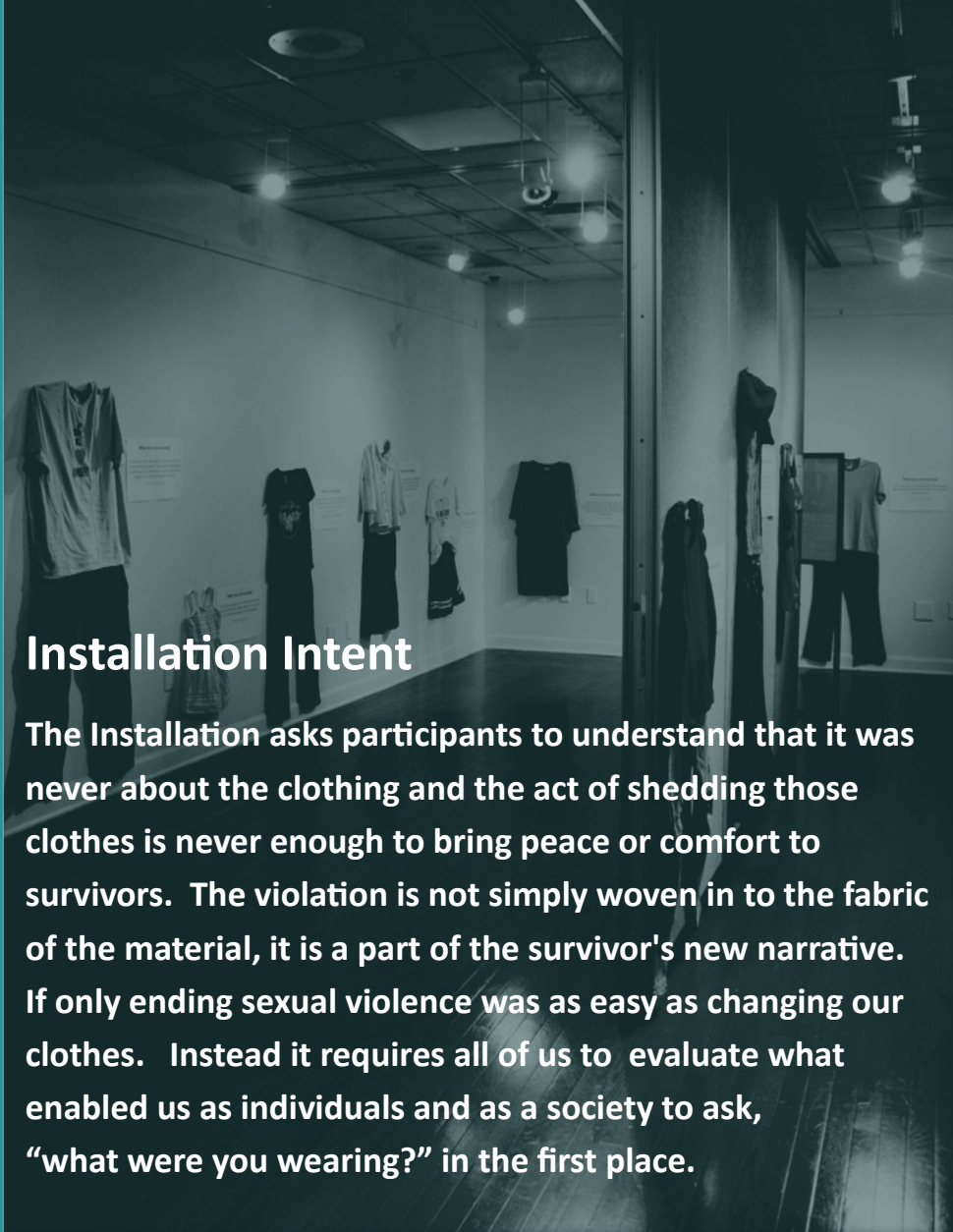


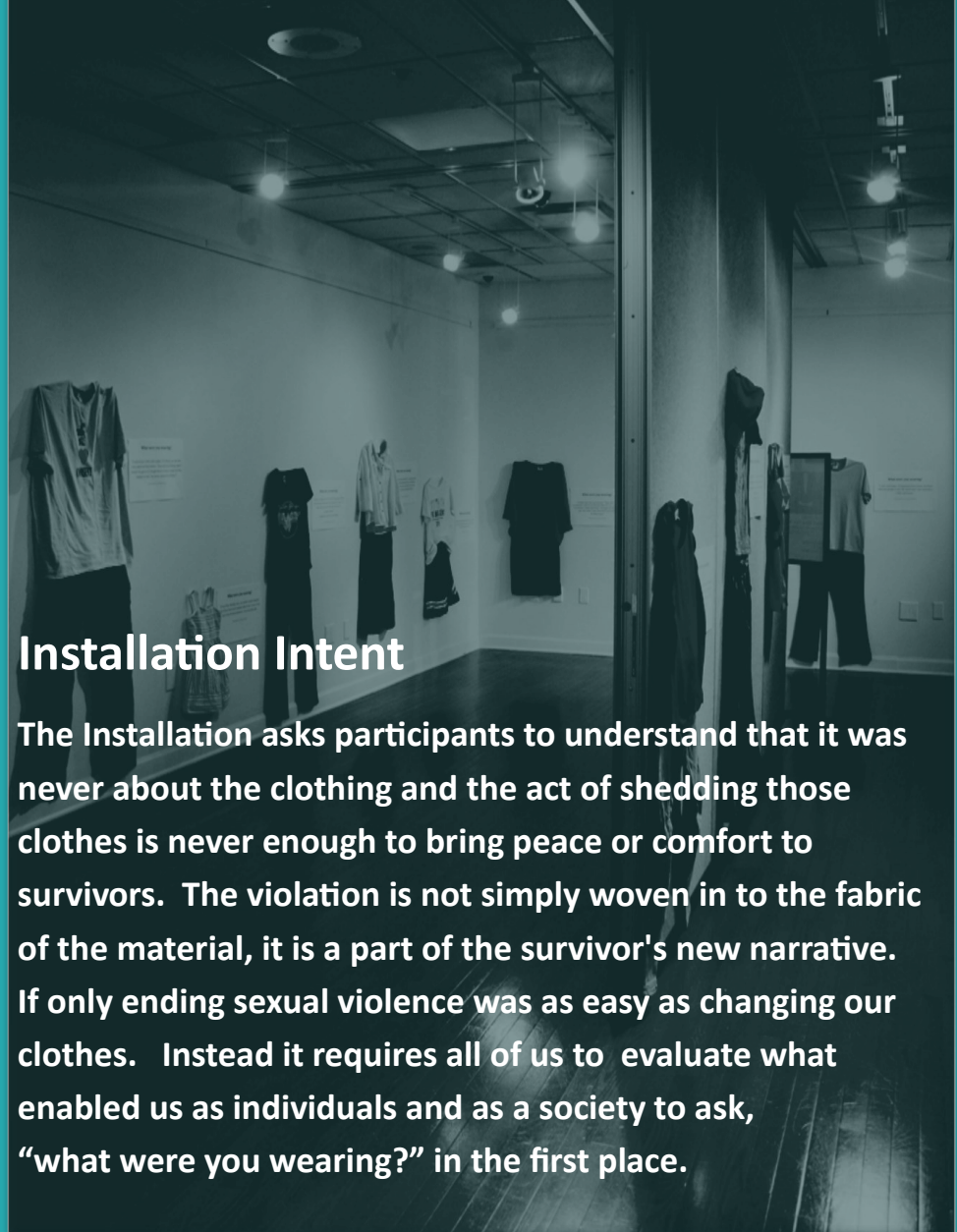
# “What Were You Wearing?” Survivor Art Installation



## Installation Intent

The Installation asks participants to understand that it was never about the clothing and the act of shedding those clothes is never enough to bring peace or comfort to survivors. The violation is not simply woven in to the fabric of the material, it is a part of the survivor's new narrative. If only ending sexual violence was as easy as changing our clothes. Instead it requires all of us to evaluate what enabled us as individuals and as a society to ask, “what were you wearing?” in the first place.

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# What Were You Wearing?” Survivor Art Installation

At a conference on May 24, 2013, Dr. Mary Wyandt-Hiebert (University of Arkansas) and Ms. Jen Brockman (University of Kansas) received the poem What I was Wearing by Dr. Mary Simmerling, copyright in 2005.

Inspired by the poem, in 2013 Dr. Wyandt-Hiebert & Ms. Brockman developed the Installation’s concept and collected donated descriptions from survivors of what they were wearing when they experienced sexual violence. These descriptions were used to recreate the outfits worn during the assaults for the Installation. The first “What Were You Wearing?” Survivor Art Installation was displayed at the University of Arkansas March 31-April 4th, 2014.

The Installation was born out of an advocacy lens. The question, “what were you wearing?” was pervasive for most survivors.

The project’s intent is to place the work of bearing witness to this question’s answer back on the shoulders of the community.

To ask the question, “what were you wearing?” cost the questioner nothing, there is no labor in making this statement. However, the survivor must pay dearly in not only their answer; but also, in the burden of self-blame.

## In Solidarity

The poem What I Was Wearing inspired this Installation, but it did not give voice to the question, “what were you wearing?” The Installation is not the only to address this specific issues. Recent individuals and projects include; but are not limited to,

**Denim Day** (1999) [www.dvsac.org/denim-day](http://www.dvsac.org/denim-day)

**Jasmeen Patheja** (2004) [www.blog.blanknoise.org](http://www.blog.blanknoise.org)

**Salamishah Tillet** (2011) [www.thenation.com/article/what-wear-slutwalk](http://www.thenation.com/article/what-wear-slutwalk)

**Christine Fox** (2014) [www.oxjane.com/issue/i-am-steenfox-and-i-wrote-the-tweet-what-were-you-wearing](http://www.oxjane.com/issue/i-am-steenfox-and-i-wrote-the-tweet-what-were-you-wearing)

**Roy Banwell** (2015) [www.stillnotaskingforit.org](http://www.stillnotaskingforit.org)

**Kathrine Cambareri** (2016) [www.katcphoto.com/well-what-were-you-wearing.html](http://www.katcphoto.com/well-what-were-you-wearing.html)

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