



# IN THIS WORLD

by Hannah Moscovitch

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**Study Guide**  
Created by Janna Smith

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## Welcome to Youtheatre

Founded 1968, Youtheatre is Montreal's oldest professional English language theatre company. Youtheatre is committed to the creation, development and production of new works by the finest Canadian playwrights. Most importantly, we consider provocative, intelligent and socially relevant subject matter to be a crucial factor in reaching our audiences.

Each year, the company produces three works for Quebec audiences and tours productions from its repertoire on a national level. These works are seen by an average of 30,000 young people each season. Since 2000, Youtheatre has been presenting work in French and considers the francophone community an important part of its audience.

### **IN THIS WORLD by Hannah Moscovitch**

The play opens following an altercation between two friends. Neyssa has punched Bijou in the face for no apparent reason. Both girls sit in detention without supervision, able to discuss the problems between them.

Bijou is a pretty blonde from a privileged background and Neyssa a recent Jamaican immigrant struggling to fit in. Deep down both girls want what the other has, but each refuses to give up certain things- Neyssa her pride and Bijou her freedom. Unfortunately for both, navigating the world is difficult even under the best circumstances. The world and its rules can change when least expected leaving us to contend with our beliefs, and our choices.

## About the Study Guide

This guide is meant to be used as a starting point for discussions and to encourage students to get the most out of their theatre experience. We recommend that students be introduced to the issues of aggression and murder before viewing the production. The discussion topics and post-show activities should follow the performance in order to enhance the students' complete understanding of the subjects involved. Feel free to adapt the activities to suit your students and your goals as a teacher. You may photocopy any of the material in this guide.

## Who's Who

Aiza Ntibarikure  
Krystina Bojanowski

as Neyssa  
as Bijou

Michel Lefebvre  
Hannah Moscovitch  
Veronique Bertrand  
Martin Messier  
Renaud Pettigrew

Director  
Playwright  
Set/Costume Designer  
Composer  
Lighting Designer

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# HISTORY

## ***Pre-Show: The Myth of Canada's Tradition of Tolerance***

There is a widely held misperception that Canada has always been a tolerant society. That is chiefly because Canadian history books don't record much about the trials, tribulations and triumphs of Blacks throughout Canada's history. There's the odd sentence or footnote in school textbooks, but nothing of real substance.

The fact is, however, that slavery thrived in the territory that is now Canada from 1628 to the early 1800s. It was a common thing to buy and sell Black men, women and children back then.

Equally horrific, most of the Black slaves who sided with the British during the War of American Independence found out that their freedom, if granted at all, came at a high cost. An estimated 3000 or ten percent of the United Empire Loyalists that came to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and PEI during the late 1700s were Black.

They were promised their own land, a chance to build their own fortunes, and lives as free people. But, as historians note, "most of them never received the land and provisions promised to them". They were cheated, left to fend for themselves or forced to work on public projects such as road building."

Then, in 1793, the *Abolition Act* was passed in Upper Canada, making Canada the first jurisdiction in the British Empire to move toward the abolition of slavery. And in 1833, the *British Imperial Act* abolished slavery throughout the Empire, including Canada.

Many white Canadians had opposed slavery and helped Black refugees during these times. But just as many Canadians feared the influx of Black settlers. They saw them as ignorant, immoral, and an economic threat. In the 1840s, for example, Robert Lachlan, an Ontario magistrate, claimed that the province's 1600 Blacks caused more crime than all of their 16,000 fellow white citizens combined.

During the decades that followed, the Jim Crow segregation movement in the American South reared its ugly head in Canada as well. Blacks were not allowed to eat in the same restaurants or to stay in the same hotels as whites. They could not attend the same schools or churches as whites. Blacks could not even sit on the main floor of a movie theatre, but were relegated to the balcony section.

This segregation remained the order of the day for Blacks in Canada during much of the 20th century. During the First World War, Black men were denied the opportunity of serving their country in the regular army. They were instead relegated to a special construction battalion.

Black women were not allowed to train as nurses alongside white women. In Ontario, the last segregated school only closed its doors in 1965. And as late as 1968, Black people were denied the right of burial in some Nova Scotia cemeteries.

Many scholars have argued that the early experience of Blacks as slaves and the ongoing

alienation of Blacks that continued afterward still taint the perceptions of Blacks and the attitudes of whites toward Blacks today – and this despite the hard won triumphs of courageous Black Canadians during the latter decades of the 20th century.

Source: A Canadian View of Canadian Stereotypes by the Honorable Donald H. Oliver Q.C., Senator, The Senate of Canada; October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007

### **Anti-Black Racism in Canada**

Anti-Black racism, which is rooted in slavery and colonialism, is a fundamental aspect of Canadian history and culture. Anti-Black racism is prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and is part of their unique history and experience.

Anti-Black racism in Canada is often subtle and is generally not accompanied by overt racial slurs or explicitly prohibitive legislation. However, it is deeply entrenched in Canadian institutions, policies, and practices. It involves systemic discrimination in the immigration and refugee system, the criminal justice system, employment, education, health, and other spheres of society. It is manifested in the current social, economic, and political marginalization of African Canadians in society such as the lack of opportunities, lower socio-economic status, higher unemployment, significant poverty rates, over representation in the criminal justice system, and the general feeling of alienation by African Canadians.

Anti-Black racism is characterized by particularly virulent and pervasive racial stereotypes. The stereotypes of the Black male as being prone to criminality and violence and being "dangerous" are some of the most prevalent and dominant stereotypes in Canadian society. These stereotypes are routinely reinforced and perpetuated by the mass media, reflected and maintained by Canadian institutions, and underpin the systemic discrimination against African Canadians in the criminal justice system. Canadian courts and various commissions have repeatedly recognized the pervasiveness of anti-Black stereotyping, the overrepresentation of African Canadians in the criminal justice system, and that African Canadians are prominent targets of racism in Canadian society.

Anti-Black racism in Canada contradicts Canada's global racism-free image, notwithstanding the mechanisms available to redress racial discrimination such as the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Provincial and Federal human rights legislation and commissions, the Multiculturalism Act, the Federal Employment Equity Act and the international human rights instruments to which Canada has acceded.

Source: [www.aclc.net](http://www.aclc.net) The African Canadian Legal Clinic (ACLC) is a not-for-profit organization established in October 1994 expressly to address anti-Black racism and other forms of systemic and institutional discrimination in Canadian society.

### **Reading: Immigrant Youth in Canada**

In order to better understand the lives of immigrant youth in Canada, the CCSD (Canadian

Council on Social Development) commissioned focus groups of young immigrants to ask about their own perspectives on their lives here. While the experiences voiced by these young people cannot be generalized to all immigrant youth, their perceptions illuminate the experience of their lives in Canada.

A total of six groups were held in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. These cities were chosen because they are home to over two-thirds of all young immigrants aged 15 to 24. All of the participants in the focus groups had arrived in Canada within the previous five years (1995-2000).

### ***General perceptions of Canada***

Focus group participants most often identified "freedom" and "opportunity" as the "best things" about living in Canada. For some young immigrants, freedom meant the increased liberation from their parents which they had gained by moving to a more permissive society. "In my country, people my age don't date, but here it's normal. My mother doesn't like it, but she understands that we are in Canada now." For others, freedom related more to human rights and freedom from state-sponsored oppression. "Here you can do whatever you want and nobody bothers you. You won't be persecuted for your beliefs or opinions."

There was a general consensus that Canada offered much greater economic opportunities "There are more jobs here." Many of the younger participants spoke about what they considered to be relatively easy access to post-secondary education. "Here, you can get student loans." Participants also liked what they described as Canada's multicultural and relatively tolerant society, one in which immigrants were not pressured to abandon their roots. "When I want to be Indian, I can be Indian, and when I want to be Canadian, I can be that too, but I don't feel like I have to be Canadian all the time. It's OK to do that here."

There was one aspect of Canadian society that most participants did not like: the consumer culture and the unrestrained pursuit of wealth and status symbols. "Here it's all about money. At my school, if you have money and the right clothes you are cool. In Poland, people decide whether or not you are cool based on the sort of person that you are." It was apparent from the discussions that many young immigrants felt that Canada's consumer culture was a particularly cruel aspect of society to contend with, given that their families did not have much money.

### ***Integration***

Participants spoke of a wide range of experiences after coming to Canada. The extent to which they found these experiences difficult appears to be directly related to their ability to speak one of the country's official languages when they arrived. The majority of young immigrants indicated that their first year in Canada was "very difficult."

A number of participants in the Toronto focus groups spoke about how their schools were sometimes divided along ethnic lines. "At our school, you've got the Greeks and the Latino kids, and then you've got the white kids. The groups don't like each other, so there are fights all the time." Young immigrants who came to Canada with a solid grasp of English (or French, among those living in Montreal) seemed to have adapted much more easily. "I really had

no problems fitting in. I knew English because my mother was an English professor in Croatia."

New arrivals felt more comfortable being with other youth who shared their experiences and hardships. In some cases, participants described how they gravitated to other youth who came from their country of origin. "The first day my brother and I went to school, word got around that there were some new Russian kids in the school, so all the Russian kids came to my class to see who I was. I started to hang around with them immediately."

### ***What is a Canadian?***

For a number of young immigrants in the focus groups, a Canadian was thought to be a white person of Anglo-Saxon descent who had been born in Canada. Similarly, in the Quebec focus groups, there was some agreement among the older immigrants that a true Quebecois was a person of French ancestry who had been born in Quebec. Indeed, participants in the Montreal focus groups were generally of the view that it was probably more difficult for immigrants to feel a part of Quebec society than it was for immigrants in other parts of the country to feel Canadian.

The majority of young immigrants indicated that they now felt comfortable in Canada and they expected to continue to adapt as their language skills developed further. Most, however, said that they did not "feel Canadian" and did not ever expect to feel truly Canadian. Many focus group participants began this aspect of the discussion by noting that they were unsure about what being Canadian meant. "What is a Canadian, really?" Many believed that one's country of birth determined your identity for life. According to this view, only people who were born in Canada were truly Canadian. Others saw the issue more in terms of their ability to integrate. "As long as I have an accent, I don't think I can feel really Canadian."

Feeling Canadian, for some participants, was less important to them than feeling comfortable being who they wanted to be while living in Canada. Most felt that this was acceptable to native-born Canadians. "It's not important to me. I call myself a Greek-Canadian and people don't have a problem with that."

### ***It is tougher on my parents***

Most focus group participants who had immigrated with their parents agreed that it was much more difficult for their parents to integrate into Canadian society. Some of these difficulties related to a lack of fluency in English or French, while others involved getting accreditation for their training or degrees earned in their country of origin. Learning English or French was, by far, the most difficult challenge for their parents. "My father has been in Vancouver for five years and he still can't speak English." Obtaining employment was also described as a huge barrier faced by their parents. "It took a long time for my mother to get a job. Even now she still only works part-time." Indeed, a few participants said that one of their parents had moved back to their country of origin because they felt that life was too difficult in Canada, particularly with respect to obtaining employment. A number of participants also lamented the fact that their parents were forced to take what they considered to be menial jobs, either because their grasp of English or French was insufficient, or because their academic credentials and work experience counted for very little in Canada. "In Algeria, my father owned businesses. Here, he is unemployed." "At home my father was an engineer. Here all he can get are odd jobs."

### *We are always terrorists in the movies*

Many young immigrants felt that people from their country were often negatively depicted in films, television and in the news media. Black and Hispanic people, they said, were portrayed as gangsters and criminals, and Russians as "lovers of vodka" and arms dealers. Immigrants from Algeria felt that Muslims and North Africans were portrayed as terrorists; Haitians and Africans were stereotyped as impoverished and uneducated. "You would think that everyone in Africa is starving to death and living in huts. That's not the case. In the cities, for example, we have things like mass transit systems." Indo-Pakistani people were said to be depicted as groveling shopkeepers. "Well, there's Apu on the Simpsons." While the focus group participants clearly felt that the use of stereotypes to depict immigrants, foreigners and visible minorities was a sad commentary on the state of North American culture, most were not overly bothered by the stereotypes. In fact, many participants chuckled when expressing their views on this issue.

#### ***If you forget your roots, you forget who you are***

Almost all young immigrants said that it was very important for them to maintain their culture, heritage and language. Many had trouble imagining not doing so. "It's who I am." "It's part of me." There was agreement among the young people that their homeland's language, culture and traditions formed an important part of their personal identity. "If you forget your roots, you forget who you are." Quite a few also said that they intended to pass on their heritage to their children.

### ***Racism***

The issue of racism was raised spontaneously in all of the focus groups. Often it arose as part of the discussions about negative aspects of Canada. Younger participants in particular felt that the police and, more significantly, teachers could be racists. Even participants who did not raise the issue themselves and those who had not faced racism from teachers agreed that certain teachers and school administrators seemed to single out certain students or groups of students for harsher treatment based on their ethnicity. "I have a teacher who hates the Hispanic kids." "Teachers don't like me because I am Greek." "I had a teacher who deducted 20 points from an oral presentation I gave because of my accent. She said that she marked everyone on their diction and she was going to treat me just like the others because it was the only way I was ever going to learn." "If a white kid does something and I do the same thing, there is no question that I'm going to get into worse trouble. In fact, teachers don't even bother with me. I go to the principal's office for the slightest offence."

Some participants felt that the police "hassled" them because they were "dark-skinned." "My friend and I get stopped all the time, for nothing. He looks like me, he's tall, dark and has 'dreads'." "I get the feeling that police are always looking at us suspiciously, but my friends and I don't do anything wrong." Participants agreed that it was difficult to tell whether the discrimination they perceived to be coming from authority figures was based on the fact that they were immigrants or because they were members of visible minority groups. "I think it's probably both."

Some older immigrant youth spoke of the discrimination and bigotry they had faced in trying to find employment. This seemed to be of particular concern among participants in the Montreal



focus groups.

The young immigrants' main reaction to the racism and bigotry they encountered was to ignore it. It was also apparent that the racism and rejection they felt from native-born people led some immigrants to retreat to their ethnic community and strengthen their relationships with people of their same ethnic background.

While most focus group participants had experienced racism or bigotry in Canada, it is important to note that only a few saw it as a serious problem. The majority were rather philosophical about the issue, noting that racism and bigotry are found in all countries and cultures, and thus, one could not expect Canada to be exempt from this problem. Many also pointed out that, compared to other countries, Canada's multicultural makeup likely made racism less of a problem here. In terms of solutions, several participants felt that efforts to promote tolerance and understanding should be focused on schools and aimed at both teachers and students.

Source: Report on Cultural Diversity commissioned by The Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) 2000

### **Post-Show: Questions**

1. To what degree does racism affect your life?
2. What actions do you take in your life to try and alleviate racism? Can you do more?
3. Fifty years following the end of segregation, have attitudes towards "inter-racial dating" changed?
4. Is such dating accepted in your family and/or among you friends?
5. Neyssa does not seem to agree with Bijou and Hector's relationship. Why not?
6. Is she perpetuating racism?
7. How well has Neyssa adapted to her adopted country? What were her family's reasons for moving? What challenges do they face?

# Psychology

## Pre-Show: Exploring Gender Stereotypes

In the 1990s, a major theoretical framework for explaining stereotypes is called the social cognitive approach. According to this approach, stereotypes are belief systems that guide the way we process information, including information about gender.

**Gender Polarization** According to psychologists such as Sandra Bem (1993), one cognitive process that seems nearly inevitable in humans is to divide people into groups. We can partition these groups on the basis of race, age, religion, and so forth. However, the major way in which we usually split humanity is on the basis of gender. This process of categorizing others in terms of gender is both habitual and automatic. It's nearly impossible to suppress the tendency to split the world in half, using gender as the great divider. In fact, after finishing this article, try ignoring the gender of the first person you meet! When we divide the world into two groups, male and female, we tend to see all males as being similar, all females as being similar, and the two categories of "male" and "female" as being very different from each other. In real life, the characteristics of women and men tend to overlap. Unfortunately, however, gender polarization often creates an artificial gap between women and men.

**Different Expectations for Males and Females** The second way in which gender stereotypes are related to cognitive processes is that we have different expectations for female and male behavior. A classic study focused on adults' interpretations of infants' behavior. Condry and Condry (1976) prepared videotapes of an infant responding to a variety of stimuli. For example, the infant stared and then cried in response to a jack-in-the-box that suddenly popped open. College students had been led to believe that the infant was either a baby girl or a baby boy. When students watched the videotape with the jack-in-the-box, those who thought the infant was a boy tended to judge that "he" was showing anger. When they thought that the infant was a girl, they decided that "she" was showing fear. Remember that everyone saw the same videotape of the same infant. However, the ambiguous negative reaction was given a more masculine label (anger, rather than fear) when the infant was perceived to be a boy.

**The Normative Male** According to a third principle, we tend to believe the male experience to be normative. A gender difference is therefore typically explained in terms of why the female differs from that norm. For example, research often shows a gender difference in self-confidence. However, these studies almost always ask about why females are low in self-confidence, relative to the male norm. They rarely speculate about whether females are actually on target as far as self-confidence, and whether males may actually be too high in self-confidence (Tavris, 1992). Consider another example. In recent U.S. Presidential elections, many commentators remarked about various gender gaps. For example, women are more likely than men to vote in elections. Interestingly, commentators typically spoke as if the male turnout rate was standard, the norm. In contrast, they provided many explanations for why the females were different. Only rarely did they consider the females to be the norm, trying to explain why male turnout was low (Miller, Taylor, & Buck, 1991).

**Remembering Gender-Consistent Information** In general, people recall gender-consistent information more accurately than gender-inconsistent information. Selective recall is especially

likely when people are faced with too many simultaneous tasks (Macrae, Hewstone, & Griffiths, 1993). For example, Arnie Cann (1993) found that students recalled sentences like "Jane is a good nurse" better than "Jane is a bad nurse." When someone is employed in a gender-consistent occupation, we recall this person's competence. In contrast, students recalled sentences like "John is a bad nurse" better than "John is a good nurse." When someone is employed in a gender-inconsistent occupation, we recall this person's incompetence. Notice that when we combine selective recall with the other cognitive factors--gender polarization, differential expectations, and the normative male--we strengthen and perpetuate our existing stereotypes.

### **How Do the Media Contribute to Gender Stereotypes?**

Television, movies, and the printed media help encourage people to develop and maintain the gender stereotypes we have been examining. Let's consider four general trends.

**Women are Underrepresented in the Media** Research suggests that women are underrepresented in the media, even during the 1990s. For example, music videos feature roughly twice as many males as females (Sommers-Flanagan, Sommers-Flanagan, & Davis, 1993). Women are not seen much, but they are heard even less. For example, the next time you see a television advertisement, notice whose voice of authority is extolling the product's virtues. Males constitute between 85% and 90% of these voice-overs. Furthermore, only 5% of radio talk-show hosts are female (Flanders, 1997).

**Women's and Men's Bodies are Represented Differently** If you glance through magazine advertisements, you'll notice that women are much more likely than men to serve a decorative function. Women recline in seductive clothing, caressing a liquor bottle, or they drape themselves coyly on the nearest male. They bend their bodies at a ludicrous angle, or they look as helpless as 6-year-olds. They also may be painfully thin. In contrast, men stand up, they look competent, and they look purposeful (Jones, 1991).

**Women and Men are Shown Doing Different Activities** In magazine advertisements, men are rarely portrayed doing housework. Instead, men are more likely than women to be shown working outside the home. The world of paid employment is not emphasized for women. For example, an analysis of the articles in *Seventeen* magazine demonstrated that only 7% of the contents concerned career planning, independence, and other self-development topics. In contrast, 46% of the contents concerned appearance (Peirce, 1990). In the magazine advertisements, men are rarely portrayed doing housework. Basically, the media world often represents men and women as living in separate spheres.

**Women of Color Are Represented in an Especially Biased Way** When Black women are shown at all, they are likely to appear in stereotypical roles. They are portrayed in an exaggerated way, with body positions even more exaggerated than those of European American women. Other women of color--Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans are virtually invisible (Andersen, 1993). Fortunately, however, we are finally beginning to see some progress in the representation of men and women in advertisements and other visual media.

Source: Bimbos and Rambos by Margaret W. Matlin Winter 1999 issue of *Eye on Psi Chi* (Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 13-14, 16)

## **Reading: Sexism Sill Tops my List of Struggles**

by Desiree Cooper; Detroit Free Press

I was born on the cusp: The cusp between Black History Month in February and Women's History Month in March. It was poet Audre Lorde who once said that there's no hierarchy among oppressions. But having labored under both racism and sexism my whole life, I can't help but do some comparisons. And I'm here to tell you that while enduring racism is no picnic, it's sexism that really sticks in my craw. There's just no escaping it. There are many times in my life when I'm free of the burdens of race. Like when I'm with my own family and friends, and the color of my skin evaporates. I'm not a black person, I'm Des. I'm just me. Much rarer are the times when my gender disappears. Even among the people I love the most, I'm still conscious of who's dragging around the heavy skirts. "Have you seen my socks?" "When will you be there to pick me up?" "What's for dinner?" -- all questions that the men in my life rarely are expected to answer.

The truth is, there's been a very effective women's movement. But when is everything else going to move with us? To this day, critical services are only offered between 9 and 5, as if most women were still at home during the day. Child care is treated as a haphazard frill, not a necessity. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, one in four families are now caring for a person over the age of 50, and 75% of those caregivers are women -- most of whom also have other jobs. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in 2006 that women spend twice as much time as men caring for children, and still do 66% of the cooking and housekeeping. In Michigan, women get paid 67 cents for every dollar a man earns. My generation was taught that women could have it all. Boy, do we ever. You've come a long way, buster?

I'd like to see Women's History Month celebrated with conversations among men about how to make the world better for their daughters, sisters, wives and mothers. It won't be an easy conversation. Frederick Douglass, the former slave and famed abolitionist, was also one of America's early feminists. He once observed that talking about equal rights for animals would be less controversial than talking about women's rights. He might have agreed with me that racism is insidious, but sexism is inherent. Douglass wrote in 1848: "Many who have at last made the discovery that the Negroes have some rights, have yet to be convinced that women are entitled to any." He added that there were many people who actually abandoned the anti-slavery movement, not because of their feeling about blacks, but because they feared it would ignite an equal rights movement for women. They could abide the idea of free blacks. But free women? Never! I don't mean to say that we women haven't gained important ground in the past 150 years.

We've certainly come a long way, baby. But for the rest of the trip, it's not good enough for us women to travel alone. It's time for men to come a long way, too.

Source: Desiree Cooper Copyright (c) 2007, Detroit Free Press Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business

### **Post-Show: Questions**

1. Discuss the word “slut” and why it’s derogatory towards women.
2. Do you think it is worse when men use the word “slut” against women or women use it against each other? Explain.
3. Bijou makes a claim that the word we use pejoratively to describe black people is the same as the word “slut.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain.
4. Is Neyssa stereotyping Hector and his reasons for dating Bijou?
5. What is more prevalent racism or sexism? Can the Clinton-Obama presidential race stand as an example of what Ms. Cooper describes?

# SEX EDUCATION

## PRE-show: Sexual Abstinence

### Why Abstinence?

Sexual abstinence is practiced in every country in the world and is the only sure way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease. Abstinence, or the action of refraining from sexual activity, has been used for centuries in order to prevent unwanted pregnancies. In fact, abstinence is a normal and acceptable practice used by men and women of all ages who are not yet prepared to accept the risks of sexual activity.

### What is Abstinence?

Every person has a different definition of abstinence. For the purpose of this guide, abstinence includes refraining from all types of sexual activity. This includes: vaginal sex, anal sex, oral sex, outercourse (dry sex or grinding), mutual masturbation, and any other sexually gratifying activity. Many sexual activities cannot result in pregnancy, but they are still considered an act of sexual intimacy. A number of these activities can still result in the transmission of diseases. Whatever you do, it's important to make responsible sexual choices.

### Why Sex?

When you are feeling close to another person, it may seem natural to progress from hugging and kissing to sexual intercourse. Many people use sexual activity and intercourse as a way to express love, tenderness, and affection. However, emotional affection can also be expressed in alternative ways and this can circumvent many of the risks associated with intercourse. Enjoying a walk on the beach, a romantic dinner for two, or just a night at the movies can illustrate the same meaning inherent in sex and also allow for the formation of a deep emotional bond. Refraining from sexual activity doesn't mean that you aren't interested in expressing affection for your loved one. To the contrary, abstinence can open up opportunities to developing meaningful communication with your partner.

**Considering sex?** Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Does having sex before marriage agree with my own morals?
- If I get pregnant, am I prepared to manage single parenthood?
- If not, am I ready to deal with the pain of abortion or adoption?
- Do I really know this person?
- If the relationship breaks up, will I be glad that I had sex with this person?
- Is he pressuring me to have sex?
- Am I pressuring him to have sex?
- Am I sure that my partner is not infected with a sexually transmitted disease?
- Am I sure that I'm not infected with a STI which I could give my partner?

If the answers to any of these questions is "no," then it may be sensible to wait.

Source: © 2008 epigee.org.

**Reading: Teaching Abstinence Reduces Teen Sex  
Condom use not affected**

August 15, 2006

TORONTO - Abstinence-only programs can reduce sexual activity among young teens and effectively delay their "sexual debut" without discouraging future condom use, according to a new study of the controversial HIV prevention strategy.

A study of 662 African-American Grade 6 and 7 students from inner-city middle schools in Philadelphia found those taught an abstinence-only approach to sex were less likely to have had sexual intercourse at 24 months' follow-up compared to those put through a "safer sex" intervention that emphasized condom use but made no mention of abstinence.

And while Bill Clinton, the former U.S. president, told delegates to the International AIDS Conference in Toronto yesterday that abstinence programs delay sexual activity but make teens less likely to use condoms when they do start having sex, the study found the opposite to be true.

"It did not reduce intentions to use condoms, it did not reduce beliefs about the efficacy of condoms, it did not decrease consistent condom use and it did not decrease condom use at last sexual [encounter]," lead author John Jemmott, of the University of Pennsylvania, said. The youngsters in the study ranged in age from 10 to 15; half were girls. Twenty-three per cent said they had had sexual intercourse at least once before the study began.

"There aren't any studies that show that children are less likely to use condoms as a result of an abstinence intervention. I've looked in the literature, there are no studies that show that," Mr. Jemmott said in an interview. "But you have to be concerned about it, because many abstinence-only until marriage programs give misinformation about condoms and present the failure rates in a way that would discourage people from using them."

At the massive AIDS meeting being held here this week, abstinence-only programs are about as popular as Alcoholics Anonymous at a brewery. Planned Parenthood has called the approach "one of the religious right's greatest challenge to the nation's sexual health." In the United States, federally funded abstinence programs have been found to push distorted and inaccurate information about sexual health, homosexuality and abortion.

But Mr. Jemmott said not all abstinence interventions can be lumped together "and thrown away," and there is no logical reason that an abstinence intervention cannot be effective. The abstinence intervention in his study promoted abstinence from vaginal, anal and oral sex until a

later time in life when youth would be able to handle the consequences of a sexual relationship.

Researchers removed all mention of condoms, other than telling facilitators not to say anything negative about them. The team involved a researcher from the University of Waterloo.

The youth were followed for two years. Through role-playing, videos and video clips and group discussions, "We changed the intention to have sex," Mr. Jemmott said. It also delayed the sexual debut of youth who were virgins when the study began.

"We caused them to have more positive attitudes towards abstinence and the negative consequences of engaging in sexual activity at an early age, including less likely to achieve one's career goals."

Source: © National Post 2006

### **Post-Show: Questions**

**“I’m not out there screwing my face off I’m just screwing my boyfriend is that okay Neyssa? Can I screw my boyfriend with your permission please?”**

1. Contrast Neyssa’s values around sex with Bijou’s, ie: what are the differences between Neyssa and Bijou’s values in terms of sex?
2. Do you agree with Neyssa who says that Bijou is only having sex with Hector because she wants attention? Is that why girls have sex?
3. Do you agree with Bijou’s actions to have sex with whomever she wants or do you think that she is careless? Explain.
4. Are there some statements that you agreed with or did not agree with in the reading, **Teaching Abstinence Reduces Teen Sex?** Discuss.
5. What are some of the key issues to consider when a person wants to have sex? List at least 3 issues.



# LAW

## Pre-show: Rape and the Criminal Code

Date rape is the common term for non-consensual sexual (vaginal, anal, oral) intercourse that is forced (by way of physical force or psychological coercion) on a person by someone that they know. Date rape is a criminal act that is perpetrated by a social acquaintance, a friend, or a dating or intimate partner of the victim. Date rape is a complex and difficult area of criminal law, given the nature of the relationship between the victim and the defendant. Most jurisdictions, however, make no legal distinction between date rape and rape that is committed by strangers.

Some Statistics:

- Approximately 70% - 80% of rape victims know their assailant.
- The majority of date rape cases occur within or near the victim's home.
- Approximately one-third of assailants are under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the crime.
- Most victims of date rape are women (over ninety percent). In fact, one in four women will become the victim of date rape in their lifetime.

Source: © 2009 Criminal Law Lawyers Source

### Canadian Criminal Code: Quick Breakdown

**Sexual Assault:** Any form of sexual contact without voluntary consent (Adapted from the Criminal Code of Canada, Sec.270). Kissing, fondling, sexual intercourse, anal intercourse, and oral sex are all examples of sexual assault if they are done without voluntary consent.

**Consent:** Under the Criminal Code of Canada, "Consent is defined as a **voluntary agreement** of the complainant to engage in the sexual activity in question." (Section 273.1) The criminal code further outlines the following five specific situations in which consent is not given.

Consent is **not given if:**

- It is **given by someone else**
- The person is **incapable** of consenting (i.e. unconscious, drunk, stoned, or sleeping)
- It is an **abuse of power, trust, or authority**
- The person **does not say yes, says no**, or through words or behavior **implies no**
- The person **changes her/his mind**

Source: [www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/SAC](http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/SAC)

## **Forcible Rape**

In Canada, the federal Criminal Code prohibits various types of sexual assault. Sexual assaults with a weapon or that cause bodily harm to the victim are punished more severely. An *aggravated sexual assault* is the most serious form of rape in Canada. A person commits aggravated sexual assault if he or she wounds, maims, disfigures, or endangers the life of another person while sexually assaulting that person.

The Canadian code does not explicitly define sexual assault in terms of the types of sexual activity prohibited. However, for the purpose of determining whether a sexual assault has occurred, the statute defines consent as the “voluntary agreement of the complainant to engage in the sexual activity in question.” If the complainant is incapable of consenting to the activity or if the complainant expresses, by words or conduct, a lack of agreement to engage in the activity, a defendant may not successfully defend against charges of sexual assault on the grounds that the complainant consented.

## **Date Rape (Acquaintance Rape)**

When a person rapes a person he or she knows, it is called either acquaintance rape or date rape. The two people may be friends, former lovers, or presently dating. Studies indicate that a woman is more likely to be raped by an acquaintance than by a stranger or a relative.

An acquaintance may commit forcible rape. However, the term *acquaintance rape* is usually applied when the sexual intercourse is nonconsensual but does not involve the physical coercion typically associated with forcible rape, such as assault or threats of violence.

The issue of consent in circumstances of date rape has stirred considerable controversy. Determining whether an incident of sexual intercourse was consensual can be very difficult. A man charged with rape and a woman alleging that she has been raped might have very different perspectives about what happened, even if they are both sincerely trying to give a truthful account. Lawmakers and courts have struggled with the issue of whether to define consent from the victim’s point of view. To do so creates the risk of punishing a person (the accused rapist) who mistakenly thought another person was consenting to sexual relations.

As awareness of acquaintance rape has grown, the subject has become a frequent topic of discussion and political protest. Rape education advocates conduct seminars on communication differences between men and women regarding consent to sex. Some colleges have developed codes of conduct instructing young men to ask permission and await an answer before pursuing sexual intercourse.

Source: Susan N. Herman, B.A., J.D.

*Crime Control and Civil Liberties Criminology: A Contemporary Handbook.*

"Rape (law)," Microsoft® Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2008

## **Date Rape Drugs**

In recent years the media has widely publicized incidences of sexual assault where the perpetrators have used drugs to debilitate the persons they assault. While this is not a new phenomenon, drug-facilitated sexual assault has only recently become widely recognized. Yet the most common and prevalent date rape drug, alcohol, is still not readily recognized as a threat. In fact, almost half of the sexual assaults young adults experience take place under the influence of alcohol.

The use of date rape drugs well illustrates how sexual assaults are planned and premeditated events. Perpetrators of sexual assault use date rape drugs as a method to incapacitate their victim and to ensure that she/he will not be able to resist the assault. In addition, it assures the perpetrator that the survivor will not recall enough details about the assault to prosecute the perpetrator. Still, if an individual is drugged unknowingly, or willingly consumes alcohol or drugs and then is sexually assaulted, the perpetrator of the assault is the only person who is to blame (it is not the survivor's fault).

The Criminal Code of Canada (Section 271.3) legally outlines the perpetrator's blame by stating that consent for sexual activity cannot be obtained when an individual is impaired by drugs or alcohol.

## **Types of Date Rape Drugs**

### Alcohol

Alcohol is a common depressant that slows the activity of the central nervous system. It lowers inhibitions, disturbs motor skills, and a large intake of alcohol can even result in a temporary coma; its effects subside fairly slowly, as it takes the human body one hour to process each alcoholic drink consumed.

Alcohol is by far the most prevalent date rape drug and is easy to use because it is legal and socially accepted. In some cases, perpetrators take advantage of the fact that an individual is drinking heavily and is less able to resist their advances. In other cases, the perpetrator is actively involved in ensuring that an individual gets drunk by buying drinks, encouraging her/him to drink, and pouring drinks with more alcohol than usual. In either case, when an individual is drunk she/he is legally unable to consent to sexual activity. There is a misconception among some people that accepting drinks from someone indicates interest in sexual activity. Yet, consenting to having a drink is not consenting to sexual activity it is solely consenting to having a drink.

Unlike the other date rape drugs, alcohol is also often used by the perpetrator on him/herself. By using alcohol, the perpetrator lowers his/her inhibitions and gives him/herself an excuse for the sexual assault. In other words, perpetrators use alcohol purposefully to aid them in committing the sexual assault.

## Rohypnol

The most well known date rape drug is flunitrazepam, which is more commonly known as “rohypnol,” “roofies,” or “the forget pill.” Flunitrazepam is legally sold in Europe and Latin America as a sleep aid, but is illegal in North America.

Rohypnol’s effects vary depending on the dosage that one is given, but they range from sedation to stage four coma (rohypnol is ten times more potent than valium). After consuming the drug, it takes 20 - 30 minutes before its sedative effects begin, and the effects can last from 8 - 24 hours. As well as being a strong sedative, rohypnol also causes short-term memory loss. Together these properties make rohypnol a dangerous date rape drug, and when it is mixed with alcohol it is even more dangerous because it can lead to severe intoxication and even death.

## GHB

Gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) is a fairly common drug with a variety of side effects, and thus has a wide range of users. For instance, some weightlifters use it for its muscle growth enhancing properties, some recreational drug users take it in combination with other drugs, and some individuals use it for its prosexual side effects (such as disinhibition and heightened sense of touch). It is inexpensive and easy to synthesize; the components that make up GHB can be purchased in health food stores or it can be purchased over the internet.

GHB takes 15 - 20 minutes to begin having sedative effects that can last a couple of hours. High dosages can have negative side effects such as vomiting, respiratory depression, and even death. GHB is especially dangerous when mixed with alcohol.

Recently GHB has become associated with raves. Other drugs associated with raves, such as ecstasy, have similar effects as GHB and have also been used as date rape drugs. When testing for GHB it is important to remember that it may be undetectable only 12 hours after ingestion.

## Ketamine

Ketamine is an anesthetic used primarily with animals that has both pain relief and memory loss effects. When given to humans it usually results in a state of intoxication that renders the individual temporarily unable to move, feel pain, or remember what took place while intoxicated by the drug. Usually this state lasts only 30 to 60 minutes, and it can be accompanied by hallucinatory experiences similar to those created by LSD or PCP.

## **Detection of Date Rape Drugs**

All date rape drugs are processed by the body quickly and are thus difficult to detect. When testing for date rape drugs the closer to the time of the drugging at possible is best, as after 72 hours detection will be impossible. It also varies depending on the drug used; for example GHB can be untraceable in only 12 hours whereas rohypnol will be traceable up to 72 hours. Date rape drugs are detected through a urine sample test, but rohypnol can also be detected through a blood test that screens for Valium (as they are similar compounds).

## **Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault**

In a recent survey conducted at the University of Alberta, it was found that over half (54.2%) of the sexual assaults experienced by students took place when the survivor of the assault was under the influence of alcohol or drugs (LoVerso, 2000). In addition, research shows that this is not a new phenomenon, and has been a reality for university students for many years (Koss, 1988).

In a drug-facilitated sexual assault, the perpetrator uses alcohol or drugs as a method to decrease resistance from the person they are assaulting. The alcohol and drugs used may have been taken voluntarily by the survivor, or forced upon her/him by the perpetrator. The most common drug used in this type of assault is alcohol.

Depending on the drug that was used, some survivors of drug-facilitated sexual assault may have little memory of what took place or no memory of being sexually assaulted at all. In the cases where there is no memory of the assault, the individual may still experience symptoms related to being sexually assaulted such as flashbacks and sudden memories. Like any survivor, the survivor of a drug-facilitated sexual assault will need time to undergo the healing process, and it may be even more difficult for her/him due to the lack of understanding about what they are experiencing.

Someone who has experienced a drug-facilitated sexual assault is likely to feel very confused and disoriented. This confusion may be accentuated by the continued effects of the drugs that may make it difficult to think clearly. The loss of memory experienced by survivors of drug-facilitated sexual assault can make recovery more difficult because part of the recovery process involves remembering and working through the memories, acknowledging that what happened was a sexual assault, and experiencing feelings around the sexual assault such as anger, regret and acceptance.

Because drugs or alcohol are involved in these assaults, survivors are even more likely to blame themselves for what happened. Survivors feel that they were at fault because they got intoxicated and “let themselves get out of control.” Yet even if the alcohol or drugs were taken willingly, consent cannot be granted when intoxicated. In addition consenting to consuming alcohol or drugs is NOT consenting to sex.

## **Experiencing Date Rape Drugs**

Most survivors of sexual assault who were given a date rape drug report suddenly feeling strangely lightheaded and intoxicated with visual and/or physical impairment and then waking up drowsy, confused, weak, and/or with impaired motor skills, and with almost no recollection of what took place since feeling lightheaded. Often when they can remember parts of the assault they recall feeling paralyzed, powerless, and/or dissociated from their body, or they remember scatters pieces of what occurred. In some cases, the survivors of drug-facilitated sexual assault have no memory at all of what took place. When alcohol is the only date rape drug used, survivors may feel that they got drunker than they had planned to that night, or they have some memories of having sexual activity that she/he was not planning on having.

## **Indications of a Sexual Assault**

In drug-facilitated sexual assaults it is possible that the survivor has little or no recollection of a sexual assault. The following are some indications that a drug-facilitated sexual assault may have occurred:

- Physical Indications
  - Soreness in the genital or anal areas
  - Marks or bruises on the skin
  - Abnormal discharge
- Other Indications
  - Loss of memory for a whole part of an evening or day
  - Waking up in different surroundings and not knowing how you got there
  - Waking up with clothes missing or put on differently
  - A sense that something wrong happened or that something is “not right”

### **Date Rape Drug Myths: Not just in bars**

Much of the information about date rape drugs emphasizes ways in which women can stay safe from these drugs. Examples include only accepting drinks from people you know, especially at a bar, keeping an eye on your drink at all times, and not drinking from wide mouthed containers. These statements are misleading for several reasons. Firstly, date rape drugs can be used in many locations, not just in bars. Cases have been documented where date rape drugs were used at house parties, restaurants, and while camping. Also, it is more common for a friend, partner, or acquaintance than a stranger to use the drugs on someone. In addition, these statements are almost always directed at women, but men can also experience drug-facilitated sexual assault. Most importantly, these statements do not place the responsibility for stopping this crime on the individuals who are using the drug against someone, but on those who may be given the drug. This results in survivors' feeling as though they were responsible for their sexual assault, but the only person who should be held responsible is the perpetrator of the assault.

### **Reading: The Courage to Heal**

To understand the reactions and process a survivor of sexual assault moves through it is necessary to look at the Rape Trauma Syndrome. The syndrome has three characteristic phases and may continue over a lengthy period of time. It is important to recognize that each survivor will go through the process at her or his own speed and intensity. Recovery time can vary a great deal because of each survivor's personalized experience of the assault and the events that followed it.

#### The Acute Phase

"Immediately following the assault, the survivor may experience a very wide range of emotional reactions which result from being faced with a life-threatening situation. Shock, dismay, and disbelief are fairly basic."

These emotional reactions are most commonly manifested in one of two ways:

1. **Expressive** - obvious outward expression such as crying, shaking, tenseness, restlessness.
2. **Controlled** - the survivor appears to be quite calm and rational about the situation.

"Guilt, shame, and self-blame may be expressed. Anger and hostility towards the assailant and the people trying to help her or him may be present. There may be a fear of pregnancy or infection."

During the first few weeks following the assault, acute physical symptoms are often experienced, for example, soreness and bruising on various parts of the body. There may be gynecological symptoms such as vaginal discharge, burning sensations, pain, or itchiness. Also, the person may experience tension headaches, fatigue, stomach pains, nausea, loss of appetite, or disturbed sleep patterns such as insomnia or nightmares.

In the period immediately following the assault, the survivor may have many **practical problems** to deal with:

- informing family and friends
- physical examination
- question of pregnancy, VD, STD, or AIDS
- fear of retaliation by the assailant or fear of being alone
- decision about pressing charges
- concerns about publicity."

### Outward Adjustment

In the next phase toward recovery, the realities of the survivor's life may be the focus and the trauma of the assault appears to be less obvious. Anxieties and fears may become less prominent as the survivor begins again to involve her/himself in her/his normal activities. While the survivor may seem to have forgotten the incident and gone on with her/his life, there is usually a high level of denial and repression of feelings around the incident. The survivor will most likely not care to talk about the assault during this phase. She or he may begin making some practical decisions around the place where they live, the people they consider friends, their work associates, and activities they choose to continue or discontinue.

### Long Term Reorganization

Long-term adjustment to sexual assault depends on several factors that come into play around the event. Factors may be the degree of support experienced by the survivor from friends and family, previous self-concept of the survivor, personal strength of the survivor, treatment by professionals following the assault, involvement with the criminal justice system, the survivors prior knowledge of the assailant and more.

"Some of the difficulties of this phase are the need to integrate a new view of the self; the survivor must accept the event realistically. The survivor must resolve feelings about the assailant and her/his attitudes towards the gender of the offender. Often the survivor will really want to talk at this stage. Many survivors feel they are losing control because they thought they had dealt with it in phase two. They think something is wrong with them because these feelings have come

back."

"To change a particular coping pattern, you have to assess its positive and negative aspects, recognize the underlying need it meets, and then gradually find healthier ways to meet those needs."

Source: The Courage to Heal. Davis, Laura & Bass, Ellen. P. 161, 1988

### **Post-show: Questions**

#### **“Could he even tell between when I meant it and when I didn’t?”**

1. When thinking about rape, what are some of the words that come to mind?
2. Do you think that gender stereotypes have a direct link to how our society views the acceptance or rejection of a rape charge? Explain.
3. Was it clear to you that Frank raped Neyssa? What were the indicators?
4. How did alcohol affect Frank’s actions?
5. Following the rape, why does Neyssa blame Bijou?
6. Do you agree with Neyssa’s reasons for not reporting the rape?
7. Do you think that her decision is a result of being a visible minority or is it more personal than that?
8. What does it potentially mean for Neyssa that she’s leaving her new school and returning to her old one? Will it effect her future?
9. How will Neyssa’s secret effect Bijou’s life?
10. What would you do if you were Neyssa and why?



## Need Help?

- Let someone know. Talk to a trusted family member, friend, or teacher. If it is difficult for you to talk directly to someone, write your thoughts down and let someone else read them.
- Contact a trained mental health professional or hospital emergency department for advice on where to receive immediate intervention and/or hospitalization.
- Kids Help Line at 1-800-668-6868
- Suicide Action Montreal at (514) 723-4000
- Gay Hotline at (514) 866-5090

**Montréal:** Assistance aux Femmes (514) 270-8291

Centre Pour les Victimes D'Aggression Sexuelle (CLSC Metro)  
(514) 934-4504 URGENCE (514) 934-0354  
[cvasm@videotron.com](mailto:cvasm@videotron.com)

CALACS de l'Ouest de l'Île/West Island  
(514) 620-4333 [calacs@bellnet.ca](mailto:calacs@bellnet.ca)

**Laval:** Centre de Prévention et D'Intervention Pour les Victimes D'Aggressions Sexuelles  
URGENCE (514) 669-9053

For a complete list for all regions contact the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres  
[www.casac.ca/english/home.htm](http://www.casac.ca/english/home.htm)