
THEATRE DIRECT

EXCEPTIONAL THEATRE FOR **YOUNG** PEOPLE



Study Guide

THEATRE DIRECT

EXCEPTIONAL THEATRE FOR **YOUNG** PEOPLE

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About the Study Guide

This study guide has been created for grade 10 students and teachers in collaboration with the York Region District School Board to assist in class preparation for and debriefing of Theatre Direct's production of *Offensive Fouls* by Jason Long. We would like, especially, to thank Mary Lawlis and her team at YRDSB for their assistance with this project. We are excited to be able to bring theatre directly to your school and hope that this guide will spark your class into discussion, reflection, and discovery!

Activities in this guide range from gentle and surface to personal and in-depth explorations of the topics of equity, racism, cultural clashes, self-identity, parental restrictions, and issues faced by teens in a relationship. Knowing your students as you do, you will be able to use this guide to delve into the gray areas of these issues as much or as little as your group will be comfortable with.

We're here to help! If you have any questions about any of the topics raised, about finding additional resources, or about integrating these activities into your classroom and curriculum, please contact us at **Theatre Direct: 416-537-4191**.

Check us out online: We will post study guide material online for download and will also have more information about this production, our company, and upcoming work.

www.theatredirect.ca

This study guide was written, edited, and compiled by Jessi Linn Davies.

Synopsis

During *Offensive Fouls*, audience members are drawn into the emotionally charged relationship between the basketball-loving Joey and his girlfriend, Christine. Like any teenaged couple about to graduate high school, they have plans for the future, parental pressures, fears, dreams, and responsibilities. Today, on their six-month anniversary, many of these issues are brought into the open.

Christine is mad at Joey. An incident at a local neighbourhood snack shop the night previous has her wondering if she really knows her boyfriend at all. Racist comments were made as a group of teens knocked over merchandise at Chan's snack shop; Christine heard that Joey was involved.

The raising of this incident sends both Joey and Christine into analyzing their relationship, their beliefs, their culture and identity, and just what being racist means in our 'diverse,' 'tolerant' and 'politically correct' society.

Christine is soon able to peel away the layers of Joey's lies, not only about the incident in Chan's snack shop, but in the dark truths about how he views her and her differences. And it is only in attacking her perceived racism within Joey and his family that she begins to see herself in a new light. By hiding her relationship to Joey from her parents, and perhaps being ashamed of her own culture and identity, Christine finds that she herself may be no better than Joey.

Offensive Fouls was originally commissioned and produced in Calgary, AB by the All Nations International Theatre Society (Natasha Nadir, former Artistic Director) in 1999-2000.

About Theatre Direct

Our Mandate

- To create and present sophisticated and uncompromising theatre for, with and by young people that provokes, challenges and inspires.
- To present theatre that is socially conscious, inclusive and that reflects the diversity of Canadian society.
- To nurture our audience's appreciation of the arts and each other through community and education based programs.

Our Vision

Our work is driven by a belief that young people deserve truth not diversion, that they have a cultural right to meaningful content and compelling, relevant theatre. We view our audience as thinking, feeling, complex individuals, not a market, not just future audiences but our present audience that needs and demands theatre that engages all their faculties and feelings.

Our audience inspires us to tackle big questions in the same way children and youth ask them, honestly, directly, courageously and passionately.

Our Education Approach

Educators and the professional theatre community consider Theatre Direct leaders in the creation and production of theatre for young audiences. Our efforts to pair sophisticated theatre with innovative education programs enhance the impact of the theatrical experience and extend our interaction with young people and teachers toward deeper learning.

Working with and involving young people in the creative process enriches our work and informs our creative practice. We strive to ensure each production is accompanied by a comprehensive set of resources and activities led by artists or by our partner educators that ensure a depth of reflection and response in the classroom and beyond.

While each season and each production inspires a specific approach to our education work, some of the programs we consistently offer include daylong programs, arts education residencies, post-show workshops and teacher preparation evenings.

Our Values

- Achieving artistic and education excellence
- Ensuring physical, cultural, economic and intellectual access in its productions and programs for all young people and their families
- Mentoring and training young people and emerging professional artists through its various apprenticeships, internships, placements and volunteer opportunities
- Providing fair compensation, professional development opportunities, and work/life support for its staff

FOR THEATRE DIRECT CANADA

Artistic Director LYNDA HILL

Associate Artists

LISA CODRINGTON, SHARADA K. ESWAR

General Manager

CLARISSA DEYOUNG

Production Manager DUNCAN MORGAN

Consulting Director of Education

and Outreach CAROLINE HOLLWAY

Education Consultant JESSI LINN DAVIES

Studio Theatre Consultant

and Project Manager JULIAN SLEATH

Associate Producer MATTHEW ROMANTINI

Administrative Assistant NICKY PHILLIPS

Co-Op Student MARINA PRATT

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Theatre Direct is a member of PACT (Professional Association of Canadian Theatres) and engages under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional Artists who are members of Canadian Actors' Equity Association. Theatre Direct is a participant in the Creative Trust: Working Capital for the Arts program, and are also members of Theatre Ontario, Toronto, Alliance for the Performing Arts (TAPA), ASSITEJ Canada, and Performing Arts Organizations Network for Education.

Meet the Artistic Team

We asked members of our artistic team to write about their artistic processes which guided *Offensive Fouls* from an idea in the playwright's mind to the lively production you are about to see in your school. Is there an artistic role students most identify with? Is there anything surprising here? What do students think would be the most difficult role for them?

Jason Long, Playwright

I initially jumped into this play, close to nine years ago now, in a completely pragmatic manner: I was just out of post-secondary school, back home in Calgary, and a friend of mine who was artistic director of a small youth theatre company was looking to commission a play on racism. My first blatant question to her, as we chatted over coffee, was “How racist does it need to be???” I asked because I had just started playing around with some dialogue, about a teenage boy and girl meeting on a basketball court behind a school. It was a fun exercise that was quickly going nowhere. Nothing was happening. I took a shot, re-tooled the story, made them boyfriend-girlfriend, created an offstage inciting incident that the young girl had heard about, and I was on my way.

After a couple of productions and tours earlier on in the decade, the piece sat relatively dormant until Concrete Theatre in Edmonton expressed interest but were also very clear that they felt the script needed to be tightened and more polished. One of the Artistic Director's comments was “About two-thirds of the way in, it begins to read like a commission.” This made sense to me, as that was how the piece originated—me as a hired gun forcing racial chatter into the drama. With Concrete's blessing I was free to loosen up and focus the story more as a complicated love story than an inter-gendered, interracial dialogue about how bad racism is. That was the easiest of angles to take. Everyone knows, or should know, that racism is bogus. Having an opportunity to rework the play, and expand on the origins of bigotry in young people—and the pressures it brings on both sides of the coin—was a welcome challenge and the experience took the play to a higher and more challenging level of art.

It's my hope that the core audience for this play—male and female adolescents—will find familiarity in the drama on some level. Someone they know, or even themselves directly. How can insidious, hidden conflicts like the one in this play, told through two “everyday” young people, find positive resolution? Maybe that's overly ambitious, and was never my intent, but if it can open the emotional faucet and get people to gush—to speak out, to complain, to vent—then at least we have a starting point.

Andrea Donaldson, Director

As the director of *Offensive Fouls*, I am the one who dreams up the vision for the project. Early on, I began imagining how the script I had read on paper would look on stage with two live actors. Five months before beginning rehearsal, I had to look through dozens of headshots and resumes, run auditions and choose the best actors for the play. I had to find a set/costume designer to work with, clearly convey my ideas to her about the play and be decisive about ideas she would bring to the table. In rehearsals, I helped the actors understand the script and create the blocking (which is the word we use to describe where and how people move on stage).

For *Offensive Fouls* I wanted to create an intimate relationship with the audience, so I decided early on to position the audience “in the round,” meaning, on every side of the stage. My central image for the set was a long bench that would be slightly exaggerated in size and scale. This bench would be the perfect centerpiece for the actors to move on and around, and would help illuminate the conflict in the play by making the actors choose sides, and each audience member see a different perspective of the show. I hope you'll find the many dimensions of this play just as compelling and complex as I do.

Meet the Artistic Team

Jung-Hye Kim, Designer

Theatre is an art form of collaboration. This art form does not happen by one person, one idea and one opinion. It happens through the process of working out a variety of ideas and differences by a variety of people such as directors, actors, the playwright, and producers.

And a designer's job is to realize that collaborative work in physical space, in visual language.

This play is about racism seen through a high school couple. The play provokes questions. Questions such as: 'Is racism and its violence clear as black and white?' or 'Is it murky with so many layers and not quite tangible?' 'Do we see racism near us?' 'Do we recognize it when we see it?' 'Or do we turn away when we face it?'

I try to convey such provocative questions by turning a physical space into a psychological and symbolic setting. An 'in the round' seating forces the audience to face one another while watching the play. The simple geometry of the floor and a long bench which breaks the space into two create a tension, while the stylized black, grey and white colour scheme conveys a psychological landscape. The graffiti on the floor is devised to draw the audience's attention to carefully chosen words from the text. I want audiences to be intrigued and challenged by the space and the set as well as the play.

Gerry Egan, Stage Manager

Many people talk about stage management as the hub of a wheel with all its spokes stemming from it to keep the wheel together and aligned straight. As the stage manager it is my job to do just that.

I usually start preparing for a show about a week before rehearsals begin. At that time I read the play, more than once, and start making lists. Lists of props, costumes, and things we may need for rehearsal. I try meet with all the members of the company, the director and designers. For this production I had to learn a lot about the specific things that go along with touring a show. Chances are I am still learning a lot about that! I attend all rehearsals and record the blocking and cues in the prompt or production book and also keep my ears open for any information I may hear that someone else may need to know. Daily reports are sent out to keep those who aren't able to be at rehearsal 'in the know' at all times; I make the schedule and monitoring progress as we go. Hopefully, if a stage manager has helped with communication between all the departments involved in the production, then everyone should feel like they are rolling ahead in a straight line together. Maybe even in the same direction!

There are lots of other things that can be added or taken away from a stage manager's job like laundry, running sound or lights, helping with quick changes or even maintaining wigs. These all depend on the theatre venue, the size or type of show, or the theatre company you are working for. No matter how big or small the show may seem, there is never a dull moment in the world of stage management.

Meet the Artistic Team

Ella Chan, Actor

When looking at the character of Christine, I instantly connected to her plight with her own “Asian-ess” but admired and recognized the growth that she was experiencing. In many ways we are the same person, but our differences are also just as extreme.

First and foremost, I go straight to the clues from the script; what details about Christine can I find? How important is this moment in her life and what is different about her from the beginning of the play until the end? I dissect the script until I’m sick of it and then I literally leave it alone. From here on, I just look to my partner in crime, Joey (Colin Doyle), and we start to play! All of the stuff I learned about Christine from the script is still in the back of my head and it guides me in terms of my wants and needs, but it’s how Joey reacts to the things I say that makes up what you’ll see on the stage. With navigation from our director Andrea, Colin and I can keep mucking around until we find the best way to tell the story of this young couple who both have serious reasons to be on the offense.

Colin Doyle, Actor

I can safely say that my process changes with every show. There are so many variables when you start on a show, but some things are a must! I read the script four or five times. The first time for the fun of reading this new show, the second to examine the time, place, who the hero is and their journey, the third to figure out how the playwright wants the audience to feel and then the fourth and fifth with just my character in mind dreaming and visualizing what the play might look like. Where am I? What do I wear? What do I want?

It is important when playing a character no matter how good or how bad you might think they are, to pose no judgement! One of my favourite actors, William H Macy, said, no matter how evil the character is (insert the worst person in history you can think of here_____), they don’t think that their actions are wrong/evil. They feel that they are totally in the right. So when I play Joey, even though I, Colin, might not agree with all that Joey is saying, the character of Joey believes it with all of his heart. So that means I have to, too. But where do these beliefs/feelings come from?

Being a good actor is like being a good detective. Ask good questions, then research, study, and examine the clues that are mapped out through the script. A lot of the time this can lead to more questions. With great actors and directors (like the ones I get to play with in this show), I get to collaborate and bounce off ideas, more questions, answers, and share my own personal stories to make my character and his journey that much more believable. Then we go into blocking (how the character moves physically) and then figuring out why I move that way. Andrea is great for working on physicality because sometimes with all these questions and thoughts I can get lost in my head... you put that aside and go to how Joey moves! The words are then connected with the all-important action and my body and voice is now able to share Joey’s story.

Separate Worlds

“You honestly, honestly, think we’re the same? ... Look at my eyes. Look at my skin...Now do you think we’re the same?”

“Well, at least you were invited to my house.”

*~Christine and Joey in *Offensive Fouls**

Offensive Fouls’ characters, Joey and Christine, come from different homes, families, and value systems; these differences lead them to ask some hard questions about their relationship.

Students will want to discuss issues of power and equity after seeing *Offensive Fouls* - use the following activity to prepare students for an honest and open-minded discussion about the play.

- Hand out the Separate Worlds worksheet (page 16) and ask students to, in their minds, identify specific people in their own lives for each column: family members, friends, acquaintances. Let students know that these forms will not be shared with others, just used for personal reflection.
- Have students fill in each remaining blank box responding as though they were the person at the top of the column.
- When students are finished, engage in a discussion about their responses.

Were all columns on your sheet the same or were there some variations between different people?

What accounts for some of the differences?

Is this fair? If so, what makes these differences okay? If not, what makes these differences unfair?

As a class, brainstorm some factors that contribute to different rights and privileges being assigned to different people (i.e. age, birth order, gender, religion, financial status, etc.). Ask students to discuss and describe how power is associated with equity, using the following exercise as an aid.

Role of Power in Society

Activity adapted from The Future We Want video study guide,
Peel District School Board, August 2003

Use the Role of Power graphic organizer (page 17) to facilitate a discussion and increase student understanding of the role of power.

Teachers should choose eight categories from the list below (or categories brainstormed in the exercise above) to explore with the students.

gender, language, age, sexual orientation, ethnic group, race,
family structure, faith, education, money, abilities, occupation,
country of origin, human rights, social class, neighbourhood

Students work individually or in small groups to complete the graphic organizer, filling in each section. Students should identify the 8 categories they will work with by writing them on the outside of the largest circle, one for each segment. They should then fill in, from inner to outer layer of each segment, those who have the least power to those who have the most power.

As a class look for similarities and differences. Discuss patterns and relate findings to the students’ own experiences and observations.

"I don't think it's your fault. Entirely."

"Oh...of course...My brother is the king of all racists and I'm just following in his footsteps. That it?"

*~Christine and Joey in *Offensive Fouls**

Offensive Fouls raises issues surrounding the systemic way racism is passed down in our society, in subtle or blunt ways. Many young people are challenging the tacit acceptance of racism. In this exercise you can find out who is making a difference and how you can get involved.

- Conduct a media search to find ways in which youth are working to fight racism in their communities (local or national). Find three articles and make a list of the actions that these community members have taken.
- Collect all lists together as a class and discuss the impact that this work has had upon the negative attitudes found in the first group of articles.

Take it further:

As a class, design a way to share your findings with the school at large. If there are changes to be made regarding the way your community or society views racist comments or attitudes, find a way to challenge your school population to make those changes (create a lunch-time seminar, website, posters, announcements, etc.).

Breaking the Silence

Post-Show Activity
Drama, Civics

Christine: Yeah, but...I mean who'd want to go to China?

Joey: I dunno. I mean there's like a trillion people there...and they got that wall, eh?

Christine: Un, huh.

Joey: Big ol' wall. Hey, that's where we could meet up...Although I'm a little worried about the food over there. Heard they like their dogs a little too much, in a way different way than we do. Like...snacking on-

Christine: I get it, Joey.

In the above excerpt from *Offensive Fouls*, Christine has an opportunity to let Joey know how she really feels about his racial slurs and stereotyping, but she remains silent, as she has done for the duration of their relationship. Even though she loves and respects her boyfriend, she remained silent. With your class, explore ways that we can break that silence.

- Have two students perform the above excerpt for the class. Ask class members to brainstorm ways Christine could have broken the silence surrounding Joey's behaviour in this scene.
- Invite students to work in pairs or small groups to enact some of the scenes which are mentioned in the play, scenes in which Christine kept silent even though she found the words/actions offensive.
- Students can then present their enactments to their classmates. Then they can invite an audience member (much in the style of Augusto Boal's work with forum theatre) to join them or replace a character as they re-enact the scenario, allowing and encouraging the audience member to 'break the silence' and respectfully confront the racism in each scene.
- See page 18 for script excerpts which might suggest scenes for student enactment.

“This is, at the very least, the second time I’ve caught you in a big lie this afternoon.”

“I’m a racist? Fine. So are you.”

“I spend every waking second trying not to stand out.”

“Jeez, they were just jokes. Words.”

- Using the list provided (page 18), copy and cut out each sentence, handing one slip of paper to each student. It is encouraged for some students to have the same sentence as others in their class.
- Let the students know that these excerpts come directly from the play they are about to see. Invite them to imagine a context in which this phrase might be part of a dialogue between a couple and to write a short script which includes their given sentence. Their script may be written as though it is a part of *Offensive Fouls* or part of an original story.
- Encourage students to make their short scenes (6 to 10 lines) theatrically interesting by adding meaningful stakes (things that are important to one or more of the characters) to their scripts. The conversation should mean something powerful to each of the characters in a student’s scene and should respectfully challenge racist ideals, not uphold them.
- The selected sentences are loaded with emotional and provocative content, which can make for a thoughtful exploration of the issues that will be introduced on stage in *Offensive Fouls*. Take the opportunity to explore the issues from an anti-racist perspective.
- After the performance, ask students to reflect on the scenes they have written. Did they use their phrases in the same context as Jason Long did in *Offensive Fouls*? Discuss the use of stakes in the play and your own scenes, identifying elements of high stakes exchanges that the students found compelling.

Performance Extension:

Shuffle the scenes (removing playwrights’ names, if desired), hand one out to each student, pair students and have each pair perform one of the two scenes they were handed. These performances could be linked together to form a larger piece for presentation or performed as individual scenes.

Both Joey and Christine have internalized messages from many sources in their lives. This exercise will explore our interpretation of the people and messages that influence the two main characters in *Offensive Fouls*.

- Working in groups of 4 or 5, select a character (Joey or Christine) to focus your discussion around. Write the character name in the centre of the graphic organizer (found on page 20).
- Decide on a critical decision this character has to make that you would like to explore. Record the decision on the graphic organizer.
- Brainstorm the various influences (human and societal) that you predict will have an impact on the decision making process (those identified in the play or those that you assume will provide an influence). Select four influences that you would like to explore and record these on the graphic organizer.
- Brainstorm the kinds of messages each of your four influences might provide to the focal character. Record these, writing at least three messages for each influence.

Explore through Writing

Compose a journal entry in the voice of your focal character explaining what decision he/she came to in the end, with reference to the advice and messages received from external sources.

Focus on creating a strong character voice for your main character and for each of the influences, keeping the decision at the heart of the writing.

Explore through Improvisation

Assign each group member a role; one person acts as the main character, the rest personify one influence each.

Set up a circle of influence on stage, with the main character in the centre of a semi-circle of influences. Have the main character state his/her dilemma and ask for advice.

Improvise interactions between the main character and each influence (advanced groups could allow interactions between influences as well). Explore the character voice of each role.

End the scenario with the focal character making a decision based on feedback from his/her influences.

Summation and Reflection:

As a large group, discuss similarities and differences in the ways each influence was portrayed. Open up the discussion to comparisons of influences explored in the exercise and the ones acting on students themselves.

Theatrical Process

Read the “Meet the Artists” section of this guide with your class to get a better sense of the planning and rehearsal process that went into Theatre Direct’s production of *Offensive Fouls*. Have students reflect on the role that most interests them in the process of theatre creation.

Metaphors - Short Class Activities

The playwright, Jason Long, chose to use basketball as a theme in *Offensive Fouls*. Why do you think he included that aspect of the play?

The director, Andrea Donaldson, chose to stage this production of *Offensive Fouls* ‘in the round’. Review different models of staging (i.e. in the round, proscenium, thrust, alley, etc.) with your class. What other types of entertainment / sports / events are typically staged in the round? What similarities does the action in *Offensive Fouls* have to other events with the same audience positioning?

Scene Work

Download scene excerpts of *Offensive Fouls* from www.theatredirect.ca to use with your class. These excerpts could be used for:

Performance - Divide students into pairs of performers or groups of 3 (performers + director) to devise staged readings or full scene performances. Students can make an informed choice about the way to stage their scene (i.e. in the round, proscenium, thrust, alley, etc.) based on the discussion from Metaphors above.

Adaptation - Invite students to choose one of the excerpts provided at www.theatredirect.ca and adapt the scene into a new one, based on the original. These adapted scenes could be set in a different location, have a different relationship between protagonists, work from a metaphor other than basketball, etc.

Extrapolation - Invite students to compose scenes to identify some of the unseen interactions that are mentioned in the play. Interesting options are:

The family dinner Christine attended at Joey’s house	Mindy (Christine’s cousin) telling Christine what she heard in her dad’s store
Christine telling her parents that she is going to spend time with Joey	The next time Joey enters Mr. Chan’s store
Joey, his dad, and Doyle watching the basketball game	The next time Christine and Joey see each other after the end of the play

Glossary of Terms

Classroom discussions concerning the issues of racism, discrimination, bias and equity etc. are sometimes accompanied by gray areas that enter between fair and unfair, justice and injustice, or good-natured joking and mean-spirited attacks. The following terms will enable you and your students to find common ground in the language you use to enter into such discussions.

This glossary has been reprinted from *The Future We Want: building an inclusive curriculum*, published by the Peel District School Board.

Ally - A member of an oppressor group who works to end a form of oppression that gives her or him privileges. For example, a white person who works to end racism, or a man who works to end sexism.

Advocacy - The act of publicly defending or supporting an individual or group.

Assimilation - When members of minority groups “melt” into the dominant society, becoming indistinguishable, they have assimilated.

Bias - An opinion, preference or inclination formed without any reasonable justification. Bias is reflected in people’s attitudes and behaviours towards people of different race, class, gender, cultural background, etc. and makes it difficult for a person or group to evaluate particular situations and thus take action objectively or accurately.

Culture - The totality of ideas, beliefs, values, knowledge, language, and way of life shared by a group of people with a certain historical background. Manifestations of culture include art, laws, institutions, and customs. Cultures change continually and, as a result, often contain elements of conflict and opposition.

Discrimination - The practice or act of making distinctions between people based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, nationality, language, faith, gender, disability, or sexual orientation, which leads to the inequitable treatment of individuals or groups based on these characteristics.

Diversity - Exists when all communities, including traditionally excluded communities, and all designated groups within communities, can give voice effectively to their issues and partake equitably in the decision-making structures that determine their lives.

Ethnic - An adjective used to describe groups that share a common language, race, religion, or national origin. Everyone belongs to an ethnic group. The term is often confused with “racial minority”.

Eurocentrism - Presupposes the supremacy of Europe and Europeans in the world culture, etc., and relates history according to a European perception and experience.

Glossary of Terms

Harassment - Persistent, ongoing communication (in any form) of negative attitudes or beliefs towards an individual or group which might reasonably be known to be unwelcome, with the intention of disparaging a person or group. Forms of harassment include name-calling, jokes or slurs, graffiti, insults, threats, discourteous treatment, and written or physical abuse. Harassment may be either subtle or blunt.

Poisoned Environment - When biased slurs, comments or behaviours affect the places where people live, work or receive a service. Such comments “poison” the environment even when they are not directed towards a person directly, and even if members of the insulted group are not there to hear them. As a consequence of creating a poisoned environment, certain individuals are subjected to terms and conditions of employment, tenancy, services, etc., that differ substantially from those experienced by individuals who are not subjected to these comments or conduct. In such instances, the right to equal treatment in the Ontario Human Rights Code may have been violated.

Prejudice - A set of opinions about or attitudes towards a certain group, or individuals within it, which casts that group and its members in an inferior light and for which there is no legitimate basis in fact. Prejudicial attitudes are very resistant to change because concrete evidence that contradicts the prejudiced view tends to be dismissed as “the exception to the rule”.

Race - A socially defined group which sees itself and/or is seen by others as being different from other groups in its common descent or external features such as skin colour, hair texture or facial characteristics.

Racism - The cultural, institutional, and individual set of practices and beliefs that assign differential value to people according to their skin colour and racial heritage. It is the exercise of power, supported by prevailing ideas and systems, creating unequal opportunity and outcomes for people from non-dominant groups.

Respect - The primary - and ultimate - social justice goal in society; respect represents the final stage on a continuum of tolerance, acceptance and respect.

Social Justice - A vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure; a society in which individuals have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility.

Stereotype - A false generalized conception of a group of people, which results in the unconscious or conscious categorization of each member of that group, without regard for individual differences. Stereotyping may relate to race or age; ethnic, linguistic, religious, geographical or national groups; social, marital or family status; physical, developmental or mental attributes; and/or gender.

Tolerance - Acceptance and encouragement of diversity as part of a value system.

Discussion Questions using Glossary of Terms

Discuss the following questions as a class, or assign discussion topics to small groups of students. Encourage students to refer to the Glossary of Terms to define the highlighted words in their questions.

Christine says, “At school, I don’t exist! I spend every waking second trying not to stand out!” Do you identify with this statement? In what ways do you or would someone like you **assimilate**?

What **biases and prejudices** exist within the play? What biases do Joey’s and Christine’s parents hold, respectively? What prejudices do Joey and Christine have?

What do you think Joey means when he tells Christine, “You just don’t look or act all that, you know ... **ethnic**.”? Is he using the term correctly?

What are some of the factors that contribute to different **poison environments** that are created or suggested in *Offensive Fouls*? What comments, if any, are some of the common contributors to a poison environment in your school?

Was Doyle acting as an **ally** of Mr. Chan’s when he pulled Joey from the store?

What are some of the **stereotypes** mentioned in the play? Does the use of stereotypes always result in **discrimination**? (*As an extension to this question, explore some of the common stereotypes that exist about groups to which students belong including teams/clubs/cliques/family types/sexual orientations/cultures/races/etc as you are comfortable.*)

Do the actions of Doyle and Joey toward Mr. Chan constitute **harassment**? What about Joey’s use of language around his girlfriend?

Do you think Joey and Christine have a relationship based on mutual **respect**?

Resources and Links

Ensuring Student Success:

Antiracism Indicators for An Antiracist School

www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/pdfs/a/depts/racereel/AntiracismIndicators.pdf

Produced by the YRDSB, this document was created to assist educators, “in a practical way, as we progress towards success for all students in our schools.” It is an excellent assessment tool to get educators involved in helping to improve student achievement and encouraging professional growth.

I Belong, You Belong, We Belong: Challenging Myths and Stereotypes:
The Future We Want video study guide for teachers and students

This fabulous document, published by the Peel District School Board in 2003, is an excellent resource for taking an in-depth look at equity issues in a school. There is a useful section covering the ‘isms’ (ableism, classism, racism, etc.) and many classroom activities for both elementary and secondary school teachers.

National Anti-Racism Council of Canada

www.narcc.ca

Check out this site for help in getting started doing research about racism. There are lots of good links and tips for research here.

Racism. Stop It!

www.pch.gc.ca/march-21-mars

This site, maintained by the Government of Canada, contains information about the March 21st Anti-Racism Day, the Racism! Stop it! campaign, and a national youth video contest.

Toronto’s Mosaic: A Reality Check

www.cbc.ca/toronto/features/diversity

This CBC site hosts a wealth of information from the public broadcaster’s recent special diversity initiative. Video and audio clips are available online as well as access to some relevant StatsCan statistics.

Ontario Human Rights Code

www.e-laws.gov.on.ca

From the e-laws homepage you can navigate to find the Human Rights Code link under Frequently Accessed Laws.

Separate Worlds activity on page 7

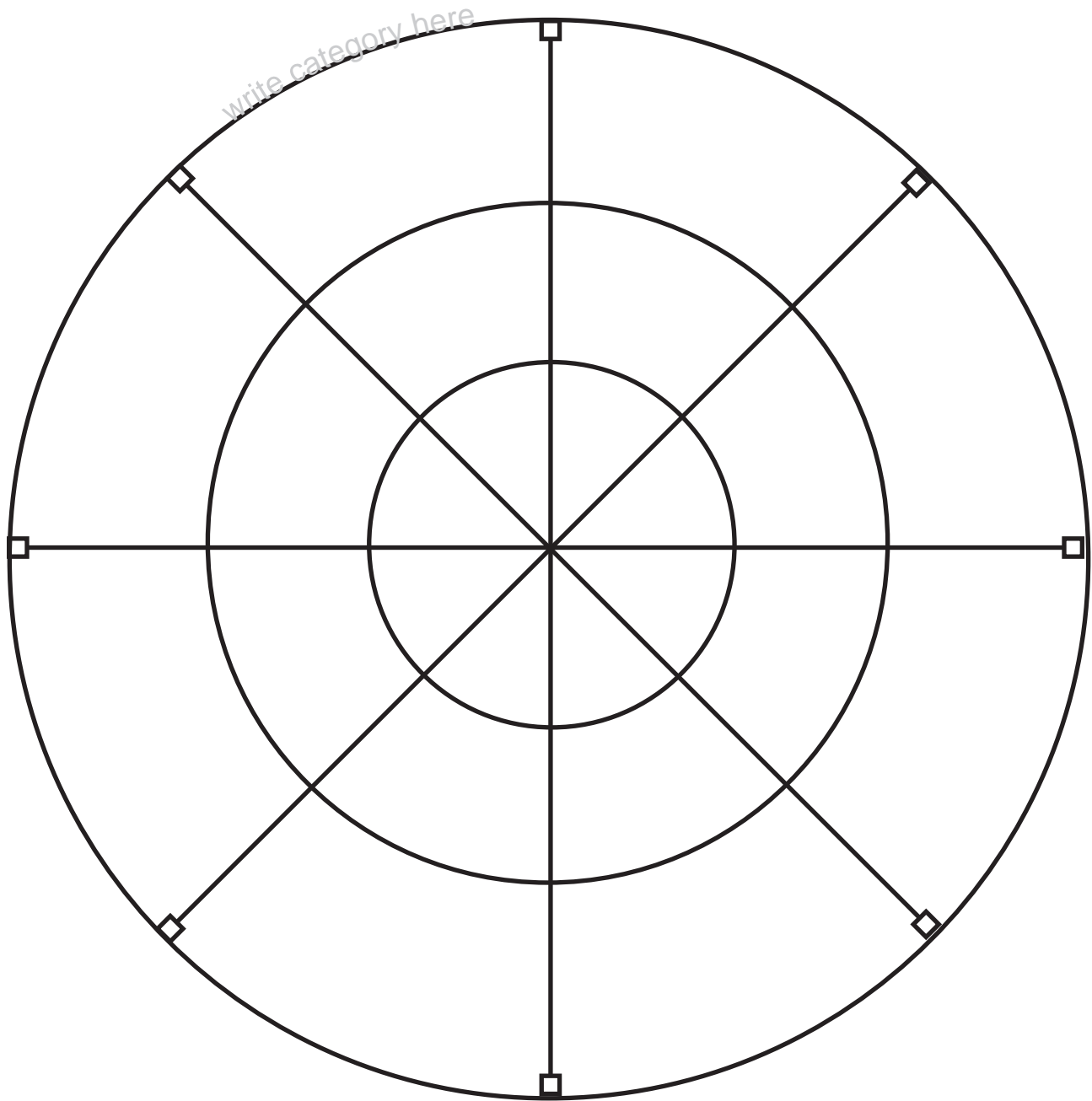
Think of a specific person to be represented by each column. Work your way down each column answering as that person might.

Y = Yes	S = Sometimes
N = No	DK = Don't know

	You	Your Sibling	A Friend	Your parent at your age	Another sibling or friend	Someone I know well	Someone I don't know well
I have a strict curfew							
I have to work at a job outside of school							
My parents would have a problem if I dated someone outside of my race/religion							
I have to do a lot of housework at home							
I know what I want to do after high-school							
I can date whom-ever I want							
I have no problems at school							
I know about my cultural heritage							
I tell others about my cultural heritage							
I have friends my parents do not know about							
I will be allowed to do what I want after high-school							
I hide things from my family							
I hide things about my family from others							
I could travel abroad on my own							

Role of Power in Society activity on page 7

Write the category on the outside of each segment. For each segment, write in the group with the most power on the inside, the group with the least power in the outer-most section, and those in between in the middle section.



Breaking the Silence activity on page 8

The following are some quotes from *Offensive Fouls* that might help spark ideas for scenarios for students to enact for the Breaking the Silence exercise:

“On our second date we went for dinner at Pappa Pasta and our waiter was Chinese. You asked him for the free bread, he said they were out, and after he took our order and walked away you said ‘He better not put sweet n’ sour on my fettuccini.’”

“We were Christmas shopping in that dollar store, you thought the Arabic man behind the counter was ‘eyeing’ you, watching your every move, so on your way out you make some muttered dig about how he should never be allowed on an airplane.”

**A scene with Christine and Joey where Joey says:
“East Indians are Cheap” or “Duck down! That Asian gang’s
packin’ heat!”**

A scene where Christine gets called “yellow”.

A scene where Christine walks down the street and is taunted for being Chinese. [“(Pushes her eyes slanted...sings) ‘Me Chinese, me so dumb, me play knick-knack on my -’”]

Loaded Words activity on page 9

I spend every waking second trying not to stand out!

You don't know a thing about bearing the brunt of racist comments.

How come I've never met your parents? I mean, do they even know about me?

Jeez, they were just jokes. Words.

You just don't look or act all that, you know...ethnic.

And besides, you're not really Chinese.

Just you and me. Together. Out in the open.

Cut this 'you're pure' and 'I'm mixed' crap. We're the same!

This is, at the very least, the second time I've caught you in a big lie this afternoon.

I'm a racist? Fine. So are you.

Loaded Words activity on page 9

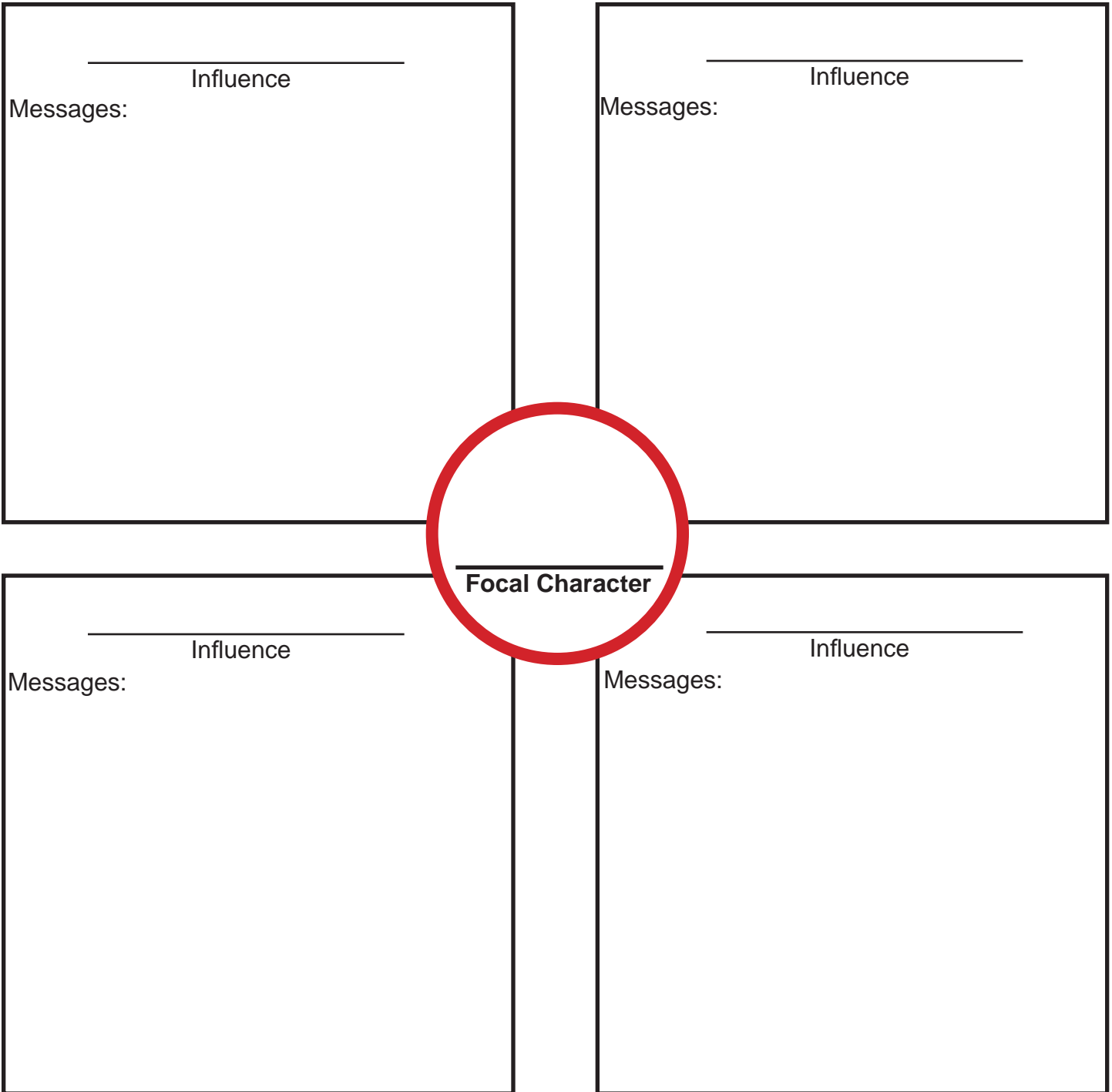
My name: _____

My given phrase: _____

Write 6 to 10 lines of dialogue between two characters. You must include your given sentence in your scene. Revision and re-revision is an important part of this process. Your goal is to compose a scene which respectfully confronts a high-stakes issue (racism, relationships, both, etc.)

Circle of Influence activity on page 10

Character's Decision: _____



Offensive Fouls

by Jason Long

Cast

Colin Doyle Joey
Ella Chan Christine

Creative & Production Team

Andrea Donaldson Director
Elizabeth Helmers Assistant Director
Jung-Hye Kim Designer
Gerry Egan Stage Manager

For Theatre Direct

Lynda Hill Artistic Director
Clarissa DeYoung General Manager
Duncan Morgan Production Manager
Jessi Linn Davies Education Consultant
Nicky Phillips Administrative Assistant

The playwright wishes to acknowledge and thank Jared Matsunaga-Turnbull and Concrete Theatre in Edmonton, Alberta, for workshopping and producing the play in the summer/fall of 2006.

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