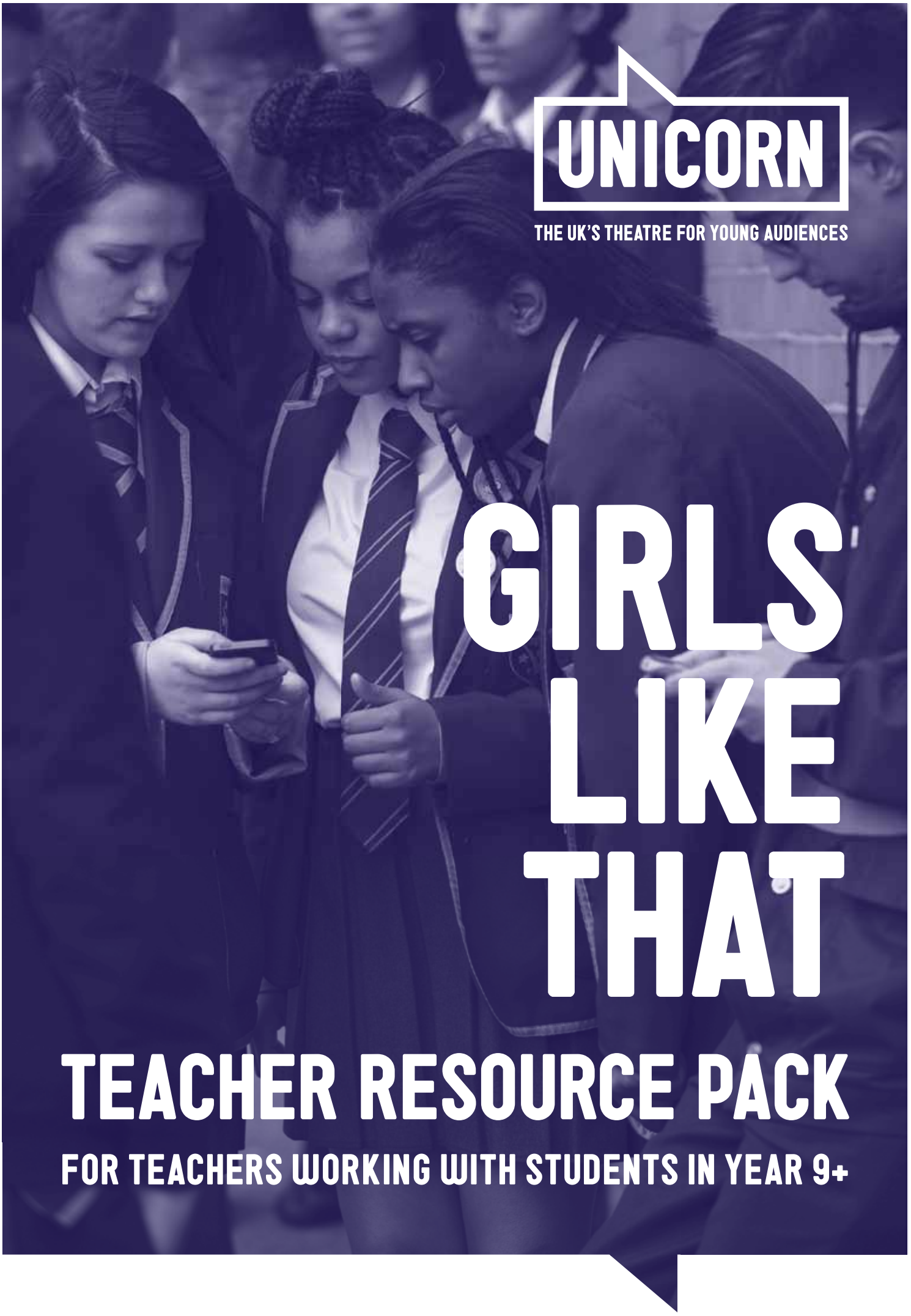

UNICORN

THE UK'S THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

GIRLS LIKE THAT

TEACHER RESOURCE PACK

FOR TEACHERS WORKING WITH STUDENTS IN YEAR 9+

UNICORN THEATRE AND SYNERGY THEATRE PROJECT PRESENT

GIRLS LIKE THAT

THE PROBLEM WITH GIRLS LIKE THAT IS THEY RUIN IT FOR EVERYONE.
THE PROBLEM WITH GIRLS LIKE THAT IS THEY GIVE ALL GIRLS A BAD NAME.

A naked photo of Scarlett goes viral. Rumours spread across smart phones like wildfire and her reputation becomes toxic, threatening to shatter the fragile unity of the girls she has grown up with. But how long can Scarlett remain silent? And why isn't it the same for boys?

Girls Like That *is an urgent and explosive play that explores gender equality and the pressures on today's digital generation.*

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CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

Girls Like That is a play about girls, boys, feminism, friendship, running with the pack, self-image and online sharing. When a naked picture of Scarlett gets sent around the school in a matter of minutes, the fall out reveals the underlying social dynamic as her peer group react to what's happened. As the girls, previously her close friends, distance themselves from Scarlett, we see their own vulnerabilities and anxieties about self-image and sexuality exposed. And when a photograph of Russell also circulates, the double standards for girls and boys are also revealed.

Girls Like That is an engaging and challenging play, told by a cast of five young female professional and ex-prisoner actors, the play moves between the present day and key moments in history when young women challenged the social conventions of their times and fought for equality for women. The play explores how the concept of feminism has changed over time and what it means to young people today.

Girls like That will appeal to teachers of Drama, Theatre studies, PSHE, including Sex and Relationship, Bullying and Citizenship Education.

There is a free teacher CPD session to accompany the production on **Thu 16 Oct 4.30 - 7pm** at the Unicorn. To find out more or book your place email **schools@unicorntheatre.com**

SUMMARY OF THE PLAY

Girls Like That follows a group of girls from when they start school age five, through to when they graduate aged eighteen.

The girls narrate the story from the present when they are fifteen years old, with flashbacks to earlier school days where they settle in to the social pecking order. Sitting in class, a picture message is received. It is a photo of one of the girls, Scarlett, naked.

We then jump back to the 1920's:

> **1928 – a young woman attends a swimming party, people are lounging in their swimsuits, smoking, dancing and drinking. Her brother arrives and tries to take her home.**
>
> ***Our mother fought for your rights so you could behave like this?***

The photo is round the school in seconds and the gradual isolation of Scarlett begins.

We see how the girls react to the picture of her, honing in on every blemish and analysing every physical detail. It makes them feel better about themselves.

The boys just smirk and when one boy says he doesn't want to look, his sexuality is questioned and he capitulates rather than draw the attention to himself.

The story is told through direct address to the audience, the cast of five actors moving between the roles of the twenty St Helen's girls. This shared storytelling underlines the theme of collective responsibility as the girls take cover in the group. No one speaks up for Scarlett and inaction turns into active distancing; no one is really responsible for what happens.

And it wasn't planned, but we all just turn away, like turn our backs.

Flashback: to the girls aged eight, all together at the swimming pool, getting changed, worrying about how they look, worrying about who isn't talking to whom.

Back in the present: when Scarlett is not around the girls begin to worry and call her, but she doesn't answer. So they leave a message – just a joke really – pretending to be *GQ Magazine*, *Penthouse* etc.

When another photo is posted, this time a boy, Russell, the reaction is very different; his friends want to get closer to him, Russell is to be admired.

> **1945 – a woman pilot holds her own against a male pilot who thinks he's not going to take orders from a woman pilot.**

Flashback: The girls are aged eleven, in the changing room after a swim, comparing bodies – who's wearing a bra? Who's growing hair down there?

In the present day things at school escalate when Russell's girlfriend turns up from another school and she and Scarlett fight. Scarlett moves to another school.

August 1968 – it's the summer of love and a young woman is pregnant. Her boyfriend is supportive; he suggests they can live in his parents' attic. But the young woman is not so sure, it is a woman's right to choose and she thinks she will choose not to have a baby right now.

Scarlett can't escape the photograph despite her move to a new school. At a chance meeting in McDonalds one of the girls sends the photo on Bluetooth to the boy she is with.

Flashback: The girls are twelve years old, at Tyler's house, playing spin the bottle. Tyler gets his laptop and finds some porn; the girls and boys sit on separate couches and watch, piled up on top of each other, arms and legs entwined.

Scarlett goes missing; there is an item on the TV news about her disappearance. The girls respond writing messages on Facebook: *We miss you Scarlett, come back.*

The 1980's – a young woman has work experience at a city law firm after school. She's aiming high, working hard and on track for success. When her boss gets a little too close she threatens to sue him:

See this right here, would be considered sexual harassment in the workplace.
And you seem not to know that.

A young woman's body has been pulled from the river. The girls are in a history lesson; they have candles and are holding a vigil for Scarlett.

Scarlett enters. She has brought her history homework: a presentation on the women in her family throughout times. She talks about her mother: one of five FTSE 100 chief executives; and her mother who marched for abortion rights in the sixties; and women further back in Scarlett's family. The flashbacks to moments in history that we have watched throughout the play are in fact from Scarlett's female family history.

The girls are leaving school and planning where to go next. Someone tries to organise a group photo of the 'St Helen's Girls' but it doesn't happen.

And those of us who are standing there with our arms around someone's waist just start looking kinda dumb, because no one's taking the photo.
And the moment is gone, and there will not be a photo.

The final scene takes place in the future; the St Helen's girls are in their forties and at a school reunion. They watch a new group of five year old girls link arms.

Her arm in her arm
Her arm in her arm
Her arm in her arm

MAKING THE PLAY

INTERVIEWS WITH THE CREATIVE TEAM

WRITER EVAN PLACEY

Why did you want to write this play?

On a surface level it was the technology which interested me, because when I was at secondary school – which isn't that long ago, I'm 30 – we didn't have it. We didn't have mobile phones at school; there weren't mobile phones that could take photos. It's a very different game now, being a young person in terms of technology, in terms of that level of bullying, and in terms of how instant attaining information is.

I was really interested in feminism and why I was finding that lots of young women felt like there was no point in feminism anymore, that all equality had been achieved and there was just no point.

And I was really interested in slut shaming and why women, in 2014, are still shamed for anything they do which is sexual; at the same time there are pressures on young women to be sexual. And I was interested in the dynamic between the two. As one of the characters says in the play, she wants to be in the space between – if she doesn't do something she's a prude, if she does do something she's a slut – and how does she get to the space in between?.

I was interested in exploring the question of whether young women were starting to oppress each other in the same ways men oppress women. It wasn't just that girls were bullying other girls, it's that they were using the same tools that men had invented to oppress women.

Could you tell us about the process of writing the play?

I was commissioned to write a new play by West Yorkshire Playhouse, Plymouth and Birmingham Rep and because the play was to be performed by the youth theatres at each theatre I began my process of writing by working with the three groups. I had no idea what I wanted to write, so I came in with my own provocations and headlines from the newspaper and we played different games around them to see what sparked conversation.

It was at the time when there were the photos of Kate Middleton topless in France that had been in the news and shortly before that it had been Prince Harry partying in Vegas. We talked about why everyone perceived Harry partying as OK and we started to look at things around gender and feminism. Most of the young people didn't seem to know what feminism meant and when I explained, didn't feel it was that relevant to them. I

was amazed at how little the group knew about feminist history, so there're lots of jokes in the play about the girls messing about in history and not listening, not knowing about the suffragettes, not knowing about the fight to have an abortion and women's rights in general.

I then went away and came back with two things; to explore different moments in history, to see what, if anything, young people thought happened in those moments of time and what had changed or not; and an idea about a naked photo going around and how they thought how they would react to that.

In the play there isn't anyone who stands up for Scarlett and it feels quite stark at times how the girls behave quite badly and she is completely alone. There is one person who you feel is about to make a stand and then he doesn't, he backs down.

I didn't think who's going to behave well and who's going to behave badly. I thought: what do each of them want? And what are they going to achieve? I think for some of those young women they don't recognise the consequences of inaction. You do see that some of them feel it and feel that it's going too far and they can't do anything and are too afraid to speak out. It's about the pack mentality and actually it's really difficult. By the end of the play it starts to fracture and people in their own way do stand apart.

I think before they stand up for someone else they have to stand up for themselves, and that means going against the group. The story is about these girls coming in to their own as individuals and realising they are more than the group they're a part of.

It does just take one person to be the first one to do something, to say something; it felt important for me that in the play there isn't that person, because actually the play is posing the question, well why doesn't that happen? I feel we understand why nobody stands up for Scarlett, not because each girl says 'I want to be evil' but 'what can I do? I'm not sure what to do? I don't want to be the one standing out, I'll get bullied if I do and actually it has nothing to do with me'. I'm interested in levels of responsibility.

It's about the other girls' own vulnerability. You get the sense that the way they attack her is really to do with them. It's how they feel about themselves. She's not the only one who's taken a naked photo of herself; she's just the only one who has it circulated. It's as much about them and how they feel about themselves and how they project that on to Scarlett.

How common is the problem now?

It is absolutely common and most schools are having assemblies and often too late, to explore the consequences of it and how it can get out of hand. It's huge, it's bigger than just a young woman feeling pressure from one person to take a photograph, it's things like page three, it's how we view young women in general, it's teaching young women by osmosis that their value is somehow through their sexuality and their bodies, but we're also teaching young women that they should be ashamed of their bodies and their sexuality.

What's really interesting for me about Scarlett is not whether its right or wrong to take the photo, because actually I don't have an opinion on that and I know most people say no she shouldn't have taken the photo, but if she'd been in a loving relationship is there something fundamentally wrong in someone deciding to show their body to their boyfriend? I don't think so; we don't want people going away thinking they shouldn't ever have sex, or have any sign of sexuality, or express themselves.

This isn't a warning play. It's about the middle. There are problems at both ends; of women feeling pressure and being sexualised and also feeling they can't express their sexuality.

It's a cultural shift. Our identities aren't just about us here and now in this room. It's how we show ourselves to the world through social media since that's how we communicate with people. A lot of shows, a lot of the magazines in the shop, they're all focussed on a woman's body, whether she's thin enough, whether she's too thin, 'circle of shame' (Heat Magazine), the messages there are really pervasive throughout.

Part of how young people are getting messages isn't just through conventional media; the magazines, the news, films and social media, but also through porn. Again that's something that's very different for this generation, how easy it is for young people to access pornography.

For many young people their first experience of sex is though porn. We can all agree, at least as adults, that it's not representative of real life bodies and real life sex. If that's where young people are getting their idea of sex and sexuality from then that's going to affect how they value themselves.

Young people are going to see pornography whether we try and stop them or not. We need to open the dialogue to really dissect how people are feeling about what they're seeing and what the reality is.

The play centres on girls, young women (and is an all female cast). What's in the play for young men in the audience?

What do young men have to do with this? They're equally part of the story. The boys' reaction to the photo versus the girls' reaction to the photo. They are equally responsible in what happens.

In theatre there are often plays, at least large cast plays that have an all male cast, there are very few for all females, and I thought where are the female voices?

The themes are not gender specific. Body-image and self-image, self esteem, friendship, collective responsibility, sex – these are things we can all relate to.

Can you say a little about the interlocking story lines?

The play exists in three time frames; the present, the girls when Scarlett's photo is circulated; the girls' past and future – when they were five, eight, eleven and twelve, then in their forties in the future; and moments in past decades where we meet a different woman in a key feminist moment, each one about a woman making a choice about who she wants to be.

The play is tracking the journey from when women were fighting for rights to when they start to become oppressors of each other. It takes us to where we are now, and is of a reminder of what we've all fought for; let's not lose sight of that.

DIRECTOR ESTHER BAKER

Why did you decide to stage Girls Like That?

Synergy work across theatre and the criminal justice system and each year we do a play about young people and crime and tour it to 3000 young people, with workshops. The cast are always a combination of ex-prisoner actors and professional actors.

We thought this was such a fantastic play - it's a bit broader than what we would normally choose, for this particular project, as quite often we would look at a specific issue to do with crime; in the past we have looked at the riots, we've looked at knife crime, joint enterprise and the line between self-defence and criminality. This play is a wider look at themes that can lead to criminal behaviour. It's about individual responsibility and the individual and the group. It explores the point where you become complicit and if you're a bystander what part you play.

We were really interested in doing a play about social media and crime, it's such a contemporary issue. You can be so detached when sending a text or an image from where it ends up. The play shows how something that seems insignificant can escalate. There is a danger with social media that what would previously be a bitchy comment now becomes so public and so far reaching.

There are so many themes in this play that are relevant to all of us, but especially to young people. The peer pressure in the play is strong; there's a lot about girls groups, their relationship with boys, and boys' relationship with boys. We've worked in lots of London schools where that's a really big issue. We work with young people who are at risk of offending and who are already involved in criminal activity and issues around sexually harmful behaviour and gang culture are really prevalent in some schools.

There is also a lot about the pecking order; about finding your place in the group and getting stuck in that place. You get it throughout life, but when you're stuck in the school environment for so long it is really hard to break out. Working with offenders there's so much about not losing face, not wanting to be the bottom of the pecking order. A lot of the things in the play, when pushed to their extreme, are actually key themes linked to why people are involved in criminality.

What I think is really fantastic about the play is it deals with the question how do you take your power back when the whole group has turned on you? What do you say? Do you say anything? And in terms of social media, what do you do when an image is out there and you can't ever get it back? How do you take your power back if you can't take the image back ? What Scarlett does is get to a point where she is not affected by it anymore. I think that's the only way to deal with it - rather than taking the image back, you have to take yourself back, which is really hard if there is a naked photo of you out there.

The group is built on a lie in one way; they're not going to be there forever. And Scarlett has strength; she has a fantastic history of the women who have stood up against the crowd and against social conventions. What's sad is that she is isolated. This is also often true for women who break away from crime. They often have to

choose to reject the group or the family that they've always known.

The play is very interesting about the group, reflected in many different images, both positive and negative. School feels like forever, the easiest way to survive is to stick to the group and the hardest thing is to step away from it. One hopeful thing about the play is that school doesn't last forever; there is an end date to school.

Can you tell us a little about about how you might stage the piece?

In the script, the lines aren't assigned to particular character - it's a collective. The storytelling style of the play reflects the content; with its different versions of the events, and in a way social media is all about presenting versions of ourselves.

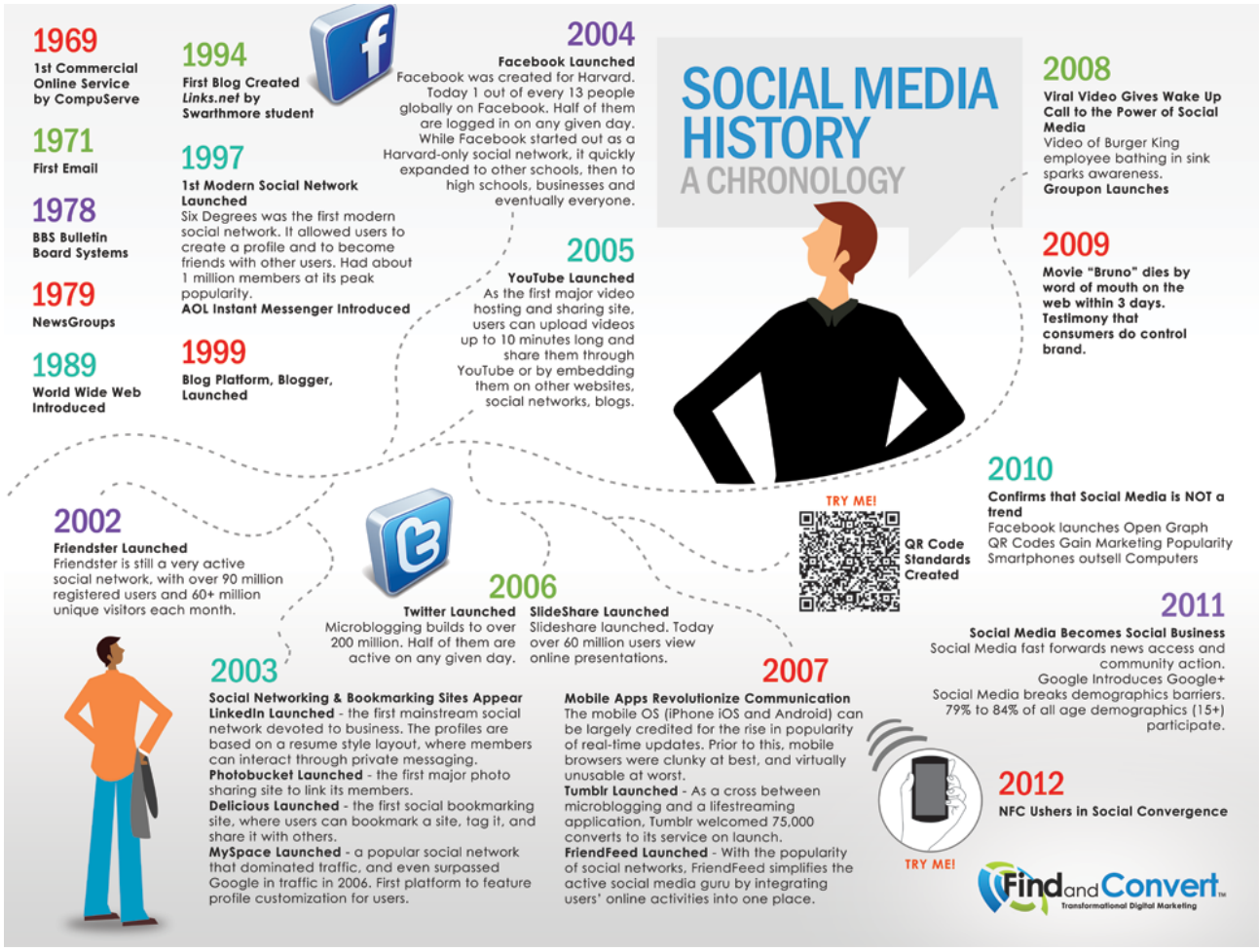
One thing we'll want to look at as a company is what are the actors trying to do to the audience? Are they trying to justify themselves? Are they confiding in the audience? Are they trying to collude with the audience? So we'll play around with that with the performers.

I think we'll be using video and probably something in the style of Instagram or Facebook. I like the idea of an image appearing on stage and then just multiplying into infinity. Everyone is interlinked, but they are also isolated as well. Visually it could have something that reflects that.

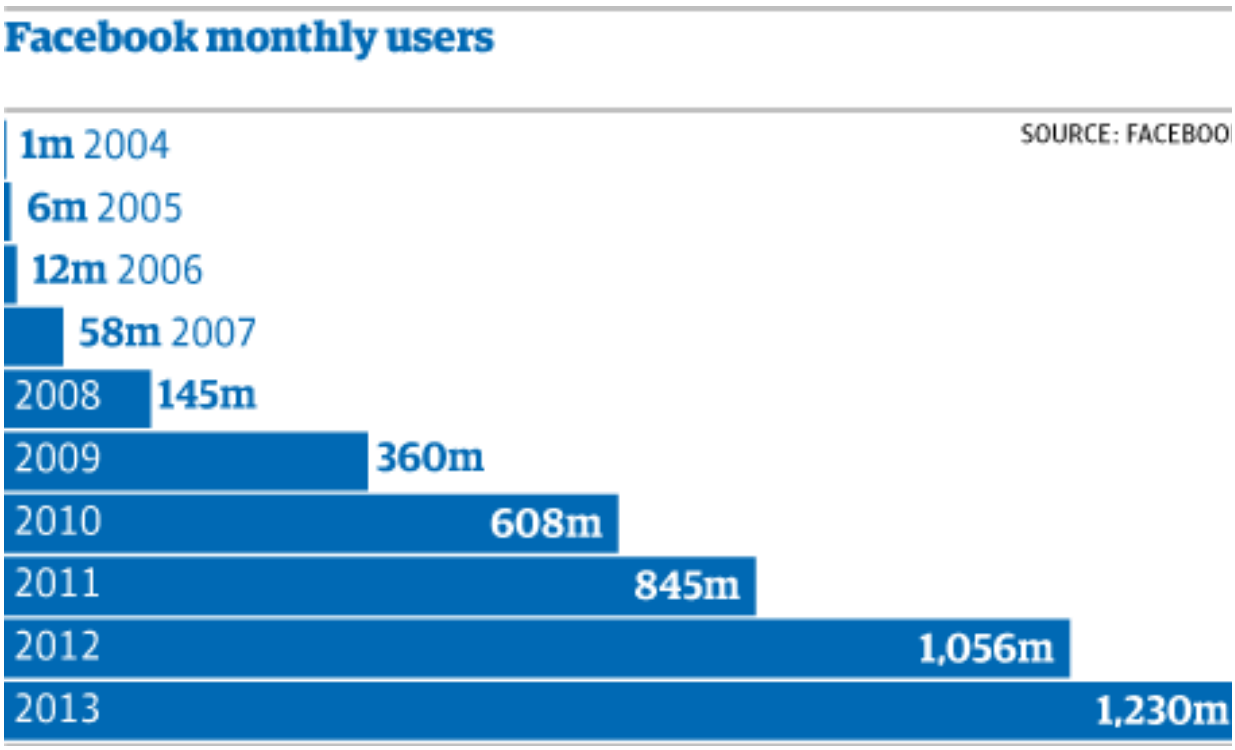
CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

We are still in the early days of the digital revolution; the first social network site Six Degrees, was launched in 1997 had 1 million users at its peak. Myspace launched in 2003 and dominated online traffic with its popularity peaking in 2006. Facebook was created in 2004 as an online network for students at Harvard. Now a global phenomenon, Facebook boasted 1.23 billion active users at the end of 2013. When YouTube was launched in 2005 creating and sharing videos became a huge part of online sharing. The rise of smart phones and applications has meant a complete transformation of online communication and made it a constant and integrated aspect of daily life.

Statistics taken from *Social Media History, A Chronology*, one of many online diagrams on Social Media available, and from reporting in the *Guardian* on the growth of Facebook:



kayepublicity.com/infographic-social-media-history



www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2014/feb/04/facebook-in-numbers-statistics

Much has been documented about the impact of digital communication on relationships, identity and gender over recent years. In her 2013 documentary, *In Real Life*, Beeban Kidron reports that **90% of the world's data had been generated in the previous two years** and **2.5 billion pieces of content are shared online each day**. Whether we choose to or not, we all constantly produce and release data about ourselves when we use the internet, either passively through visiting websites and online shopping or actively though sharing information online - uploading images, creating an online identity. Social media breaks demographic barriers; with approximately 79 – 84% of all age ranges participating. For children and young people social media is a natural part of life and it is easy to accept without question. However, many of the moral, social and political implications of this online revolution are now being discovered.

Girls Like That opens up many questions around social media, gender roles and sexuality and how they are reflected and shaped by the internet. There is a huge amount of information to be found online, in books, films and articles. Here we have selected a few starting points to explore some of those questions and debates:

THE RISE OF SEXTING AND ONLINE SHARING

Sexting is on the increase, but many people, acting on impulse, maybe under the influence of alcohol or drugs, as a dare, or in order to please a boyfriend or girlfriend, don't think through the implications of sharing intimate images.

So you got naked online? Is a resource for young people produced by South West Grid for Learning that gives useful practical advice to young people who have shared online images. The resource outlines how 88% of self generated images have been collected and put onto other sites. It also explores why and how sexting happens, how the technology works, what the real risks are, and what can be done to begin to take control. It also helps young people think through the implications of a photograph going viral, fears of getting into trouble with parents and teachers and the possible impact on you for the future. The resource also gives contacts for a range of organisations that are there to help:
www.saferinternet.org.uk/ufiles/Sexting%20Toolkit.pdf

An article from the Guardian about a mother's fight to prosecute a man who posted a naked photograph of her daughter online. Hunter Moore hacked into Kayla's computer and stole the photograph that she had taken, but not shared with anyone:
www.theguardian.com/culture/2014/mar/30/charlotte-laws-fight-with-internet-revenge-porn-king

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATION ON GENDER AND RELATIONSHIPS

The debate around the impact of digital communication on how people relate and its relationship to misogyny has intensified in recent months with documentaries like Kirsty Wark's *Blurred Lines* and Beeban Kidron's *In Real Life*.

Kidron's film explores the impact of the internet on the lives of young people and maps the changing ways of relating since the digital revolution. The film follows a number of young people and their relationship with online communication; a young man who has lost his place at Oxford University because of his addiction to gaming, a young woman who risked (and suffered) sexual assault in order to hold onto her phone. Most relevant to *Girls Like That* is the interview with Ryan and his friend Ben. Ryan speaks openly and eloquently about his reliance on pornography and how this shapes his relationship with girls:

When you're with your mates and you want a laugh you don't go onto porn websites because it's too easy, you want a bit of a challenge and you all take it in turns to see who can get the most girls to do stuff on the camera. So say you are on a chat website, or on a cam website, you see a good looking girl you're going to want to talk to her and then who can get the girl to take off her top or show part of her body the quickest will obviously get the most ratings out of it.

It is great and I'm highly thankful for whoever made these websites and that they're free, but in other senses it's ruined the whole sense of love. I mean people get addicted on drugs, you try drugs for the first time you love it then you get addicted to it and it ruins the whole sense of drugs it's like that but with love, you go at it, you watch it and you see oh yeah this is nice, this is nice, you keep on doing it, and then you see a girl and you go oh yeah I'm going to do it to her, you do it to her, she get's called a slag for it, the boy really likes her, but doesn't want to go out with her because she's called a slag, so what's happened there?

It hurts me because I find it's so hard for me now to feel a connection for a girl and whenever I do, which is hardly ever, that girl is either known to be a slag or doesn't trust any guy because she's had her heart broken

once or twice and that's the thing which kills me with seeing these amazing girls, gorgeous girls, with such a nice personality and see guys have already gone and done that to them girls.

Find out more about the film here:
http://inreallifefilm.com/filmmaker

A full resource pack has been created to accompany *In Real Life* for Key Stage 4 English teachers - available for download from here:
docacademy.org/films/19/real-life

Beeban Kidron, in an interview about her film:
'There is no doubt girls get more judgmental and sexualised comments – let's not forget that Facebook was invented to give 'hot or not' ratings to women on campus. That thought is in its DNA. The ubiquity of porn has led to the 'pornification' of society as a whole. The fact that what used to be called soft porn is now called advertising is very problematic for young women.'

All the research she read showed that the more you use social media as a young woman the unhappier you are. 'The reason seems to be that people are forever posting pictures that are happy pictures. When you are alone and you look at everyone at the party pouting for the camera you tend to think: all those people are happy – why aren't I?'

Read the full interview here:
www.theguardian.com/film/2013/sep/08/beeban-kidron-inreallife-interview-teenagers

Below are two interviews with feminist writer Germaine Greer, author of *The Female Eunuch* who talks about how she sees misogyny increasing with the rise of social media:
www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-life/10793793/Germaine-Greer-Are-women-really-worse-off-today-compared-to-the-70s.html

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/10791712/Germaine-Greer-online-trolling-shows-men-now-even-less-tolerant-of-women.html

FEMINISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Girls Like That explores and questions the double standards associated with male and female sexuality and sexual activity. This article describes the rise of slut shaming:
http://finallyfeminism101.wordpress.com/2010/04/04/what-is-slut-shaming/

In his interview, Evan Placey described himself as 'the only feminist in the room' and part of what his play does is challenge the audience not to forget or lose sight of what feminists have fought for in the past. This article talks to young people who define themselves as feminists in 2014:
www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2014/mar/29/fifth-wave-feminists-young-activists

An article by Laura Bates about her blog 'Everyday Sexism':
www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2014/mar/29/everyday-sexism-women-encounter-laura-bates

KEY MOMENTS IN FEMINIST HISTORY

1867 The London Society for Women's Suffrage is formed.

1870 The Married Women's Property Act allows married women to own their own property. Previously, when women married, their property transferred to their husbands. This act allows women to keep their property, married, divorced, single or widowed.

1903 The Women's Social and Political Union is founded in Manchester by Emmeline Pankhurst, her daughters Christabel and Sylvia, and Annie Kearney.

1905 Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kearney serve a prison sentence rather than pay a fine after being found guilty of disrupting an election rally.

1918 Women over 30 are granted the right to vote in Britain
The Parliamentary Qualification of Women Act is passed, enabling women to stand as MPs.

1928 All women in Britain gain equal voting rights with men.

1939 – 45 Throughout the Second World War women were needed to do what had previously been considered men's jobs.

1956 In Britain, legal reforms say that women teachers and civil servants should receive equal pay.

1967 The Abortion Act decriminalises abortion in Britain on certain grounds. Originally, abortion was entirely illegal, but was changed to make it legal when the woman was in danger of dying.
The contraceptive pill becomes available through Family Planning Clinics.

1968 Women at the Ford car factory in Dagenham strike over equal pay, almost stopping production at all Ford UK plants. Their protest led directly to the passing of the Equal Pay Act.

1970 The Equal Pay Act makes it illegal to pay women lower rates than men for the same work.
The Miss World Competition is interrupted by feminist protestors claiming the contest is a cattle market. They throw flour and smoke bombs.

1975 The Sex Discrimination Act makes it illegal to discriminate against women in work, education and training.
The Employment Protection Act introduces statutory maternity provision and makes it illegal to sack a woman because she is pregnant.

1999 A new law on parental leave enables both men and women to take up to 13 weeks off to care for children under age five.

DRAMA SESSIONS

INTRODUCTION

The following four Drama sessions have been developed with students and staff at Hammersmith Academy - our 2014-15 Collaborate partner school. The activities aim to allow students to:

- **EXPLORE** the form and some of the content of play in order to get more out of the experience as an audience.
- **RESPOND** to characters, themes and ideas in the play by devising their own piece of work using the **elements of drama**, considering different **drama mediums** and some of the techniques used in *Girls Like That.*
- **PERFORM** both script extracts from *Girls Like That* and their own practical responses to the play (including pair and group work).

The four sessions build sequentially, developing understanding, skills and knowledge progressively and can be done before or after watching the play. They would work particularly well as an introduction to devising for Drama teachers. Teachers may want to follow the sequence quite closely or use selected activities as a starting point for developing their own scheme of work. Activities are designed to be flexible so that they can be adapted for use by Drama, English and PSHE teachers at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5.

Each session is estimated at a 1 hour lesson.

Publicity images taken at Harris Academy South Norwood by Hugo Glendinning

SESSION ONE

AIM

To explore the dynamics of peer and friendship groups through a focus on physicality and proxemics.
Explorative strategies: still image, marking the moment
Drama mediums: using space and movement to explore relationships and communicate an idea
Elements of drama: rhythm, pace and tempo

INTRODUCTION

Begin by explaining that *Girls Like That* follows a group of friends throughout the years and focuses on the shifting dynamic within a friendship group. The style of performance is shared narration and direct address.

WARM UP – ENSEMBLE MOVEMENT WORK

The activity is designed to prepare the group to work together by focusing on group movement, tempo and spatial relationships.

Ask students to walk around the room, finding a group pace and making sure that the whole space is covered as people weave in and out of each other. When you say STOP the group must stop as one. When you say GO the group move off together. Work for a sense of a whole group who are in tune and are aware of themselves as part of a whole.
You could extend this activity by asking the group to find the moments of stopping and moving off together collectively, without your signal.

Now, each time you say STOP, introduce a number which has a corresponding instruction:

1. Move to the sides of the room and turn you attention and energy into the centre of the space.
2. Form a line, standing side by side, across the space and facing in one direction. Ask students to check who is either side of them in the line, as the next time you call number 2 you will want them to find the same position in the line.
3. All point to one spot or thing in the room and direct your energy there.
4. Create a circle around one person who will be left in the centre. This person can be different each time you call number 4 - the group will have to find who that person is without talking or signalling to each other.

When you have done each instruction once, continue the activity, calling out different numbers (you don't need to use the STOP/GO commands now) and concentrate on the group's energy, pace and concentration as they perform the instructions.

Now ask half the group to sit out and the other to do the activity as if it is a movement piece that they are performing to an audience. Add music to underscore the work and feel how that affects the movement.
Ask the audience to respond to what they have seen. How would they describe what they saw? What did it make them think about? Did they impose any narrative onto it?

Now swap the groups around and repeat with different music underscoring.

GROUP DYNAMICS MOVEMENT PIECE

This activity asks students to create a movement piece based on the dynamic of a group of friends/peers who have known each other for a few years.

Have a brief discussion: what are the good and bad things about being in a group of friends? What kind of dynamics might there be in a group of friends who have known each other for years?

Move the class into groups of five or six and ask them to create four different still images that show something about the group dynamic, thinking about both positive and negative aspects of being in a large group, and how the dynamic can change. Ask students to make clear decisions about spatial relationships, thinking about proxemics and physicality.

When students have created their four moments and rehearsed them, add some music (ideally a piece with a clear beat pattern). Now ask students to rehearse their moments adding a transition from one image to the next; for example you may hold an image for 4 beats and then use 4 beats to transition to the next image

EXTENSION

In each still image, ask groups to add a moment where someone steps out of the image and speaks directly to the audience about what they are thinking or feeling at that specific point. They should try and keep these moments of speech within the rhythm/tempo of the piece as a whole.

REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION

What the movement pieces tell us about how groups behave and how the dynamics in friendship and peer groups can shift?
How does the pace of the transitions affect the way we view the still images?

SESSION TWO

AIMS

To build on the concept of group dynamics looked at in the previous session and explore what can happen when someone new joins the group.
To explore and use the forms of direct address and collective narration used in *Girls Like That.*
To create and perform a short piece and respond to each other's work as an audience.
Explorative strategies: still image, thought-tracking, marking the moment, narrating
Drama mediums: using spoken language and movement
Elements of drama: characterisation and form

WARM UP ACTIVITY

Choose a warm up game which helps students to work together as a group, but also allows for the exploration of competition and rivalry.

CREATING A CHARACTER – THE NEW ARRIVAL

Explain that the session will build on their group dynamic work and explore what happens when a new arrival joins the school half way through the year. Make it clear that the young person has come from another London school, so they do not have language or other cultural barriers.

Ask the class to find a space on their own in the room. Begin to play STOP/GO, working for a good focus and energy for the group.

When you say STOP introduce a series of moments for the students to depict as they all embody the new arrival:

- The new student in front of the mirror getting ready for their first day at the new school.
- Standing in the dinner hall looking for somewhere to sit.
- At home in their room that night after their first day.

Thought-track a range of students at each stage of the exercise.

BUILDING THREE MOMENTS

Move the students back into the groups they worked in for their movement pieces in the previous session. Ask them to create three moments that show the new student at school and how their arrival affects the group dynamic. The three moments need to mark the passage of time so should cover more than one day, but students can choose whether they would like the images to be over a few days or a few months.

Having begun to tell the story in three still images, now build on these images, adding movement and no more than three lines of dialogue for each moment or scene. Encourage the students to draw on the work around proxemics from the last session, so that they are showing what happened as much as telling.

ADDING DIRECT ADDRESS

Explain that the play *Girls Like That* is written with a shared narration between the five actors on stage and that direct address is a key part of the form of the play: a post-Brechtian technique which removes the fourth wall, where actors break the action of the play and speak directly to the audience.

As Esther (director) mentions in her interview, using this technique will be an important part of her process with the cast: *One thing we'll want to look at as a company is what are the actors trying to do to the audience? Are they trying to justify themselves? Are they confiding in the audience? Are they trying to collude with the audience? So we'll play around with that with the performers.*

Have a brief discussion about direct address asking whether students have seen or created work using this technique and how and why it can be used.

Ask students to now employ direct address and collective narration within the scenes they have created. They will need to choose:

- Who breaks out of the action to speak to the audience and at what moments do they do this?
- What are the rest of the actors doing at these moments? Does the action continue or freeze?
- Do the actors look at the audience when they speak or are they still focused on the action of the scene?
- Are they detached or emotionally involved in what is happening in the scene?

Try to have at least three of your characters narrate in each scene, giving multiple perspectives on what is happening

The actor can either narrate, telling the audience what happened, or they can comment on what is happening.

Are the characters reliable or unreliable narrators within the scene?

PERFORMANCE

Share the students' work. Ask the audience to pay attention to whose version of the story is being told at any one point and how it is being told.

REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION

What is the effect of direct address on the audience?
What is the effect of collective narration?
What is demanded of the audience when there are multiple perspectives or versions of the same event?
Is it possible to have an objective narrator?

SESSION THREE

AIMS

To explore the use of social media in the context of the drama created.
To write in-role and perform a short piece in pairs that explores the way we construct online and offline identities.
To respond to each other's work as an audience.
Drama strategies: Cross cutting, writing in role
Drama mediums: using space and levels, using movement to communicate relationships, using voice and spoken language
Drama elements: content (exploring a theme), characterisation, contrasts

INTRODUCTION

Explain that *Girls Like That* explores the use of social media and its impact on a group of young girls. Social media may feel part of the fabric of everyday life, but it is still very new technology and is fast changing. Watching the play and the following activities are a chance to reflect on the use of social media and the role it plays in our lives.

WARM UP – AGREEMENT LINE

Set up an agreement line within the space, with strongly agree at one end of the room and strongly disagree at the other. Ask students to place themselves at any point along the line in response to the questions:

- I share images online
- I share images of myself online
- I comment on other people's images
- I interact with people online that I've never met in real life
- I'm addicted to the internet
- I can't function without my phone
- I spend more time talking to friends online or on the phone than in real life
- I feel that the version I present of myself online is who I really am
- I share things online that I wouldn't say out loud
- I feel pressure to have a certain image online
- I control where all my images and comments can be seen
- I know how to delete and remove things I have posted online
- There are things I have posted online which I now regret

Have a brief discussion about the construction of online identities - how people create an image of themselves by what they choose to show or not show online.

WRITING ONLINE/OFFLINE MONOLOGUES

Ask the students to go back into their groups and then split into smaller groupings of twos or threes.

Ask them to create the Facebook entries of the protagonist – the new arrival - they have created in their scenes. This should include both images and words they have posted. Ask them to think about who might see these entries, friends and peers from their old school as well as from their new school.

Alongside this, create the diary entries their character has written in the same timescale, which are not intended to be read by others.

There may be a maximum of six entries of each and keep them to a good length for performance.

STAGING MONOLOGUES

Ask students to stage their monologues, cross cutting between the Facebook updates and the diary entries:

- How can you make it clear to your audience which is Facebook and which is the diary entry?
- How will you use the actors in your group? Will you have more than one person playing your protagonist?
- How do the online/offline personas view each other? How is this reflected in their spatial relationships?

See a few of the monologues and ask the audience to analyse what is affective in the different approaches to staging their pieces.

Reflect on what these monologues reveal about how the protagonist presents themselves online and their more private, interior world.

COMBINING SCENE WORK AND MONOLOGUES

Back in the larger groups now ask the students to combine their scenes with the monologues they have created. They will have a lot of material now so they will need to make some key decisions about how to edit and combine both content and form from all of the work they have devised.

PERFORMANCE

Perform the final pieces.

REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION

How do the different theatre techniques combine to tell the story in each piece?
Do some elements work better than others?
What solutions have different groups found to the challenges of combining different theatre form and multiple perspectives?
What do the pieces communicate to the audience about the way online communication affects friendship and peer group dynamics?

If you don't have time in to share the work created, you could start Session 4 with the groups' performances and discuss how they think parents would feel about the online personas they have created. This would then be a way in to the activity that follows which explores adult perspectives.

SESSION FOUR

AIMS

To explore adult perspectives on young people and social media, through whole group in-role improvisation.
Drama strategies: Teacher and student in role, still image
Drama elements: characterisation
This session continues to explore the content of the role of social media in young people's lives but is a discrete activity which can be run before or after a visit to the play.

INTRODUCTION: WHOLE GROUP DISCUSSION

We know that the protagonist in the scenes which students have created spent time online, what kind of risks or dangers might this particular young person be vulnerable to? (If you haven't done sessions 1 - 3 talk generally about the risks for young people). Write down as many ideas as you can.

EXPLORING ADULTS' PERSPECTIVES

In small groups give the students a range of quotes (maybe 3 or 4 per group) from adults about young people's online use. **Resource 1.**

Ask students to imagine that they are the parent of a young person in a fictional school who has been called to a meeting at the school. The meeting has been organised by the head teacher and is called 'How can we protect our children from social media and the internet?'

Ask each student to spend a little time deciding:

- The age and sex of their child.
- What they know or don't know about their child's internet use.
- What their attitude is towards young people and social media. They may have very strong opinions like the quotes provided, or decide they don't think or care much about the issue, or maybe decide that some adults make a huge fuss when actually there's no need - it's just the modern world.
- Whether their child has a smart phone.
- Whether they have any rules around internet use.

PAIRS IMPROVISATION

With a partner ask students to imagine they are waiting outside the school hall and improvise the conversation they have just before going into the meeting.

Ask the class to freeze their improvisations and bring a few of those conversations to life, so that the whole group can hear a range of conversations.

WHOLE CLASS ROLE-PLAY

Create a space in the room which has the look and feel of a school hall - with chairs for the parents and somewhere for you to stand (in-role as the head teacher).

Make sure that you have prepared what you are going to say and that you are confident of the head teachers' views on this issue. There is information at the front of this pack which can help you in this.

Watching Beeban Kidron's film *In Real Life* would also be invaluable preparation as it is a highly researched study of young people's use of the internet and social media, and explores the impact on behaviour and development.

In-role, invite the parents into the meeting and thank them all for coming.
Explain, that the head teacher has been asked by a government body to consult parents on their thoughts about the unprecedented freedoms of the internet, the dangers this raises and whether there is anything that can be done to protect children and young people against these dangers.
As head teacher start by asking the parents their thoughts and concerns:

- Do you think your children are online too much?
- How do you think it affects them in terms of their relationships, school work, and self confidence?

As the conversation develops, feed in your main concerns as head teacher. This is an opportunity to deepen the students' responses and ask that they articulate their thoughts and feelings in relation to the head teacher's perspective. It can be useful to take quite a strong stance in the debate, e.g.:

- There is too much unregulated content; children can see things that they are not ready to see in terms of their emotional and cognitive development.
- Pornography is just at the click of a button and is affecting how young people form their sexual relationships.
- It is affecting young people's confidence and self image; there is constant focus on how people look.
- Trolling and online bullying is very vicious; people can hide who they are online and become braver and less inhibited.
- Children aren't reading anymore, it is affecting their attention span and the ability to focus, they increasingly only communicate in Twitter length exchanges (140 characters).
- It is affecting the development of the brain. Research shows how internet use is reshaping the brain: children can reason more and apply logic, but can't think laterally and complexly and this affects the development of empathy.

Then ask what the parents think and feel we could or should do about these issues. Explain that the government body which is consulting has a number of possible actions they could take, and want to hear parent's thoughts on them:

- There is technology which can read fingerprints and irises – each child can be monitored so that we can have certain content that is restricted to young people; we could even limit time that they can spend on the internet.
- There is a call for Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and other social media to be monitored and moderated much more closely, for all exchanges to be viewed and assessed.
  Call the meeting to a close and thank the parents for attending, explain that you will feed back to the government body on their behalf.

REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION

How do adults view social media differently to children and young people?
Many adults didn't have any internet use when they were growing up, how does this affect the relationship between adults and their children around this new technology?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

You could use the characters and content you have created in the role-play to add a scene involving an adult's perspective into the pieces students have created.

RESOURCE ONE

PERSPECTIVES ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND SOCIAL MEDIA:

Sexting is on the increase, but many people, acting on impulse, maybe under the influence of alcohol or drugs, as a dare, or in order to please a boyfriend or girlfriend, don't think through the implications of sharing intimate images.
Danah Boyd, author: *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*

There is no doubt girls get more judgmental and sexualised comments – let's not forget that Facebook was invented to give 'hot or not' ratings to women on campus.
Beeban Kidron

All the research she read showed that the more you use social media as a young woman the unhappier you are. The reason seems to be that people are forever posting pictures that are happy pictures. When you are alone and you look at everyone at the party pouting for the camera you tend to think: all those people are happy – why aren't I?
Beeban Kidron

Our new sensibility 'I share therefore I am' is causing people to not feel like themselves until they send out for comment and that way of being leaves people without a sense of them self, a sense of their core beliefs.
Professor Sherry Turkle - social studies of science and technology

Now young people put themselves out completely on the internet. They're trying to get external validation from a large number of people. I think we're also seeing quite a large increase in the number of girls who self harm and go through the bullying process. There's still the same stuff like boys and relationships and school, but things like self harm are much more talked about, it becomes more acceptable for these girls to be doing it.
Germaine Greer

The rise of social media is a double-edged sword. On the one hand it enables women to bond, build contacts and feel supported, on the other is opens up access so that we can be abused and bullied by total strangers.
Germaine Greer

Everything about the internet is increasingly designed to be addictive, using the ongoing trillion-clicks of data to analyse what keeps people coming back, checking for updates, exploiting our highly evolved need to touch, to respond, to feel, for commercial ends. We are entrapping our young people in this world.
Professor Luis Van Ahn – internet entrepreneur

People from all political sides routinely say that the internet has to be the model of free speech and freedom. I wonder where else the level of freedom these kids are faced with exists? Why on the internet and only on the internet? Perhaps we should all be a tiny bit more critical?
Beeban Kidron

Regulation might be part of the answer, but also some kind of shift in cultural attitudes. That it is not OK to be constantly checking your phone in front of your children. That there should be certain situations where phones are unacceptable – at mealtimes; in some public spaces, and so on.
Beeban Kidron

The internet in practice is the greatest spying machine that has ever been developed. Google knows nearly every web page you've looked at.
Julian Assange

Yes of course, all that 'cloud' and 'like' and 'friend' and 'Google' and 'Twitter'. The nursery language makes it seem a safe Teletubby land where nothing bad could happen. Are we all comfortable with this? Shouldn't we demand not only that it sound safe for our children to explore, but that it is safe? Google and Facebook and the rest – routinely take our data and sell it on to advertisers. Their business is clearly content, data. We have to start asking why they are not being made responsible for it.
Beeban Kidron

We see a huge difference in attention span between some of the older users where you can show them a whole paragraph explaining a grammar rule and they'll read it. Whereas the younger users, as long as it's longer than one line just won't read it. To them it just looks like text.
Professor Luis Van Ahn – internet entrepreneur

UNICORN

THE UK'S THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

Synergy Theatre Project

GIRLS LIKE THAT

A Synergy Theatre Project/Unicorn co-production

CREATIVE TEAM

By Evan Placey
Directed by Esther Baker

Resource pack written by Catherine Greenwood
Drama activities developed with Ella Macfadyen and students and staff at Hammersmith Academy.

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