

# D.C.

## WHAT IT IS

D.C. is a show about the first year after college, set against the backdrop of Washington. It follows the lives of five young staffers as they deal with the issues of the day and the challenges of being out on their own.

D.C. is a show about ambition and idealism, ethics and consequences.

D.C. is a show about America.

## THE SHOW'S THEMES

### *Living as an Adult*

As *Dawson's Creek* deals with high school, and *Felicity* deals with college, *D.C.* is the show about post-college life. For the first time, these characters are truly on their own, with no safety net to catch them if they fall.

It's a universal experience, those moments when you realize, "Oh my God, I'm a grown-up." Every day of schooling, every test, has been preparing you for this event, and now suddenly it's arrived — but you're not sure if you're ready.

This is the time for deciding what you believe: your values, your ethics and ideals. A thousand choices have to be made, and all of them have consequences.

### *Your Natural Family vs. The Family You Create*

We can't choose the family into which we're born. Be it functional or dysfunctional, happy or tragic, as children we're stuck with what we get. Part of becoming an adult is deciding what role our parents and siblings are going to play in the rest of our lives. Do we recognize their strengths and forgive their mistakes, or hold them to blame? Do we welcome them as adults, or shut the door forever?

Once out on our own, we form second families: friends, roommates and significant others. Although self-selected, these families are just as chaotic and difficult to manage. Without blood to bind us, the links can be all too easily cut. Each argument has the potential to be the one that rips the group apart.

### *The Responsibilities of Power*

Working in government, the media and the law, our five characters control tremendous resources, with the power to affect people's lives. Whether it be restoring a constituent's Social Security benefits or exposing a national scandal, these five characters have the opportunity to change the world around them.

What's unique about Washington, D.C. is that so much power is concentrated in the hands of people so young. While Senators and high officials have the titles and the glory, the real work of Washington is done by over-caffeinated 23-year olds in cramped offices.

The national agenda is on some young staffer's Powerbook.

With this type of power comes the opportunity to do tremendous good, and the possibility of abuse. How does someone so young develop the wisdom to see the difference?

## CHARACTER DIRECTIONS

### *Mason*

As the series progresses, Mason will be breaking up with his college girlfriend and dating for the first time as an adult. He'll be coming to terms with his often-frustrating sister Finley, and the changing dynamics of his "best-friendship" with Pete.

Fired from the Senator's office in the pilot episode, Mason will find his way back to Congress through a job working for an idealistic young Midwestern representative. It's a smaller office, so Mason will have much more responsibility, both in dealing with legislation and helping constituents.

Mason and Finley's parents are recurring characters, in particular their defense attorney father.

### *Lewis*

Having grown up in D.C., Lewis has a large extended family in the city, who play an important role in the series. He's the shining light of the neighborhood, the local-kid-made-good, but with that honor comes responsibilities he never sought.

Organized to a fault, Lewis seems to have a master plan for his life. This often frustrates his girlfriend Sarah, who feels like she's penciled in on the margins. As the series progresses, their relationship will endure many trials.

His clerkship with the Supreme Court is the most prestigious "first job" in the legal profession, and also one of the most demanding. It's not simply the amount of work, but the weight of responsibility in being the nation's final verdict. Add to this the visibility of being the Court's only black clerk, and his dream job seems less ideal by the moment.

### *Pete*

Always quick with a joke, Pete seems to roll with the punches, never taking work — or life — too seriously. In time, however, we'll see behind the façade to the turmoil underneath.

Having endured a truly horrible childhood, Pete finds himself clutching for any stability around him, while sabotaging any real intimacy that comes his way. His ongoing flirtation with Finley is a case in point: he's crazy about her, but doesn't want to let her see the real him.

Landing a spot in the competitive Foreign Service training program at the State Department, Pete will leave his lobbying days behind him — for a while. A combination of circumstances will send him back working at a for-hire lobbying group, where his charms are used to sell the issue of the day.

### *Sarah*

Moving in with Lewis forces her to confront her expectations about their relationship: is this forever, or just for now? And life with her housemates is no less complicated: accustomed to being "the girl" among a group of boys, she must share the spotlight with Finley, and find common ground.

Reporting on the most important issues of the day, Sarah has first-hand access to tomorrow's headlines. Her job at the network lets us see how news is manufactured, and reality distorted. Driven but often self-defeating, Sarah's frequent clashes with managing editor Packman underscore her conflicted nature: she doesn't know when to pick her battles.

### *Finley*

Capricious but ultimately good-hearted, Finley is secretly the smartest of the group, equally able to debate quantum theory or post-impressionism. Compared to her over-achieving housemates, she can seem lazy, but tell her something is impossible and she'll find a way.

While she often frustrates her twin brother Mason, their bond is indestructible. The greater problem is her continued financial reliance on her parents, who finally cut her off. Not only does she not have a job, unlike the others, she has no idea what she wants to do with her life. She's already explored the world; now she has to explore herself.

With no interest in politics whatsoever, Finley functions as the audience's perspective on Washington: curious but distrustful.

## FUTURE EPISODES

### “Truth”

With Finley's help, Sarah discovers a source is lying, but is not allowed to report it. Mason and Pete find themselves interviewing for the same job at the State Department, leading to tensions between them. We also learn more about Lewis' job as a Supreme Court clerk, and his family in D.C.

### “Justice”

Lewis risks his clerkship to help defend his 18-year old cousin on murder charges in a D.C. criminal court. Sarah struggles to find a role within Lewis' family, while Pete tries to get Lewis to see past his pride. Mason lands a position with a representative, while Finley gets and loses a job as an art museum guide.

### “The American Way”

When an ex-boyfriend stages a controversial art show, Finley organizes a major fight against NEA censorship, dragging her roommates in to help her. Pete has to answer for his many one-night stands, while Mason breaks up with his college girlfriend for the final time.

### “Identity”

When a young man carrying Pete's stolen license ends up in the morgue, Pete needs Lewis' help to convince the world he is not legally dead. In the process, Pete learns he has much in common with the dead man. Meanwhile, Finley becomes convinced the Sorensens may be spies, and Sarah deals with the horror of being a bridesmaid.

### “Asylum”

Mason and Pete help an elderly constituent fight extradition to Germany on charges of war crimes. Covering the story, Sarah is less convinced of

the man's innocence. Finley and Lewis become addicted to a Burke-Williams-style day spa.

“Parade”

Tensions arise between Sarah and Lewis when they find themselves on opposite sides over a case before the Supreme Court: whether a city can ban a Confederate pride parade. Mason drafts Pete when his intramural baseball team faces off against his old office, including Neil and Chang. Escorting an author on a Washington book tour, Finley finds herself horrifically disappointed by her feminist idol.