

TARRAGON



Girls Like That

Canadian premiere

By Evan Placey

Directed by Esther Jun

April 17 – May 27, 2018 in the **Mainspace**

Education Resource Guide by EmmaRose MacDonald

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About the Play:

Synopsis

A naked photo of Scarlett is circulated around her high school. Everyone wonders why she took the photo and who sent it. A second photo of a boy in the class is then forwarded. Rumours spread and the stakes are raised as everyone faces what it means to be a teenager girl and what the rules are to belong. How far will things go? Who is accountable? Who can speak out? The story is told by an ensemble of girls in Scarlett's class.

Characters

Girls (Ensemble of up to 19 girls who are the students in Scarlett's class)

Girl in Flapper Dress

Girl with Aviator Helmet and Goggles

Girl with Flowers in her Hair

Girl with Shoulder pads

Scarlett

About the Playwright

Evan Placey is a Canadian-British playwright raised in Toronto and currently based in London. His play *Girls Like That* won the Writers' Guild Award in the UK, the Scenic Youth Prize in France, and the Jugend Theatre Preis Baden-Wurttemberg in Germany.

Placey's first full length play *Mother of Him* won the King's Cross Award for New Writing, Canada's RBC National Playwriting Competition (Tarragon), and the Samuel French Canadian Play Contest, and was shortlisted for the Meyer Whitworth Award and the Rod Hall Memorial Award.

Placey has written several plays including *Orange Polar Bear* (co-written with Sun Duck Ko National Theatre Company of Korea in Seoul), *Pronoun* (National Theatre Connections); *Girls Like That* (Synergy/Unicorn; originally produced by Birmingham REP/Theatre Royal Plymouth/West Yorkshire Playhouse); *Banana Boys* (Hampstead); *How Was It For You?* (Unicorn); *Suicide(s) in Vegas* (Canadian tour, nominated for Centaur Theatre Award); *Scan Artists* (BRIT School/Yard Theatre); *Little Criminals* (Polka/ York Theatre Royal/ Plymouth Theatre Royal) and *Holloway Jones*. Placey's play *Scarberia* recently premiered at Young People's Theatre and was nominated for 5 Dora Awards.

For more information visit <http://theagency.co.uk/the-clients/evan-placey/>

Resources:

Internalized Sexism/Internalized Misogyny

FAQ: What is “internalized sexism”?

<https://finallyfeminism101.wordpress.com/2007/10/20/internalized-sexism/>

This blog discusses internalized sexism, its impact and how to combat it, and includes quotes and links by other writers and theorists.

Why Women Hurt Women: Understanding and Overcoming Internalized Sexism

<http://www.interchangecounseling.com/blog/why-women-hurt-women-understanding-and-overcoming-internalized-sexism/>

This article is a chapter from the anthology *Internalized Oppression: The Psychology of Marginalized Groups* edited by E.J.R. David. The piece thoroughly discusses internalized sexism in accessible language. A few activities and discussion questions are also included.

Safe@School: Sexism and Violence Against Girls and Women

<https://www.safeatschool.ca/plm/equity-and-inclusion/understanding-sexism-racism-and-homophobia/sexism-and-violence>

This website provides accessible information on sexism specifically regarding youth and schools. Exercises are suggested as well as discussion on intersectionality, racism, and homophobia, and a glossary of important terms.

Healthy Relationships

Healthy Relationships Are

http://canadianwomen.org/sites/canadianwomen.org/files//Healthy%20Relationships%20Are_0.pdf

This document is a printable poster from the Canadian Women’s Foundation that describes the characteristics of a healthy relationship. It can be applicable to a range of relationships from friendships to romantic partnerships.

How to help your teen recognize unhealthy online relationships

<http://canadianwomen.org/blog/help-your-teen-recognize-unhealthy-online-relationships>

This website offers resources including a tipsheet on unhealthy online relationships and signs of cyberbullying.

Draw The Line Campaign

<http://www.draw-the-line.ca/resources/index.html>

'Draw The Line' is an interactive campaign that aims to engage Ontarians in a dialogue about sexual violence. The campaign challenges common myths about sexual violence and equips bystanders with information on how to intervene safely and effectively. The website describes different situations, including many examples involving social media and technology, and then offers extensive guides, worksheets, lesson plans and exercises for each situation.

Teaching men to ask for consent

<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/outintheopen/sexual-consent-1.4123222/teaching-men-to-ask-for-consent-1.4123302>

Piya Chattopadhyay interviews Stafford Perry from Calgary Sexual Health Centre. Perry runs a program called WiseGuyz for teenage boys, which teaches about consent and healthy relationships. Perry offers his thoughts on caring for your partner, communication, processing being rejected, and how avoiding saying “no” in non-sexual interactions impacts notions of consent.

WiseGuyz

<https://www.calgarysexualhealth.ca/programs-workshops/wiseguyz/>

This site provides further information on the WiseGuyz program including perspectives from teenage participants. WiseGuyz aims to address issues young men face, provide a safe space for young men to process and talk about their experiences, provide tools for healthy relationships, and help young men understand connections between masculinity and male norms with sexuality and violence.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying - Media Smarts

<http://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/digital-issues/cyberbullying>

This website offers information and resources on cyberbullying for youth, parents, and teachers. Resources include articles, tip sheets, games, lesson plans, blog posts, and range in topics from identifying cyberbullying, the role of witnesses, cyberbullying and the law, as well as how social media is also being used as a positive tool amongst youth.

Cyberbullying

<http://www.prevnet.ca/bullying/cyber-bullying>

This website prepared by PrevNet (Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network) discusses the impact of cyberbullying and shares strategies for youth and parents. The website also includes information on bullying and power dynamics among youth in general.

What are the potential legal consequences of cyberbullying?

<https://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca/cnt/cbrbllng/prnts/lgl-cnsqncs-en.aspx>

This website from the government of Canada provides information on the law regarding cyberbullying. The site also offers information on cyberbullying for both parents and youth including what to do if you are being cyberbullied, or if you think your own actions or those of a friend's is cyberbullying.

Masculinity in Connection to Homophobia, and Gender Equality

The play discusses how boys react to the photo of Scarlett, and their role as bullies and bystanders. This section examines how homophobia is used to control boys behaviour and also boys' role in ending sexism and violence against women.

Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality: Q&A with Kevin Vowles

<http://canadianwomen.org/blog/engaging-men-and-boys-gender-equality-qa-kevin-vowles>

In this article the Canadian Women's Foundation Interviews Kevin Vowles the Community Engagement Manager at the White Ribbon Campaign. He discusses challenges, strategies, and the impact of engaging boys and men in conversations on sexism and gender based violence.

Masculinity as Homophobia by Michael S. Kimmel

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/324c/e35cfa841d942c2b8a4700cb1ef6aff302bc.pdf>

This brief academic article discusses pressures regarding gender roles that men and boys encounter. The article also examines how homophobia is used to police men and boys gender and enforce certain notions of masculinity.

Safe@School: Homophobia and Gender-Based Discrimination

<https://www.safeatschool.ca/plm/equity-and-inclusion/understanding-sexism-racism-and-homophobia/homophobia-and-gender-based-discrimination>

This site defines homophobia, examines its impact, and discusses power and privilege. Homophobia is often used to regulate people's behaviour and impacts LGBT2SQIA and straight people.

Youth and Suicide

In the play there comes a time when a young woman is missing and people fear she has committed suicide. The following links discuss youth and suicide in Canada.

Suicide and Youth

http://toronto.cmha.ca/mental_health/youth-and-suicide/#.WUpmr8YZPVo

This page from the Canadian Mental Health Association Toronto provides information on youth and suicide in Canada. The site goes over common myths about youth and suicide, recognizing signs that someone is having suicidal thoughts, and recommendations for how you can support that person.

Teen Suicide Resource Toolkit

https://www.weechi.ca/wcm-docs/docs/teen_suicide_resource_toolkit.pdf

This short guide provides statistics, historical trends, risk factors, protective factors regarding youth and suicide.

Teen suicide on the rise among Canadian girls

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-39210463>

This article from BBC examines levels of suicide among girls in Canada. The article discusses the vulnerability of Indigenous girls specifically as well as cyberbullying and the Rehtaeh Parsons Case.

22% of Canadian teens considered suicide this past year: Kids Help Phone study

<http://globalnews.ca/news/2925079/22-of-canadian-teens-considered-suicide-this-past-year-kids-help-phone/>

This article from Global News discusses contemporary levels of suicidal thoughts amongst youth in Canada.

Cyberbullying in the News and Popular Culture

The following are a few links to articles on prominent cases in Canada involving cyberbullying and suicide. Also included are articles on the tv series *13 Reasons Why* a fictional story of a similar situation. Students may be familiar with these stories and draw connections to the play and thus these links can provide some context.

Amanda Todd: Bullied Canadian Teen Commits Suicide After Prolonged Battle Online And In School

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/amanda-todd-suicide-bullying_n_1959909

This article from the Huffington Post discusses the case of Amanda Todd, a Canadian teenage girl who committed suicide after being sexually coerced online and bullied.

Amanda Todd's accused cyberbully sentenced to 11 years in Dutch prison

<http://globalnews.ca/news/3313729/amanda-todd-cyberbullying-aydin-coban-sentenced/>

In March of 2017, the man who cyberbullied and blackmailed Amanda Todd was sentenced. This article discusses the court case.

Rehtaeh Parsons: A family's tragedy and a town's shame

https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2013/04/12/rehtaeh_parsons_a_familys_tragedy_and_a_towns_shame.html

This article from The Toronto Star discusses the events leading up to Rehtaeh Parsons death. Parsons committed suicide after a photo of her during a sexual assault was circulated around her high school and community.

13 Reasons Why

http://www.slate.com/blogs/browbeat/2017/05/01/school_counselors_talk_netflix_s_controversial_teen_suicide_drama_13_reasons.html

This article discusses the controversy surrounding the Netflix show *13 Reasons Why*, specifically the way the show depicts suicide. Several different critiques of the series are discussed with links to other articles analyzing the show and its potential impact on youth.

Support Lines

Kids Help Phone

<https://kidshelpphone.ca/?lang=en-ca>

Call a counsellor: 1-800-668-6868

A toll free, 24 hour a day, anonymous professional counselling phone line for children and youth.

LGBT Youth Line

Call 1-800-268-9688 or Text 647-694-4275.

LGBT Youth Line provides free, confidential, and non-judgemental peer support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, and questioning young people.

The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre / Multicultural Women Against Rape

Crisis Line: 416-597-8808

<http://trccmwar.ca>

TRCC/MWAR is a grassroots collective that provides support to survivors of sexual violence through support, education, and activism.

The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP)

<http://suicideprevention.ca/need-help/>

The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention offers links to crisis centres across Canada and other resources on the topic of suicide prevention.

Discussion Questions:

Pre-Show Questions

1. When someone takes a photo, who owns it? The photographer? The person in the photo? Whoever has a copy of the photo? Discuss.
2. *Girls Like That* describes the experience of a group of long time friends/classmates. What do you gain from being a part of a group and what do you lose?
3. What do you know about cyberbullying?
4. How are girls “supposed” to behave? How are guys “supposed” to behave? What happens if you do not follow these gender rules?

Post-Show Questions

1. Scarlett argues that while her female ancestors struggled with men limiting what they could do, she thinks that now women police other women’s behaviour. Do you think she is right? Give some examples of ways that women regulate or alternatively, support each other in your own life, in the news, or in popular culture.
2. In the play the students have a very different reaction when a photo of Russel is circulated than when the photo of Scarlett is. Why do you think that is? Discuss.
3. When Scarlett is asked by her teacher if she sent the photo of Russel she answers “Sure.” Why do you think she answers this way?
4. The play mostly focuses on the perspectives of the girls in Scarlett’s class. What do you think is the role of classmates when someone is experiencing bullying or harassment at school?
5. How are the guys in the school involved in the events? What do we learn about masculinity?
6. Do you think the next generation of St Helen’s girls at the end of the play will be different? What would need to happen for things to change?

Activities:

Activity 1: Dear Scarlett

Purpose: Reflection, Empathy, Consider individual accountability

1. Imagine you are one of Scarlett's classmates. Decide how well you know Scarlett. Do you have a class with her? Have you hung out before? What was your experience of the events in the play? Did you receive the photo? Did you hear the rumours?
2. Once you have a sense of your character write a letter from your perspective to Scarlett.

Consider the following questions:

What would you like to say to her?

What do you want her to know?

What would you like to ask her?

How has her story affected you?

Optional extension:

3. In pairs discuss the experience of writing the letter. Did anything surprise you?
4. Lastly as a group ask if anyone would like to share their reflections on the experience or would like to read a section of their letter. Discuss.

Activity 2 - Making a Change

1. In small groups of 4 or 5 create a pose to represent what is happening in the play when the photo of Scarlett is first sent around the high school. Consider the emotional world of the students. What do they feel inside and what do they show to each other? Who has power? Think about levels, how close people are to each other, and where the focus of the scene is. The scene can be a specific image from the play or can be a more abstract representation of the relationships between the students.
2. Have the students share their pose with the whole group. Either one at a time or have one half of the groups show their poses at the same time and then the second half show their poses.
3. Now create a group pose of what you would like the relationships between students to be in an ideal future.
4. Ask the students to share their pose with the whole group.

5. Create 3 poses that represent steps from the first pose to the second pose. What would need to happen for a change to be made?
6. Ask each group to present all 5 of their poses transitioning from the situation in the play, through the changes that would need to happen, and ending with the future they hope for.
7. As a whole group discuss the creations. Were there similarities or differences between groups? What were common images? What was challenging in the process? Did people find coming up with the steps for change was easy or was it complicated?