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Statement of Anika Narayanan

My name is Anika Narayanan. I am a rising senior at the University of Southern California. During the spring semester of my freshman year, in 2016, I was a patient of George Tyndall's over the course of two months. I was eighteen years old.

My first appointment with George Tyndall in February of 2016 was my first appointment with any gynecologist. I requested a routine STD check and birth control consultation. During the exam, I was not given any sort of covering and the entire lower half of my body was exposed. Using two fingers, Tyndall performed an examination in a deeply penetrative massaging motion, applying pressure as he commented on the "tightness" and "elasticity" of my vagina, as well as my broken hymen. At times throughout the procedure, he kept a hand below my buttocks while using his dominance to perform the examination. Afterwards, we met in his office, where we engaged in a conversation surrounding my heritage, family and social life. He asked me at one point if I had disappointed my Indian family by not pursuing a degree in STEM. He asked about my sleeping, sexual and drinking habits, and asked if the reason why I hadn't used a condom was because I had been

too exhausted and forgotten. He refused to give me a birth control consultation, citing a policy that required a second appointment be made. He instead provided me with pamphlets about insomnia.

My second appointment with George Tyndall in March of 2016 was made following a nonconsensual sexual encounter that left me with tearing and bleeding. He chastised me for returning, asking me if I had “forgotten to use a condom again.” I explained the forcible circumstances briefly but they were not discussed further. He made similar comments about my “tight” vagina while performing a similarly penetrative exam with two fingers. When he found the fissures that had caused the bleeding, he asked me what position we had assumed. I told him I did not know as the sexual encounter was non-consensual. He then told me my injuries were consistent with “doggy style” and asked me if I did a lot of doggy style.” In his office, he prescribed an over-the-counter topical cream, telling me to “fill my vagina and then massage the extra cream into my labia.” Again, he refused to give me a birth control consultation, citing the same policy.

I’ve spent a lot of time thinking about what exactly happened, where exactly the fault lines are drawn and how much validity there is in recounting my experience with George Tyndall, which fluctuated between guarded comfort and an equally guarded dread, asking myself, is this wrong? Is this right? Is this enough to report? Had I been sexist and regressive for wanting a female doctor in the first

place? Am I being too sensitive? Two years later, I am not surprised that I am not alone in this horrible regurgitation of memory. I am ashamed, disappointed and furious that I am not alone, that I am a single and short-lived example of the continued administrative negligence of an academic good old boys' club, and I am even more infuriated by the fact that countless women have confronted their experiences only to be denied action by the university. But again, I am not at all surprised. Reports of misconduct began in the early 1990s. I was born in 1997. This chronicle has both laid dormant and been institutionally bolstered for as long as the fledgling class of Tyndall's naïve game has been alive. When you institutionalize the art of not listening, you normalize an atmosphere of student endangerment and distorted prioritization. You normalize a hierarchy that places aesthetic above morals.

A student's time at a university is a short-lived intermission between childhood and adulthood. University students are given new freedoms, while the university simultaneously undertakes an unequivocal responsibility to foster and protect its young and often naïve student body. At our freshman convocation, President C.L. Max Nikias welcomed us to the "Trojan Family" with a tenacity that made me smug because I already belonged to this elite club. I grew up on this campus. My father, a university professor, was brought from the east coast to teach at USC in 2000 by the former president of the university, and my mother followed.

I took my preschool naps on the floor of my mother's office in the Dean's Suite in the old Annenberg building. I blew my allowance in a single go at the campus center when it was still a basement food court at age ten, desperately hoping someone would glance at me and think I was a student. I casually referred to Viterbi professors and Annenberg staff as aunts and uncles. Some of these names appeared among the two hundred listed in the faculty letter calling for the president's resignation. This was already my family.

But I have come to realize that the "Trojan Family" mantra extends only as far as football tailgates and professional networking. In the past year, we have watched the university scramble again and again to perform damage control and put out overdue fires. But quiet settlements and equally subdued discharges in the wake of breaking news coverage are a transparent, flimsy attempt to save face, succeeding only in the crystallization of a disinterested bureaucracy, an institution that capitalizes on financial prowess and big names on big buildings, often leaving the student body to pick up its own pieces when the underlying cracks in the cosmetic infrastructure give. Ten years later, I am a real student here, but I no longer rely on the familial protection I once trusted. As I prepare to begin my senior year at the university that brought me up and then brought me back down again, I feel betrayed and humiliated on behalf of my fellow students, past and

present, who trusted this university and its leaders. The last time I felt this humiliated, I was half-naked on Tyndall's exam table.

USC is a beautiful school with many beautiful buildings, privileges, and opportunities for those who occupy its space and I meet that with gratitude. But a place is nothing without its people, and the university is a disappointment to the parents who trusted you with their children, the children who trusted you with their burgeoning adulthood, the women who came forward and demanded their rights be observed, and the community that took the maxim of "Trojan Family" at face value. How can you stand by and call this university a family, and then turn a blind eye to the continued degradation and denial of your family's rights? Tyndall is gone. He will not practice at the University of Southern California again. But your system will continue its exponential process of failing, one that will not be curtailed until responsibility is fully accepted and dilatory convictions and expressions of remorse are exchanged for active and tangible change. If the current administration is incapable of executing this adjustment, I have no doubt in my mind others can. This is not a business. This is not a machine. This is a school, and where you might think there are silent, emotionless cogs, there are instead real people with agency and voices.

All I've ever known is academia. I know the beauty and innovation it can foster, the conversations and collaboration it stimulates, and the incredible cast of

humans it engenders. I have seen academia become a family—among them, mine. But this school is not a family, because families protect and respect their own and USC has failed to do either. Every brick building you build, every big-name partnership you secure, every act of aesthetic beautification is nullified when you continuously neglect the interior. I believe it is my responsibility to speak out against this shameful pattern of omission, both on behalf of myself and the other voices that have been ignored, silenced or lost in the folds of this decades-long injustice.

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