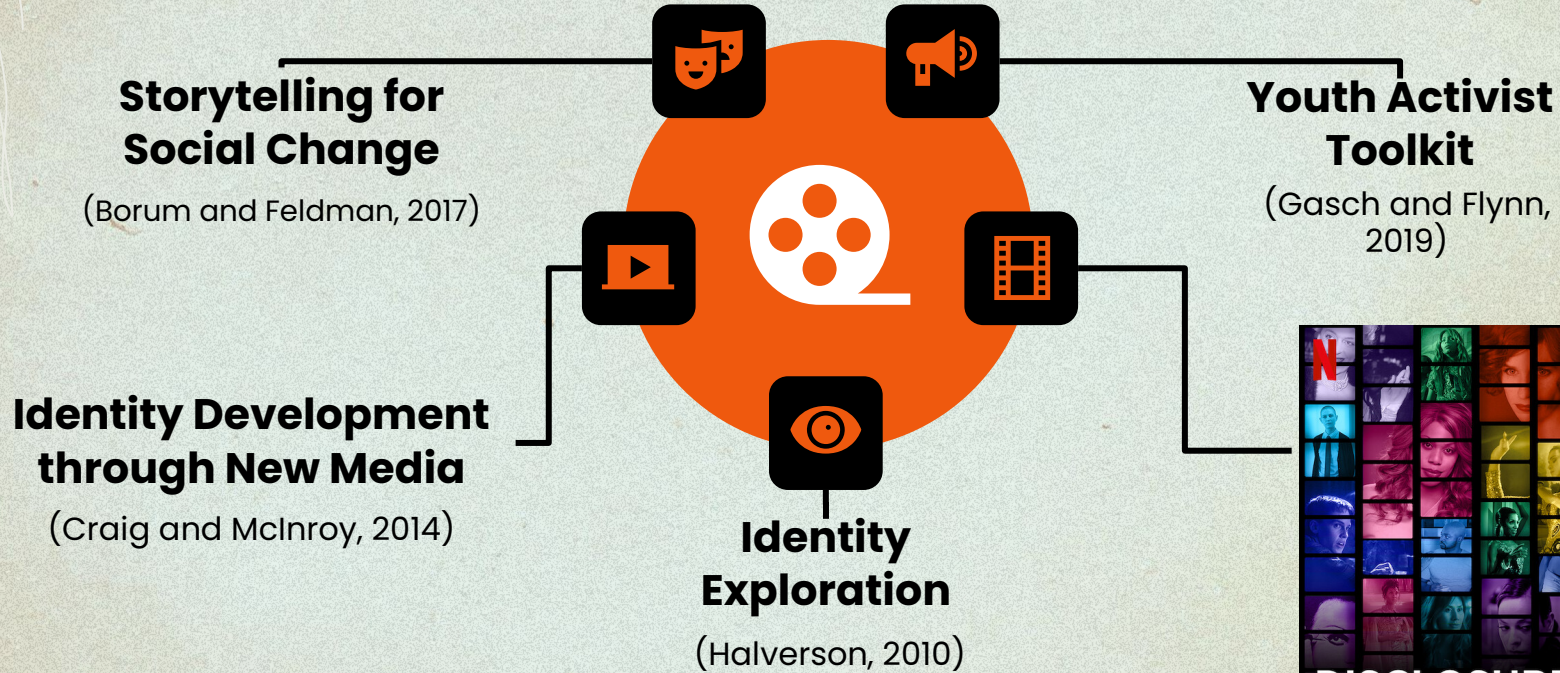
Goal Statement

Create a documentary with five queer Rutgers students talking about how LGBTQ+ representation has impacted their lives and queer identity formation.



1. Inform allies and creatives about how life saving LGBTQ+ representation is for queer youth and show them how they can support community in the fight for more representation.
2. Empower LGBTQ+ people by sharing their stories and hearing stories from their community.

Intellectual/Conceptual Foundation



Products



Media as a Mirror

A SOCIAL ACTION DOCUMENTARY

A REFLECTION OF THE QUEER EXPERIENCE

FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 17
ACADEMIC BUILDING WEST
ROOM 1180 - 7 PM


RSVP HERE → 


Five queer Rutgers students talk about the importance of LGBTQ+ representation in media. Followed by a Q & A with the director.

RUTGERS
Institution for Women's Leadership

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
KAITLYN FUNG


Outreach


November 2 11:45 AM


nxbaafnkln

Incredibly honored to be one of 🙋 queer students that took part in this conversation!

Five queer Rutgers students talk about the importance of LGBTQ+ representation in media. Followed by a Q&A with the director.



@rusjelgbt

Support @kaitlyn_fung and her documentary if you're a Rutgers student or alumni!

Nubia had some great things to say and you won't want to miss it!

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Stephanie P	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nubia Franklin	LLEGO	Instagram
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		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rutgers Film Production Club	Club for film production students	Instagram
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RU Ultraviolet	Club for LGBTQ+ non-men	Instagram
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nico Toepfer	Demarest RA	Text
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audrey Arias-Justo	BIPOC MGSA	Text

Timeline

Summer

Storyboarding, research documentaries, preliminary meetings and cast.

September

Create interview questions, film interviews.

November

Send out drafts, finish editing and screen the film.

August

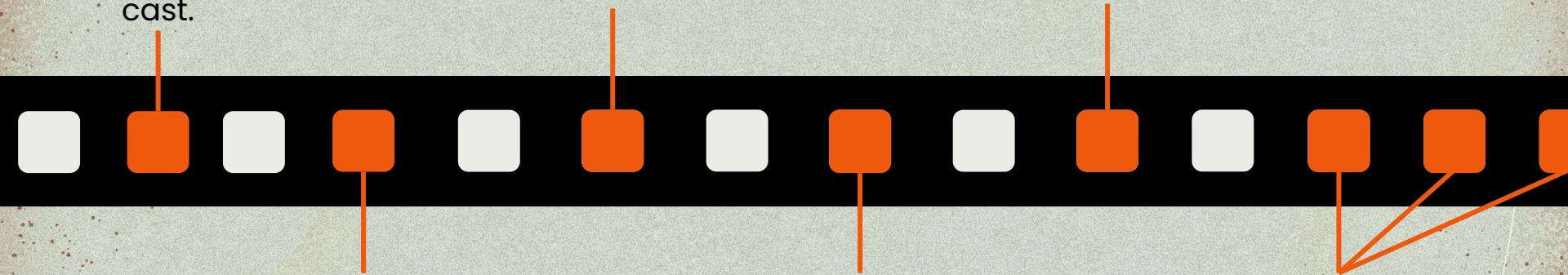
Schedule interviews, secure equipment, establish vision for set.

October

Transcribe interviews and start editing. Create promotional material and start advertising.

The Future

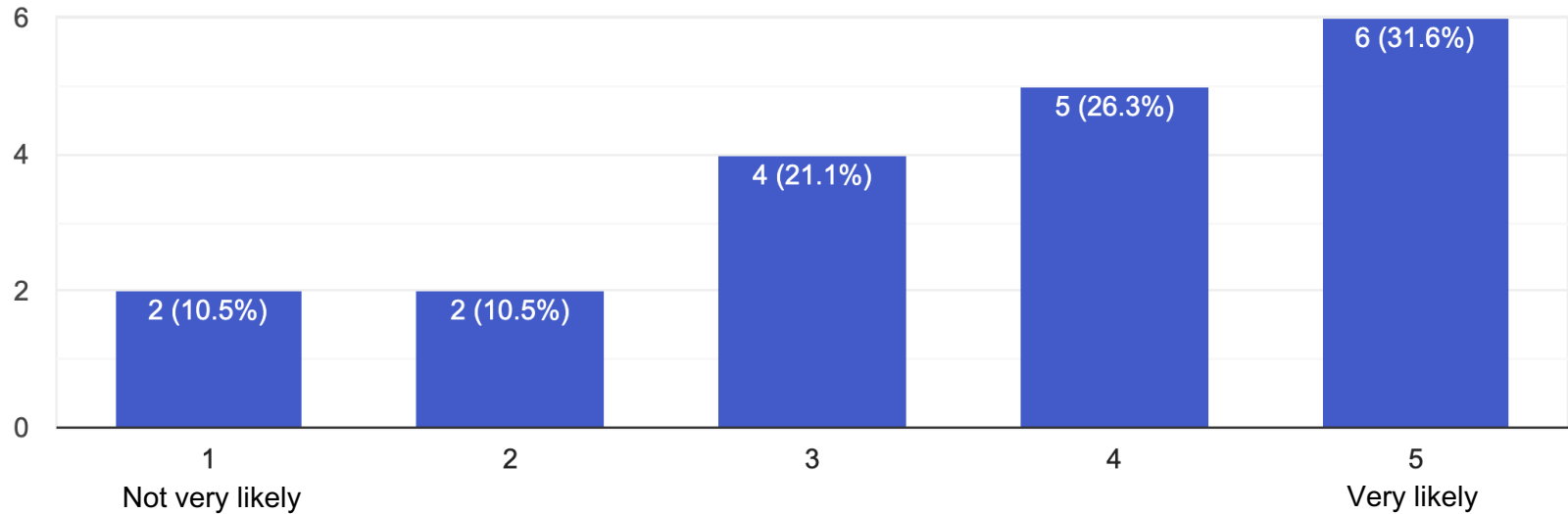
Review feedback, edit again, rescreen in the spring, and submit to film festivals



Project Impact

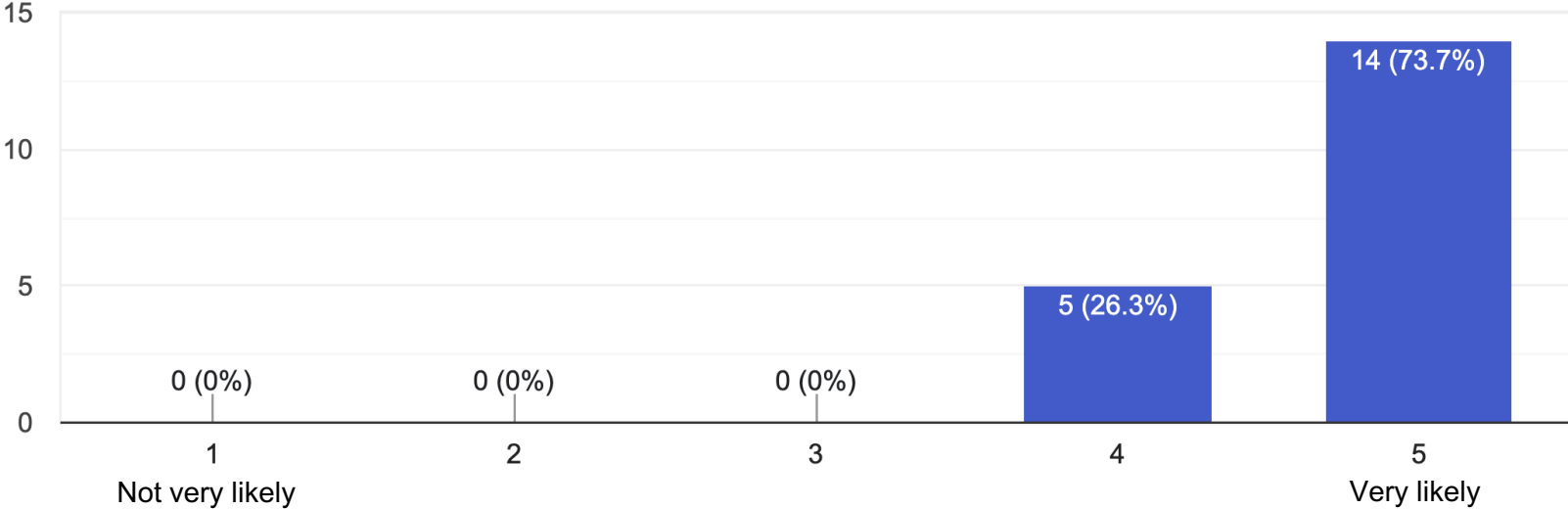
Before viewing, how likely were you to go out of your way to seek out queer media?

19 responses



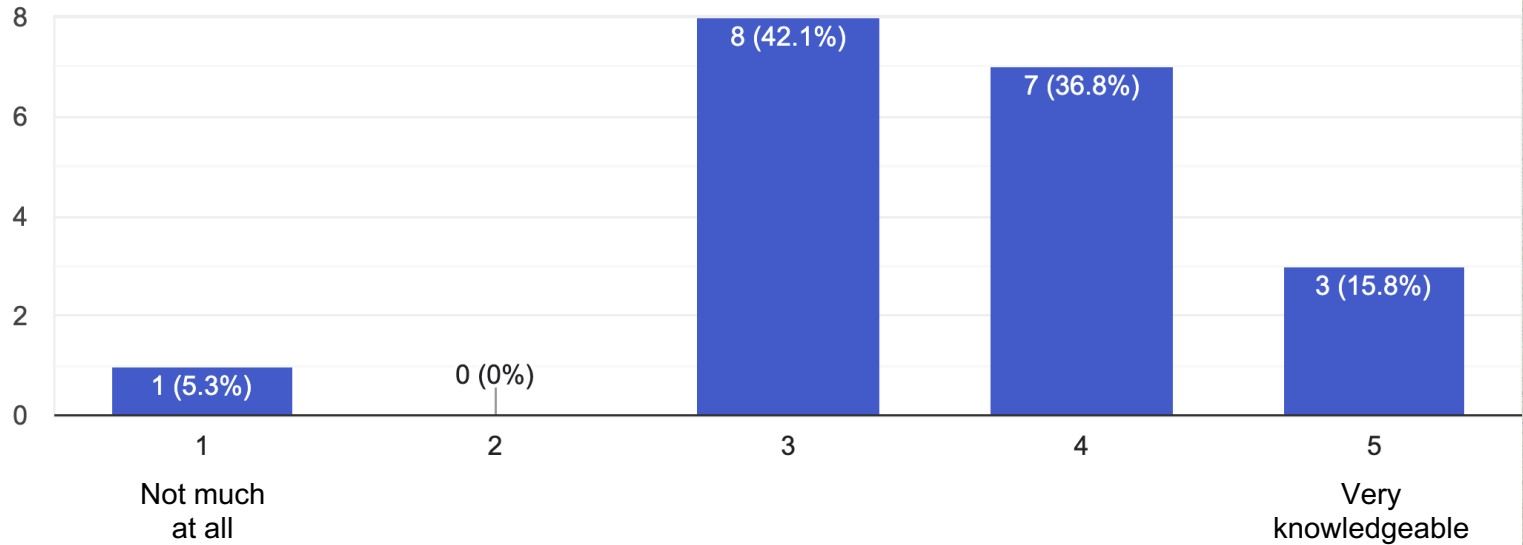
After viewing, how likely are you to support/seek out queer media knowing the impact it can have?

19 responses



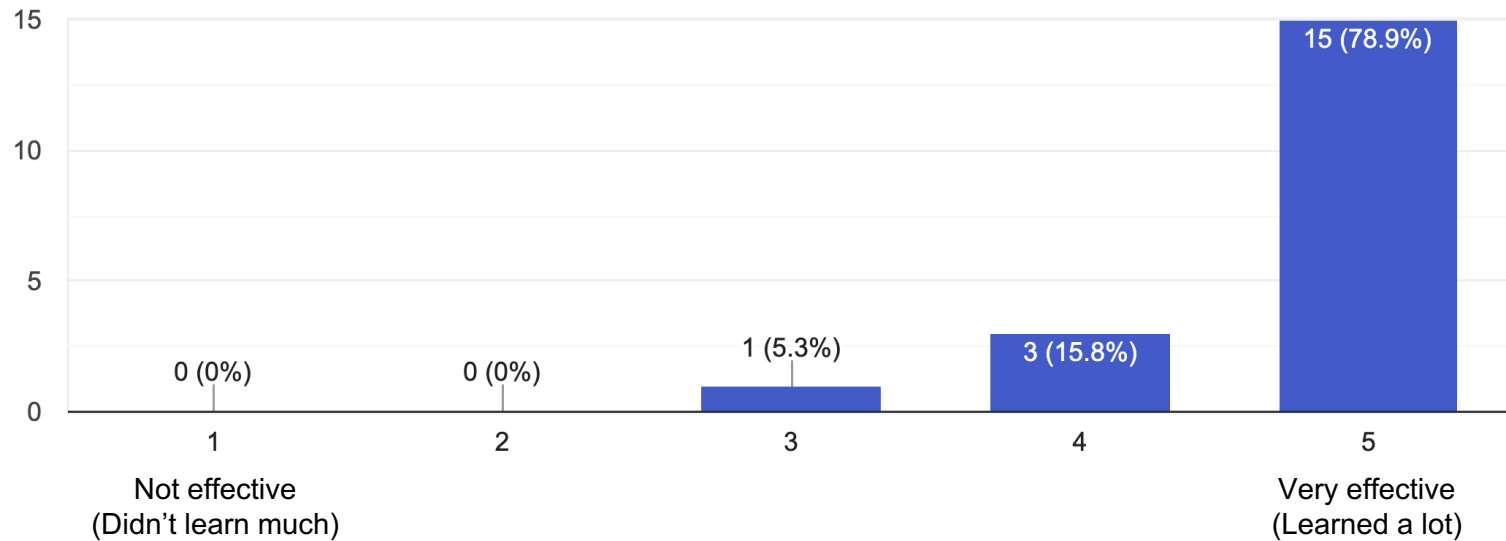
Before viewing, how much did you know about LGBTQ+ representation (its impact, the lack of it, etc)

19 responses



How effective was the documentary in educating and raising awareness for LGBTQ+ representation in media?

19 responses



I learned...

“How important it is for even the most niche of **intersectional identities** to be represented.”

“How representation is important to helping **shape individual identities and confidence**, rather than simply being a means of progression in the public eye.”

“[Please] release the film I [want to] watch with my parents, I think it **would really help them understand me more.**”

“As a fellow queer, I wanted to cry throughout about seven times. I have never **felt so safe and seen in a room before.** I felt **enlightened** by some of the points made by the brave people who spoke in your film.”

Feminist Leadership



**Feminist
interviewing**
(Herron, 2023)



**Community &
collaboration**



**Identity
evolution**

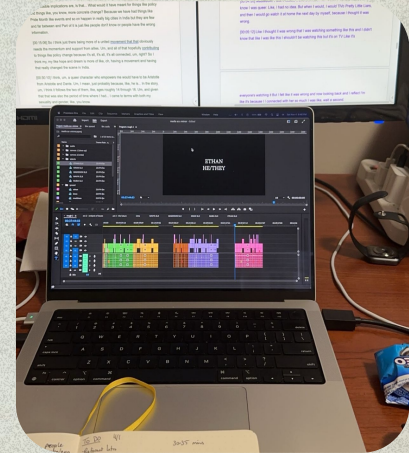
Insights



Filmmaking



Confidence



Adaptability

Special Thanks

- SAP Advisor: Laura Transue
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 - Sasha Taner
 - Emily Haran
 - Institute for Women's Leadership Staff
 - Leadership Scholars Class of 2024
 - Lindsay Jeffers at SJE
 - Maddie Cortes
 - Bridge Zhang

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