Frontline: Add Sex and Stir - Notes
In this episode, we see the effects of blatant lies as well as manipulation of the truth. Do you think these lies lead to greater disasters than usual? If so, how?

- **Brooke’s interview:** In this episode, Brooke interviews a woman who claims that she was dropped from a sporting team because she was not gay.
  - Brooke only interviews the woman (Allison) who made the allegations, without confirming the story with the other team members, and she is quick to reject the notion that the woman was dropped due to poor form. She uses a sardonic tone, calling Jase’s suggestion of poor form “groundbreaking”. This highlights the essential ingredient needed for current affairs: entertainment value.
  - When confronted by the team captain, Brooke defends herself by claiming that she is only reporting the woman’s story. This is typical current affairs mentality, that they are only doing their job.
  - As the team captain is leaving, Mike calls it an “ambush”; this is ironic in that it was the Frontline team who had ambushed the sporting team.
  - Brooke blatantly doctors the truth by filming a replacement question after the woman leaves; this is because the woman is hesitant to accuse everyone as being lesbians. The enhancement of sensationalism is used for their advantage: ratings. Nodding and walking towards the camera are techniques to falsify the image.
  - During the interview itself, Brooke assures the woman that she is a “star player”, which audience of Frontline knows is the opposite of the truth.
  - Hypocrisy is evident in the Frontline policy not to pay interviewees. Instead, they offer her an all expenses paid holiday to the Gold Coast for her to “chill out”, which in essence is exactly the same thing. Their hidden agenda is to cover up the truth, or their version of the truth, by preventing her from seeing the edited story or contacting other media organisations, thereby preventing the course of justice.
  - This doctoring of the truth has serious consequences for those involved. It could potentially ruin the reputation of the sport, not to mention the harm done to the players’ careers and their families. Emma appears to be the only one with the moral conscience (she was afraid that they had “pushed the sleaze angle a bit too far”), and her failed attempt to get Brian to allow a story on a gay cricketer demonstrates the influence that vested interests can have on the media.
  - The episode also features a “re-enactment”, filled with sexual suggestion. This is fiction dressed up as serious journalism, a recurring concept Frontline explores.
  - Marty: “Get any story, add sex and stir”.

- **Mike’s cocktail party and Burke’s Backyard:** Mike organises a cocktail party, and his failure to attract RSVPs from his colleagues is a running joke throughout the episode.
  - The appearance of the high profile celebrities at Mike’s party indicates the extent to which Frontline has contact with industry insiders, and the influence that current affairs journalism is able to wield.
  - Jan, the network publicist, is initially wary of why Channel 9 would permit a rival host to appear on their show. This is for good reason, for even Mike comments that the interview needs “tight editing”. He was relying on the falsification of the truth that never came.
  - The contrast between Mike’s off and on-screen personas is seen, for he is publicly presented as the man who knows everything. This pretence demonstrates the ignorance of many journalists, which may prove dangerous to the community.

- **Mike’s proposal to appear on an advertisement:** Brian’s lie to Mike about the offer from Burke’s Backyard backfires when Mike appears foolish and damages his credibility. The media treats credibility as a commodity to be traded.