TEDDY FERRARA

By CHRISTOPHER SHINN
Directed by EVAN CABNET

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Introduction to the Study Guide

BY WILLA J. TAYLOR

We the people declare today that the most evident of truth that all of us are created equal -- is the star that guides us still; just as it guided our forebears through Seneca Falls and Selma and Stonewall; just as it guided all those men and women, sung and unsung, who left footprints along this great mall, to hear a preacher say that we cannot walk alone; to hear a King proclaim that our individual freedom is inextricably bound to the freedom of every soul on Earth.

-President Barack Obama, January 21, 2013

When Barack Obama linked Seneca, Selma and Stonewall together at his second inauguration, it was a watershed moment. It was the first time in history that an American president mentioned gay and lesbian rights in his inaugural address. On that day, the day when this country pauses to remember the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Obama’s understanding of the ‘long arc of justice’ that King talked about was made manifest in the linking of those birthplaces in the fight for justice and equality for all.

Seneca Falls, New York, was the birthplace of the American women’s rights movement which started with the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 which asserted that women should have the right to preach, to be educated, to teach, and to earn a living. The delegates passed a resolution stating that “it is the sacred duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise,” and with these words the struggle began in earnest to win full voting rights for women in the United States. On August 26, 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution became law, and women finally could vote.

Selma, Alabama, in the heart of Dixie, was also the site of the fight for voting rights. It was where on March 7, 1965, hundreds of people set out to march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge towards Montgomery, the state capitol, to protest African Americans’ lack of voting rights. About six blocks away from the bridge, these peaceful protesters were set upon by state troopers and local sheriff’s deputies who attacked them with police dogs, billy clubs and tear gas. Many were injured on what became known as Bloody Sunday. Film of the attacks appeared on news programs across the country, illustrating the tremendous struggle for basic human rights being waged in the southern states. The events at Selma helped increase public support for the cause, and that year the US Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It provided for federal oversight and enforcement of voting rights for all citizens in state or jurisdictions where patterns of under-representation showed discrimination against certain populations, historically minorities.

Stonewall, a gay bar in the heart of Greenwich Village in Manhattan, was the site of five nights of riots and demonstrations against a police raid that took place in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, at the bar. They are widely considered to constitute the single most important event leading to the gay liberation movement and the modern fight for gay and lesbian rights in the United States.

This watershed moment at the inauguration, along with the revocation of Don’t Ask Don’t Tell in the military, and the momentum of marriage equality battles across the country is a celebratory time for American LGBT rights. And just this week, the Boy Scouts are at long last considering admitting gay scouts.

Yet in the midst of all this good news, there is Jadin Bell. Bell, a 15-year-old high-school sophomore in La Grande, Ore., was taken off life support earlier this week after hanging himself on a playground structure at Central Elementary School. His family says that he had been bullied for being gay. The negative treatment that many GLBT teens endure can lead to suicidal feelings.

According to the Massachusetts 2006 Youth Risk Survey, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth are up to four times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers. In addition, the San Francisco State University Chavez Center Institute has found that LGBTQ youth who come from a rejecting family are up to nine times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers.

So for all the strides we’re making, we need to remember that teenagers are still killing themselves. And families and friends are left shattered and grieving because we still live in a climate where bullying is too often not taken seriously enough, and where LGBT individuals are subject to institutionalized discrimination and flippant homophobia on a regular basis. It does get better, and a whole lot of things in this country have gotten better, but as long as kids are dying because hateful creeps are pushing them around, we have miles and miles to go.
On the Playwright: Christopher Shinn
BY AENEAS HEMPHILL

Although a great deal of attention is paid to the craft of the actor or the director, Christopher Shinn’s play Teddy Ferrara, a new work enjoying its world premiere at Goodman Theatre, provides a unique opportunity to turn our attention to the playwright. Writing is certainly difficult and takes considerable drive. The product that emerges, whether about the playwright or not, is stamped with the experiences and the method with which the writer develops it. Shinn is vocal about the origins of his thoughts and process, which can provide useful insight into how Teddy, as well as other plays, go from concept to the form it takes on stage.

Shinn has long had a particular interest in otherness and difference. One can find a possible origin for this in his childhood growing up in an economically diverse town bordering Hartford, Conn. Shinn recalls early morning weekend drives with his father through Hartford’s neighborhoods, where he saw “the most profound and unimaginable poverty” only five minutes away from his home. Questions like “what was it like to be rich?” and “what was it like to be poor?” began to occupy his imagination. His first time meeting a black child was marked by the shame and confusion he felt when, driven by unmalicious curiosity, he touched the boy’s afro and the boy recoiled, refusing to play with him from then on. These experiences instilled in him the sense that he could not understand certain things and perhaps never would. Much of his writing reflects the trauma of these early experiences and informs his drive to explore the wrestling with the unknown that goes on constantly in all of us.

Shinn’s work seems especially concerned with the otherness within a person — those parts of oneself with which can be difficult to engage. In an article in The Economist on madness in the theater, Shinn refers to psychoanalyst Adam Phillips, who observed that “the more disturbing something is, the more we defend against it.” Shinn, while sympathetic to that view, questions whether it is just a defense designed to “protect us from more fully confronting the things that disturb us.” Shinn’s method reflects this, involving deep self-reflection, uncovering rather than guarding the things he fears within himself:

“When I write a play, I try to access something in me that feels beyond my control, a traumatic inner space where painful feelings and images of loss, longing and rage lie in wait. When this process becomes unbearable — that is, when I begin to feel ‘mad’ — I haul myself to the computer and begin to write until I’m depleted.”

He argues “if the writing is easy, I know it’s not very deep; if it’s hard, I know I’m getting somewhere.” However, Shinn admits that he must keep some level of distance in the process. He proceeds slowly and leaves before he becomes too overwhelmed. If he gets lost in it, it can be dangerous not only to his physical and mental health — he remarked that while exploring rage-fueled fantasies for his play Dying City, he developed so much anxiety that he could not bring down his elevated heart rate for weeks — but also for the play. In order to
communicate these very challenging feelings and issues more effectively to an audience, the play must maintain some type of structure and enough distance so that the audience can explore without becoming lost in it.

Teddy’s structure is no less important. Fear of the unknown drives each of the characters. Teddy’s death, instead of providing answers, prompts uncomfortable self-reflection in his classmates and the school administrators. This results in outward conflict as each person tries to explain Teddy’s actions based on his or her own experience. Although the audience gets to see Teddy in his “private” moments, it is only as an outside observer. Teddy does not explain his thoughts and actions, nor does Shinn attempt to speak for him. Rather, he presents Teddy as he would appear to us or to his classmates. Once the conflict surrounding him begins, the audience does not know much more than the people he left behind, perhaps prompting a similar self-reflection. This distance causes the audience to become an active participant, following the dialogue, making allegiances, then breaking them and reforming them throughout. Gabe has a point in asserting that no one knows the exact reason for Teddy’s death, but the response, as well as the responsibility, of a community is still relevant, complex and worthy of debating. Whatever the final opinion of the individual audience member, Shinn wants to inspire the kind of reflection and debate that continues beyond the walls of the theater:

“The only thing I want the audience to take away is a feeling, and I want that feeling to be a little unsettled or provoked that allows them not only to see the world differently, but their lives differently. In what direction, that’s something I don’t care about; but to make someone think in a new way about anything at all, then it’s a worthwhile thing.”
Goodman Theatre has been deeply invested in the development of new work in Chicago. Although there is no strict definition of a “Goodman play,” Goodman tries to find playwrights with unique and authentic voices who can tell a good story, and who are in some way representative of current theater culture. A number of distinguished playwrights have developed work at the Goodman in some capacity, from August Wilson with his play *Seven Guitars* to Lynn Nottage and her play *Ruined*, the first Goodman-commissioned play to receive the prestigious Pulitzer Prize in drama. *Teddy Ferrara* is the most recent commissioned production to receive a spot in a mainstage season.

In Goodman’s *New Stages* Series, playwrights have the opportunity to develop their work for a staged reading, while some are selected to have a workshop production. Workshop productions, a step past staged readings, add elements, such as costumes, set, sound and lighting, to a play without being a full-blown production. These performances, provided by the Goodman to audiences for free, allow the playwright to hear their work aloud and receive helpful feedback from audience members and participants in the production. It’s also helpful for the Goodman as well, since this information can help them determine whether a play would work in a full production.

Plays also can be commissioned directly by the Goodman, without going through the *New Stages* process. The playwright normally has a one-year deadline, with some flexibility based on the work habits of each writer. Some writers are more precise and structured, but others are not. Every playwright works differently, so the Goodman does its best to respect the individual process of each writer. Additionally, whether or not the play makes it to production does not affect the commission process. In the event that a play is not selected, playwrights are free to shop around to other theaters with their play, strengthened by the workshop experience.

Christopher Shinn is an established playwright who has received accolades for his work in the U.S. and abroad. Though he had a reading of an earlier work at the Goodman for *New Stages*, the play was not selected for production. This does not necessarily reflect on the quality of the work. Season planning is a very complex process, involving many factors. The Goodman produces eight mainstage shows a year in addition to its yearly production of *A Christmas Carol*. Many of the shows are chosen ahead of time, based on the desires of the Artistic Collective and interest in artists Goodman wishes to work with. Some slots are filled with classic plays, which leave fewer slots for new plays. Budget constraints also make it important to balance the number of actors and crew needed for the season as a whole. There cannot be a season entirely made up of 20-person or two-person casts. The Goodman also tries to include a diverse array of voices, which can exclude certain plays based on what has already been chosen. When you factor in which spaces are being used, it gets even more complicated. One reason *Teddy Ferrara* worked for this season was because there was an opening that needed to be filled in the Owen Theatre, a smaller, more versatile space in which more intimate shows are performed.

Space considerations were not the only reason *Teddy Ferrara* made it in the season. Although the Goodman has engaged issues of race and class, it has not dealt with LGBTQ issues in the same way. Just before *Teddy Ferrara* was commissioned, significant national attention was paid to the issue of bullying in schools — especially of LGBTQ youth — including its relation to teen suicides. The origins for the debate can be traced to the 2010 suicide of Rutgers University student Tyler Clementi and the role bullying might have had in contributing to his death. This event and the resulting arguments became a springboard for what would eventually become *Teddy Ferrara*. Although theme is not often the central factor in determining the season, what’s on the minds of those who develop it can certainly influence what ends up making it in. This could be a reason why the Goodman produced *Camino Real* and *Sweet Bird of Youth* in the same calendar year; both are Tennessee Williams plays and both deal with issues of gender and sexuality. It is preferred, however, that the audience draws connections on their own. Each play should generate conversations, whatever the nature of those may be. Even in that sense alone, *Teddy Ferrara* should fit right in.
A Conversation with Christopher Shinn
BY TANYA PALMER

Originally published in Goodman Theatre’s On Stage Magazine.

Known for his incisive, closely observed explorations of characters grappling with events beyond their control, Pulitzer Prize finalist Christopher Shinn was inspired to write Teddy Ferrara in the wake of a number of well-publicized incidents of bullying of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth, including the tragic case of Rutgers University student Tyler Clementi. Commissioned by the Goodman and developed in our annual New Stages series, Teddy Ferrara explores the contemporary climate for LGBTQ youth in universities, asking difficult questions about victimization and responsibility, and delving into what it means to come of age in an era dominated by social media. In a conversation with Tanya Palmer, the Goodman’s director of new play development, Shinn discusses his inspiration and his relationship to the world of the play.

Tanya Palmer: What inspired you to write Teddy Ferrara?

Christopher Shinn: In 2010 there was a string of suicides of gay youth, many of which seemed linked to bullying. And for some reason there was more public attention paid in this period than there had been previously to these issues. It is something I’ve wanted to write about for a very long time. After Matthew Shepard was killed, I remember I saw The Laramie Project and thought, wow, the one thing this play doesn’t dramatize is the person who was killed. That was what interested me the most. Ever since then I wondered when, if ever, I would write that play—a play that explores the issues that interested me back then. And when these issues were in the news in 2010, those feelings and thoughts got restimulated in me and it felt like a really ideal time to explore in-depth the dynamics behind bullying and suicide.

TP: I know from our conversations that some of the characters in the play are drawn from your memories of your own college days, but the piece is also very grounded in college today and the particular way in which social media impacts students in that age group. Could you talk about the similarities and differences?

CS: I’ve always wanted to paint a really complete portrait of the characters that I was writing about. I didn’t want to write a play about an issue—I wanted to write a play about complex human beings moving through the world. And my task and my challenge was to make it really convincing. I couldn’t just write about myself and transpose it; it really is a different world today. I remember the first time we signed onto America Online in 1993—I was 18 years old. Kids today grow up with extraordinary technology from the time they are very young, and it is an entirely different social world as mediated through media and technology. An extraordinary coincidence was that I had an opportunity to teach undergraduates at The New School just as I was beginning to work on the play. I usually teach graduate students, but now I was working with students who were 18, 19, 20 years old, and I was watching them—watching how they interacted with each other, how they interacted with their mobile devices, how they paid attention, how they didn’t pay attention. So as I was digging into my

Synopsis

Teddy Ferrara introduces us to Gabe, a college senior and the president of his campus’ Queer Students Group. Gabe has a great new boyfriend, fun friends and aspirations to start a career in politics when he graduates. But when a campus tragedy occurs, Gabe finds himself inadvertently pulled into the center of a tense debate that threatens to tear down everything he’s worked to build up.
memories of being that age, I was able to measure my experience and my memories of my feelings against what I was experiencing in this intimate classroom setting with undergraduates. So that became the tension that drove the play in an exciting way for me.

TP: Beyond the young characters who are central to the play, you’re also looking at the university—the faculty and administration who are trying to deal with LGBTQ issues. What interested you about those characters?

CS: Having worked at a university for eight years now, I was very excited to translate my own experience not only as a professor but also as somebody who has served on committees and the faculty senate. Also, when I was an undergrad at New York University (NYU) there was very little effort on the part of the administration to proactively deal with the mental states of the students. I remember seeking out counseling, really having to work hard to find out how you got counseling at NYU, back in 1993 and 1994. I know from my work at The New School that universities today see themselves as having a much broader responsibility—it isn’t just about educating students, it’s also about taking care of them. I think there’s a tension between adolescents, late adolescents and adults that is part of human history going back forever. So adults or institutions have to deal with that tension when they attempt to reach out to a population that, at best, has ambivalent feelings about adults and
institutions. It presents extraordinary challenges for institutions and administrators, who have very good intentions but run into the psychological complexity of intergenerational conflict.

TP: Something I find interesting about your work in general is that a lot of it looks at big traumatic public events—like 9/11, or the Iraq War, or in this case these suicides—but through very closely observed relationships and personal encounters. They don’t feel like “issue” plays because they’re very much about the people and their connections. I’m curious about your process—do you start with the sense of the relationship and find the event, or do you find the event and then explore how people are impacted by it?

CS: When an issue grabs me, I pay particular attention to what is happening in my life at the moment and what that event does for me. An example is my last play, Now or Later, which is about the gay son of a Democratic candidate. One of the issues in the play is that the son is mad at his father for not supporting gay marriage. The idea for that play was born during the Democratic presidential primary in late 2007 or early 2008. The candidates sat down with Logo, a gay network, and gave an interview and they were all against gay marriage. I remember watching Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton explain that they thought marriage was between a man and a woman. The feeling I had was, wow, what if one of them had a gay son? I immediately imagined myself: what if I was a 19- or 20-year-old and I was watching my parent say that? How would I feel? Similarly, with Teddy Ferrara, I thought about Tyler Clementi, who was the most prominent LGBTQ suicide of 2010. I remembered the despair and pain that I felt at his age, and that made me think about the other gay people I knew at that time and my first relationship from that time. It started me on this path of remembering and thinking and feeling. Something about that very public issue had become a spark for me to sift through these memories from that period in my life.

TP: For this production at the Goodman you’re going to be working with director Evan Cabnet. I know you’ve known him for a long time, but this is your first collaboration, right?

CS: Yes. He was the assistant director on my play Dying City, which is where I met him, but this is the first time he will have directed a play of mine.

TP: What was it about Evan that made you feel he was the right director for this play?

CS: I had gotten to know Evan on a very basic level
“When an issue grabs me, I pay particular attention to what is happening in my life at the moment and what that event does for me.”
— Christopher Shinn

as someone who is immensely sensitive and patient. *Dying City* was directed by a British director, James MacDonald, so for most of the run Evan was the one watching because James was back in London. And we began a dialogue about what we were seeing and how the performances had changed, and I was impressed with his insight, sensitivity and patience. He was someone who could watch, absorb and think in a very deep and sustained way. Then, a few years later I saw a string of plays he directed that had younger actors in them. I was extraordinarily impressed with how complex, natural and fearless the performances were from these young actors. I hadn’t been in the rehearsal rooms so I didn’t know exactly at the time how he had gotten those performances, but I felt like his patience and sensitivity were probably big factors in getting young actors to trust him and trust themselves. When Evan and I began talking more at length about Teddy Ferrara, it was clear from the way he talked about young actors that he had a very particular insight about how to work with them. He approaches young actors with patience, lots of nurturing and lots of building off of their impulses and their instincts. After our casting process, I got some Facebook messages from some of the actors we didn’t cast. They remarked about what a warm and inviting and safe audition room it was, and how most of their experiences auditioning weren’t like that. I can’t wait to be in an extended rehearsal period and get to know even more how Evan works.

TP: Who are your influences—what artists, other playwrights, other writers, do you look to?

CS: Anytime a writer really seems to be writing somewhere deep within him or herself, I get inspired. Like the South African novelist J.M. Coetzee; it feels like he is writing about who he is from the deepest part of himself. I also think a lot of Caryl Churchill’s work has that quality; even when it’s very intellectual or formally inventive, you can feel her psyche being worked through. There’s a middle period of David Mamet around the time of *The Cryptogram* and *The Old Neighborhood* when I feel like he was in touch with something very traumatized in himself, and writing with an honesty that remains striking all these years later. Those are a few names of people who have that quality that I strive for, where you feel like you’re in the presence of someone trying to communicate the deepest part of themselves in a clear, accessible way to an audience. What all three of those writers have in common is real simplicity and directness. They have a hunger to be as direct and clear and convincing as possible, and that really inspires me.
An LGBTQ Glossary
BY VINCE PAGAN

It can be challenging to equitably discuss LGBTQ topics without first knowing the requisite vocabulary. While the list included below isn’t exhaustive, it defines some of the terms you may hear or read frequently throughout this guide and in the world. If there are other terms you’re curious about, just email us (education@goodmantheatre.org)!

• Ally
A person who is a friend and supporter of people in the LGBTQIQI community.

• Androgyny
A person who adopts characteristics of both male and female gender roles. This can be in fashion, gender role, sexual orientation or all of the above.

• Asexuality
A person who is lacking sexual attraction to others.

• Bisexual
A man or woman who is attracted to both sexes or genders.

• Drag queen
A man who adopts the persona and appearance of a woman, often for the purposes of entertainment.

• Gay
A man who is primarily attracted to men.

Below: A presentation about discrimination against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) Alaskans during the Adult Education Hour at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church in Anchorage, AK. Rev. Drew Phoenix asked people to write down “the first thing you think of” with regard to the words “straight,” “transgender” and “gay.” Here, Rev. Sara Gavit, reads out what people wrote on the word “Transgender.” Photo by Mel Green (provided by author under a Creative Commons License via Flickr).
This word is also used as a blanket term for men and women attracted to the same sex.

• Gender
The psychological identity of a person’s role of male or female. A person can be biologically male, but psychologically female (see: transsexual).

• Gender identity
The way a person sees themselves within societal gender roles (see: transsexual).

• Heteronormativity
The concept that society sees heterosexual relationships as the norm, and thus, anything that is not a heterosexual relationship is viewed as abnormal.

• Heterosexism
A bias against anything that is not heterosexual or does not conform to gender norms.

• Homophobia
Literally meaning fear of homosexuals, the term often is used to describe prejudice or hatred toward homosexuals.

• Intersex
A person who is born with some combination of male and female characteristics, either on physical or chromosomal levels, or both.

• Internalized homophobia
A prejudice against homosexuals as expressed by someone in the gay community.

• Lesbian
A woman who is primarily attracted to women.

• LGBTQQIA
An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered/sexual, queer, questioning, intersex and ally. The acronym was first only “LGBT,” which then extended to be more inclusive of all those groups who are considered to be part of the community.

• Pansexual
A person who is attracted to all sexes and genders. This differs from a bisexual, who is attracted to only men and women.

• Queer
A blanket term that is used to describe all kinds of people in the LGBTQI community. The use of this word is somewhat controversial, as it has been used as a slur for people in the community for a long time. The word itself means “strange or different,” but there are individuals who still see its use as unacceptable, regardless of whether or not the community has “taken it back” and changed its meaning.

• Sex
The biological assignment of male or female, determined by genitalia at birth.

• Transgender
A blanket term used to describe an individual who does not conform to traditional gender roles, i.e. cross dressers, transsexuals, androgynes.

• Transsexual
A man or woman whose gender identity does not match his or her biological sex. People who are transgendered often describe being a woman trapped in a man’s body, or vice versa. A transsexual person who is in process of a transition can be described as either male to female (M2F) or female to male (F2M).
A Short History of LGBT Pride and the Fight for Equality
BY VINCE PAGAN

For as long as there has been recorded history, there has been written documentation of non-heteronormative relationships, although they were seen in different lights across time and across the globe. The ancient Greeks and Romans were among the first civilization to recognize homosexual love, but their terminology differed. For the ancients, the emphasis was not placed upon the fact that both of the partners were male, but that they had different social classes. Since Roman society was male-centric, a free male citizen had physical liberty as well as the right to rule himself and his household, including any young men who served under him.

Throughout the following centuries, homosexuality became something that was taboo and “other.” Famous non-heterosexual individuals include Alexander the Great, Oscar Wilde, Cole Porter, Jane Adams, Virginia Woolf and Frieda Kahlo. As time went on, people with homosexual tendencies began to be persecuted, socially exiled and labeled abnormal. For decades in the late 19th and early to mid-20th centuries, hope for LGBT equality seemed futile. Small LGBT advocacy organizations emerged, such as the Mattachine Society (1951), the Daughters of Bilitis (1955) and the National Transsexual Counseling Unit (1966), but on June 28, 1969, something happened at New York City’s Stonewall Inn that would set events in motion that would change everything.

June 28, 1969: The Night that Started It All

The Stonewall Inn of Greenwich Village in New York City was one of the few establishments openly welcoming to the LGBT community, in a world where it was facing perhaps the most anti-homosexual legal systems that it has ever encountered. The Stonewall was widely known as a safe haven for transsexuals and drag queens to be able to come meet each other and be themselves without the strict constraints of the mainstream society of the time.

Police raids of gay bars were typical during the 1960s, and there was little community members felt they could do to fight back. That is, until the Stonewall Inn was raided in the latter half of the decade. Early in the morning on June 28, 1969, police officers raided the bar, and female patrons were taken into the women’s bathroom to have their genders “checked.” Of course, some of the patrons who were dressed as and appeared to be female were not, and these men became some of the first of many to fall victim to the fight for equality. They were arrested and abused, both verbally and physically.

This was the last straw for the many patrons of the bar, as well as onlookers in the area, who began to riot against the police. The next evening, citizens of Greenwich Village, which included both members and allies of the LGBT community, protested again, marching on the police station in the Village and New York’s City Hall. Within a few weeks, the residents of the neighborhood organized into activist groups. Within only six months, two activist organizations emerged from New York and three LGBT friendly newspapers were founded to create a place for the community to have a voice.

On June 28, 1970, the first gay pride marches took place in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. The parades commemorated the first anniversary of the Stonewall Riots and are now held annually around the world during the summer months to remember the sacrifices that were made for the sake of the community in 1969.

After the Stonewall Riots in 1969, members of the community knew that change was on the horizon. Different individuals strived for progression in different ways; some advocated for LGBT rights as lobbyists to abolish anti-sodomy laws in states across the country and others attempted to educate the general population as to what the LGBT community was really like. But one man on the other side of the country did more for the community at that time than anyone thought possible.

“My name is Harvey Milk and I am here to recruit you!”

In San Francisco, Calif., Harvey Milk responded to the riots at the Stonewall by running for city supervisor.
in 1973, taking a stance against against the clear homophbic legislation of the 1960s and government involvement in personal sexual matters. Unfortunately, Milk lost his first election, landing at 10th place out of 32 candidates. Milk became known for his brave political stance and passionate speeches, which often began with the proclamation: “My name is Harvey Milk and I am here to recruit you!”

In 1976, San Francisco Mayor George Moscone made history when he made Harvey Milk the first openly gay city commissioner in the U.S. by appointing him to the Board of Permit Appeals, a position that Milk only held for five weeks after Moscone was forced to fire him. This injustice led Milk to run for the California State Assembly, a race that he lost by only 4,000 votes. After his loss, and partly because of a perceived lack of support from the LGBT Democratic Club, Milk founded the San Francisco Gay Democratic Club.

Milk ran to be a member the San Francisco Board of Supervisors the following year, and in January of 1978, he made national news when he was sworn in to the board, winning the election by 30 percent. Within months of beginning his term, Milk and his Democratic Club sponsored a bill that outlawed sexual orientation discrimination. When the bill came to a vote, all but one of the members of the Board of Supervisors voted to pass it into law, a law that Mayor Moscone had no problem signing.

The same year, John Briggs, who had recently dropped out of the California governor’s race, sponsored Proposition 6, which was a proposal to fire any teacher or school employee who publicly supported gay rights. On Nov. 7, with the support of Milk’s campaigning efforts, California voters rejected the proposition by more than a million votes. It seemed that Milk would do great things for the LGBT community in the years to come, but tragedy soon struck and Milk’s legacy was prematurely put to an end.

On Nov. 27, 1978, recently fired San Francisco city supervisor Dan White shot Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk at City Hall. White was found guilty of two counts of voluntary manslaughter and was sentenced to serve seven and two-thirds years. After his sentence was reduced for time served and good behavior, White would be released in five.

The people of San Francisco revolted when they heard that White was given a mere slap on the wrist for assassinating Moscone and Milk. The riots that ensued after the sentencing was delivered caused more than $1 million in damages to City Hall, police cruisers and the Elephant Walk Bar on Castro Street, a stark difference from the peaceful protest that Milk advocated for. Although the LGBT community in San Francisco grasped for answers for this injustice, district attorney Joseph Freitas could give them none. In 1985, a little more than a year after he was released from prison, White took his own life.

Countless streets, buildings and even a school for LGBTQ youth have been named after Milk to honor his legacy. In August 2009, President Barack Obama presented Milk’s nephew Stuart with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and later that year, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger announced May 22 as “Harvey Milk Day.”

BELOW: Harvey Milk in 1978 at Mayor Moscone’s Desk. Provided by author, Daniel Nicoletta, [GFDL], via Wikimedia Commons.
Milk’s Legacy and LGBT Equality Legislation

Following Harvey Milk’s unprecedented work for the LGBT community, legislation emerged all across the country, both in favor of the community and not so:

1982—Wisconsin becomes the first state to outlaw discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

1984—Berkeley, Calif., becomes the first city to offer its employees domestic-partnership benefits.

1993—“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is instituted for the U.S. military. The policy is a compromise to President Bill Clinton’s original desire to revoke prohibition against gays in the military. The policy leads to the discharge of thousands of men and women in the armed forces.

1996—The Supreme Court abolishes Colorado’s Amendment 2, which denied gays and lesbians protections against discrimination.

2000—Vermont becomes the first state to recognize civil unions between gay or lesbian couples.

2003—The U.S. Supreme Court rules in Lawrence v. Texas that U.S. sodomy laws are unconstitutional.

2004—The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court rules that barring gays and lesbians from marriage violates their state’s constitution.

2005—Same-sex marriages become legal in Connecticut.

2006—Civil unions become legal in New Jersey.

2008—The California Supreme Court rules that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry. By November, when 18,000 same-sex couples have married, California voters approve a ban on same-sex marriage known as Proposition 8; voters in Arizona and Florida approve similar bans. Voters in Arkansas pass a measure to bar gay men and lesbians from adopting children. In a small victory, the Supreme Court of Connecticut rules that same-sex couples have the right to marry.

2009—Iowa, Vermont, Maine, and New Hampshire legalize same-sex marriage. Unfortunately, soon after voting into law, same-sex marriage is banned in Maine. President Barack Obama signs a referendum allowing same-sex partners of federal employees to receive restricted benefits.

2010—Washington D.C. legalizes same-sex marriage. “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is overturned by Congress and President Barack Obama.

2011—New York becomes the largest state to legalize same-sex marriage.

2012—Proposition 8 is overturned, 2-1. Washington and Maryland legalize same-sex marriage. Minnesota rejects a ban on same-sex marriage. President Obama endorses same-sex marriage. Tammy Baldwin becomes the first openly gay politician to be elected into the Senate. Maine legalizes same-sex marriage. The U.S. Court of Appeals rules a section of the Defense of Marriage Act unconstitutional.

Although we still have a long way to go before the LGBT community is afforded all of the civil rights its members deserve, we have taken leaps and bounds since Harvey Milk lost his life in 1978, fighting for the rights of LGBT individuals across the country. It will take determination and activism from all parts of the community, but it is quite possible that true equality, at least for the LGBT community, is within our grasp.

There have been a number of legislative acts and societal milestones that have advanced LGBTQ rights (and others still that have set it back). Legislative acts, however, only represent one facet our world’s progression toward LGBTQ equity. What examples can you think of? Are there other legal advancements? Changes in popular political opinion or stance? Changes in your school or community? Have your own views on LGBTQ topics changed? Or your friends’ and family?

Share your examples of LGBTQ Equity Progression as a part of our living newspaper theatre project on Tumblr! Just visit http://lgbtqequity.tumblr.com to submit your thoughts.
Tyler Clementi and The Tragedies that Sparked a Revolution
BY VINCE PAGAN

On Sept. 19, 2010, 18-year-old Rutgers University student Tyler Clementi asked his roommate Dharun Ravi if he and a male guest could have their dorm room for the night so that they could have an evening alone. Ravi, allegedly worried about the safety of his personal possessions, set up his webcam to stream the goings-on of the dorm room. Ravi turned on the webcam with fellow hallmate Molly Wei and saw Clementi and his male guest kissing with both their shirts and pants off. The same evening, Ravi tweeted:

Roommate asked for the room till midnight. I went into molly’s room and turned on my webcam. I saw him making out with a dude. Yay.

The following morning, Clementi sent an online request for a single room, but no action was taken.

Two nights later, on Sept. 21, Ravi sent a mass text message saying that he would be viewing Clementi with his male guest a second time, along with directions on how to view the interaction remotely. At 6:39 p.m., Ravi tweeted:

Anyone with iChat, I dare you to video chat me between the hours of 9:30 and 12. Yes, it’s happening again.

Ravi had set up his webcam, this time pointing it toward Clementi’s bed. This time, Clementi noticed the webcam and unplugged Ravi’s power strip to prevent the video streaming. Ravi claimed to have changed his mind about the broadcast and that the camera wasn’t recording.

After this attempt to stream his private activities, Clementi complained to a resident assistant and two other administrators at the school, telling them what Ravi had done and requesting a room assignment change, saying in an email after the meeting:

I feel that my privacy has been violated and I am extremely uncomfortable sharing a room with someone who would act in this wildly inappropriate manner.

On the evening of Sept. 22, at 8:42 p.m., Clementi posted onto Facebook from his cell phone:

Jumping off the gw bridge sorry.

Clementi’s body was recovered on Sept. 29 in the Hudson River.

On May 21, 2012, Ravi was sentenced to 30 days in prison, three years probation, 300 hours of community service, a $10,000 fine and counseling on cyberbullying and alternate lifestyles. Both parties filed appeals to the decision.

Tragedy Strikes the Nation Again…and Again…and Again.

Unfortunately, Clementi’s suicide was not the only tragedy that the LGBT community and its supporters faced that month. Clementi was the fourth of nine youth who took their own lives because of LGBT-related bullying in September 2010. During the fall of that year, it seemed that each day brought news of another youth who had been bullied to a point where he felt that he could no longer cope:

Sept. 9 — Billy Lucas, 15, of Indiana
Sept. 13 — Cody J. Barker, 17, of Wisconsin
Sept. 19 — Seth Walsh, 13, of California
Sept. 22 — Tyler Clementi, 18, of New Jersey
Sept. 23 — Asher Brown, 13, of Texas
Sept. 25 — Harrison Chase Brown, 15, of Colorado
Sept. 29 — Raymond Chase, 19, of Rhode Island
Sept. 29 — Felix Sacco, 17, of Massachusetts
Sept. 30 — Caleb Nolt, 14, of Indiana

Dan Savage Reminds LGBT Youth —“It Gets Better.”

After hearing news of the suicides of Billy Lucas and Cody Barker, radio personality and journalist Dan Savage, along with his then partner, now husband Terry Miller, founded the It Gets Better Project, designed to prevent suicide by having LGBT adults convey the message that their lives will improve. The same day, Savage and Miller released the first of countless It Gets Better videos, which featured the couple telling LGBT youth that even though things might look grim now, it does, in fact, get better:
There really is a place for us, there really is a place for you and one day you will have friends who love and support you. You will find love. You will find a community.

ItGetsBetter.org features the opportunity for anyone to submit a video to the campaign, and since the release of Savage’s It Gets Better video, 50,000 user-created videos have been submitted that have been viewed more than 50 million times. People have made submissions across the nation and the world, from both the general and celebrity populations. Notable submitters include Ellen DeGeneres, Chaz Bono, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Margaret Cho, Lady Gaga, Janet Jackson, Neil Patrick Harris, Fiona Shaw and President Barack Obama.

It was not only individuals who have created messages to bullied youth through the It Gets Better campaign. Organizations around the world decided to have their employees and partners tell their stories to the youth of the U.S. These organizations include Apple, Inc.; Google; Gap, Inc.; Facebook; the Chicago Gay Men’s Chorus; the White House staff; the U.S. Senate; and the San Francisco and Austin police departments.

Hope for Our Youth

Since 2010, there has been a huge upsurge in centers around the city that specialize in LGBT youth services. Unfortunately, young people are still being bullied for being gay or for being perceived to be gay, but now, thanks to organizations like It Gets Better and The Trevor Project, they can see that people all around the world can show them that it does, in fact, get better.

If you are a youth who is feeling alone, confused or in crisis, please contact The Trevor Lifeline at 1-866-488-7386 to receive the immediate help you deserve.
School safety is a topic on the nation’s mind these days. While legislators are focused on a conversation on gun control, in the past three years a movement has emerged around anti-bullying as well. In March 2011, the Obama administration hosted a White House conference. Since then, Jessie Klein’s book The Bully Society: School Shootings and the Crisis of Bullying in America’s Schools has hit shelves, and Lee Hirsch’s documentary “Bully” has received much attention. The New York Times, which has reviewed both pieces, characterizes this period in time: “Lee Hirsch’s moving and troubling documentary ... arrives at a moment when bullying, long tolerated as a fact of life, is being redefined as a social problem.”

But the conversation surrounding bullying — the effects of which can be detrimental — is an important one. The Illinois General Assembly reports that “bullying causes physical, psychological and emotional harm to students and interferes with students’ ability to learn and participate in school activities.” Stressing the weight of the issue on a national level, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius has stated, “It’s a systematic situation that threatens the health and well-being of our young people. It’s destructive to our communities and devastating to our future,” according to the Washington Post. The federal government defines bullying as “aggressive, unwanted behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance” and notes that “both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.”

As a result, both federal and state politicians have explored solutions to address bullying in schools. Originally launched after the White House conference by the Obama administration, stopbullying.gov has since been renovated and endorsed by Arne Duncan at an annual anti-bullying summit. The Washington Post reports that bullying has been added to a survey of risk behavior in schools by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Perhaps most importantly, the Department of Education released several official resources, including a free, downloadable tool kit in collaboration with the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers and several other organizations.

In Illinois, several organizations and some state representatives, including Rep. Kelly Cassidy and Sen. Heather Steans, have worked on an anti-bullying campaign that has spanned at least the last three years. Both the Illinois Prevent Student Violence Act and the Safe Schools Improvement Act, as well as the School Bullying Prevention Task Force, are a product of this effort. According to stopbullying.gov, Illinois does have anti-discrimination and anti-bullying laws — which extend to cyber bullying — and punishment and curriculum are in place. However, in May 2012, the Senate voted against anti-bullying bill HB5290, which had already passed in the House of Representatives. The bill would have more specifically defined bullying and laid out procedures for reporting and investigation.

But the topic of school safety in Illinois hasn’t by any means been dropped. On Jan. 22, Gov. Pat Quinn held a school safety summit, which he said was “just the beginning” of a renewed effort to make schools safer. Although the summit was directly a response to the Newtown shootings, the focus was broader, with an emphasis on mental health resources and what teachers can do to help prevent school violence.

On both federal and state levels, an emphasis has certainly been placed on creating a widespread understanding of what bullying is and what it isn’t. According to Obama, who shared at the conference in 2011 that he was bullied as a child for his big ears and funny name, bullying shouldn’t be considered a “harmless rite of passage or an inevitable part of growing up.”
Anti-Bullying Resources
COMPILED BY MARIA NELSON

If you or someone you know feels bullied, below is a list of resources that might be helpful for finding out more information and addressing the problem. For a more extensive list of resources on bullying, visit stopbullying.gov/resources.

Stopbullying.gov

Stopbullying.gov is a federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The website provides information from various government agencies on what bullying is, what cyberbullying is, who is at risk and how you can prevent and respond to bullying.

For more information, visit www.stopbullying.gov.

Anti-Defamation League Curriculum Connection: Cyberbullying

The Anti-Defamation League was founded in 1913 “to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” Now the nation’s premier civil rights/human relations agency, ADL fights anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry, defends democratic ideals and protects civil rights for all.

A leader in the development of materials, programs and services, ADL builds bridges of communication, understanding and respect among diverse groups, carrying out its mission through a network of 30 regional and satellite offices in the U.S. and abroad.

ADL’s Curriculum Connections is a collection of original lesson plans and resources that help K-12 educators integrate multicultural, anti-bias and social justice themes into their curricula. Each edition is organized around a particular topic or theme, and a new edition is published about two times per school year.

For ADL’s Curriculum Connection on Cyberbullying, visit www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/cyberbullying.

American Federation of Teachers' See a Bully, Stop a Bully

According to the AFT, bullying is a community issue that extends beyond the school campus and is prevalent online. The American Federation of Teachers is partnering with educators, school leaders, community and advocacy groups to recognize, prevent and combat bullying.

The purpose of the AFT’s campaign, See a Bully, Stop a Bully: Make a Difference, is to raise awareness and provide resources to educators, students and parents.

For more information, visit www.aft.org/yourwork/tools4teachers/bullying

NEA’s Bully Free: It Starts With Me

The National Education Association’s Bully Free: It Starts With Me campaign website offers tips on how to identify bullying, how to intervene in a bullying incident and how to be an advocate for bullied students. NEA’s website offers the following 10 steps to stop and prevent bullying, whether you are a parent, an educator or a concerned friend of the family:

1. Pay attention.
2. Don’t ignore it.
3. When you see something — do something.
4. Remain calm.
5. Deal with students individually.
6. Don’t make the students involved apologize and/or shake hands on the spot.
7. Hold bystanders accountable.
8. Listen and don’t pre-judge.
9. Get appropriate professional help.
10. Become trained to handle situations.

For more information, visit www.nea.org/home/neabullyfree.html.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Podcast: Bullying Prevention for Educators

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website states that youth violence refers to harmful behaviors that can start early and continue into young adulthood. Youth violence includes various behaviors. Some violent
acts — such as bullying, slapping, or hitting — can cause more emotional harm than physical harm. Others, such as robbery and assault (with or without weapons), can lead to serious injury or even death.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov.

Cyberbullying Research Center:
Identifying the causes and consequences of cyberbullying

The Cyberbullying Research Center is dedicated to providing up-to-date information about the nature, extent, causes and consequences of cyberbullying among adolescents. Cyberbullying can be defined as “willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices.” It is also known as “cyber bullying,” “electronic bullying,” “e-bullying,” “sms bullying,” “mobile bullying,” “online bullying,” “digital bullying” or “Internet bullying.”

This website serves as a clearinghouse of information concerning the ways adolescents use and misuse technology. It is intended to be a resource for parents, educators, law enforcement officers, counselors and others who work with youth. Here you will find facts, figures and detailed stories from those who have been directly impacted by online aggression. In addition, the site includes numerous resources to help you prevent and respond to cyberbullying incidents.

For more information, visit www.cyberbullying.us.

The Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan on Cyberbullying

The Illinois Attorney General Stop Cyberbullying website provides a variety of resources for kids, teenagers, parents and educators seeking information and advice about cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is when someone is harassed, humiliated or threatened by another person using the Internet or a cell phone. Despite their benefits, these technologies make us vulnerable to bullying anywhere and at any time — through them, the bully can follow us home.

The Illinois Attorney General E-Info Hotline provides assistance to kids, teens, parents, and teachers coping with cyberbullying and Internet safety issues. Call 1-888-
Matthew Shepard Foundation
Embracing Diversity

The Matthew Shepard Foundation was founded by Dennis and Judy Shepard in memory of their 21-year old son, Matthew, who was murdered in an anti-gay hate crime in Wyoming in October 1998.

Created to honor Matthew in a manner that was appropriate to his dreams, beliefs and aspirations, the foundation seeks to “Replace Hate with Understanding, Compassion & Acceptance” through its varied educational, outreach and advocacy programs and by continuing to tell Matthew’s story.

The mission of the Matthew Shepard Foundation is to encourage respect for human dignity and difference by raising awareness, opening dialogues and promoting positive change.

For more information, visit www.matthewshepard.org.

Nickelodeon’s The Big Help

Nickelodeon’s The Big Help provides resources for kids and parents on bullying, including a Nick News Special on bullying, a list of top 10 anti-bullying tips, digital citizenship tips and information on how you can get involved or help.

For more information, visit www.nick.com/thetbighelp.

Pacer Center’s Kids Against Bullying

This website was developed to help children in second through sixth grade recognize bullying and respond to it in appropriate, effective ways. It is for all children who are bullied or who witness bullying.

Through engaging activities and helpful information, this website helps to:

- promote bullying awareness in elementary schools;
- teach effective ways to respond to bullying;
- and prevent bullying of all children, especially those with disabilities.


“Bully,” a documentary by Lee Hirsch

The film “Bully,” directed by Lee Hirsch, which will be available on DVD and BluRay Feb. 12, is part of The Bully Project. The New York Times writes that, “while the film focuses on the specific struggles of five families in four states, it is also about — and part of — the emergence of a movement. It documents a shift in consciousness of the kind that occurs when isolated, oppressed individuals discover that they are not alone and begin the difficult work of altering intolerable conditions widely regarded as normal.”

The Bully Project as a whole highlights solutions that both address immediate needs and lead to systemic change. Starting with the film’s STOP BULLYING. SPEAK UP! call to action, The Bully Project will catalyze audience awareness to action with a series of tools and programs supported by regional and national partners.

For more information, visit www.thebullyproject.com.

ABOVE: Bully Screening Hosted by Maryland First Lady, Katie O’Malley. Photo by Jay Baker (provided by under a Creative Commons License via Flickr).
Surprisingly, the term “bully” was first used as a term of endearment. Perhaps derived from the Dutch “boel,” meaning “lover” or “brother,” the term appears with this positive definition in four of Shakespeare’s works: Henry V, Midsummer Night’s Dream, Merry Wives of Windsor and Tempest. In a linguistic study of Shakespeare’s works, Ulrich Busse notes that many instances of “bully” appear in comedies, in informal or jesting contexts, such as this one from Merry Wives of Windsor (Act 1, Scene 3: Lines 1-11):

FALSTAFF: Mine Host of the Garter!
HOST: What says my bully rook? Speak scholarly and wisely.
FALSTAFF: Truly, mine Host, I must turn away some of my followers.
HOST: Discard, bully Hercules, cashier. Let them wag; trot, trot.
FALSTAFF: I sit at ten pounds a week.
HOST: Thou’rt an emperor—Caesar, Kaiser, and Pheezer. I will entertain Bardolph; he shall draw, he shall tap. Said I well, bully Hector?

Needless to say, “bully” has very negative connotations today. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the term as “a tyrannical coward who makes himself a terror to the weak,” and stopbullying.gov expands this definition: “Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.” How can the meaning of a word flip so drastically?

As early as the 18th century, “bully” carried more negative connotations, similar to “gallant” — handsome but perhaps overly showy. Yet Teddy Roosevelt (president 1901-1909) used the term frequently as a positive exclamation, similar to how we might use “awesome!” today. Interestingly, “bully!” still is used in this sense occasionally in British English. The media often used the compound “bully pulpit” in reference to Roosevelt’s position of authority as president. In Chicago, “bully pulpit” has recently been taken up by the media, with a negative connotation that power has been abused, in reference to Mayor Rahm Emmanuel and the teachers’ strike.

Recently, with heightened awareness and a push to stop bullying in schools, the term “bully” has become even more culturally specific and loaded — a keyword, as Raymond Williams might claim. In his book Keywords, he writes, “the most active problems of meaning are always primarily embedded in actual relationships, and that both the meanings and the relationships are typically diverse and variable, within the structures of particular social orders and the processes of social and historical change.” What matters most isn’t how the term “bully” changed step by step from positive to negative. Instead, what gives the word “bully” its meaning today is its complicated history as a whole, and the context in which it is used.

To access more resources online, visit: www.goodmantheatre.org/engage-learn
The Legality of Hate
BY ELIAMARIA LINTZ

Hate crimes have occurred in the U.S. for a large portion of its history. However, the term “hate crime” has only recently become part of legal jargon and legislation. According to the FBI, a hate crime is a crime committed as an act of prejudice against a person or his or her property as a result of the victim’s real or perceived membership in a particular group. Hate itself is not a crime, but acting upon that hate in a malicious way is.

The first appearance of hate crimes in federal legislation was in 1968. The Civil Rights Act provided a clause that permits federal prosecution of anyone who willingly injures, intimidates or interferes with another person, or attempts to do so, by force because of the other’s race, color, religion or national origin. This legislation only protected people while they were engaging in federally protected activities such as voting, attending school, applying for a job, acting as a juror and congregating in a public place. The penalty for committing a hate crime was one to 10 years of jail time depending on the severity of the crime.

The next change to federal hate crime legislation came in the 1990s with the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act and the Hate Crime Statistics Act. The Violent Crime Control Act increased punishment for crimes based on bias. The Statistics Act, which was a federal statute, required the attorney general to collect data on crimes committed because of the victim’s race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or ethnicity. This was the first time that a federal statute recognized and named gay, lesbian and bisexual people.

The 1990s also saw an event that called attention to the lack of LGBT language in federal hate crime legislation. Matthew Shepard, a gay college student, was tortured and murdered in 1998 because he was gay. The crimes committed against Matthew Shepard could not be considered hate crimes because LGBT people were not included in the wording of legislation.

In 2009 the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act was passed by President Barack Obama. The bill was long opposed and came against opposition in 2007 when then President George W. Bush said he would veto the bill if it crossed his desk. Prior to 2009, any language regarding the LGBT community had not been included in federal hate crime legislation. The Matthew Shepard Act also provided a clause that ended the stipulation that victims must be engaging in federally protected activities.

State and local officials handle the majority of hate crime prosecution. Federal legislation only has jurisdiction if a case is brought to that level. States have different laws regarding hate crimes. Some states don’t have any laws regarding hate crimes. Today, Arkansas, Georgia, Michigan, South Carolina and Wyoming lack legislation addressing hate crimes directed to LGBT people. Illinois has legislation that protects against crimes based on race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, physical disability or national origin, regardless of any other motivating factor. It also protects against harassment through electronic communications.

Illinois is one of the few states that acknowledges some sort of cyberbullying — harassment through electronic communications — in its legislation. New Jersey, the state where Dharun Ravi was tried for the Tyler Clementi case, does not include any mention of electronic harassment. Instead, Ravi was convicted of biased intimidation and invasion of privacy.

The Tyler Clementi case placed emphasis once again on hate crimes and created a campaign for federal cyberbullying legislation. Cyberbullying legislation would include harassment through the Internet whereas bullying legislation would cover any physical, verbal or psychological acts of bullying.

Some ask: does the federal government need to develop new legislation regarding cyberbullying and bullying? Laws against invasion of privacy, hate crimes and assault already exist. Should bullying and cyberbullying when acted upon physically and severely be considered crimes of that sort? The legal system in the U.S. is already convoluted with a myriad of laws which creates problems of a weakened legal system and people being tried for the wrong crimes. The area where bullying, cyberbullying, assault and hate crimes intersect is so gray. Do we further convolute the already murky legal system by making additional bully laws?

What do you think? Should we consider bullying a form of assault, or does new legislation need to be created?
The News Cycle
BY TERESA RENDE

Every day we are inundated with news. What was once an industry dependent on the circulation of paper has evolved in ways 18th century printer and journalist Peter Zenger never could have predicted. In your earbuds, on your iPhone, flashing on TV screens in homes, train stations or Times Square, condensed into tweets and expanded into tumbls, picked up in a paid Tribune or a free RedEye — there are so many ways to consume news it’s hard to imagine that anything goes unknown these days. Regardless of the method by which you consume news, though, you can only eat what you are served. In the great buffet that is news media, many stories never make it to the table. Whether by choice or random happenstance, the news cycle weighs heavily on the level of exposure any single story receives.

Most news stories that break will be reported upon multiple times. The news cycle loosely refers to the repetitious nature of news stories in any given medium and the frequency by which said stories repeat. Before the advent of television and radio, when newspapers were the primary source of news and were printed once daily, the news cycle ostensibly was a multi-day cycle. A story breaks in the morning when the paper is released. The next day’s news might include that same story, but with follow-up reporting of reactions to the story by the public or key figures related to the story. Later in the life of the story, there may be a final analysis of some sort and eventually this story cycles out of the news.

Radio and television move much quicker than print news does and cable television introduced 24-hour news channels, creating an expectation of more immediate and up-to-the-moment news production, considerably shortening the news cycle. Further into the 20th century, the advent of the Internet sped the cycle up yet again. Now news cycles vary between mediums, from days in print media to mere minutes for online news outlets. Since most stories are repeated throughout the day multiple times, a cyclic pattern appears in news media. If you were to flip through multiple 10 o’clock news broadcasts, you’d notice many of the same stories, because all of these stories are still in the news cycle. Were you to check the news on one channel at 10 a.m., 6 p.m. and 10 p.m., you also may notice the same story with associated follow-up reporting throughout the day, as it is still making its way through the cycle. A week or two later, however, if the story has been “wrapped up,” it will cycle out, and no longer will you see it on the news.

Sometimes stories have a longer lifetime in the cycle because there is a considerable amount of followup to be done. Other times stories have an abbreviated life in the news cycle because there is no followup to be completed. Take, for example, a headline such as: “Obama returns campaign funds from indicted Florida lobbyist.” A journalist might get a statement from the Obama campaign explaining why it’s returning the funds and in the future the campaign will be more cautious about from where its funding comes. The Obama campaign might not “look good,” but the story goes away quickly because the campaign has acknowledged some wrongdoing or error and moves on. People forget the story because there is no followup to be done, no life in the news cycle.

But, pretend the Obama campaign didn’t return the funds from the indicted lobbyist. Now Obama’s campaign members could face questions the next week. Why are they keeping the funds? Should they have kept the funds? Days or weeks later, if the indicted lobbyist is convicted, the campaign would get more follow-up questions. When the convicted lobbyist is eventually sentenced, more questions will come to the Obama campaign. Maybe someone starts digging into how the campaign received the money in the first place and the nature of the relationship between Obama and this lobbyist or lobbying group, or reports on the Obama campaign’s other lobby donations.

Anything with considerable follow-up time, such as a story that leads into a legal proceeding, can defy the news cycle and stick around much longer — often as long as the litigation itself lasts. By contrast, smaller stories might cycle in and out very quickly. A “one-day story” refers to a story that’s covered only once, say a few times per day on CNN or published in newspapers one time, but never followed by reaction or final analysis reporting. This is sometimes used to refer to a bad piece of press that goes away and is forgotten after a few days. Stars, political figures, companies and just about anyone whose image can be affected by bad media has staff to help them navigate the news cycle to their advantage.

The court recently ordered Groupon, for example, to inform all subscribers of a refund program established as a result of a class-action lawsuit brought against the
company. Although Groupon has to inform its subscribers of this, company leaders also recognize it is bad press. From their perspective, the fewer people who know about this, the better. As such, Groupon sent its court-ordered informational email on a Friday after 11 p.m., when most people aren’t sitting in front of their computers. Business reporting organizations that might cover this story are using skeleton crews because the workweek already has closed. By breaking the news when less people are reading and reporting, an individual or organization hopes to hit a low point in news consumption so the story cycles out before people have much time to notice it. Compare that to a story that breaks Monday at 8:30 a.m., when people have the news on TV at home, are driving to work, are checking email and are potentially online visiting websites, and you’ll see how one might use the news cycle to their advantage or to someone else’s disadvantage.

As mentioned earlier, the news cycle is referred to as such because of its cyclic nature. This does not mean that the news cycle defines the frequency by which any single story might repeat. There are, in fact, many exceptions to the news cycle. Sometimes a story completely defies the standard news cycle and lives on much longer than does the average story; the suicide of Tyler Clementi was one such instance, for multiple reasons. Clementi’s suicide and Dharun Ravi’s potential involvement in his death create a variety of newsworthy angles from which different media outlets can approach and continue follow-up reporting. It wasn’t just the suicide of a young person, but the suicide of a young, gay man, a death on a college campus, a legal battle regarding rights to privacy, bullying and young people’s interactions on the Internet, a culture clash, a class clash, an arts and technology clash — in summary, a tragic story that can be covered from many different angles, and one with a long follow-up time given the court proceedings.

Similarly, stories that might otherwise receive coverage sometimes get completely disregarded because a very high-profile story crowds them out, or gets more repetition throughout the day, minimizing the opportunities for other stories to receive air or print space. The news cycle is one determining factor in how much exposure a story receives, but certainly not the only one. Indeed, media outlets, editors and journalists sometimes face pressure, internal and external, to run certain stories more or less often, report stories from a particular angle and continue follow-up reporting on stories that are still deemed popular by the public. Even though none of these factors should attribute a value to the story in question or the people around whom the story focuses, they nonetheless contribute to what stories makes it across our iPads, TV screens and mailboxes as well as what stories do not.
Beyond the Binary: Male, Female and More
BY VINCE PAGAN

Sex vs. Gender: What’s the Difference?

It is widely understood that sex and gender both have to do with the way people are labeled by society. However, they are often mistaken for being interchangeable, although they are definitely not. A person’s sex is a biological fact usually determined by sexual organs and genitalia. It is also the first factor in determining what an individual’s gender is. Gender is a social construct that informs society, using indicators such as physical appearance, where a person falls in the binary of male and female. But what happens when a person is neither male nor female? Or what if they’re both?

Intersex: A Brief History

There is anthropological evidence of intersex* individuals going back 4,000 years in Sumerian creation myths. Archeological evidence shows us images of an intersex deity from the Hellenistic era of ancient Greece (200-100 BC), which were discovered as far back as 1608, when the “Sleeping Hermaphroditos” was found during the building of a cathedral in Italy. These clues from the cultures of our collective past suggest awareness and general understanding of intersex individuals. Ancient Greeks, however, did not have the ability to truly understand all of the small details of the different individuals of the intersex population, because of a lack of medical development in combination with a very small sample of people. Thanks to modern science and medicine, we now know much more about what lies beyond the biological binaries of sex and gender.

Sex

It is estimated by the Intersex Society of North America that 1 in 100 people classify as something other than biologically male or female. However, a number of factors classify a person who is intersex, including having two Y chromosomes (most people have one X and one Y) or having an XXY combination, as well as several different conditions having to do with a person’s androgen levels. And for as many reasons as there are for an intersex person, there are even more physical results. Some symptoms of these conditions include double or partial genitalia, severe hormonal imbalance and atypical internal sexual organs. In fact, some people live their entire life being intersex and do not know it.

When an infant is born intersex, it is usually left up to the physician-informed parent or parents to decide what to do. They might choose to attempt to “correct” what is atypical, or they might choose not to operate, leaving the baby’s genitalia as they were when he/she was born.

There is some controversy within the intersex community regarding what parents should do when they learn that their child was born intersex. Some consider “gender corrective surgery” genital mutilation, putting it under the same heading as female circumcision and male castration. Others believe that a sexual reassignment for an infant is necessary to give the child any hope of being “normal.” This idea was put on trial during the John/Joan case involving David Reimer and Dr. John Money.

John/Joan vs. Dr. John Money

In 1965, a pair of twin boys named Brian and Bruce (later known as David Reimer) was born to a couple in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Because of a condition known as phimosis, it was suggested that the boys both undergo a circumcision. When the boys were 6 months old, a urologist performed a circumcision on Bruce using cauterization. For some reason, the operation did not go as planned and his penis was burned past the point of surgical repair.

After the operation, Reimer’s parents, with information from psychologist Dr. John Money, decided that the best course of action for Bruce was to perform a gender corrective surgery in combination with a hormone treatment that would assure Bruce would grow up as a woman, now renamed Brenda.

As time went on, it seemed that the gender correction was a success. Reimer was growing up with the correct female physical traits, but behind closed doors, it was revealed that Dr. Money was forcing the twins to rehearse sexual acts, which he believed was important in ensuring a “healthy adult gender identity.”

At 15, Reimer found out about the gender corrective surgery that she underwent when she was an infant, and revealed to her parents and psychiatrist that she believed herself to be male all her life. From that
moment on, Brenda changed her name to David Reimer and lived the rest of his life as a man. When he was 38, Reimer ended his own life because of financial instability, a troubled marriage and chronic depression. His life ended prematurely, but the legacy of the John/Joan case, as it was later called, has been used as a landmark case study in gender corrective surgery and has been alluded to in several different media platforms in popular culture.

Gender

Gender, as was previously mentioned, is based not on biological indicators, but on how a person identifies psychologically. An individual can identify several different ways: male, female, transwoman, transman, androgynous, pangender and gender queer. The list goes on and on. Although a person’s sex and gender often match, an estimated 3 million gender queer individuals currently live in the U.S. and have been considered part of the LGBTQI community as early as the 1960s.

There is an important distinction to make within the LGBTQI community, and that is the differences among transgender women, female impersonators and individuals known as “drag queens.” Transgender individuals were born biologically as one sex, but choose to live their lives as a different gender. Female impersonators might or might not also be transgender, but what makes them female impersonators is their performances of well-known female performers in a show lounge setting.

Finally, drag queens or drag kings are biologically male or female and choose to adopt caricatural personas of the opposite gender, mostly for entertainment purposes. Perhaps the most widely known drag queen is entertainment mogul Andre Charles, also known as RuPaul. Charles’s presence in mainstream media through his television show, “RuPaul’s Drag Race,” and his legacy in general has made a lifestyle that was once taboo and negatively depicted widely celebrated and accepted by a much larger population.

Leaps and bounds have been made in legislation and policy protecting the intersex and gender queer communities over the last few decades, but our society still has a long way to go until they are accepted even to the point of the rest of the LGBTQI community. There is still a lot that the general population does not know or does not want to know, but with the proper education and awareness, that could all soon change.

* See glossary for definition of intersex
The Straighest Gay Man in the World
BY MICAH MALENFANT

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Originally published in Out and Allied: An Anthology of Performance Pieces Written by LGBTQ Youth and Allies.

The Out & Allied Anthology is a youth-led writing and performance project intended to help everyone be better allies for LGBTQI youth. While some of the performance pieces in Out and Allied dig into what’s difficult and unjust, it also celebrates what is amazing, strong, joyful, resilient, and, well, funny about supporting queer youth. The project, which began in 2008, has involved youth writing, editing, directing, acting for activism through Add Verb Productions. Add Verb has presented theatre for activism and health and wellness around the US since 2000. Out & Allied won the 2012 Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance award for Best Anthology!, and was honored by the League of Young Voters as Best Youth Startup, and was featured in Teaching Tolerance as a Staff Pick.

CHARACTERS:
ABE, a charismatic, outgoing guy.
TRAVIS, a dude.
ERIC, another guy, who is gay.

SETTING: ABE, TRAVIS and ERIC are sitting at a table. The table could be at different locations depending on the audience. For example, for a college-aged audience, the setting could be a bar; for a high school or middle-school audience, the setting could be a local hangout like a pizza parlor.

(Lights up on ABE, TRAVIS and ERIC sitting at a table.)

ABE: I can’t believe you said you were quitting the team two weeks ago.

TRAVIS: Coach Scott was pissing me off.

ABE: I was so scared you were serious.

TRAVIS: I was serious.

ERIC: But you love rugby.

TRAVIS: I hate coach more than I love rugby.

ABE: But we all love you.

TRAVIS: Thanks...I guess...

ERIC: What bothered you so much?

TRAVIS: He always says I’m soft and I’m too worried about re-injuring my knee.

ERIC: It’s been awhile since you hurt your knee. Aren’t you fine now?

TRAVIS: Yeah and I’m not worried about it.

ABE: Well it’s just...sometimes you seem a bit hesitant.

TRAVIS: Maybe I am, but he doesn’t need to make those “gay” jokes all the time.

ABE: Well it’s a good coach. We need him.

TRAVIS: Well there’s no excuse for some of the things he says.

ERIC: Yeah, it’s just the way he is. He doesn’t know any better.

TRAVIS: It’s just some of the things he says really get to me. I mean, if a school official heard some of the remarks he makes at practice, he’d be fired in a heartbeat.

ABE: But he’s a good coach. We need him.

TRAVIS: Well there’s no excuse for some of the things he says.

ERIC: You’re right.

ABE: (Looking at a text message on his cell phone) Well, I’d love to stay and chat, but the lady’s waiting for me. See ya tomorrow. I’m glad you’re back, Travis.

(ABE gets up and hugs TRAVIS from behind. TRAVIS shrugs his shoulders to try to get ABE off of him. After ABE has left, TRAVIS looks over his shoulder to make sure he is gone.)

TRAVIS: Man, he is the gayest straight kid I know.

ERIC: How do you know he’s straight?
TRAVIS: He has a girlfriend.

ERIC: That doesn’t necessarily mean he’s straight.

TRAVIS: Well, he’s the king of man hugs and I could swear he’s tried to kiss me a few times.

ERIC: (Laughs) That’s just Abe.

TRAVIS: Oh...

ERIC: What?

TRAVIS: Nothing.

ERIC: What?

TRAVIS: It’s just, I always forget that you’re gay.

ERIC: Haha, it’s fine.

TRAVIS: I mean it’s just so weird ‘cause you act so straight. I mean Abe’s the gayest straight kid I know and you gotta admit you must be the straightest gay kid in the world.

ERIC: Well...I don’t really get how you can be gay and straight unless you’re bisexual.

TRAVIS: You know what I mean.

ERIC: Explain...

TRAVIS: I mean, you’re just one of the guys. You’re on the rugby team, a mountain biker, an outdoorsman, and you like to hang out with the guys.

ERIC: So?

TRAVIS: Well, I wouldn’t expect a gay guy to be able to say he spent half of last summer camping in the woods of Maine.

ERIC: Then what would you expect a gay guy to do?

TRAVIS: I don’t know... Spend half his summer shopping? Work at Abercrombie and Fitch? Have tons of friends that are girls and hardly any that are dudes?

ERIC: (Laughs) Not every gay guy is like that.

TRAVIS: Sure...I guess.

ERIC: I mean, everyone has their own unique personality whether they are gay or straight.

TRAVIS: Yeah but it’s just really strange.

ERIC: Why?

TRAVIS: I mean usually I can walk right into a room and spot everyone who is gay within my first glance.

ERIC: So you got gay-dar?

TRAVIS: Exactly.

ERIC: Well, it’s not that simple all the time. (Beat) I’ll tell you what...

TRAVIS: Yeah?

ERIC: Tomorrow I’ll go see Coach Scott and tell him not to bother you anymore and not to make any more “gay” jokes.

TRAVIS: Thanks man.

About the Author:

Micah Malenfant was born and grew up in Portland, Maine. He attended Wheaton College in Massachusetts where he studied Creative Writing and served as the editor in chief of Wheaton’s weekly newspaper, the Wheaton Wire. He was not only was a contributing writer but spent a summer internship at Add Verb, helped edit the manuscript, and researched the publishing process. Micah currently works as a Behavioral Health Professional and a Mental Health Rehabilitation Technician in southern Maine.
On April 19, students in more than 9,000 schools will forego their normal chatter and gossip in the halls to call attention to LGBT bullying in schools. The silence will spread throughout middle schools, high schools, colleges and universities. Day of Silence is the largest student-led action towards creating safer schools. The students take a vow of silence to create an awareness of the silencing of LGBT voices through bullying. This peaceful protest was created in 1996 by a group of students at the University of Virginia as an assignment for a class. That year, 150 students at the university participated. The event has since become a worldwide event with more than 100,000 participants.

Day of Silence invites students to participate regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

One place that students are expected to break the silence is in the classroom. Under the Constitution, public schools must respect students’ right to free speech, or in this case silence, but this right does not extend to class time. Students who participate in Day of Silence are expected to break this silence if a teacher asks them to answer a question in class or addresses them directly. One great way to combat this and create more awareness is to talk to teachers beforehand. Day of Silence has found that most teachers are more than happy to respect students’ silence when they are made aware.

Day of Silence is a peaceful protest, but many socially conservative organizations oppose this event. Day of Dialogue, a counter-protest sponsored by Focus on the Family, is always held the day before the Day of Silence event. Other organizations urge parents to keep their children home from school on the Day of Silence.

Regardless of opposition, students still will take a vow of silence on April 19 in support of ending LGBT bullying in schools. If you want to organize your own Day of Silence event, check out www.dayofsilence.org. You can find speaking cards, an activity guide and tips on what to do if you encounter opposition. The website also has great suggestions on how to break your silence with a Night of Noise event. The Day of Silence is only one sponsored event to bring attention to the harassment and bullying experienced by many LGBT students. How else can you use your voice to help those who lose theirs?

ABOVE: April 18, 2007: Day of Silence (provided by author, Marchel [Flickr user: DiabolaSpinner], under a Creative Commons License via Flickr).
What should I wear?

Definitely dress nicely but comfortably; try business casual. No tank tops, ripped jeans, etc. Baseball caps or hats must be moved once you enter the theatre. The Goodman is air-conditioned so be sure to bring an extra sweater or dress warmly.

What should I bring?

Only what you really need. Electronic devices such as **PSP, Nintendo DS, smart phones, and laser pointers** are not permitted during the show. If it makes noise or is distracting, please refrain from having it out in the theatre. A purse, bag, or backpack is fine. School supplies are not necessary. Remember that you are here to sit back, watch and enjoy, so don’t bring anything you don’t need.

(Please remember):

No smoking, and no eating or drinking while inside the theatre.

What if I need to leave the theatre during the show?

Only if it is an emergency. Otherwise, it’s very disrespectful. Make sure to use restrooms before the show, or wait until intermission.

Have respect for other audience members. This means no talking during the performance, no feet on seats, and no kicking. (For your safety and others’!)
How should I respond to what’s going on on the stage?

Honestly but appropriately. If you find something funny, then laugh—but don’t laugh for five minutes straight or laugh so hard that you need to leave the theatre. Theatre is very different from watching a movie at home. Always remember that you are in a room full of people who are there to watch the performance. They can hear your responses just as well as you can hear theirs. Most important, the actors can hear and see you. They will appreciate any appropriate feed back but might be extremely offended if it is inappropriate. Whether you enjoy the play or not, you owe respect to the actors for having given it a try.

What to do before the show:

When your class arrives, your teacher will let the Education staff know how many people are in your group. It is a good idea to arrive at least 15-20 minutes before the performance. If you are late, often you will not be allowed to enter the show until after intermission. Once your group is called, an usher will lead you to your seats and hand you a program.

Please promptly sit where you have been assigned. Remember that the show needs to begin on time and everyone needs to be seated.

What to do during Intermission:

Most plays have a 15 minute intermission. This gives you time to stretch your legs, walk, use the restroom, get water and discuss the play with your friends.

We do ask that if you are sitting on the main floor that you remain downstairs and if you are sitting in the mezzanine that you remain upstairs. There are restrooms on both floors. When intermission is over, the lights in the lobby will flash several times! that is your cue to get back to your seat because the performance is about to begin!

What to do after the show:

There will be a post-show discussion immediately following the performance. Members of the cast will come out on stage and answer your questions. Feel free to ask anything that’s on your mind about the show, but please remember to be respectful.

And remember the Golden Rule of Theatre-going:

Theatre artists are paid professionals.

When you enter a theatre, you are entering their work space. Respect their work as you would have them respect yours.

Enjoy the Show!
Reading Your Ticket
BY GOODMAN EDUCATION

As a patron of the theatre, it is important to know how to read your ticket and find your seat. Generally, seats for all performances in the Goodman’s Albert Theatre are assigned seating, so be sure to know how to be able to find your seat. When you come with your school, you will be ushered to a section where you and your fellow students can sit and enjoy the play together.

Below is a seating chart—a map of all the seats in the Albert Theatre—and an explanation of how to read your ticket. If you have any problems, ask an usher for help. They’re here for you!

This will guide you to the lobby door closest to your seat—aisle numbers are on plaques that hang above the doors to the theater.

Play you are seeing and its author

The section of the theatre you will be sitting in: Main Floor or Mezzanine

This is your seat number, located on the edge of the bottom seat cushion

The row where your seat is located, noted in a letter on the side of the end seat of each row

Day and date of performance

Curtain time

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Goodman’s Albert Theatre

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Albert Ivar Goodman Theatre—Main Floor

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Albert Ivar Goodman Theatre—Mezzanine
After you have seen the show and discussed your responses in the classroom, it’s time to let us know what you thought! Your response letter plays an important role at Goodman Theatre. All of the letters we receive are forwarded to our artists, and you may get a response!

Pick one of the artists involved with Teddy Ferrara whose work was particularly memorable to you—an actor, designer, the playwright or the director—and write that artist a letter describing your experience at the show and your feedback about his or her work. Be honest and ask any questions that are on your mind.

Send us your letter within one month of seeing the show, and we’ll forward it on to that artist!

Here is a great student letter we received in response to Animal Crackers:

Dear Cast and Crew,

I would have to say that every single one of you have done a superb job in this play. All the effort you have put forth into this play has resulted in a memorable experience for all of us. I thought it was clever that the actors, actresses and the orchestra interacted with the audience. From viewing the original film of Animal Crackers, I think the cast played in the play and the original cast of Animal Crackers very similar! This play might have been the first encounter of the Marx brothers for many teenagers and children and I believe that the crew and cast of Animal Crackers proved that early comedy can also be entertaining and memorable!

The director’s vision of the play was a rather conscious one. Exposing the Marx brothers to the vast majority of people who never knew about them and bringing back nostalgic memories to the older audience was a great idea. This play was actually my first play and a first trip to Goodman Theatre. I myself, as a young adult, finally realized that plays are enjoyable and gratifying. The play had all the elements of emotion and slapstick comedy which made it a great one. The technical aspects as well as the props were amazingly set to follow each scene. My favorite scene had to be the scene where Harpo and Rivelli tried to clear up the misunderstanding of “The Flash.” I though the script was very flowing and comfortable. Was there any improv involved? I did not find any negative aspects of this play. I have found the play and the ambiance of Goodman Theatre very positive. I give Animal Crackers two thumbs up.

Sincerely,
A CPS student

Send your letters to:
Education and Community Engagement
Goodman Theatre
170 North Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60601

Or email us at:
education@goodmantheatre.org

Goodman Theatre Education & Community Engagement is also online!

Check us out on Facebook:
http://www.facebook.com/goodmaned

Or Twitter:
http://twitter.com/GoodmanEd

We love hearing your thoughts, so don’t be afraid to drop us a line, comment, tag us in a note, @reply, or retweet us. Also check out our online educational resources for more information regarding the play you’ve seen, or anything else you’d like to know about how our programs (and theatre) work!

Keep checking in for updates online!