

NEW URBAN ARTS

THE UN- TITLE MENT TOOLBOX

**A Program Resource Guide
The Untitlement Project 2010-2014**

ABOUT NEW URBAN ARTS

New Urban Arts is a nationally recognized community art studio and gallery for high school students and emerging artists in Providence, Rhode Island. Our mission is to build and sustain a vital learning community that empowers young people as artists and leaders through the development of lifelong creative practices. Founded in 1997, our free, year-round out-of-school programs foster lasting relationships between professional Artist Mentors and urban high school students. In a storefront art studio, located in Providence's West End, our programs promote leadership, risk-taking, collaboration, community engagement, and self-directed learning. Each year we serve over 300 high school students, 25 emerging artists, and over 2,000 visitors through free youth programs, professional development, and artist residencies as well as public performances, workshops, and exhibitions.

OUR CORE VALUES

CONNECTION: authentic experiences & bonds fuel us. We believe that everyone needs a mentor—someone to trust, to share honesty with, and who enables us to be accountable to ourselves.

VOICE: young people prevail.
The diverse voices of young people drive the direction of our programs and our organization.

INCLUSION: everyone is on equal footing.
We believe everyone is ready to inspire or be inspired; that all of us have something to teach or to learn.

LEADERSHIP: the baton is yours for the taking.
We believe everyone is ready to inspire or be inspired; that all of us have something to teach or to learn.

RISK: a push into new & positive directions.
Find beauty in mistakes or failure. It is hard to dare when fear of screwing up, letting down, or reprisal looms. You can't grow if you don't dare.



For more information, please visit us at www.newurbanarts.org
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THE UNTITLEMENT PROJECT

Since 2010, the Untitlement Project has been one of New Urban Arts' five-week-long intensive summer programs. In its current form, Untitlement offers stipends to ten youth from low-income families to gain job-readiness skills while exploring gender-based issues and questions through creative writing and other media. Students attend separate identity-based small groups twice a week with an individual mentor, and all participants meet together for large group sessions on Fridays. In this way, students are able to engage with sensitive or gender-specific topics in an intimate setting before bringing them up with the full group. Two facilitating artist mentors develop a curriculum that covers topics such as identity, stereotypes, body image, violence, and relationships. Using written and spoken word, as well as visual and performance arts, as tools for consciousness-raising, the mentors facilitate four-hour-long sessions that challenge youth to critically connect their lived experiences to larger social justice issues and activism.

The Untitlement Project began as a creative response to challenging questions and behaviors in the studio. Quickly, mentors learned that these necessary conversations about gender could be artfully channeled through creative workshops, specifically creative writing and spoken word poetry. The program now seeks to offer students a foundation in a variety of media so that they can seek new routes for understanding and sustaining a healing and radical creative practice. Each year brings a different student dynamic and a unique process of self and communal exploration. Although mentors have organized the program in varied ways throughout the program's history, this guide identifies the following central themes as pillars of the Untitlement Project:

- Crafting Community & Identity
- Unpacking & Naming Oppression
- Dismantling Patriarchy
- Forging Healthy Relationships
- A Nurturing Artistic Practice

Activities and dialogue are supplemented by visits from local artists, organizers, and community members who speak to the challenges of combating patriarchal ideas and practices through art and activism. In the past, these have included panelists about healthy relationships and guest workshops on gender identity and sexual orientation. Additionally, we take field trips to expose the group to community resources and observe how gendered behavior operates in their community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This publication draws from the five years of hard work it took to make the Untitlement Project what it is today. Special thanks to former Director of Programs Sarah Meyer who co-founded the program and initially pushed for the creation of this resource guide. Additionally, thank you to all individuals and organizations who helped us during these summers, including: Sarah Meyer, Dan Schleifer, Jason Yoon, Jesse Banks III, Ashley Paniagua, Holly Ewald, Heather Viera, Paul Tavarez, Madeline Montgomery, Tamar Kaplan, Breck Petrillo, Eric Gurna, Mike Cavallaro, Ethan Kennedy, Anja Ranneberg, Meg Griffiths, Heather Johnson, Rhode Island Public Transit Authority, and Youth Pride Inc.

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And, of course, none of this would have been possible without the tireless efforts of the Untitlement Project's mentors: Sarah Meyer and Dan Schleifer (2010), Jamila Woods and Jorge Vargas (2011), Franny Choi and Emmett Fitzgerald (2012), Sydney Peak and Jorge Vargas (2013), and Thuy-Mai Vu Nguyen and Paul Tran (2014).

STUDENT PARTICIPANTS BY YEAR

2010

Ashley Dominguez
Esmeralda Martinez
Kia Shields
Aaron Daniels
Austin Barry
Christopher Jorge
Kiana Peralta
Michelle Olivo
Tatiana Shields
Christopher Medina
Mathias Vialva
Miguel Escobedo

2012

Sierra Jade Clayton
Naomy Gutierrez
Erin Taber
Jose Puella
Henry Guerrero
Isaiah Carter
Dakotah Brown
Mauro Orellana
Sissy Rosso
Kiana Latrice Wright
Julisa Reyes

2014

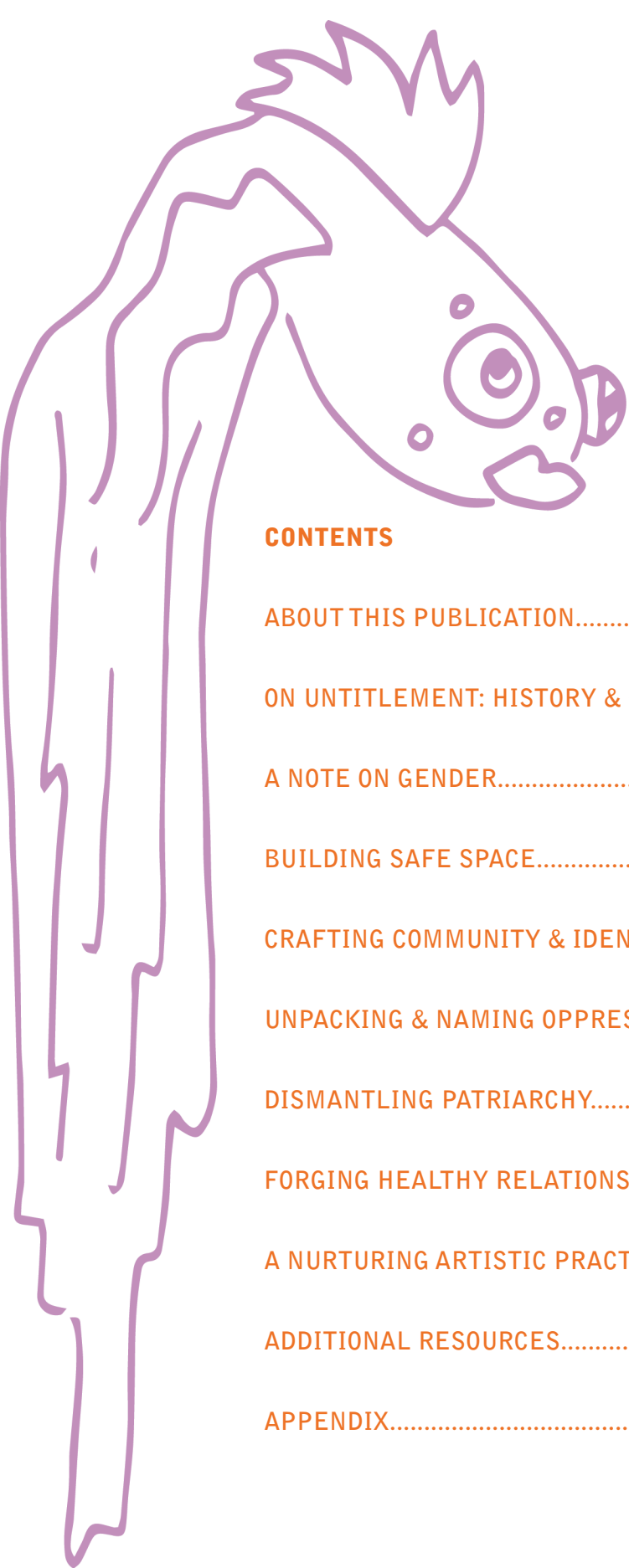
Anthony Toasty
Axel Lozada
Alysha Turner
Koyeawon Mendee
Zoe Goris
Jon Henry
Cauldierre McKay
Brianna Brooks
Saron Vongsavang
Laura Mecure

2011

Ian Rosales
Austin Ogaffa
Christopher Medina
Jacques Achille
Mauro Orellana
Ava Ginsburg
Brigitte Larmena
Kiana Latrice Wright
Kiana Peralta
Michi Olivo
Maxine Wright
Melissa Leonardo

2013

Neziah Coakley
Sierra Clayton
Marisela Garcia
Breanna Harte
Kayliana Hazard
Emmanuel Johnson
Eric Kromah
Vuthy Lay
Rose Simplicie



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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

The Untitlement Toolbox is a program resource guide based on New Urban Arts' summer program the Untitlement Project from 2010 to 2014. After five years of collecting materials and informally passing down knowledge, this guide was created to bring together the many resources we had developed to provide tools for other organizations and individuals looking to create or build upon similar programs. In the following pages you will find activities, ideas, conversations, questions and curricula for creative writing and arts workshops that guided our process. You will also find additional resources that were used to generate and expand our understanding of gender, patriarchy, and power.

We hope you find this resource guide useful as artists, educators, activists, and young people in sparking and guiding conversations about art as a tool for social change. We encourage you to alter, combine, or adapt these activities to best meet the needs of your specific environment. This publication is available online at <http://newurbanarts.org/exchange-group/curriculum-planning-resources>. Please check back to <http://www.newurbanarts.org> for progress on this and other projects and send feedback and questions to info@newurbanarts.org.

Activities and exercises are divided into thematic categories in this toolbox with general highlights. For example, some activities were designed specifically for male or female groups, while others function for both or across gender identities. Additionally, the guide identifies which tools or skills each activity helps facilitate such as dialogue, creative process, or collaboration.

The work Untitlement does is sensitive by nature. Inspired by the 2009 Summer Art Inquiry Resource Guide "Collections & Archives," this publication will organize activities and exercises into three categories based on their complexity and emotional intensity. This scale covers activities from icebreakers to long-term projects. While each exercise may be altered to incorporate it into any workshop, the guidelines are as follows:



Easy exercises that help warm up the room and build relationships within the group. Generally shorter in length.



Activities that may be more collaborative or sensitive in nature. Help students build trust.



Projects or workshops that may require several hours or be stretched over several days, requiring trust among participants and care in facilitation.

ON UNTITLEMENT: HISTORY & GOALS

Cleaning the studio one afternoon, former Director of Programs Sarah Meyer found a sticky note with the following scribbled on it:

Keys

- a) Flirting is always good
- b) Be Aggressive
- c) Hooking up 1st (total spontaneity)
- d) Don't talk about it

It came at a moment when the ecology of New Urban Arts' studio was shifting. More male students were enrolled than ever, and some inappropriate behaviors had sprung up in the studio. Staff were primarily concerned with safety, but knew that a top-down, punitive approach to addressing the behaviors conflicted with New Urban Arts' mission and pedagogy of fostering youth-led space. When staff began conversations with male students, they learned that they felt bombarded by ideas about women from the media and their peers and they felt lost without role modeling or guidance to understand any of it. It became apparent that the studio needed to make time and space for students to process their notions of gender, identity, and relationships. And so, with few resources, then Director of Programs Sarah Meyer and Studio Study Buddy Dan Schlifer teamed up to lay the groundwork for this initiative.

That sticky note is still glued in a program-planning notebook for the Untitlement Project that also lists the initial goals drafted for the first version of the program:

- Shift the culture of the studio to be more of a safe space
- Shift the response from adults reprimanding to be more youth-led
- Encourage self-reflection
- Enable honest, authentic discussion to unpack what's on their minds
- As well as enabling thought about gender issues in new ways
- Deepen awareness of "me" and "we"

These ideas have guided Untitlement since its inception. It is our primary goal to foster a safe and productive dialogue about the gendered issues youth face as they come into their high school years. The Untitlement Project is a five-week-long intensive program that meaningfully engages young people in difficult conversations through art making. At the core of this program, Untitlement has connected mentor poets, performers, writers, visual artists, activists, and scholars with young people in Providence by asking and meditating on hard questions together. Through this process, the program has fostered a safe and productive studio culture that includes a lasting reverence for issues surrounding gender, identity, power, and resistance.

A NOTE ON GENDER

The Untitlement Project's very first summer was held in New Urban Arts' former studio. Students split into male- and female-identified groups simply to accommodate the small studio space available. Twice a week, they met separately with a mentor that shared their gender identity and on Fridays, when the other summer programs were not in the studio, they met together.

Each summer since, mentors have considered altering this structure, hoping to challenge the binary model of gender. However, many student surveys reported back that they preferred the arrangement. The students appreciated having two days to work in smaller groups of their identifying gender—young, cis-gender women in particular shared how rare the sense of sisterhood was to them and that they felt more comfortable discussing certain topics with their small group. While students can choose which small group they identify with, we recognize that the binary opposition of a male- and female-identified group can exclude or limit some students. New Urban Arts seeks to affirm and support transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary students in all aspects of their lives. Mentors, students, and staff are in ongoing conversations about how to disrupt our current arrangement and further improve the program to be more inclusive. We are confident that 2015 is the year to reimagine this aspect of Untitlement and we look forward to reporting back what those changes look like.

This resource guide presents a unique opportunity to reflect on the benefits and challenges of Untitlement's current structure. We hope that others will join in this conversation, share best practices, and help us continue to strengthen our programs.

BUILDING SAFE SPACE

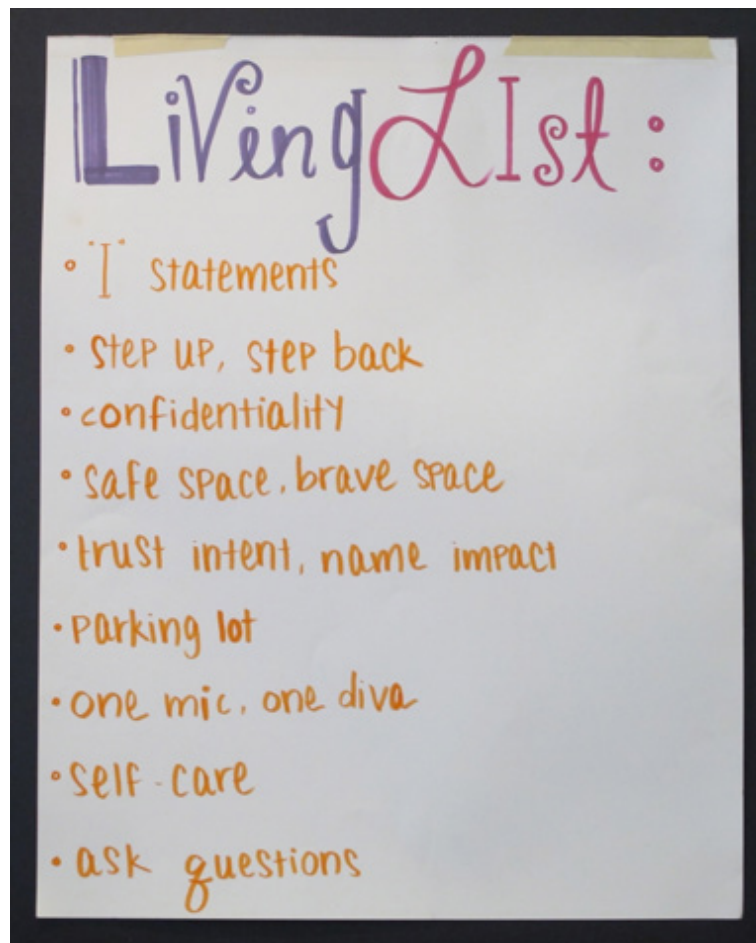
The Untitlement Project boldly asks that students make themselves vulnerable, drawing from their personal experiences to better understand structural violence. We do not take on this task lightly. As high school students, most participants have never had the space to discuss such thorny or personal topics. The students who participate in Untitlement come from marginalized backgrounds—all qualify for free or reduced lunch, half identify as women, and most also identify as people of color, immigrants, and/or LGBTQ+. Coming in with these experiences, many of Untitlement's students have already witnessed or survived physical, psychological, or sexual violence. To adequately support students, mentors need to be sensitive to and knowledgeable about forms of oppression such as sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism/homophobia, cissexism/transphobia, imperialism, and ableism.

It is important to lay the groundwork in order to have conversations effectively. For this reason, extra time is dedicated to incorporating introductions and trust building exercises in the first week. Because the Untitlement Project offers stipends to its students as a work-readiness component, there is an interview and hiring process. This aspect formalizes the program, and youth are informed that they are making a serious commitment. The first day includes workplace logistics and expectations (see Appendix) as well as time discussing and creating community agreements. The program has come to name this a Living List to emphasize that these are not authoritarian rules, but rather agreements for respecting each other that can always be adapted to serve the needs of the group. Students and mentors discuss together how we want to be treated and decide on the list. Things to consider are breaks, boundaries, confidentiality, inclusivity, and avoiding judgment. Hang them up and have students read them aloud at the beginning of each session or periodically to reinforce them. Some guiding questions for forming a Living List:

- What are strengths I bring to this group?
- What is sometimes hard for me about working in a group?
- What about me that is sometimes hard for other people in groups?
- What requests do I have for my peers to make this space enjoyable, productive, and worthwhile?

As the program moves forward, carefully pair activities together to help create a sense of safety and trust. Consider starting with something small, then doing something large. Some large workshops are best prepped for with a high energy warm up exercise, while others will need a quieter check-in that gets the youth centered and focused. When dealing with sensitive topics, recognize that no one is an expert and encourage reflection and inquiry. In moments of conflict or when a student may say something that could be hurtful or offensive to others, first ask students if “anyone would like to respond.” As a facilitator, you can “push back” on problematic statements by offering another perspective. Ask questions. Keep dialogue challenging but not combative.

Although mentors plan the Untitlement Project, the youth direct it. Throughout the program, make sure to check in with youth about what they liked and didn’t. Take note of when they seem tired or burnt out and bring extra energizers for those moments. Apply their feedback. This is a space where youth control and shape their learning.



This photo of the 2013 women’s group “Living List” showcases all our agreements to help foster a safe and vulnerable space. Some terms that may not be as well known are:

safe space, brave space: This is a space where we respect each other. At the same time, no one is expected to be an expert; be courageous in sharing your opinions and questioning others.

trust intent, name impact: Something someone says may confuse or hurt you. Trust that it was not said with malicious intentions, but also try to challenge their thinking by explaining how it felt to you.

parking lot: When we get derailed or too far on a tangent, we can “park” something for later and return to the topic at hand.

CRAFTING COMMUNITY & IDENTITY

This theme helps introduce students to the Untitlement Project. Workplace logistics are set. Program goals and outcomes are established. Youth introduce themselves and spend time getting to know each other. Collaboratively come up with a living list of agreements for time spent together. Youth will engage in discussions about identity formation, notions of womanhood/manhood/adulthood, rites of passage, and community. Youth produce and share poetry and other art. Students receive notebooks that they are encouraged to decorate and make their own.

small

QUESTIONS

Highlights: relationship building
Materials: pens, scrap paper

This is a thoughtful “get to know each other” exercise that tunes everyone in to the communal space. Youth submit 2 questions to a hat. Each student draws 2, picks one, and writes an answer. Then share responses and debrief the exercise: How did it feel to write together? To answer a personal question among strangers? To read aloud?

small

MAPPING THE SELF

Highlights: introspection, creative process, trust building
Materials: xerox, markers or crayons

Copy your feet and/or hands and draw a map of where you’re from and where you’re going. You can use pictures, words, and varied colors to make your map. When everyone is done, share with the group and discuss the process.
Guiding Questions: *What was hard to represent? Was there something you were afraid to include?*



Kiana Wright for Mapping the Self, 2012

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I WAS BORN OF

Highlights: introspection, understanding identity, building trust
Materials: paper, pens

Read Jeanan Verlee's "Brawler" as a group. Discuss what you like about the poem and how we learn our identity. Ask what the most salient aspects of our identities are. Generate a list of the following:

1. foods you ate growing up
2. things that were invented just for you
3. nouns that describe where you're from
4. phrases you've heard said around your home/community
5. things often found in your house
6. family members that impacted you

Write a poem based on this list toward the prompt "I am from." Ask everyone to share as much of their poem as they feel comfortable with—even if it is just one line. Discuss: *How do you identify? Which of these identities is most important to you? Do you identify in different ways with different groups? What is a community?*

Alternatively: Read Langston Hughes's "My People". Write who your people are.

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ENCOURAGING BANNER

Highlights: Reflection, self-esteem
Materials: Construction paper, markers, scissors, glue, tape

Think of something encouraging you often tell yourself.
For example: *Everything will be okay.* Or: *Don't listen to them.* Or: *It'll blow over.*
Now make a banner:

Draw each letter of the sentence on a large piece of colored construction paper or big squares of fabric—one letter per piece. Draw them blocky so you can cut them out. After you cut them out, glue each one onto a piece of construction paper or fabric in a contrasting color. Then glue the edges of all the pieces of paper or fabric together to make a banner. Hang the banner in a place where you or someone else might need some encouragement, for example across your bathroom.

small

DESERTED ISLAND

Highlights: Icebreaker, focusing in
Materials: None

Announce that you've been exiled to a vacant island for one year and you can only take the essentials with you. You are allowed one book, one piece of music, one luxury item, and one other person. Each person should answer these questions in a circle.



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MAP YOUR WORLD

Highlights: Considering relationship to community, society, and self

Materials: Large sheets of paper, markers

On large sheets of paper on the floor, draw a large circle around you. This circle is your world. You can fill your world with as many experiences as you wish. Let students know they only have to share as much as they feel comfortable with, since others will be able to look at their map at the end of the activity.

What are you currently obsessed with?
What moves you to shout?
What moves you to defend?
What brings out your anger?
Why would you yell “stop!” at someone?
Where do you find comfort when you feel bad?
What makes you cry?
What makes you laugh out loud?
Who do you like to be with?
Who do you trust?
Add things that cause you pain.
Add things that you avoid at all cost.
Add your favorite foods.
What would push you to hurt someone or something?
What makes you feel proud?
What do you dream about?
What do you hope for?

Discuss Together: Look at your world. Walk around and look at the world of others. Are there things in your world that you find in others? Are there experiences in other people’s worlds that you’d like to experience or learn more about? Is there anything you see in someone’s world that you want to ask about or learn more about? Allow students an opportunity to talk with each other about the worlds, but let them know they are not obligated to explain their words if they don’t feel comfortable doing so.



large

UNDERSTANDING/QUESTIONING WOMANHOOD

Highlights: Personal as political, gender as a spectrum, reflection, and trust building. This workshop was designed for the women’s cohort, but could be adapted for a men’s group or a collective/nongendered group.

Materials: Paper, pens, photocopies of genderbread guide and poems

This is a challenging exercise for many students. It asks for some to begin reconceptualizing gender, sex, and attraction in ways that may divert from what they have typically been taught. It is important to stress the community agreements before this so that students remember they can ask questions, but should be careful not to make assumptions about their peers. As a facilitator, you may need to do extra research into gender and queer theory to be able to make sure you can manage the space. Start exploring here, but also check out the Additional Resources section of this guide for more tools.

Hand out copies of the genderbread person. If you print in black and white, give students a chance to color it in, letting themselves freely explore the infographic. Then have students read sections in a round robin. Have them circle any words they do not know as their peers read. Look up the words together or hand out definitions. Ask clarifying questions: Have you ever seen something like this? Why do you think the arrows point the way they do? Explain some of the limitations of the infographic. Let students know it is one representation, but not a perfect means for explaining or defining the terms. Give students a chance to map themselves onto the arrows, but ask them not to share with each other. Remind them their identity is theirs to understand, grow into, shape, and share with others when and how they want to. Ask them why they think it is important to respect how people self identify?

Read aloud "The Herstory of My Hips" by C.C. Carter.

Discussion questions: How do we learn our gender? Do we carry a legacy from our ancestors that shapes how we understand our identity? In what ways does our body represent or identify our gender? In what ways doesn't it?

Have students choose a body part—skin, eyes, a beauty mark, breasts, thighs—and write its (her)story. Ask students to share. For exercises like this, you can ask that everyone share as much of their work as they feel comfortable with, even if it is just one line. As part of a brave space, students should push themselves to contribute.

Discuss the Process: How did the exercise feel? Have you ever been told, "You have your mother's/father's/someone's _____" about one of your features? How did the genderbread diagram influence your poem if at all?



2013 Untitlement students and Facilitator Jorge Vargas participate in an icebreaker outside

Large

PUPPET SHOW

Highlights: Understanding and affirming gender and sexual diversity

Materials: socks, glue, an assortment of decorations (googly eyes, pipe cleaners, feathers, etc.)

Create a puppet using the available materials and create a short biography for it that includes gender identity, sex, sexuality, and gender expression. Create a story for your puppet: give it a name, a place to grow up? Give it pronouns to use.

In small teams, put together plays that feature, embrace, and affirm a diverse cast of puppet identities. The plays should demonstrate who the characters are without announcing identities explicitly. Put on the plays for the whole group. Discuss: *How did it feel to make your puppet and their story? What were the most fun and most challenging aspects of this activity? Why is it important to respect and affirm others' identities? How do we practice this in our everyday lives?*



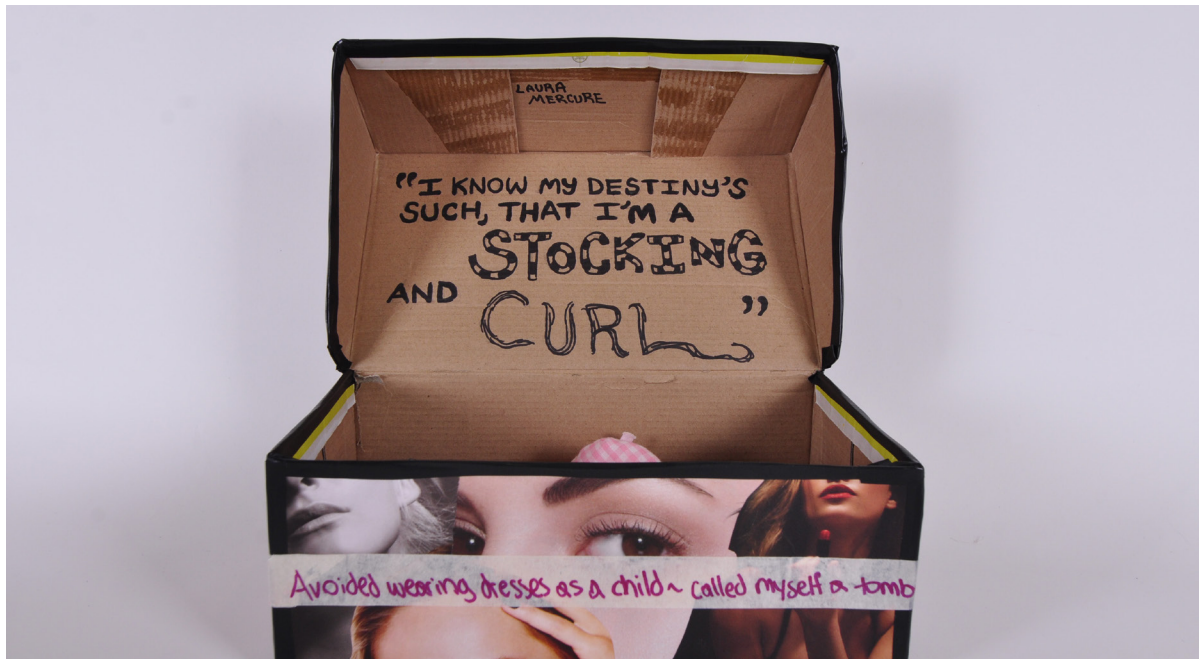
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THE GENDER BOX

Highlights: considering and understanding gender identity, introspective, trust building

Materials: variety of small boxes or jars, collage materials, glue, tape, scissors

Have students construct a box that represents their experiences with gender identity. On the outside, show the way others or society expects you to be based on your gender or assigned gender. On the inside, show how you see yourself.



Student work for The Gender Box, 2013

UNPACKING & NAMING OPPRESSION

Youth will be able to define oppression, privilege, and patriarchy, as well as specific iterations of these such as racism, classism, sexism, cissexism, heterosexism, ableism, imperialism, white-privilege, white supremacy, machismo, heteronormativity, etc. Through workshops, the groups will reflect on how these institutions impact their lives and others within their communities. Youth will turn these reflections into narratives, poetry, and other creative works. Youth will discuss ways to overcome writer's block and sustain a creative practice over time.



small

ROSE AND THORN

Highlights: icebreaker, tuning in to others
Materials: none

Ask students to go around a circle saying one rose (a positive) and one thorn (a challenge) in their day or week. Make sure students are present and listening to one another. At the end, ask students to share one thing someone else said that resonated with or intrigued them.



small

(RE)DEFINING UNFAIRNESS

Highlights: terminology, personal as political, small groups
Materials: markers, poster paper, dictionary

Discuss recent experiences that seem unfair: Where were they unfair? How did they make you feel? How did you know it was unfair?
Find connections between experiences: What are some key reasons why we experience unfair treatment?

As a group, create a word map toward a definition of oppression. Ask a student to look up the definition in dictionary and compare it to your working definition. Then have students look up discrimination, privilege, and patriarchy. Re-state and re-write definitions in your own words. This is an opportunity to examine words related to power themselves and play with language.
Explore together how these words are connected and where their roots come from.

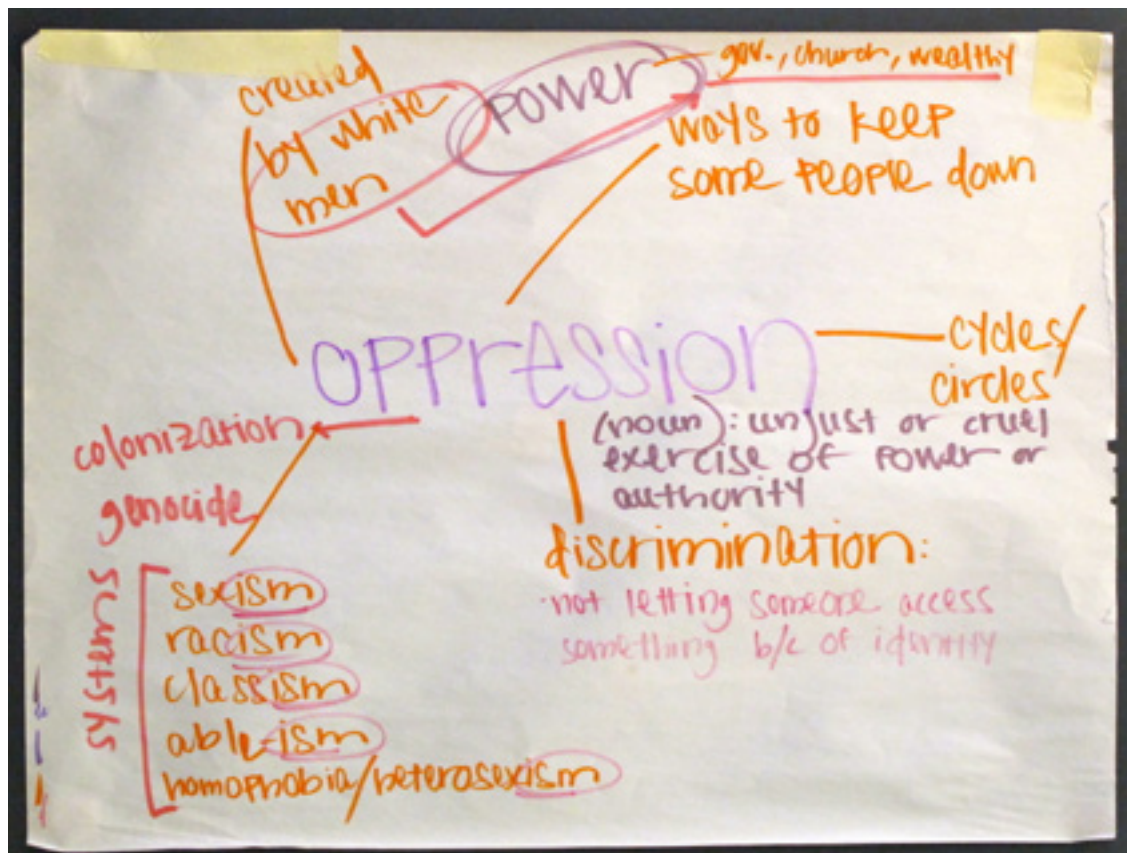
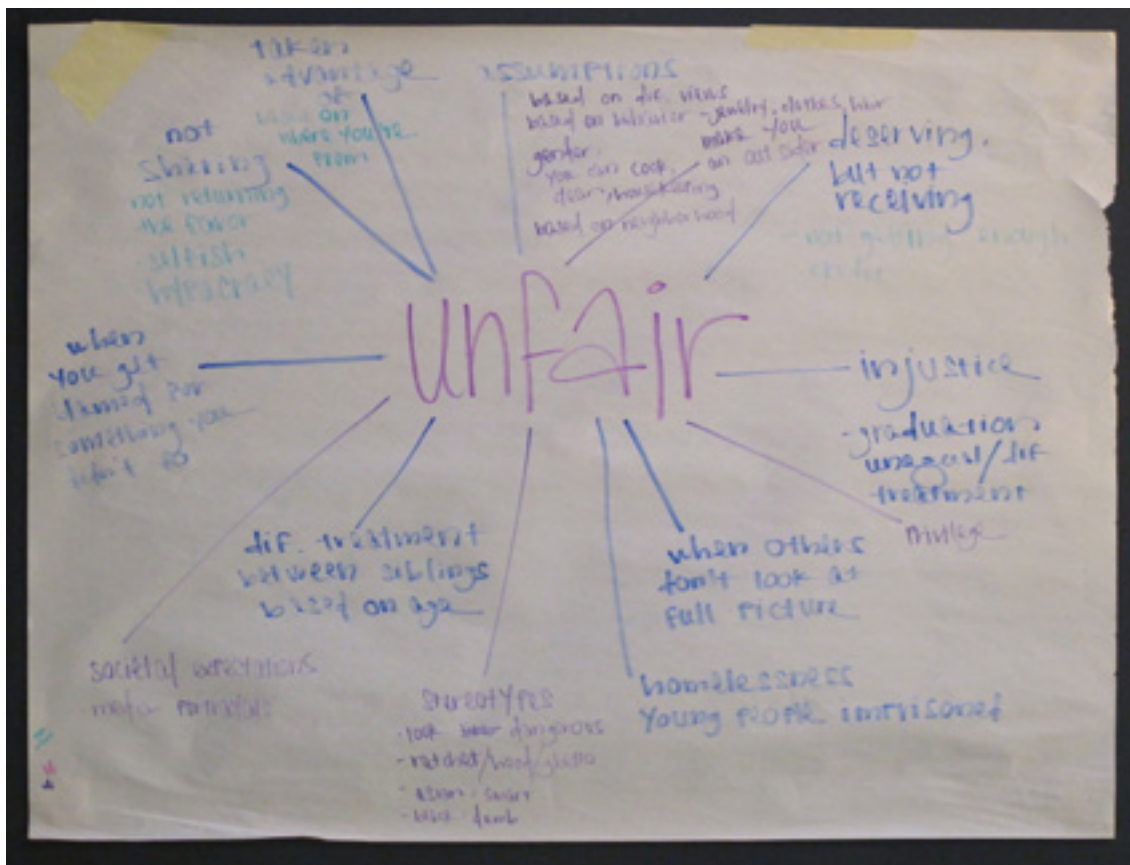


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ACTIVE LISTENING

Highlights: trust building, social justice tools
Materials: watch or timer

Get into pairs. Decide that one person will be A and the other B. Have Person A speak for one minute to answer the question "Who are you?" During this time Person B can only listen and not respond. Then reverse roles. Do the same exercise for two minutes responding to "I am from." Finally, do the exercise for three minutes about a time you felt discriminated against. Guiding questions for debrief: How did it feel to just listen? Did you find yourself waiting to speak? Which of the three times felt the longest? What decisions did you make about how to tell your story of discrimination?





Large

MOVE IN / MOVE OUT

Highlights: trust building, understanding privilege and oppression
Materials: list of statements

This is an activity that requires focus and respect within the group. This exercise is about forms of privilege and oppression. You will want to mix your statements so that they require varying degrees of risk to reveal to a group. You may want to focus on issues you know are salient or divisive in your cohort such as immigration history, race, class, gender, or sexuality. You can group the statements together by topic so that they reveal a fuller picture or mix them all together to preserve more anonymity on particular issues.

Have everyone face each other in a circle. Explain to the group that you will read a series of statements from a list. When the statement is true for you, step or move into the center of the circle. Ask that students take notice of how many people move for each statement. Assure students that if at any point they do not feel comfortable, they do not have to move, but remind them that it is a brave and confidential space.

Read an example statement that applies to everyone: "I am a part of the Untitlement Project." Everyone should move in. Ask if anyone has clarifying questions. Then begin reading your list (see Appendix for full list from UP 2013):

- I am an only child
- I have more than three siblings
- My parents are separated
- I have never left the United States
- My family came to this country for economic opportunities not available in their home country.
- My family came to this country to escape violence, war, or genocide in their home country.
- At some point in the last 250 years, somebody in my family has been enslaved or indentured.
- My parents went to college
- My parents own the home we live in
- I have been bullied
- I have been told I was not acting lady like
- I have been catcalled or whistled at by men on the street
- I have been called a dyke, lesbo, faggot, bulldagger, or another word that was intended to hurt me based on my perceived sexual orientation
- I know someone who has attempted or committed suicide

End with:

- At some point during this exercise, I could have moved in, but did not.

Have everyone take a deep breath together. Have everyone get comfortable sitting together in a circle.

Guiding Questions for Debrief: *How did this exercise feel? What did you notice about your experiences? What, if any, statements stood out to you most? What kinds of privileges and injustices were brought up? Where do you feel more or less privileged?*

large

rites of passage

Highlights: trust building, questioning gender norms and patriarchal practices. This exercise was designed for a women's cohort, but could be adapted for male or non-gendered groups.

Materials: pens, paper

Content Warning: This conversation can quickly raise questions and dialogue about sexual assault and consent. In the Additional Resources section you can find some tools to help you facilitate those conversations.

Discuss what are popularly considered rites of passage for women with your group. Consider menstruation, quinceañeras, bat mitzvahs, sweet 16, debuts, marriage.

Guiding questions: *Have you had any rituals or ceremonies that celebrated your womanhood or transition to adulthood? When you were young, what did you think it meant to become a woman?*

Watch trailer for "The Purity Myth" documentary.

Read an excerpt (Pages 41-43) from Chapter 2 of Jessica Valenti's book *The Purity Myth*. Ask students to brainstorm a list of things their body is not. Write poems in 3 parts:

1. I knew I was a woman when
2. My body is not
3. My body is

Share and discuss the poems with each other.

Guiding Questions: *What did you think of the video and reading? How is virginity discussed differently for men and women? What did it feel like to write your poem? How have you been treated as you grew older because of your gender?*

small

BEST SOCIETIES

Highlights: understanding unfairness and oppression, icebreaker

Materials: variety of paper, pencils, colored pencils, markers, glue, magazines

Split students into three small groups or pairs and have them build their best society with what each group is given:

low resources: paper, pencil

medium resources: paper, colored pencils

high resources: markers, pen, papers, glue, magazines

Discuss: *What did it feel like to be in your particular group? What did you decide were most important parts of your society? How are resources distributed differently across groups in our country, in your community, or in your school?*

Large

ANTI-OPPRESSION MEMES

Highlights: identifying, understanding, and connecting to different forms of oppression and privilege

Materials: old books with images, various magazines, cartoons or comics, or images printed from online, chart paper, markers, scissors, glue, scrap paper, pens
Have students brainstorm and then look up definitions for oppression and privilege.

Potential definitions:

Oppression is the prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or control.

Privilege is a right or benefit that is given to some people and not to others

On chart paper write the words oppression and privilege. Have students come up with examples or incidents for each.

Look for pictures of oppressive systems in action in cartoons, magazines, or other printed images. Students can sort through the pictures and categorize them by different systems of oppression they can identify such as sexism, racism, and ableism. They can work as collaboratively or independently as they wish.

When students are done, discuss: *How did they categorize the images? Ask them to share examples for each category. What are some systems of oppression that came up?*

Cover and define racism, sexism, heterosexism, cissexism, classism, ableism, imperialism. Remind students these are not the only axes of oppression and they do not operate independent of one another. Try to allow room for nuance and discussions of intersectionality in the conversation while meeting students where they are at in terms of prior knowledge. Have students pick some of the pictures that stand out to them and create responses to make "memes." They can write directly onto the images or work with the scrap paper to collage. If you can, have them go online to look for examples.



Students write together in small, gender identity-based groups, 2013

Large

CREATE AN ACTIVIST ZINE

Highlights: self-directed, cultivating a creative practice, in depth exploration of social justice topic of interest

Materials: paper, images and text for collage (can be from magazines, a computer, a typewriter, etc.), pens, copy machine

Making a zine, or self-published magazines, can be as big or as small of a project as you and your students want it to be. But for the Untitlement Project, it serves as a way for participants to build on a topic of interest over time. Spend time exploring what zines are with your group (see Appendix for some examples).

Have students brainstorm as they choose their topic:

- What do you want to say?
- What has been on your mind lately?
- What do you wish people knew more about?
- How do you want to say it (your voice, many voices, quotes, images, poetry, essays)?
- Who is your zine for? Consider: Is it for a small or wide audience, your age group or a different one, people who already have some base knowledge on the topic or people who haven't heard of it before?

Have students try to relate their topic to one of the "-isms" discussed in the meme workshop: racism, sexism, heterosexism, cissexism, classism, ableism, imperialism. Ask them to make sure they pick something they feel invested in.

The prompt: create a zine exposing a social injustice.

Students can do this using whatever media they feel most comfortable or excited about compiling. There are endless different models for sizes, but a small eight-page zine or a half-sheet 12-page zine is a good place to start. Set goals for the time you allow for the project, whether it is two days or two weeks. Have students gather and make materials, put together a master copy, and then get to photocopying. Consider having students distribute them at school or in the community.



DISMANTLING PATRIARCHY

Youth will be able to define sexism and misogyny and understand their connection to patriarchy. In group settings and as individuals, youth will reflect on and list the gender roles that apply to them today, noting how they have changed or stayed the same. Youth will learn, list, and reflect on the gender roles forced upon women, gaining an understanding of how they have changed or stayed the same over time. Through dialogue, youth will reflect on the ways that they have experienced these systems and how they wish to change them. In the workshops, youth will continue to explore tangible ways to challenge these systems in their own lives.



med

GLADYS BENTLY

Highlights: coalition building, understanding homophobia, women's group
Materials: dictionary, poster board, sticky notes, pens

Watch Gladys Bentley perform "Them There Eyes" on youtube and read Bentley's autobiographical 1952 EBONY Magazine Article "I'm A Woman Again." Discuss what is considered "normal" in terms of sexual orientation and gender presentation according to American culture. Compare this to Gladys Bentley's image and writing. How does Bentley define womanhood? In 1952 why might Bentley have written this article for EBONY?

Write the terms lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning each on its own poster. Have students write stereotypes for each of these words onto sticky notes. If students can't think of any for a particular word, ask them to write what they think it means. Post the sticky notes on each poster and then read them aloud. Students should then look up these words in the dictionary and compare definitions.



large

SISTERHOOD

Highlights: resisting sexist bullying and building solidarity, comprehensive sex education. This was designed for a women's group, but could be adapted for male or nongendered groups. While this has been structured as a long workshop, it could be divided into smaller exercises.
Materials: index cards, paper pens

Read Cheryl Burke's "Motor Oil Queen". Discuss how gossip has impacted the members of the group. Ask if anyone in the group has heard the term slut shaming. Guiding questions for conversation: Why do you think people are so concerned with how women have sex? Can you share about a time you had a rumor spread about you that was related to sex or your body, regardless of if it was true?

Have everyone write on an index card something you have called someone else behind her back—write as many as you can think of in 3 minutes. Turn all the cards in. Have students stand together. The following clapping exercise is good for maintaining anonymity with sensitive conversations about experience. Below is a sample script for explaining the activity:

We are going to do an anonymous clapping activity. Please close your eyes and keep them closed for the entire time. As facilitator, I will keep my eyes open only to ensure that no one is looking. I am going to move you around so that no one will know where anyone else is standing. If anyone does not want to be moved or touched, please raise your hand now so that I know not to move you.

Carefully and quietly rearrange the group. When everyone is ready, with their eyes still closed, explain that you will read the words on the cards and students should clap if they have been called these words before. Before they open their eyes, read the words again. This time they should clap if they have called someone else the word. When you have read them all, rearrange students again (again asking if anyone does not want to be moved), and then have them open their eyes. Take a collective deep breath and get in a circle for discussion. Guiding discussion questions: How did it feel to clap and listen to others clap? Did you notice any words that got a large or small response? How many of these words were attached to ugliness or dirtiness? In what context have you heard men be called these words? How are these words gendered? How is it different when female, male, and gender queer or trans* people get called these words?

Write on another index card something you have said to someone as a compliment—write as many as you can think of in 3 minutes. Count how many words are attached to physical beauty or purity. Discuss: *Why do you think we tend to compliment women this way? How do you think people value your appearance compared to your intelligence or other characteristics?*

Read excerpts from Audre Lorde's speech "I am Your Sister: Black Women Organizing Across Sexualities". Pass out paper for a writing prompt. Write a part of your identity that has made you feel isolated from other women before. Take 2 minutes to brainstorm why you felt that way. Take 3 minutes to write what you have in common with that group. Write a poem titled "I am your sister" explaining how you and that group are connected and how your sisterhood is valuable. Share and discuss.

small

AFFIRMATIONS

Highlights: closing exercise, relationship building
Materials: scrap paper or note cards

Write a note to the person to your right about why you value their presence. Check in: What's one thing you liked today? One thing we can improve upon?

med

MEDIA REPRESENTATION

Highlights: Addressing stereotypes and archetypes in media, critical analysis
Materials: computer(s) or phone(s) with internet access

In small groups or pairs find one short video (music video, advertisement, movie clip, etc.) that has negative representations of women and one video that has positive representations of women. Then present the videos to each other. When the large group comes back to together, partners will explain why they chose their particular videos.

Potential Discussion Questions:

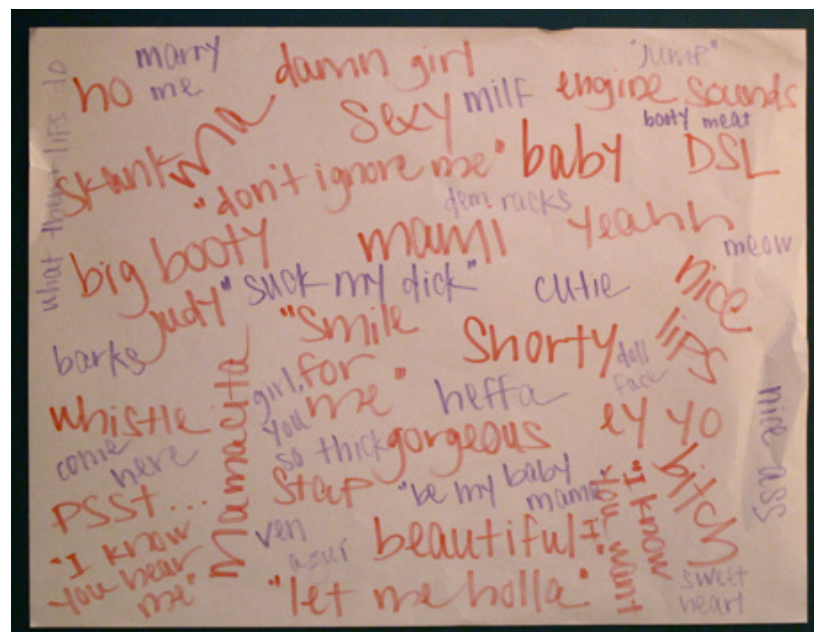
- What characters do women get to be in television, movies, books, and other media? How does this compare to male representation?
- For women of color, what specific tropes do we see? Maybe discuss the Mammy, Jezebel, Latina Maid, and "exotic" Asian sex fantasy, among other archetypes and racialized gender roles.
- What, if any, representation do we see of transgender and gender non-conforming people on television?

- med

Speak Back: write a poem or prose from the perspective of a media stereotype you feel misrepresents part of your identity. Make a list of characteristics of this role. Use your list to help flesh out the writing—Who are you? What do you have to say? How have you been silenced?

Highlights: unpacking patriarchy, speaking truth to power
Materials: pens, paper, dictionary

Share Sofia Snow's "The Rebuttal" and Franny Choi's "Pork Fried Rice". Discuss how each tackled the topic of street harassment differently in their writing style. Brainstorm as a group: What words have been called before in public that bothered you? How are these words gendered and racialized? Pick one of these or something else someone said to put you down. Look up the word in the dictionary for inspiration. Write a rebuttal. It can be directly to the person or to a larger group, like men, homophobes, the media, hip-hop, or American culture.



Target

FISHBOWL

Highlights: Dialogue, disproving myths and stereotypes, active listening. This exercise was done with male and female identified students, but may need to be adapted for inclusion of gender queer or trans* students.

Materials: poster board, scrap paper, markers

Let students write down on a piece of paper questions they have about a gender they do not identify with. Discuss with students the difference between open-ended questions and yes/no questions. Most commonly, this will mean male students writing questions about women and vice versa. Submit these questions and have a mentor review the questions with the groups separately—consolidating similar questions, clarifying unclear ones, and questioning/rephrasing potentially problematic ones. When the groups are ready with their questions, form two concentric circles. Have an insider group (the female-identified students, for example) sit on the inner circle and the outsider group (those who do not identify as such) sit in the outer circle. For 15 minutes, have a mentor facilitate a dialogue among the inner group where they respond to the questions. During this time the outer group can only listen and should refrain from making comments, gestures, noises, etc. Then switch. At the end, open it up for discussion: How did it feel to listen? What, if anything, were you surprised by? Did you ever want to respond to something you heard? Is there anything that bothered you that you'd like to talk about?

Note: a fishbowl activity can be done across a variety of identities or groups, not just regarding gender. In this version, the questions were generated by students, but they could also be generated in advance by workshop facilitators.

Questions for Womyn:

1. Growing up, did you ever feel like you were treated less than boys? If so, when?
2. What are you most insecure about?
3. What are some things men have said to you that offended you? Why?
4. Do you think women are more emotional than men? Why or why not?
5. What do you do when you feel depressed?
6. Which women do you look up to? Which men? Why?
7. Have you ever tried to intimidate/control a girl? How?
8. What do you think women focus on too much? Is this good/bad? Why?

Questions for The Boys' Group :-)

1. Do you ever feel like you are being judged?

2. What do you think is the most important thing in life?

3. Do you ever feel like you are being judged?

4. What do you think is the most important thing in life?

5. Do you ever feel like you are being judged?

6. What do you think is the most important thing in life?

7. Do you ever feel like you are being judged?

8. What do you think is the most important thing in life?

9. Do you ever feel like you are being judged?

10. What do you think is the most important thing in life?

11. Do you ever feel like you are being judged?

12. What do you think is the most important thing in life?

13. Do you ever feel like you are being judged?

14. What do you think is the most important thing in life?

large

THE BODY IS NOT AN APOLOGY

Highlights: self-esteem, body positivity, personal reflection, sex positivity.

Materials: pens, paper, internet access

Content Warning: This workshop may bring up sensitive conversations about mental health, eating disorders, and sexual violence. Please review the content before facilitating to ensure that it is appropriate for your group of students. When facilitating, be prepared to take breaks and encourage students to practice self-care if any material is triggering or upsetting to them.

Watch Sonya Renee's "The Body is not an Apology", Arati Warriar's "Witch Hunt", and Danez Smith's "Mail". Have students take a collective deep breath and jot down any strong reactions between poems. Discuss:

- What stood out to you about the poems? How are they connected?
- Where do ideas of purity and sexual deviancy come from?
- How do these ideas apply differently to people of different genders and with different sexualities?
- What kind of sex education have you received in and out of school?
- How has this shaped your ideas of your own body, sexuality, and sexual relationships?

Write: Give students time to quietly reflect on paper. They can write whatever they are thinking about or respond to the following guiding questions:

- What parts of yourself (physical or otherwise) do you apologize for?
- Which parts are you ashamed of?
- How have you molded yourself to fit the expectations of others—family, romantic/sexual partners, friends, peers?
- How do your sexual encounters or ideas about sex connect back to how you understand body?

When students are done brainstorming asking if anyone would like to share. Open up the floor to discuss body image, self-esteem, sexuality, and consent.

Based on their brainstorms, have students make a list of the parts of themselves (physical or otherwise) they have apologized for (verbally or through actions). Prompt: Transform these lists into a poem however you see fit. Do not apologize.

med

3 FACES

Highlights: self-esteem, body positivity, personal reflection

Materials: markers/pens/colored pencils, collage supplies, paper

Begin with discussion: *What is beauty? How do different people/groups/systems define and shape it? How do you see your body/your self in the world?*

After, have students create three faces to represent themselves:

1. How others see you
2. How you see yourself
3. How you wish others saw you

Give the group the option to draw, write, collage, or create the faces however they wish. They can fold a piece of paper into three sections if necessary or work in whatever parameters they wish.



med

HOUSE OF PATRIARCHY

Highlights: intersectionality, connecting personal to political, team building
Materials: cardboard, stapler, misc. art supplies

Read and discuss Audre Lorde's speech "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House".

Have youth design and build an interactive house that embodies and questions patriarchy and misogyny. Consider Lorde's words: What tools should be used? How are patriarchy and misogyny tied to other forms of violence such as racism, classism, heterosexism, and cissexism? What should be on the inside vs. outside? How will you destroy it?



large

BALLROOM

Highlights: destabilizing gender roles/norms/performance, intersectionality, team building
Materials: clothes from a thrift store, clothing accessories, your imagination.

Pair this activity with a viewing and discussion of the documentary "Paris is Burning," available online through Netflix.com. This activity is inspired by the ballroom drag culture of queer and trans people of color, and should not be stripped of this historically and cultural context. For a more nuanced conversation, bring in/bring up critiques of "Paris is Burning" and drag in general.

Assign students partners and then drag categories such as Executive, Butch Queen, Grunge, Femme Fabulous—create your own! Bring students to a local thrift shop and give them guidelines to create their own gender(ed) performance for a ballroom competition:

- 30 minutes at thrift shop to find outfits to transform
- 30 min – 1 hour to transform their outfits—can sew, pins, glue, and craft items like glitter, lace, ribbon, etc.
- 20 min to work on a routine/performance: students should pick a name for their "house" and a song to walk the runway to

Encourage students to consider the gendered sections of the store as they shop and consider transgressing gender norms that have been mapped onto them. Have a facilitator be emcee and DJ and staff members judge on a panel. Reward creativity, innovation, teamwork, and spirit.

Then come together and debrief as a large group: What was fun about this activity? Challenging? How do we perform gender everyday? What tools do we have for deconstructing gender and gender roles? What limitations?



Cauldierre McKay and Axel Lozada prepare for the ball, 2014



Students, mentors, and staff pose in their creations for The Ballroom, 2014

FORGING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Youth will be able to define sexism and misogyny and understand their connection to patriarchy. In group settings and as individuals, youth will reflect on and list the gender roles that apply to them today, noting how they have changed or stayed the same. Youth will learn, list, and reflect on the gender roles forced upon women, gaining an understanding of how they have changed or stayed the same over time. Through dialogue, youth will reflect on the ways that they have experienced these systems and how they wish to change them. In the workshops, youth will continue to explore tangible ways to challenge these systems in their own lives.



med

DOCUMENTING LOVE & LONELY

Highlights: reflection, self-esteem

Materials: disposable cameras

Distribute disposable cameras to students. In one week, take five photos of when you feel loved and five photos of when you feel lonely. Do this twice (for two weeks).

Have students reflect on the process. Get the photos developed after each week to review the following week. For further writing, you can have students choose their favorite loved and lonely pictures for each week and write on them.



small

EQUALITY WHEEL

Highlights: reflection, unpacking patriarchy, identifying (un)healthy relationships, imagining healthy relationships

Materials: colored pencils

Pass out 2 copies of the Equality Wheel for each student. Have students read the sections of the circle aloud. Have youth each choose two colors of colored pencils—one for strengths and one for weaknesses. Have students color in which segments are strengths and which are weaknesses for their parents or guardians. If students only have one parent, they can fill it out for that parent's romantic relationships they have seen. If students do not have parents or guardians they want to do the exercise about, they can do it for any adult relationship they have seen in their life.

Review the wheels and discuss: What experiences have you had with these adults that informed how you colored the circle? How has it felt to live with or watch these relationships play out?

Do the exercise again, this time coloring the wheel to represent you in relationships—what are your strengths and weaknesses? Discuss: How does it feel to reflect about yourself in romantic relationships? How do you think we can improve upon our weaknesses?



large

JUST BE YOUR SELFIE

Highlights: understanding healthy intra- vs. inter-personal relationships, self-image, self-love

Materials: camera or camera phone, printer, at least 4 transparencies per participant, colored sharpies

Part I: Self-Image—How do we perform and see ourselves?

Begin with conversation:

- What is self-image? How do we create it? Does it shift over time?
- How does our presentation, or even our sense of self, change around different people, different spaces? Consider the things you say or do, or the way you speak or dress, at school vs. at home/with friends vs. with employers, etc.
- Consider a time or times when you didn't like "who you were" around certain people or at a certain place. What made you feel that way?

Have each student take a selfie and print it out. Recommend taking the picture with a light colored shirt and taking the selfie from the chest and up so it is easier to see the transparencies over the original. Use the selfie as a base and lay the first transparency over it. Draw on the transparency to create a "filter" that represents you in a particular context. Create at least four filters for your selfie, each showing you in a particular context (ex. with family/friends/partner, on a sports team or in an afterschool club, in your least favorite class, when you're sad/frustrated/happy). Pick whatever filters speak to you in the moment. Create as many filters as you want.

When everyone is done, share with the group and allow students to play with layering the filters. Then discuss:

- What are the filters you chose?
- How do they compare and contrast?
- What happens when there is overlap?
- What other ways do we filter ourselves?
- What can we be like when we meet people for the first time?
- Have you ever filtered yourself to someone you were attracted to? Why? What did you show/didn't show?

Part II: Self-esteem—How do we love and hurt ourselves?

Add filters. Create two new filters:

1. What does self-love look like?
2. What does self-loathing look like?

Consider: When does each happen? When is it hard to love yourself? When is it easy? When is it easy to loathe yourself? How do we take care ourselves?

small

LOVE/HURT

Highlights: defining/understanding (un)healthy relationships

Materials: paper, pens

Begin with a Writing Prompt:

Write 10 "Love is _____" statements.

Write 10 "Hurt is _____" statements.

Encourage youth to dig deep—the statements can range from people to objects to verbs. Ask students to try to expand—don't leave it at just one sentence each time. Choose 5 from each. Put them in order. Expand. When students have had enough time to write, share. Then discuss: How do we learn love/hurt?

- What experiences did you choose for your statements? How are they related or not?
- How do they create limits or expectations?
- In your statements, could you replace the word hurt with love and vice versa? Would it still make sense?

Large

BILL OF RIGHTS

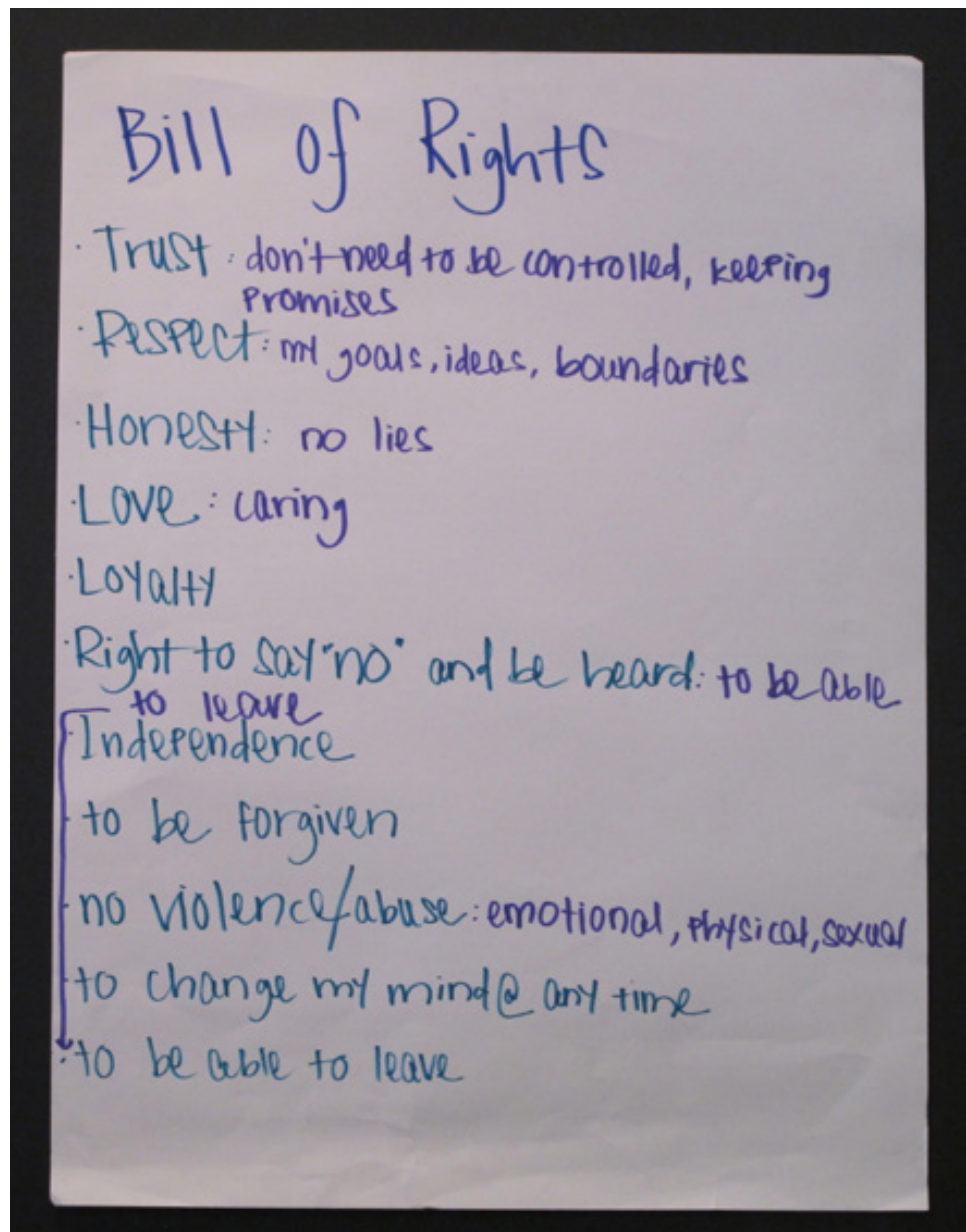
Highlights: making demands

Materials: poster board, markers

Begin with an open discussion about dating:

- What are we looking for in relationships?
- What are ways we know that we don't want to be treated? For example: being called names, being criticized by others, being told what we can or can't do, etc.
- How do we want to be treated by others? For example: being treated with respect, being asked about our opinion, being consulted before decisions are made, etc.

Make a "Bill of Rights" that outlines ways people deserve to be treated and should treat each other in relationships.





med

LOVE STORIES

Highlights: role modeling, dialogue, open for questions

Materials: paper, pens

Invite partners in diverse, healthy relationships to sit on a panel. This is a good teaching moment to expose youth to healthy interracial and queer partnerships, which they may not be as familiar with. Have couples prepare their love stories in advance—thinking especially about past, unhealthy relationships and what they have learned about communication, trust, and respect. Have everyone share. Then offer students 5-10 minutes to write down any questions they have for the panelists. They should specify if the question is for someone in particular or open to all. Put the questions in a hat for anonymity and have a moderator read the questions for the panelists to answer. See Appendix for sample questions.



med

THE FIRE

Highlights: reflection, naming violence

Materials: paper, pens

Watch Safia Elhillo's "What I learned in the Fire".

Talk about themes in the poem: How does Safia describe love? How does the structure make you feel?

Have students write down a place that makes them feel safe. Consider the place a metaphor for an unhealthy relationship you have been in or seen. Write the destruction of that place. Does it crumble? Shatter? Flood? Do your characters survive the wreckage, or go down with it?



large

UNPACKING CONSENT

Highlights: sex positive sex education, defining/understanding consent, identifying coercion/manipulation/abusive behavior, teaching tools for healthy communication in sexual/romantic relationships

Materials: printed copies of Oh Joy Sex Toy "Consent" comic; red, yellow, and green cards, video clips, art supplies for poster making

Content Warning: The activities and resources in this workshop deal explicitly with sex and implicitly with sexual violence. Facilitators should review all the sources ahead of time and adapt the workshop to suit your organization and youth participants. Versions of this workshop have been conducted with mature high school aged students; while some sources may not be appropriate for younger groups, it is never too early to discuss consent and we hope you can adapt this structure to suit your group. Because of the sensitive nature of the topic, only facilitators who feel confident in the material should lead this workshop. Don't feel up for it? Consider inviting in a guest facilitator! Bringing in a Gender/Sexuality Studies professor, Public Health student, feminist activist, medical professional, or other qualified facilitator from your community can be a dynamic and exciting way to ensure the conversation stays productive and safe. Please see Appendix for more resources on consent and sex education.

Part I: Defining Consent

Give students a verbal trigger warning. That is, let them know that this workshop will address topics that can be difficult to talk about or may be upsetting to some people. Remind them of the Living List and that they can exercise self-care

by stepping out, stepping back, doodling, getting a drink of water, etc. if at any point they need to take some space. Hand out printed copies of the Oh Joy Sex Toy “Consent” comic to students in your group. Let students know that this educational comic contains drawings of naked bodies and genitalia as well as some explicit language about sex. Remind them that while it may seem funny or awkward at times, you trust them to approach this kind of content with maturity and respect for each other. Students can take turns reading panels of the comic aloud or a student can read the role of each character.

Debrief: How do we define consent?

- Had you thought about consent like this before?
- Why is consent sometimes hard for people to talk about, with partners and in general?
- What kinds of behaviors break the boundaries of consent?
 - + The use of force in a sexual assault may be the most obvious answer, but make sure students begin to discuss alcohol and other drugs, coercion, and manipulation. Ex. You are happy to have penetrative sex with a cisgender male partner, but then he insists upon or tries to pressure you into not using a condom saying, “it feels better” and “if you really trusted me”—not consensual behavior.

Part II: Identifying Consent in the World

Pass out green, yellow, and red cards to students. Show the group clips from television or movies and have them hold up green when consent is sought and honored (go), yellow when it is unclear (check in), red when a boundary is crossed (stop).

These are some sample scenes, though you could use many more:

- Mark + Lexie, “Grey’s Anatomy” 5x10
- Brian + Client, “Queer As Folk” 1x02
- Shane + Carmen, “The L Word” 2x01
- Fitz + Olivia, “Scandal” 4x08

Debrief the scenes:

- What calls did you make about the scenes?
- How does the media tend to portray sexual encounters?
- How does the media shape our ideas about how we should have sex, especially across gender?

Part III: Make a Consent Poster

Look at examples of educational art about consent such as:

- New College of Florida poster series
- This sexedquestions tumblr post
- Jana Marie Soroczak’s Infographic for VitaminW
- Poster from a University of Alberta series

Have students talk about what they like and don’t about the posters—are they effective? Then brainstorm to create your own. You can work in small groups or individually to make posters as simple or complex as there is time for. You can do them by hand with markers, paint, pencils, collage materials or make them digitally. After, have students make copies to hang up in bathrooms at your organization or at school. Or consider scanning them and uploading them to an online forum such as tumblr.

A NURTURING ARTISTIC PRACTICE

Youth will gain further insight into cultivating an artist-activist practice. Youth will learn about the health and healing benefits of art. Depending on how you structure your program, this section will take a different form. In the Untitlement Project, facilitators and students set goals for long-term projects early on and throughout the program. In the past this has meant publishing a chapbook of poetry, hosting a final performance or reading, or showcasing work in an exhibition. Student participants work toward these goals throughout the program as they create work in the workshops. The last week of the program, then, is typically dedicated to finalizing these projects while also reflecting on and closing the space. At the very end, youth receive and fill out surveys about the program.



CLOSING THE SPACE

Highlights: reflecting on program, closing exercise, transitioning to a lifelong practice

Materials: blank envelopes, markers/pens, candle

Part One: Distribute blank envelopes to students. On the front outside, write something that people immediately notice about you. On the back outside of the envelope, write something that not everyone knows about you that you have shared with this group. On the inside of the envelope, write something that not many people notice about you. You have the option to seal the envelope closed so people can't read it, or you can leave it open. Sit in a circle and remind the group about confidentiality. Pass the envelopes around the circle until you get your own envelope back.

Part Two: Circle of Light

Read aloud the following quotation by Marianna Williamson:

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

Sit in a circle in the dark. Take turns sitting in the middle one at a time holding the candle and have everyone say how they have impacted the group, how they have been a light in your space or in your life. Then the person in the middle passes the candle on to someone else and that person goes. Instead of saying "I'm done," or "Next," use nonverbal signals such as tapping their knee or the floor to show it's their turn.



REFLECTION & REVIEW

Highlights: reflecting on program, closing discussion

Materials: none

Lead a conversation recapping and revisiting material from the program.

Guiding Questions:

- What have you learned and examined the past few weeks?
- What was most interesting to you? Challenging?
- How has this program informed how you live next?

AFFIRMATION WEB

Highlights: reflecting on program, building/solidifying trust, closure
Materials: ball of yarn, scissors

Have everybody in your group sit in a circle on the floor. One person will begin with the ball of yarn and tie it around their wrist. Then they will pick someone else and toss or roll the yarn to that person. The first participant will then affirm the person they passed the yarn to and the recipient will tie the yarn around their own wrist. They can speak about positive qualities, a blossoming friendship, a fond memory from the program, or anything—so long as it affirms or celebrates the other participant. That student will then pass along the yarn to someone else and affirm that person while they tie the yarn to their own wrist. Continue until everyone in the circle has been affirmed and affirmed someone else. In the end, everyone should have the yarn tied to their wrists, forming a giant spider web of affirmations. Have everyone take a moment to feel connected while they look around. Have those who are able stand up and step back so that the yarn stretches. Take a deep breath together. When everyone is ready, cut the yarn so that each person still has the piece on their wrist. Tie and secure these as bracelets.



Sierra Clayton and other students recite poetry for a final showcase, 2013

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ZINES

Barnard Zine Library
The Beginner's Guide to Making your own Zines

MEDIA REPRESENTATION + ADVERTISING

The HTML5 Gendered Advertising Mixer
Always #LikeAGirl campaign
"18 Again" Vaginal Rejuvenation Ad

PROMPTS

Learning to Love you More
Rachel McKibbens

GENDER/SEXUALITY

Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN)
Oh Joy Sex Toy
Scarleteen: Sex Ed for the Real World
Greatist, Contraception Guide
Elixher
PBS, Two Spirit: A Map of Gender-Diverse Cultures
Trans*What
Laverne Cox presents: The T Word

CONSENT

Autostraddle worksheet for communicating with partners about sex
Scarleteen, "Navigating Consent"
Teen Talk, "Consent"
The Center for Sexual Pleasure and Health, "Q&A: Consent—Beyond No Means No"
Brown University Health Services, "Consent"
"When a Girl Says She's on her Period (And Other Excuses)" – rape culture rhetoric (non-consent)

MENTAL HEALTH

Black Girl + Mental Health

RAD ART AND OTHER GEMS

Angry Girl Comics
Artists Against Police Brutality
BrownPride.com
YellowRage

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins"
Atong Atem, "photographing the space between cultures"
Zeba Blay, "For Black Women, Police Brutality and Sexual Harassment go Hand in Hand"

FEMINISMS

Crunk Feminist Collective, Mission Statement
Stop Street Harassment, Interview with Tatyana Fazlalizadeh

VIOLENCE, HEALING, RESISTANCE

Peggy/Kyoungwon, "Breaking Concrete: Queer Shame and Sexual Violence"
NPR, Interview with Michelle Alexander "Jim Crow Still Exists in America"
Jessica Valenti, "Ending Rape Illiteracy"
Rebecca Flin, "Modeling Consent"
Emma Catherine, "It's Not Okay: Intimate Partner Violence in Radical Queer Spaces"

BODIES OUT OF BOUNDS

Cameron Russell, "Looks aren't everything" TED Talk
Jamila Woods, "Etymology of a Beauty Shop"
Megan Falley, "Fat Girl"
Amaris Diaz, "Dear Privilege"
Ariana Brown + Arati Warriar, "Invisible"
Sofia Snow, "Broken English"
Loretta Scott, "The Origin of the phrase 'Woman of Color'"

APPENDIX

MOVE IN/MOVE OUT STATEMENTS

We have tried to group these by the general topics they may address, though this is not the exact order they originally appeared in and some additional suggestions have been included. Some statements easily fit into multiple groupings, but we hope this helps give a sense of topics you can cover and how you might do so.

On Family:

- I am an only child.
- I have more than three siblings.
- My parents are separated.
- I have lived at some point in foster care, group homes, or another state agency.

Migration, Language, & Diaspora:

- I was born in a country other than the United States.
- I have never left the United States.
- My family came to this country for economic opportunities not available in their home country.
- My family came to this country to escape violence, war, or genocide in their home country.
- At some point in the last 250 years, somebody in my family has been enslaved or indentured.
- Members of my family speak a language other than English at home.
- My family and/or community find it favorable to marry someone of lighter skin.
- I alter the pronunciation of my name in introductions with English speakers.
- I have been made fun of for my accent.
- I have made fun of someone's accent.

Education:

- My parents went to college.
- My parents were not typically able to help me with my homework when I was in elementary and middle school.
- I believe I can go to college.
- People assume I am a good student.

Gender & Sexuality:

- I have been bullied.
- I have been told I was not acting lady like.
- I have been catcalled or whistled at by men on the street.
- I have been called a dyke, lesbo, faggot, bulldagger, or another word in a way that was intended to hurt me based on my perceived sexual orientation.
- I know someone who has attempted or committed suicide.
- I have been told to man up.
- I feel safe when I walk at night.
- I know someone who has been raped or sexually abused.

Race // Ethnicity:

- I frequently see people who look like me represented positively on television.
- I have been stopped by the police when I did nothing wrong.
- I have been called a slur based on my perceived race.
- People I barely knew have asked me "What are you?"

Economic Background:

- My parents own the home we live in.
- I have helped pay for my family's rent, utilities, food, etc.
- There have been times I didn't know where my next meal would come from.
- I have never had a job while I was in school.

Mental Health & Safety:

Someone in my family has battled with addiction.
A parent or sibling of mine has passed away.
I have heard gunshots in my neighborhood.
I have felt unsafe in my own home.
I have been in a physical fight.

WHAT MAKES FOR GOOD, MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION

Active listening
No side conversations
Using I statements
Show that you are listening:
+ Staying quiet
+ Eye contact
+ Head up
Undivided attention
Positive feedback
Positive energy
Questions
Being interested
Reciprocation
Explain yourself
Vulnerability
Sincerity
Compassion
Suspending judgment

SAMPLE RELATIONSHIP PANEL QUESTIONS

1. Who were you as a teenager? How were you looking for love?
2. Who was your first love/relationship? How does your current relationship relate? Contrast?
3. How did you meet your current partner? What was your relationship like when you first met?/What is your relationship like now?
4. What/Who was your biggest heartbreak? What was it like? How did you get through it?
5. What was your biggest altercation? What was it in regards to? How did you resolve it?
6. What are some compromises and negotiations you've had to make in your relationship?
7. What do you worry about in your relationship?
8. What do you look forward in your relationship?
9. How do you define a healthy relationship? How have you learned to have one? How are you still learning?

ICEBREAKERS, WARM UPS, & REFLECTION EXERCISES

NUMBERS AND MOVEMENTS

Pair up. Each person takes turns saying a number going up to five. A:1, B:2, A:3, etc until the facilitator says stop. Then the facilitator assigns an action to a number so instead of saying the number you replace it with an action when the order comes up.

Jump, 2, 3, 4, 5 then add another, Jump, Shoulder Shrug, 3, 4, 5, etc until you're all action and no order! examples: jump, shoulder shrug, shout "I AM THE CHAMPION" with a gesture, dance, leap frog, ask participants to recommend gestures.

STOP MEANS GO

Reverse the meaning of actions. This game is like Simon says, except one step up. Begin with 3 words that have assigned actions. Start, for example, with Stop means Go. When the facilitator says Stop, you Go (walk). When they say Go, you Stop. Pick 2 more words and assign them actions.

Was this a difficult task? What did you have to tell yourself each time? Did it get easier? What did your body want to do vs. your brain? How do you think our natural inclinations affect our every-day interactions?

HAND HYPNOSIS

Group divide into pairs, choosing A and B. A will hypnotize B with one hand. B must keep their face just a few inches from A's hand at all times, always maintaining that distance. A should try to manipulate B into all sorts of positions.

Discussions of power: How did it feel to be in control, not in control? Were you kind? Were you manipulative? Did you feel comfortable? Did you start working as a team at any point?

PUSH NOT TO WIN

Divide into pairs. Imagine a line is drawn between each pair. Have pairs their hands against one another's shoulders and begin to push. One wins when they push their opponent far enough to cross over the line onto the other side.

In this game, you do not want to win. Give in to your partner's strength; support one another's weight, sometimes pushing harder, sometimes allowing your partner to push you harder.

- What is the game you are trying to win?
- How did you approach this?

FIST OF POWER: Divide into pairs. A & B. A must clench their hand into a fist. B must try to open it by any means possible. After some tries, A & B will switch. Do not hurt each other.

What strategies did you use? Were they primarily physical, verbal, or neither? Did anyone ask the other person to open their hand? How does this reflect the ways we do or don't cooperate in other situations?

THE WORDS WE USE:

Gendered groups will split up. Each will create a silhouette of their gender. They fill words about their gender on the inside. They fill words of what your gender is "not" on the outside. Come together as large group to discuss and share. Commonalities, differences?

YOU'RE MY FAM IF...

A version of "a big wind blows." Have students stand in a circle with one volunteer in the center to start. The person in the center will say a statement that is true for them with the structure "You're my fam if ____." It can be as simple as "You're my fam if you're wearing blue" to more complicated or personal

statements like, “You’re my fam if you have a single parent.” When the statement is true for others in the circle, they should leave their spot and run across the circle to find another one. Like musical chairs, the last person to try and find a spot is the new leader in the center.

SUMMER STUDIO RESIDENT ARTIST-SCHOLAR VALUE STATEMENT

We participate—We do things here! We make, try, build, and create things we never dreamed or imagined possible.

We take risks—We try new art forms, and explore unfamiliar ideas. As we step outside our comfort zone, we politely and respectfully encourage others to do the same with us.

We take care of ourselves and each other—We expect to be treated compassionately and we treat our colleagues in the same way. We seek help when it is needed. We are honest about challenges and limitations we face without fear of negative judgment.

We are flexible and adapt to change—We recognize that despite our best efforts, plans change and we are at our best when we balance intentionality with flexibility. We are all open to new ideas and opportunities.

We embrace a spirit of inquiry and curiosity—In all interactions, we seek deeper understanding, ask clarifying questions and place ourselves in another person’s shoes to appreciate other frames as well as our own.

We are inclusive—We know that this studio attracts people from many neighborhoods, countries, religions, cultures, experiences, and beliefs. In order for us all to feel included at New Urban Arts, we balance voicing our thoughts and ideas while not acting in a way that might silence others. We avoid hateful, disrespectful language, even in jest, and any actions that may make other people feel or be unsafe. We avoid mean spirited talk—anything that someone might think, experience, or perceive as teasing or bullying.

We are professional, reliable, and responsible—By professionalism, we don’t mean stifling bureaucratic rules. Rather, we strive to conduct ourselves in a way that honors and respects the hard work of our colleagues. Some examples are that we show up when we’re expected, we meet our commitments or seek help and communicate when we can’t, we double check our work for errors, and respond to inquiries promptly, professionally, and enthusiastically.

We work together—We must work together to achieve our shared goals. We recognize that our community work is most effective when it is grounded in close, honest, and authentic connections with each other. In order to create a supportive work environment together, ask yourself each week: Did you support someone this week? Did someone support you?

We keep it fun—This work is rewarding and hard. In order to stay the course we have to keep a positive attitude, celebrate the big and small victories along, celebrate each other, our community, and be giving and receptive to recognition.



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