



Sydney Theatre Company Education presents Zeal Theatre's

TABOO

by Tom Lycos and Stefo Nantsou

Teacher's Resource Kit

DRAMA

Written and Compiled by Elizabeth Surbey

Activities are scattered throughout the notes. They are applicable to a range of subjects but relate to broadening your students' appreciation of physical theatre and the playbuilding or self-devising / group devising process.

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

This play contains coarse language, some violence and examines important issues of on-line relationships and date rape. STC recommends this suitable for students in Year 9 and above.

DURATION

75 minutes including post performance question and answer.

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PDHPE TEACHER'S KIT AVAILABLE

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COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The Caledonia Foundation supports Sydney Theatre Company's 2008 in-schools tour of *Taboo* in Western Sydney and contributes to STC's Theatre Access programme.

The City of Sydney supports Sydney Theatre Company's 2008 in-schools tour of *Taboo* to school located in the City of Sydney.

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Sydney Theatre Company

Sydney Theatre Company produces theatre of the highest standard that consistently illuminates, entertains and challenges young audiences. It is committed to the engagement between the imagination of its artists and its audiences, to the development of the art form of theatre, and to excellence in all its endeavours.

STC has been a major force in Australian drama since its establishment in 1978. The original intention was to better utilise the Drama Theatre of the Sydney Opera House and the new Company comprised a small central administration staff, technical staff, workshop and rehearsal facilities.

The Company began its own productions a year later and plans began for the development of its own premises at The Wharf, Walsh Bay. The Wharf opened on 13 December 1984 by Premier Neville Wran, which allowed all departments of the Company to be housed under one roof for the first time. From 1985 the Company could perform in two venues throughout the year, the Drama Theatre and The Wharf.

In September 1999, CEO/Artistic Director Robyn Nevin, AM, launched her first season for the Company. At present STC operates out of its home venue, The Wharf comprising two theatre spaces, on Sydney's harbour, and the Drama Theatre and the Playhouse of the Sydney Opera House. The Company also tours productions across Australia and internationally.

In 2004, STC opened its state of the art 850 seat theatre, Sydney Theatre situated on the site of the old Bond Stores opposite Pier 6/7 on Hickson Road, Walsh Bay. Sydney Theatre is designed as a specialist drama and dance venue and will provide the missing link between the Drama Theatre and Sydney's larger venues such as the Opera and Capitol Theatres. It offers STC the opportunity to expand the range of work we both produce and present.

The predominant financial commitment to STC is made by its audience. The Company is also assisted annually by grants from the Federal Government through the Australia Council and the New South Wales Government through the Ministry for the Arts. STC also actively seeks sponsorship and donations from the corporate sector and from private individuals.

STC's annual subscription season features up to twelve plays, including recent or new Australian works, as well as interpretations of theatrical classics and contemporary foreign works. While these productions are the core of STC's activities, our work reaches a variety of audiences in many different ways. STC regularly co-produces and tours its productions throughout Australia, playing annually to audiences in excess of 300,000. STC actively fosters relationships and collaborations with international artists and companies.

For further details, check our web site: **www.sydneytheatre.com.au**

About Zeal Theatre

Founded in 1989 by actor/writer/director Stefo Nantsou, Zeal Theatre is dedicated to creating original, relevant and entertaining theatrical productions for theatres, schools, universities, national and international festivals.

The multi-skilled ensemble prides itself on a collective group-devising process utilising an eclectic mix of musical and theatrical styles. Zeal Theatre has won awards in Australia and overseas, the most recent award being recipients of the 2005 Presidents Award from International Association of Theatre for Young People. Their productions have been presented in over 15 countries and translated into different languages.

Zeal Theatre is a company dedicated to producing hard-edged, theatre performances that take an uncompromising look at some of the toughest current social issues in an honest and direct way. The characters and the situations they find themselves in are often not politically correct, ugly, hidden and difficult to address with young people. Through the immediacy and power of live theatre audiences have a chance to experience and reflect on such issues without personally exposing themselves.

The Company deliberately avoids passing judgement, instead various aspects of a scenario are humanised and laid bare for young audiences to form their own opinions. Zeal Theatre doesn't offer up neat solutions or moral messages to their theatrical situations. Instead productions are emotional experiences design to be catalysts to further discussion and reflections of the greyer areas in our modern society. Students are encouraged to debrief with the actors and their teachers to discuss what they have seen.

Zeal Theatre productions are highly physical and presented in a minimalist style. Props and set elements are used sparingly and usually have multiple uses as the action races from scene to scene. The small ensemble casts are skilled in performing, writing, music, movement and engaging with young people. Exceptional storytelling rather than expensive production values lay at the heart of Zeal Theatre productions. Within the tight structure of each production, the performers explore scene's detail through improvisation and group devised performance. The result is performers engaging with each other in a way that is alive and fresh.

www.zealtheatre.com.au

TABOO

Synopsis

Researched and developed with the help of students from a diverse range of Sydney high schools, Taboo dares to explore contemporary social and cultural tensions of the ever-evolving relationships between boys and girls, men and women.

Performed by an experienced cast, Taboo is a powerful exposé of contemporary sexuality and in true Zeal Theatre style, loaded with comedy, music and their trademark energetic performance power.

After the final class of the day, health education, Xenia and Leah hurry to get ready for a secret meeting with Leah's on-line boyfriend i-boy. Leah has convinced her friend Xenia to come with her on a pre-arranged double date.

Xenia's bother Nick, and his friend Mohammed, drop off the girls at the movies before they head off to a famous Sydney strip club. Instead of the girls going to a movie they are picked up by i-boy and his friend Will.

What starts out as an exciting night of flirting and partying descends into a dreadful date rape for one of the girls as i-boy and Will transform from uber-cool older guys into frightening sexual predators.

Parents, friends and siblings are then left to deal with the after-math of this terrible event and Xenia has to find the courage to reveal and deal with what has happened to her.

ZEAL ON THE PRODUCTION - Interview with Stefo Nantsou

What was process of creating this production?

We wanted to make a play about date rape. We researched a few known contemporary Australian stories to do with the subject. We then interviewed and held workshops with Years 9,10,11, 12 students from a range of Sydney high schools and gathered their views/opinions on dating, relationships, the internet, sexual awareness, and a stack of other interesting anecdotes on the subject. We decided on a map for the play's duration and finalized characters, based on some of the interviewees, but also fictionalizing characters from some of the true stories we had read about. A first draft script was prepared for the start of rehearsals, and from there the cast and directors group devise the eventual first performance. The first few performances give the cast and directors instant feedback on what works, what doesn't work and what needs work.

Why did you decide to do a show that tackled these issues?

Sexual predators are everywhere and not a day goes past without some news item or some story from someone you know is affected by sexual harassment of some kind. The internet is playing its part. We wanted to warn students of the dangers of internet dating, as well as taking a 'slice of real life' approach at an 'average' dating encounter that goes horribly wrong, and then the shock waves experienced by those closely involved. Theatre can create great discussion and illumination on topics and issues that are rarely discussed openly in our society.

What is it like exploring content such as teenage on-line dating and date rape? What have you learnt?

Relationships between boys and girls have not greatly evolved over the years. Fears, ambiguities, sexual urges, tensions and misunderstandings seem timeless. The internet is the real change in this situation. In many cases, a lot of people meet each other through the internet. However one never really knows the truth about those with whom we 'chat' with on line. Having teenage girls myself, I see their infatuation with the connection that the internet gives them, a weird heightened unreality exists between those communicating, and living out their fantasies at the same time. What it is like is alien to me. But as a writer/director/actor, one has to explore in order to know what one is talking about.

Can you describe the rehearsal process?

A draft script exists and the pleasures and pitfalls of finding out what works, what doesn't and what needs reworking or rewriting is what the rehearsal process is all about. We know we want live music in the show so the music is crafted to the skills of the cast. Characters evolve either out of discussion with the actors, or the actors have done their research to 'know who they are playing', or 'who they are representing' in the play. Out of this process one soon learns what is 'crucial' to the play, and where 'the moments' are, ie: how you want to tell the story with the maximum of effect for an audience.

How did you create the characters during the production process?

Characters were based on students we met/meet during the evolution of the script and rehearsals. Some characters are drawn straight from life, others are 'constructs' made up of numerous people all put together like a Frankenstein's monster.

What are the three things you want students to take away from seeing the performance?

We want discussion to be going on about the dangers of internet dating, the vulnerable situation people put themselves in the pursuit of 'a good time', and we want the audience to feel the ripple effects and the tragic circumstances which surround (mainly) girls who have been sexually assaulted.

Company List

Sandy Greenwood	Leah & Yolana
Lindy Sardelic	Xenia
Tom Lycos	Chad, Nick, i-boy & Film Buff Kid 1
Stefo Nantsou	Mr Smithers, Zubin, Mohammed, Will & Film Buff Kid 2

Characters

Mr Smithers	Teacher
Leah	Year 9 Student
Xenia	Year 9 Student
Chad	Leah's Father
Yolvana	Xenia's Mother
Zubin	Xenia's Father
Nick	19 Year Old Xenia's Brother
Mohammed	Nick's Friend
'I Boy'	23 Years Old
Will	28 Years Old
Film Buff Kid 1	
Film Buff Kid 2	

Scene Break Down

Scene 1	SCHOOL	2.55pm
Scene 2	AFTER SCHOOL	3.37pm
Scene 3	LEAH'S HOUSE	4.14pm
Scene 4	XENIA'S HOUSE	6.26pm
Scene 5	CLT.TZR	7.09pm
Scene 6	WAITING OUTSIDE FOX	7.24pm
Scene 7	TABOO	7.38pm
Scene 8	THE OXFORD TAVERN	8.05pm
Scene 9	THE DATE	8.26pm
Scene 10	THE OXFORD TAVERN	9.17pm
Scene 11	THE RAPE	9.42pm
Scene 12	TABOO	10.22pm
Scene 13	WAITING OUTSIDE FOX	10.39pm
Scene 14	CLT.TZR 2	11.01pm
Scene 15	LEAH'S HOUSE	11.19pm
Scene 16	XENIA'S HOUSE	11.55pm

After seeing the production use the following questions to reflect on the performance

Activities / Questions

Do you think the play is a true story?

Could you relate to any of the characters in the play?

Do you know people like these characters?

How common are the stories told in the play?

Was the story over the top or too unreal?

What did you think of the parents' reactions in the play?

How would you react in the parent's situation?

What did you think of Xenia's actions and thoughts in the play?

Is her story an 'isolated' one?

What sort of person did 'Will' represent? And "i-Boy"?

How were music and sound used in the production?

How different was the play from your expectations?

What would you change in the play to make it better?

Do you think a play is a good way to explore ideas?

What did you think of the staging arrangements and set of the play?

If the play was only part one of a bigger play, what would happen in part two?

Are there stories that you know that are similar to the stories that were told in the play?

Write a review of the play. *(see section below on writing a review)*

Write a letter to ZEAL THEATRE about the play. *(Send to STC via website)*

Performance style

The play is distinctive as the story telling methods are constantly changing. The characters are interspersed and the transitions clear. The players at times use music to both tell the story as well as to alter the moods or even commentate on events.

Activities

Telling and / or devising stories:

Teacher lead activity

Using a daily newspaper, either select a story or allow each student to select a story and write a short sketch about it. Specific focus should be placed upon:

1. Who are the characters (or what characters do you need?)
2. Where are the scenes going to take place?
3. How are the characters going to look, speak, behave etc?
4. How will the play start and how will it end?
5. Allow the students to experiment with writing styles (rhyming poetry, monologues, devising words, song)

Stylisation

The actors in ZEAL THEATRE use minimal props and costumes, fundamentally creating all that is suggested within *TABOO* via their bodies and voices in space and time. Where students have already seen the play, identify how the actors represented changes of location and changes of character.

Explore how simple motions and vocalizations can be enlarged, stylized, abstracted. Is this a good way to represent the mind and body altering nature of drinking? How do simple greetings look and sound when altered physically / vocally? Eg faster, slower, enlarged, minimised etc. What impression does each variation convey?

Activities

In small groups, explore stylized (non-naturalistic) ways to represent a short episodic story. Perform these to one another. Identify theatrical techniques that are effective, creative and engaging.

Writing a review

While watching *TABOO* you will be forming opinions and making judgments about the play and the production. The critic's job is to pass comment on the quality of the show informing others about its good and bad points in the process. When writing a review of a play, there is a lot to think about. You may not want to comment on every aspect of the play, but the following outline will help you to structure your review.

1. Introduction

Title:

Writer(s):

Company:

Where and when you saw the play:

How you felt about seeing the play before it started:

2. The play

Give a brief outline of the story and the main characters.

Identify major themes, issues, ideas in *TABOO*.

What do you perceive was the intention of the piece?

How do you interpret it?

What was the impact of the performance?

How did it make you feel?

Did you find the story convincing?

Which parts worked best for you?

Were there any moments that stirred your emotions?

How did the audience react to the play?

How did you feel about the characters?

Which one did you respond to most and why?

3. The set

Some stage sets are very elaborate, others little more than a bare stage.

Identify design elements in the production.

How else could *TABOO* have been designed and staged?

How appropriate is this set to the play and to the space it is being performed in?

Did anything about the set particularly catch your eye?

How did the actors use the set?

4. The acting

How did you rate the actors?

Comment on voice, gesture and movement.

What things did they do to distinguish between the characters they played?

Who did you sympathise with?

Identify the skills of the particular actors. Define their performance style. What makes them unique?

5. Conclusion

Bring in anything that you thought was remarkably good or bad about the production.

List any elements in the performance that seemed unnecessary / ineffective.

On balance, was it a successful show?

Did it keep your interest and involve you with the characters?

Did it make you laugh, cry, think?

Was it suitable for its audience?

Compare *TABOO* with other live performances you may have seen.

Theatre Design

Activities

Theatre Design:

TABOO is an intimate studio production that uses minimal scenery, props, costumes and only basic lighting. Where students have seen the performance, discuss the impact of the minimal design elements of the play. How is it that audiences are aware of changes of location between the school, after school, Leah's house, Xenia's house, waiting outside Fox, The Car, The Oxford Tavern, and i-Boy's place?

Have students select a play and design sets, props etc for a minimalist style. How will changes of location be clear to audiences?

Have students make models or use sketches to present back to the class to justify their choices.

Characterisation

The four actors in TABOO portray several roles each. (except Xenia) These characters are easily distinguished from one another despite minimal use of costume / props.

Some ways into the play exploring writing in class.

- Write the First exchange between Leah and I Boy
- Write a dialogue between Xenia and one of her (or both) parents
- Look at the themes explored in TABOO and identify moments in the play when these were explored.
- Write a short passage which describes the feelings you had when you watched the play

Activities

Ask each student to create a character.

Perhaps allocate or ask each student to choose a photograph of a character to work from. Encourage students to explore ways in which the character might sleep, brush their teeth or hair, drink, walk, greet other people, make a telephone call, eat an apple etc.

In developing their characters have students pay attention as to how their posture, movement style, expression, breathing and voice can be used to reflect their characters personality, age, disposition, physical condition. (Use hats, props, costume items as an option)

Playbuilding and Storytelling

Activities: Storytelling

Being able to communicate a story clearly to an audience is a skill in itself. A story can be told in a serious way, or a comic way, or both – there are no rules as long as it is clear and concise. The actors in TABOO actually tell the audience what happened various ways.

Exercise 1

Three students leave the room - they choose one of the three's own personal stories to tell to the class as if it were their own.

The audience (rest of class) tries to guess who was telling the original story.

What is effective storytelling?

Exercise 2

Ask each student to tell a simple story.

Ask them to tell the same story as a different character.

Finally tell them to tell the same story, either in character or as themselves, once in a comic way and once in a serious way.

Exercise 3

Each student tries different ways of telling the story:

Using direct audience eye contact

Not looking at the audience

As a soliloquy

In different languages

In mime

In poetry / rap or song

Exercise 4

Four students tell the same story from their own perspective.

Each one tells the audience separately

Tell each other (not referring to the audience)

Argue their stories, involving the audience

One story funny, another make serious

Adapting the text

Try to improvise a scene in pairs between the characters from the play.

Recalling the script – what was different or the same about your scene?

Was it better or worse?

Discuss what would happen if the characters were different? Would it change anything?

Trust and Relationship

Leading the blind:

In pairs, label yourselves Leah AND I Boy. Leah closes her eyes and I Boy drives them around the room using the following commands:

Flat of the hand pressing in the centre of the back means GO

Both hands lightly on shoulders means STOP

Left hand on left shoulder means TURN LEFT

Right hand on right shoulder means TURN RIGHT.

Swap over

Following the hand uses similar principles – one is drawn to the hand of the other and like a magnet must stick to it and be lead around the room – not losing the relationship with the hand. Then swap over and see how it feels the other way round.

Physical Theatre

In the ZEAL THEATRE production, the actors employed physical and acrobatic skills. Tom Lycos is a teacher of acrobatics and has trained with many experts. In TABOO, the actors employ different skills; any combination of acrobatics, physical work, sweat, energy and zeal, help to give the production dynamism and power.

Activities:

Physical Theatre

Exercise 1

(Good for large classes)

Through a range of body shapes, balances, and formations, the class should create a series of places: a jungle, a large city, a beach and Mars or the Moon

Exercise 2

In small groups, tell a story with as much physicality as possible.

Exercise 3

(Suit seniors)

In groups of three, create a non-verbal storytelling style, with a particular focus on body shapes and balances.

Mime

In TABOO mime is used by the actors to give the impressions of being on a train, riding in a car, different places and even drinking. The actors' mime skills also help create a sense of others, such as 'the school room'. Discuss the effect and impact of mime in the performance.

Activities:

Mime

Exercise 1

Try miming various actions such as doing a job, playing sports, eating various foods. Discuss what makes it possible to understand the meaning of mimed actions. How can impressions of holding and working with objects such as a lawn mower, broom, billiard cue be achieved?

Exercise 2

In small groups, have students rehearse and perform a short story through mime only. See if other students are able to comprehend one another's intended storylines. Where miscommunication occurs, identify why and revise.

Dual Characterisation

Playing two or more roles in a play can be quite a challenge. Switching quickly between characters without significant costume change, exiting the performance area, or pausing can make it even more difficult. In TABOO, the actors take on various roles, playing the teenagers and the adult world around them.

Activities

Exercise 1

Each student should attempt to create a character highlighting:

Body shape (posture and stance), attitude, the situation they are in (where are they?), then a typical thing that the character would say and the way they would say it.

Exercise 2

Ask each student to create a monologue for their character. In doing so, students will need to decide a setting and point in time for their character to deliver their monologue.

Who is their character talking to?

What is his/her motivation to speak?

How should the piece start / end?

How would the character speak? E.g. Accent, speech patterns, language.

Students may incorporate costume and / or props.

View monologues. Identify the skills involved in sustaining a characterisation.

Extension exercise

Each student should then create a second character. Depending on the situations each student has chosen, they should try to make both of their characters have some kind of conversation or interaction.

Or

They perform scenes in which they shift from one character to another.

Comedy – drama, music

Preparation: a selection of pre-recorded instrumental music (eg Fats Waller, Glen Miller, Corelli, Bach, Pachelbel, etc), props / costume (optional)

Discuss with students what makes them laugh. Where students have seen TABOO, identify comic moments. What made these funny?

Together with students, list elements and the types of scenarios that make for comedy, eg. Exaggerations of reality (voices, walks, clothes, movements), a character who misses the point others are trying to make, parent/child relationships.

Consider with students the effect of the spoken word on making something comic. Consider when action alone can make something comic.

**Activities:
Comedy****Exercise**

Comedy is often connected with music. Organise students into groups of 2s, 3s and 4s. Allocate each group a segment of instrumental music to design and perform a comedy sketch to. Encourage students to portray specific characters completing an action, eg. Labourers lifting a ladder, a family packing for vacation, players cheating during a card game. In creating their sketches, students should refer to the previous discussion.

If students find it difficult to get moving on this, a solid starting point may be to have them design their act around a simple prop such as a paintbrush, clothing that does not fit, a telephone that does not ring, etc.

View these performances. Observe where and how musical accompaniment can enhance comic elements. Sometimes working against music is funny in itself.

Mood music: – discuss how live music and amplified sound were used to reflect and enhance dramatic tension and acted situations.

Live sound effects are used in TABOO. Recall where and how sound effects were used and how these created and enhanced a sense of location, mood and atmosphere.

Activities:

Music and Sound Effects

Exercise 1

Allocate small groups a piece of music each. Ask them to listen to it several times, and then to share and articulate what they feel it suggests or evokes.

Using the music as inspiration, have the groups script and then rehearse a scene (dialogue) to be performed with their given piece of music as background mood-music.

View these. Did the music add to the atmosphere of the scene/s? How?

Comment on the effect the music had on the scenes. Would the impact of the scenes differ if performed with no background music? Would the impact of the scenes differ if performed with different background music? (try this)

Exercise 2

In small groups use voice and implements to create and record (optional) soundscapes representing locations such as a sports arena, amusement park, busy highway, mall, deserted house. Or elements and emotions such as cold, heat, a storm, joy, fear, relief danger, misery.

Play or perform these for one another. See if they are all clearly identifiable. Discuss how groups used tempo, volume, rhythm, pause, speed and pitch to evoke different feelings or atmospheres.

SUPPORT MATERIAL

ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS AND DATE RAPE

The following material is from websites sourced and government supported sites for date rape and its victims.

Net Predators 'Not Who You Think', February 19, 2008 12:05pm

DESPITE popular myths, the typical online predator does not pose as a teen and lure victims into face-to-face meetings to abuse them, according to new research.

Rather, they tend to be adults who make their intentions of a sexual encounter quite clear to vulnerable young teens who often believe they are in love with the predator. And contrary to the concerns of many parents and politicians, the US researchers found that social networking sites such as 'Facebook' or 'MySpace' do not appear to expose teenagers to greater risks.

"A lot of the characterisations that you see in internet safety information suggests that sex offenders are targeting very young children and using violence and deception against their victims," said Janis Wolak of the Crimes Against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire.

"Especially since social networking sites became popular, people are suggesting that these offenders are using information to stalk and abduct their victims," said Ms Wolak, whose study appears in the journal *American Psychologist*. "We are not seeing those types of cases," Ms Wolak said. Instead, she said most cases arise from risky online interactions such as chatting about sex with strangers. "The great majority of cases we have seen involved young teenagers, mostly 13-, 14- and 15-year-old girls who are targeted by adults on the internet who are straightforward about being interested in sex," she said.

The study was based on telephone interviews with 3000 internet users between the ages of 10 and 17, undertaken in 2000 and again in 2005. The researchers also conducted more than 600 interviews with federal, state and local law enforcement officials in the US. They also combed through data from similar studies. They found internet offenders pretended to be teenagers in only 5 per cent of the crimes studied. They also discovered that nearly 75 per cent of victims who met their offenders in person did so on more than one occasion.

Ms Wolak said internet predators used instant messages, emails and chat rooms to meet and develop intimate relationships with their victims. "From the perspective of the victim, these are romances," she said. Ms Wolak said teens who engaged in risky online behaviors having buddy lists that included strangers, discussing sex online with strangers, being rude online were much more likely to be targeted. "One of the big factors we found is that offenders target kids who are willing to talk to them online. Most kids are not," Ms Wolak said.

US government officials have been working with Facebook and MySpace to protect users from registered sex offenders. But Ms Wolak said it was important for parents and children to have a clear picture of who these predators were. "If everybody is looking for violent predators lurking in the bushes, kids who are involved in these relationships aren't going to be seeing what is happening to them as a crime," she said.

<http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,23239466-8362,00.html>

What is date rape?

Date rape is when someone you know socially (but not family) makes you have sex when you don't want to. It could be someone you meet at a party, or someone you love and trust, like your boyfriend.

They might use physical and verbal threats, emotional blackmail, or alcohol and drugs to force or trick you into having sex. And it's not just sexual intercourse – it can be oral sex or some other kind of sex. You may even agree to have sex with someone and then decide that you want to stop, but they force you to keep going.

Date rape can happen to women of all ages but young women between 15 and 24 are at highest risk.

While it's mostly women who are raped, guys can be victims of date rape too. And, as with female victims, guys are usually assaulted by other men.

Sexual assault is a crime ... Whoever commits it, or however it happens, sex that you have not freely agreed to is rape. Rape has nothing to do with love – it's about power and control.

Who commits date rape?

Rape is almost entirely committed by men, and almost entirely against women. Women are the victims in 96 percent of reported rape cases.

An attacker may be:

- your boyfriend
- an ex-boyfriend
- a friend
- a workmate
- Someone you've just met.

Rape is committed by guys of all ages but the largest group of offenders is between the ages of 17 and 30.

How common is it?

Unfortunately date rape is much more common than you'd believe. Most people think of rape as being committed by a stranger – an attack in a dark alley perhaps – but date rape is actually much more common than rape by a stranger.

Rape is one of the most underreported crimes and because of this it's difficult to give exact figures.

Date rape is even more hidden because many girls and women who have been raped don't recognise their experience as a crime – they think that because they knew their attacker it wasn't actually rape.

Facts and myths

She says 'no'; but she means 'yes'. Does this sound familiar to you? I'll hear people say all sorts of things about girls and sex - often very hurtful things based on mistaken ideas, or 'myths'.

And when it comes to rape, the myths are very strong and very dangerous, because they excuse rape and blame the victim rather than the attacker.

Here are some of the common myths about date rape and rape in general.

What they say ...	The truth
'Rapists look evil'	Rapists are usually 'ordinary' guys, of all ages and backgrounds
'Rape is committed by strangers in dark alleys'	In 80-90% of cases the attacker is known to the victim, and it may occur in your own home
'Nice girls don't get raped'	Women of all ages and from all different backgrounds can be the victims of rape
'She was asking for it'	Drinking, flirting or dressing in a 'sexy' way is not an invitation for sex
'If he pays for dinner and drinks, she owes him sex'	It doesn't matter how much he spends, sex can't be expected as a payback
'Guys can't control their sexual urges'	Guys are fully capable of controlling their sexual desires - it's about choice
'Girls cry rape when they didn't enjoy it' 'She didn't scream or fight back, so it wasn't rape'	Only 2-7% of rapes reported are false claims (no higher than for any other crime)
'She didn't scream or fight back, so it wasn't rape'	Women may be paralysed with fear - rape is rape, regardless of whether there's a struggle
'It's not rape unless she's threatened with a knife or a gun'	Many victims are scared of losing their lives and being hurt even when no weapon or obvious physical force is used
'She didn't say no'	There are many ways that people say no to sex without using the word 'no' (e.g. 'I've got a boyfriend', 'Let's just go to sleep', 'I'm not sure', 'I'd really like to but ...', 'You're not my type', 'You've been drinking', 'I've been drinking', 'I want to be alone', 'Don't touch me', 'I'm not in the mood')

Abuse in relationships

Date rape is often part of a wider problem to do with abuse in relationships. Abuse happens when one partner tries to control or hurt the other person. It's a pattern of behaviour, not just a one-off, and the abuse usually gets worse over time.

There are three main types of abuse in relationships:

- Emotional abuse – e.g. name-calling, putting you down, stopping you seeing your friends and family, checking what you're doing all the time, or saying threatening things like 'I'll kill myself if you leave me'
- Physical abuse – e.g. hitting, pushing or punching you, smashing things, or driving dangerously to scare you
- Sexual abuse – e.g. forcing you to have sex of any sort against your will

You might think it's somehow your fault if the person you're going out with isn't treating you well. The abuser might make excuses for their behaviour or 'blame the victim', but it's their responsibility to stop the abuse, not yours.

It's against the law for your partner or boyfriend (or anybody else) to physically hurt you, threaten you or force you into having sex. You can contact the police and your partner or boyfriend may be charged.

Good relationships

In relationships where you both respect each other, you don't have to agree about everything. To have an argument is part of every healthy relationship, but it's never OK for one partner to hurt the other person to get their way. Arguments shouldn't leave you feeling scared or afraid for your safety.

A good relationship is one based on respect for each other. If someone is treating you with respect you feel:

- free to say 'no' to things you don't want to do
- safe and never scared
- free to see friends and family when you want
- free to express your opinions and beliefs
- free to change your mind
- good about yourself
- supported to make your own decisions
- free to end the relationship if you want.

(This list has been reproduced with kind permission of the Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre (DVIRC), in Victoria.)

Safety tips

You should never see date rape as your responsibility to avoid, or 'your fault' if it happens - it's always the attacker's fault.

However, it is sensible to be aware of the signs that something might be happening. One issue that has got a lot of attention lately is spiked drinks, but there are also other ways in which date rape happens.

There are a few things you can look out for to avoid ending up in a situation where you don't feel comfortable. Whether you've only recently met the guy or you've been going out for a while, it helps to think about what you want out of the relationship.

Going out or going on a date

If you're going on a date or meeting up with somebody you don't know very well, you might like to:

- go out in a group or on a double date so you can suss him out
- pay your own way so he doesn't get the wrong idea about you 'owing' him anything (but remember - even if he does pay, you never owe him sex)
- organise your transport home before you leave
- take a mobile phone with you
- be careful about inviting him into your house or going to his (most date rapes happen in the home).

Trust your gut feelings

Never feel that you have to spend time alone with someone who makes you feel uneasy or uncomfortable. Listen to your instincts and leave situations that you don't feel good about. Don't wait for someone to look out for you or for things to get better, because chances are they won't.

Alcohol

Some guys will be really generous and buy you drinks all night, but they might have hidden reasons. Getting a girl drunk is a common way to make her drop her inhibitions.

You may be less able to refuse someone who is making a move on you or pressuring you to do something you don't want to do. It's best to buy your own drinks and to keep an eye on them.

- Read more about alcohol and drugs.
- Be choosy about guys
- Be careful about who you hang out with. There's no sure way to tell which guys could be dodgy, but watch out for guys who:
 - ignore you or don't really listen to you
 - do unwanted touching or invade your personal space
 - want to control what you do and make decisions for you
 - make suggestive or crude remarks about women

Spiked drinks

'Sure I'll have another – since I'm not paying!'

The trend of spiking drinks has become a growing problem in Australia and overseas. Spiking a drink means that it has had some kind of drug added to it, including alcohol.

Drink spiking can happen to girls and guys – it may be used for sexual assault, robbery or as a practical joke or party trick.

What are the physical symptoms?

The main sign that you've had a spiked drink is that you feel noticeably drunk more quickly than you would expect. You may also experience:

- dizziness, feeling light-headed, queasiness
- drowsiness, loss of consciousness, confusion
- wild behaviour, lack of self-control
- problems with coordination.

Many victims of drink spiking describe having blackouts and can't remember what happened to them the next day.

What can I do about it?

Drink spiking doesn't mean you should lock yourself up at home and never go out. Girls have the right to party and enjoy themselves just as much as guys. It just means that when you do go out, be aware of things going on around you.

Spiking safety tips

- Only accept drinks from people you know and trust.
- Be suspicious if someone buys you a drink and it's not what you asked for
- Keep your drink with you, and finish it before you go to the bathroom or onto the dance floor
- If someone you don't know offers to buy you a drink, go to the bar with them
- Never share or exchange drinks with anyone
- Look out for your mates – if they seem too drunk or too out of it for what they've had, they may be in danger
- If you decide to go home with someone, introduce them to your friends (or the bar staff or security) and make sure they know others have seen them
- Help friends get home safely after a night out, or check they're OK before they leave with anyone
- Always let people you have just met think you have a flatmate or live with other people
- Don't be too quick to trust somebody you don't know – be careful about taking strangers at face value
- If you feel dizzy or light-headed but haven't had much to drink, try to get to safe place with safe people (people you know and trust).

Alcohol

Most of the publicity about spiking is about adding chemicals to drinks so that the drinker can be 'knocked out'. This does happen, and it can have very serious consequences, but it is actually quite rare.

A much more common 'trick' by far is to add extra alcohol to a drink (e.g. by ordering a double scotch instead of a single) or to give someone a lot of drinks so they lose track of what they've

drunk. The use of alcohol and drugs is a major issue in date rape. A 1996 survey found that alcohol had been involved in 44.9 percent of sexual assaults for women 15 years and over.

Alcohol is often used to loosen women up. It can lower your self-control and make you behave in ways you wouldn't normally. You may be less able to refuse someone who's making a move on you or pressuring you to do something you don't want to do.

'It's OK for guys'

In our society there are double standards around alcohol and drug use for girls and guys.

If she drinks ...

- she's sexually 'easy'
- she's sending out confusing messages to guys
- she may be blamed if she's later raped.

If he drinks ...

- he's 'a man' is allowed to behave badly – 'boys will be boys'
- he 'didn't know what he was doing' if he assaults a woman.

The fact is nobody ever asks to be raped, regardless of whether they were drinking or not. Just because girls are out enjoying themselves doesn't mean they're sexually available. The responsibility for any sexual assault is always with the attacker.

Remember, sexual assault is a crime.

In Victoria, for example, the law states that a person is unable to consent to sex if they are drunk or on drugs. Consent means free agreement. A woman is unable to give a free agreement to sex if she is drunk or out of it.

How often do guys say 'You would if you loved me ...'? Sex shouldn't be the only way you can show somebody you love them. And sex is not meant to be one-sided – it should be something you both want.

Remember, you have the right to say no, even if you've had sex with him before, and you also have the right to change your mind. It is never OK to force somebody into having sex.

It can be particularly hard to say no to a guy you like – you might enjoy kissing and touching but aren't ready to have sex just yet. It's good to be firm and straightforward about what you do and don't want to do.

In an equal relationship, each person has the right to stop the activity at any time. If he really cares about you he will respect your decision and will not start or continue anything you don't like.

Look out for your mates

When you go out in a group to a party, pub or club, look out for each other and make sure that everyone you came with gets home safely. If you're concerned about what a friend is doing, talk to them about it.

Break the silence

If you've been forced into sex against your will it is not your fault. It may help to talk to somebody about what happened, like a friend, a trusted adult or a counsellor at a sexual assault service or crisis line. Remember, you're not alone.

10 warning signs

1. Being alone with someone you don't know well
2. Not knowing how you're going to get home
3. An instinctive 'bad feeling' about a situation
4. Drinking too much alcohol
5. Accepting drinks from people, particularly if the drink tastes or smells 'funny'
6. Guys who don't listen to you or show respect
7. A guy who insists on coming into your house when he drops you home
8. Unwanted touching by a guy
9. Guys who say 'You would if you loved me ...'
10. A friend who's not in control and is being taken advantage of

Educational resources

This **About Date Rape** website is part of the Negotiating Consent resource package that includes the:

About Date Rape Website and information card

Lesson Plan and facilitator notes

Date Rape interactive cubes

Relationships booklet

Request your copy of the package from the Violence Against Women Specialist Unit by phone: 02 9716 2061 or email: vaw-unit@community.nsw.gov.au. Also visit the VAW pages at Lawlink for more information.

Please note that the package is for distribution in NSW only.

For Educators

Education programs for children & young people on healthy relationships, domestic violence & sexual assault. Promoting healthy relationships needs to occur throughout a young person's life, and challenging abusive and violent attitudes or behaviours requires a systemic and long term approach.

The following pages include a list of 19 programs developed in NSW, that could be used together to build up a more holistic educational program for 5-18 year olds, about healthy relationships, including sexual assault, domestic violence, harassment and bullying.

The programs aim to equip young people with skills and knowledge to recognise and respond to unsafe or abusive relationships.

Other useful services

In an emergency dial 000 for police or ambulance.

You can contact the police directly at any time if you've been assaulted. You can ask to speak to a female officer or a police officer who is specially trained to respond to sexual assault crimes. Any service you go to first will help you contact other relevant services.

Violence Against Women Specialist Unit website

This website lists the contact details of other services in New South Wales that offer help for women who have been sexually assaulted or are in domestic violence situations. See their website for details.

Kids Help Line

Free call (anywhere in Australia): 1800 551 800 (Calls to this free call number will not appear on your phone bill). The Kids Help Line offers telephone counselling for children and young people, under 18 years. This service also provides support through email and online counselling. See their website for further details.

Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre (DVIRC)

A resource centre for information about domestic violence and sexual assault .

Lifeline

Offers general telephone counselling - 131 114

Lawstuff

This site provides information about the law in Australia. If you're from Australia you can email a lawyer for advice on how to use the law to protect you from violence. See their website for details.

Dympna House

A NSW counselling service that deals with Child Sexual Assault. In the Sydney area phone 9797 6733. Outside Sydney call 1800 654 119 (freecall).

Specialised service for adult women survivors of child sexual assault in NSW

Sydney area 9797 6733

Outside Sydney 1800 654 119 (freecall)

<http://www.aboutdaterape.nsw.gov.au/education/education.html>

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Despite an increasing awareness of the problem of sexual violence, there is still reluctance in some quarters for date rape to be considered criminal or even unacceptable behaviour. This is due partly to the hidden nature of the crime and the complicated issue of sexual consent. Numerous Australian women have experienced date rape. This paper outlines the main issues underlying date rape. Because of low-reporting, it is difficult to establish an accurate measure of the extent of the problem, thus reducing the possibility of identifying appropriate responses for prevention and for treatment of victims and perpetrators. Victims who do not recognise forced sex as unacceptable are unlikely to seek help, despite the potential impact of date rape being just as severe and traumatic as other types of rape. This paper discusses prevention measures that range from a change in the formulation of Rohypnol, which has been misused as a “date rape drug”, through to a description of school and community activities concerned with the prevention of violence.

Adam Graycar
Director

Date rape is a controversial and ambiguous crime. There has been much debate regarding the definition, prevalence, and importance of date rape in the past twenty years. This uncertainty is evident in the attitudes of date rape victims/survivors and offenders, of professionals in the criminal justice system, and in the wider community. Rape in marriage was only criminalised in the 1970s. This is a reflection of the tolerance in our society towards rape in intimate relationships. Very few cases of date or marital rape are prosecuted in court.

This paper provides an overview of date rape, including what is known of its incidence in Australia, factors that contribute to its occurrence, why it is a hidden crime, its impact on victims, and responses to it, including prevention strategies. The paper also aims to increase the level of understanding of complex issues such as sexual consent and the underlying causes of sexual violence such as prevailing attitudes about sexuality and gender roles.

What is Date Rape?

The term “rape” has (largely) been replaced in Australian legal terminology with the term “sexual assault”. Sexual assault includes any sexual activity carried out against the will of the victim through the use of violence, coercion or intimidation, even if it did not end in penetration (ABS 1996). Sexual assault is a criminal offence. Date rape is a type of sexual assault where the victim and the offender are in, or have been in, some form of personal social relationship, ranging from a first date to an established relationship. Date rape may be easily recognised as “rape”, or it may involve coercive sex that has left the victim feeling confused and traumatised. Victims of date rape often experience emotional but not physical injury (Bechofer and Parrot 1991). Date rape is not a legal term, and is sometimes referred to as “relationship rape” in the Australian literature.

Measuring the Incidence of Date Rape

It is difficult to accurately estimate the incidence of date rape, which as other forms of acquaintance rape, is a very much under-reported crime. Some indication of the extent of date rape in Australia can be found in sexual assault statistics that specify the relationship between the victim and the offender. The most recent official sexual assault statistics available include police records published in Recorded Crime, Australia (ABS 1999b), the results of national crime victim surveys published as Crime and Safety Australia (ABS 1999a) and Women's Safety Australia, 1996 (ABS 1996).

There are, however, some limitations with the available statistics. Police statistics in Recorded Crime underestimate the incidence of sexual assault. According to the recent Crime and Safety Survey, only about 30 percent of female sexual assault victims in 1998 reported the incident to the police (ABS 1999a). Moreover, crimes that are reported to the police are only officially recorded if police believe enough evidence exists to support the claim (David, Cook and Grant, forthcoming). National crime victim surveys generally provide a higher (and more accurate) measure of the incidence of sexual assault, as they are based on questionnaires sent to thousands of households around Australia, and include both reported and unreported crimes.

Unlike Recorded Crime and the Crime and Safety Survey, the Women's Safety Survey, includes the category "boyfriend/date" in its estimate of the incidence of sexual assault. Here, sexual assault by a boyfriend or a date represents 16.6 per cent of all sexual assaults, a total of 23,800 incidents in the 12 months prior to the survey (see Table 1). This finding is close to a 1992 national survey on sexual assault (Easta1993), which found that 13 percent of sexual assaults were committed by a boyfriend or a date.

However, there are several reasons why the Women's Safety Survey may also underestimate the actual extent of date rape.

These are:

- responses in crime victim surveys are based on the participant's perception that they have been the victim of a crime, yet date rape is often not recognised as a crime;
- male victims are not included; and
- figures for the previous 12 months (Table 1) do not include victims under the age of 18, yet young people aged between 15 and 19 years have been identified as representing the highest risk group for sexual assault (ABS 1999b).

The Women's Safety Survey was a one-off survey, and is not likely to be repeated for some years. Consequently, it will not be possible to estimate the incidence of date rape in Australia in the future, unless a specific national research project is undertaken, or the periodic Crime and Safety Survey incorporates the category "boyfriend/girlfriend /date" to describe the relationship between offender and victim.

Explaining Date Rape

Rape Myths

Common understandings of rape and sexual assault are informed by widely accepted cultural myths, which also influence legal processes and institutions (Bechofer and Parrot 1991). Rape myths are false beliefs about rape and sexuality that disadvantage women and are incongruent with the experience of people who have been raped. An understanding of the issues relating to sexual consent highlights the link between traditional sex-role stereotypes, the occurrence of date rape, and date rape not being recognised as unacceptable or potentially criminal behaviour.

Sexual Consent and Coercion

The issue of sexual consent is central to the problem of date rape. Sex forced on a date or partner who has not consented clearly constitutes rape. However, there is a reluctance in our society to accept that sexual consent can be denied within relationships. This is partly because consent is not always communicated clearly, and because consent is sometimes wrongly assumed for a range of reasons, including an adherence to rape myths. The literature stresses the importance of clear communication of sexual consent to overcome ambiguous messages (Pineau 1989).

The normalisation of sexual coercion in intimate relationships is one of the main reasons date rape is not recognised as a serious problem. Sexual consent obtained through physically violent coercion can clearly be seen as rape, whereas verbal or emotional coercion can result in a multitude of situations which may be difficult to categorise as “rape” or “not-rape”, but may be traumatic for the person being coerced. Research has shown that young women in particular are inclined to perceive sexual coercion in dating or romantic situations as acceptable behaviour. Moreover, a significant proportion of young men in the United States have admitted that “they would force sexual intercourse if they knew they would not be caught”, yet a substantial minority admit to having committed sexual violence (Bateman 1991).

Date Rape Drugs

Drugs have been used to facilitate sexual assault in Australia and abroad. Offenders sometimes covertly spike their victim’s drink in order to incapacitate them, typically at a party or a bar. Drugs misused in this way include prescription drugs such as Flunitrazepam (Rohypnol), as well as illegal drugs such as gammahydroxybutyrate (GHB), a steroid alternative for body-builders (International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) 1999). Rohypnol is prescribed for insomnia in Australia, and in response to its misuse as a date rape drug, the pharmaceutical company Roche recently changed its formulation. Its availability and tablet strength have been reduced, and it now releases a bright blue dye in liquid, with the aim of making it more difficult for potential date rape offenders to abuse. However, generic versions of the drug which do not contain blue dye are still available. Research in the United States points to a range of date rape drugs, and there is evidence to suggest other drugs besides Rohypnol and GHB are used in Australia to facilitate sexual assault (McKey 2000).

The extent of date rape drug use in Australia is presently unknown. Date rape drugs are a fairly recent phenomenon in Australia, and data collection only began in 1998, so figures are not yet available (McKey 2000). Furthermore, date rape drugs commonly result in a loss of consciousness and memory, so victims often do not report the crime. For this reason, investigation and prosecution of drug-facilitated sexual assault cases is difficult as identification of suspects and details of the attack are difficult to establish (IACP 1999).

The Role of Alcohol

Alcohol is a widely used social stimulant that is sometimes consumed in the hope it will enhance people’s sexual encounters. Research has shown a high correlation between the use of alcohol and sexual assault, including acquaintance rape. However this does not indicate a causal link (Richardson and Hammock 1991). Alcohol can cloud judgement during a sexual encounter, reducing the ability for the victim to resist unwanted sexual advances, and is some-times used as an excuse to justify sexually manipulative behaviour (Richardson and Hammock 1991).

The impact of rape can be devastating to a victim. It may be even more destructive and humiliating when she/he has lost the ability to offer resistance, for example if under the influence of drugs or alcohol (IACP 1999). Legislative reform has led to the Victorian Crimes (Rape) Act 1991 expressly stating that there is no “free agreement”, or consent, if the victim was asleep or unconscious (including through intoxication) during a sexual assault (McSherry 1998). In other states, judicial rulings that sexual assault is less damaging to the victim if she/he is unconscious at

the time of the attack have “quite properly” been overturned on appeal(Warner 1998). An Australian study found that one of the reasons for non-disclosure and a reluctance to seek help was self-blame by date rape victims who had been drinking (Easteal 1994).

The Impact of Date Rape

The IACP has stated that “Except for homicide, rape is the most serious violation of a person’s body because it deprives the victim of both physical and emotional privacy and autonomy” (IACP 1999). Contrary to popular belief, the vast majority of sexual assaults are not committed with a weapon and do not result in physical injury. Most victims experience a range of serious and long lasting effects including emotional, psychological, financial, educational, and vocational repercussions (David, Cook and Grant, forthcoming). Victims may also be at risk of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Some of the emotional problems resulting from sexual assault include anxiety, depression, relationship and sexual difficulties, substance abuse, eating disorders and sleep disturbances (Bechofer and Parrot1991). The stigma associated with being a victim of sexual assault in our society, and the disbelief of family or friends that the incident occurred are other problems victims face, potentially hindering their recovery (Easteal 1994).

Research suggests that sexual assault by an acquaintance, such as date rape, can be just as traumatic as sexual assault by a stranger, and may be more traumatic because it also involves a breach of trust (Frazier and Seales1997). Another problem specific to date rape is confusion over whether sexual coercion is accept-able behaviour and a failure to define the incident as rape or sexual assault. This often leads to self-blame by the victim and a delay in seeking treatment, which can also impede recovery(Schwartz and Legget 1999).

Responses to Date Rape

Date Rape and the Criminal Justice System

There is little specific reference in the current literature to the response of the Australian criminal justice system to date rape per se, probably due to the small number of such cases that are reported to police or end up in court. However, much attention has been directed towards a tendency within our legal system to focus on the rights of sexual assault offenders over those of victims, and in particular for stranger rape to be viewed as more serious and more plausible than acquaintance rape (Graycar and Morgan 1990).

Police Response

The traditional police response to sexual assault in Australia included sometimes insensitive, inappropriate, or inadequate treatment of victims. Efforts have been made in most states to address these issues, including the introduction of officer education programs, and specialized units with trained staff to assist victims (David, Cook and Grant, forthcoming). Despite some improvements in the police response to sexual assault, victims are still often reluctant to report to the police, particularly those victims who are acquainted with the offender. Apart from the failure by victims to recognise date rape as a crime, other reasons for not reporting include a reluctance to have the offender arrested, fear of retribution by the offender, shame, and a belief the police could/would not help (ABS 1996; ABS 1999a).

Judicial Response and Legislative Changes

In the past three decades, the unsatisfactory treatment of victims in rape trials has received much attention. Law reforms have now been introduced to achieve a better balance between the rights of the sexual assault victim and the accused, with varying degrees of success, often dependent upon the discretion of individual judges (Easteal 1998).

One aspect of sexual assault legislation that has been subject to reform is the issue of consent. Consent is pivotal to the legal definition of sexual assault: it signifies the difference between sex and sexual assault. However, determining consent is problematic: in some states a rape conviction requires proof that the alleged victim did not consent. Whereas in others, it must also be proven that the alleged offender intended to have sexual inter-course without the consent of the other person, or was reckless in determining their consent (McSherry 1998). A fundamental problem regarding the lack of recognition of date rape as a crime is that it does not usually involve clear physical injury, and rape trials still focus on the prosecution proving lack of consent through physical resistance, despite law reform to the contrary (McSherry 1998).

Rates of Attrition and Conviction

As noted above, sexual assault is a considerably under-reported crime in Australia (ABS 1999a). Only a very small proportion of sexual assault cases that are reported to the police (particularly those involving intimates) result in the offender being prosecuted (David, Cook and Grant, forthcoming). Reasons for such high rates of attrition include the case being dropped or the charge reduced due to a perceived lack of evidence (particularly if no injuries are sustained, as is often the case in date rape); or the case going to court but the defendant being found not guilty. It is not possible to establish the national rate of attrition for sexual assault due to limitations of the ABS statistics. However, New South Wales figures show that of all sexual assaults recorded by the police in 1996-1997, only 5 per cent resulted in a guilty verdict (David, Cook and Grant, forthcoming). In effect, "this means sex-offenders can expect a good measure of legal impunity and most victims expect to remain unprotected" (Carmody and Carrington 1999). It is also worth noting that contrary to popular belief, there is no evidence of there being more false reports of rape than of any other crime (Graycar and Morgan 1990).

Treatment: Rape Crisis Centres

Victims of date rape are less likely to classify their experience as "rape" than those raped by a stranger, and they are also less likely to seek professional help. For those who do seek help, rape crisis centres play an important role in providing counselling, information, and support. Rape crisis centres have been established in major Australian centres over the past twenty years, in response to efforts of the women's movement for sexual violence to be recognised as a "public" rather than "private" matter. Rape crisis centres operate from a philosophy that acknowledges the existing "social context which condones, even encourages, male violence against females" (Daws et al. 1995). It has been noted, however, that young people in particular have a very limited knowledge of support services, and few services for male victims of sexual assault are available (Daws et al. 1995).

Prevention Strategies

Preventing sexual assault is very difficult. However, there are strategies with the potential to address some of the problems of date rape. In Australia, sexual assault prevention strategies have been implemented but not rigorously evaluated, while programs that are successful in other countries have been identified here, but not put into practice (Carmody and Carrington 1999). Prevention strategies in Australia include public awareness campaigns and educational programs aimed at students. Unfortunately, public awareness campaigns have not been thoroughly evaluated, so their preventative impact is unknown.

In a national survey conducted in 1995, Australian education departments reported the inclusion of educational programs in their curricula to raise students' awareness of human relationship issues including sexual violence (Daws et al. 1995). Studies have shown that a disturbingly high level of teenage boys condone sexual violence, reinforcing the need for sexual violence prevention education in secondary schools (Bateman 1991). Education programs aimed at tertiary

students are also considered important. The prevalence of date rape amongst university students has been widely documented in the United States, and research in Australia and New Zealand suggests similar levels of sexually coercive behaviour (Patton and Mannison 1995). However, the difficulty of changing beliefs about sexual relationships that are already deeply ingrained must be recognised (Carmody and Carrington 1999). Another prevention strategy in Australia is based on re-education programs for violent men. It has been noted, however, that these have focused on physically and not sexually violent offenders (Carmody and Carrington 1999).

It is widely recognised that “best practice” sexual assault prevention programs have a philosophical basis that recognises the link between gender and violence, and aim to destabilize rape myths (Daws et al. 1995). They also aim to educate young people to set up relationship models built on equality, mutual respect and caring (Bateman 1991). Concern has been expressed that some prevention strategies have shifted the responsibility for avoiding sexual assault onto the victim, by advising women how to change their behaviour to avoid being sexually assaulted. Exercising caution maybe common sense, but the importance of avoiding a “blame the victim” attitude has been repeatedly emphasised. Particular care must also be taken to ensure programs are of the appropriate length, address drug and alcohol issues, are properly evaluated, and take into consideration the diversity of backgrounds of victims.

A prevention program that revealed both the successes and the limitations of addressing adolescent dating violence is the Safe Dates Project. The Safe Dates Project was implemented in a United States rural community in 1995, and consisted of school and community activities aimed at the prevention of psychological, sexual and physical dating violence amongst high school students (Foshee et al. 1998). Prevention activities addressed gender-stereotyping, norms associated with partner violence, conflict management skills, beliefs about the need for help, and awareness of services. A one-month follow-up of participants found a significant positive change in attitudes towards dating violence, as well as a considerable decrease in perpetration of sexual violence. Help-seeking by victims and perpetrators also increased, although it was noted that those seeking help were still in a minority (Foshee et al. 1998).

A one-year follow-up of the Safe Dates Project revealed that positive changes in attitudes towards dating violence were maintained, but that short-term behavioural effects had disappeared (Foshee et al., in press). This reveals the difficulty of effecting long-term changes in behaviour with exposure to only one prevention program. It is important to conduct follow-up prevention programs to maintain behavioural changes. For in-stance, positive effects have been noted up to six years after the introduction of adolescent sub-stance abuse programs where follow-up programs had been included (Foshee et al., in press).

Conclusion

This paper has revealed the complexity of date rape: it is difficult to define, to measure, and to prevent. The main problems with date rape centre around the complicated issue of consent, and the potentially traumatic consequences of forced/coercive sex on individuals, predominantly (although not exclusively) young women. The extent of date rape in Australia is currently very difficult to estimate, and will remain hidden unless appropriate changes are made in the collection of sexual assault statistics. The underlying causes of sexual violence and the inadequate response of the criminal justice system have been linked to prevailing attitudes about sexuality and gender roles that disadvantage women. Prevention measures should, therefore, be directed primarily towards young men and women during adolescence, when they begin having intimate relationships.

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<http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/ti157.pdf>



Sydney Theatre Company Education presents Zeal Theatre's

TABOO

by Tom Lycos and Stefo Nantsou

Teacher's Resource Kit

PDHPE

Written by Frida Hristofski and Helen Hristofski

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

This play contains coarse language, some violence and examines important issues of on-line relationships and date rape. STC recommends this suitable for students in Year 9 and above.

DURATION

75 minutes including post performance question and answer.

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Sydney Theatre Company

Sydney Theatre Company produces theatre of the highest standard that consistently illuminates, entertains and challenges young audiences. It is committed to the engagement between the imagination of its artists and its audiences, to the development of the art form of theatre, and to excellence in all its endeavours.

STC has been a major force in Australian drama since its establishment in 1978. The original intention was to better utilise the Drama Theatre of the Sydney Opera House and the new Company comprised a small central administration staff, technical staff, workshop and rehearsal facilities.

The Company began its own productions a year later and plans began for the development of its own premises at The Wharf, Walsh Bay. The Wharf opened on 13 December 1984 by Premier Neville Wran, which allowed all departments of the Company to be housed under one roof for the first time. From 1985 the Company could perform in two venues throughout the year, the Drama Theatre and The Wharf.

In September 1999, CEO/Artistic Director Robyn Nevin, AM, launched her first season for the Company. At present STC operates out of its home venue, The Wharf comprising two theatre spaces, on Sydney's harbour, and the Drama Theatre and the Playhouse of the Sydney Opera House. The Company also tours productions across Australia and internationally.

In 2004, STC opened its state of the art 850 seat theatre, Sydney Theatre situated on the site of the old Bond Stores opposite Pier 6/7 on Hickson Road, Walsh Bay. Sydney Theatre is designed as a specialist drama and dance venue and will provide the missing link between the Drama Theatre and Sydney's larger venues such as the Opera and Capitol Theatres. It offers STC the opportunity to expand the range of work we both produce and present.

The predominant financial commitment to STC is made by its audience. The Company is also assisted annually by grants from the Federal Government through the Australia Council and the New South Wales Government through the Ministry for the Arts. STC also actively seeks sponsorship and donations from the corporate sector and from private individuals.

STC's annual subscription season features up to twelve plays, including recent or new Australian works, as well as interpretations of theatrical classics and contemporary foreign works. While these productions are the core of STC's activities, our work reaches a variety of audiences in many different ways. STC regularly co-produces and tours its productions throughout Australia, playing annually to audiences in excess of 300,000. STC actively fosters relationships and collaborations with international artists and companies.

Zeal Theatre

Founded in 1989 by actor/writer/director Stefo Nantsou, Zeal Theatre is dedicated to creating original, relevant and entertaining theatrical productions for theatres, schools, universities, national and international festivals.

The multi-skilled ensemble prides itself on a collective group-devising process utilising an eclectic mix of musical and theatrical styles. Zeal Theatre has won awards in Australia and overseas, the most recent award being recipients of the 2005 Presidents Award from International Association of Theatre for Young People. Their productions have been presented in over 15 countries and translated into different languages.

Zeal Theatre is a company dedicated to producing hard-edged, theatre performances that take an uncompromising look at some of the toughest current social issues in an honest and direct way. The characters and the situations they find themselves in are often not politically correct, ugly, hidden and difficult to address with young people. Through the immediacy and power of live theatre audiences have a chance to experience and reflect on such issues without personally exposing themselves.

The Company deliberately avoids passing judgement, instead various aspects of a scenario are humanised and laid bare for young audiences to form their own opinions. Zeal Theatre doesn't offer up neat solutions or moral messages to their theatrical situations. Instead productions are emotional experiences design to be catalysts to further discussion and reflections of the greyer areas in our modern society. Students are encouraged to debrief with the actors and their teachers to discuss what they have seen.

Zeal Theatre productions are highly physical and presented in a minimalist style. Props and set elements are used sparingly and usually have multiple uses as the action races from scene to scene. The small ensemble casts are skilled in performing, writing, music, movement and engaging with young people. Exceptional storytelling rather than expensive production values lay at the heart of Zeal Theatre productions. Within the tight structure of each production, the performers explore scene's detail through improvisation and group devised performance. The result is performers engaging with each other in a way that is alive and fresh.

www.zealtheatre.com.au

Synopsis

Researched and developed with the help of students from a diverse range of Sydney high schools, *Taboo* dares to explore contemporary social and cultural tensions of the ever-evolving relationships between boys and girls, men and women.

Performed by an experienced cast, *Taboo* is a powerful exposé of contemporary sexuality and in true Zeal Theatre style, loaded with comedy, music and their trademark energetic performance power.

After the final class of the day, health education, Xenia and Leah hurry to get ready for a secret meeting with Leah's on-line boyfriend i-boy. Leah has convinced her friend Xenia to come with her on a pre-arranged double date.

Xenia's bother Nick, and his friend Mohammed, drop off the girls at the movies before they head off to a famous Sydney strip club. Instead of the girls going to a movie they are picked up by i-boy and his friend Will.

What starts out as an exciting night of flirting and partying descends into a dreadful date rape for one of the girls as i-boy and Will transform from uber-cool older guys into frightening sexual predators.

Parents, friends and siblings are then left to deal with the after-math of this terrible event and Xenia has to find the courage to reveal and deal with what has happened to her.

Company List

Sandy Greenwood	Leah & Yolana
Lindy Sardelic	Xenia
Tom Lycos	Chad, Nick, i-boy & Film Buff Kid 1
Stefo Nantsou	Mr Smithers, Zubin, Mohammed, Will & Film Buff Kid 2

Characters

Mr Smithers	Teacher
Leah	Year 9 Student
Xenia	Year 9 Student
Chad	Leah's Father
Yolvana	Xenia's Mother
Zubin	Xenia's Father
Nick	19 Year Old Xenia's Brother
Mohammed	Nick's Friend
'I Boy'	23 Years Old
Will	28 Years Old
Film Buff Kid 1	
Film Buff Kid 2	

Scene Break Down

Scene 1	SCHOOL	2.55pm
Scene 2	AFTER SCHOOL	3.37pm
Scene 3	LEAH'S HOUSE	4.14pm
Scene 4	XENIA'S HOUSE	6.26pm
Scene 5	CLT.TZR	7.09pm
Scene 6	WAITING OUTSIDE FOX	7.24pm
Scene 7	TABOO	7.38pm
Scene 8	THE OXFORD TAVERN	8.05pm
Scene 9	THE DATE	8.26pm
Scene 10	THE OXFORD TAVERN	9.17pm
Scene 11	THE RAPE	9.42pm
Scene 12	TABOO	10.22pm
Scene 13	WAITING OUTSIDE FOX	10.39pm
Scene 14	CLT.TZR 2	11.01pm
Scene 15	LEAH'S HOUSE	11.19pm
Scene 16	XENIA'S HOUSE	11.55pm

Taboo

Stage: 5

Strand 1: Self and Relationships

Outcome:

5.2 A student evaluates their capacity to reflect on and respond positively to challenges.

Students learn about:

- Challenges and opportunities
 - During adolescence
 - Responding to challenges

Students learn to:

- Formulate safety plan to meet the particular needs of a challenging situation, listing choices and consequences and making a decision about the best choice.

Outcome:

5.3 A student analyses factors that contribute to positive, inclusive and satisfying relationships.

Students learn about:

- Developing equal and respectful relationships
 - Active listening
 - Decision making
 - Negotiation
 - Conflict resolution
 - Use of power in relationships
 - Empathy
 - Speaking up
- Recognising and responding to abusive situations
 - Recognising situations where abuse may occur
 - Date violence
 - Sexual harassment
 - Impact of violence and abuse on the individual and relationships
 - Practical personal safety strategies
 - Planning for safety or seeking help
 - Importance of support and updating adult support networks

Students learn to

- Develop ground rules and boundaries when forming new relationships
- Explore how the appropriate use of personal power can contribute to positive relationships
- Examine power, conflict and cooperation in different settings including friendship groups
- Identify situations – such as at a party, going out with others in cars in which forms of abuse may occur and suggest possible protective strategies
- Practise *trust, talk, control*, as a strategy for dealing with abusive situations

Strand 4: Individual and Community

Outcome:

5.6 A student analyses attitudes, behaviours and consequences related to health issues affecting young people

Students learn about:

- sexual health
 - qualities values in a partner
 - appropriately expressing and exploring sexual feelings
 - power, gender and risk taking
 - sexual choices and their consequences

Students learn to:

- identify and evaluate safe sexual health practices, including methods of contraception
- examine personal values and attitudes related to sexual health and identify factors that have contributed to their formation
- analyse how sexual attitudes, behaviours and sexuality are influenced by gender expectations and assumptions

Outcomes:

5.7 A student analyses influences on health decision-making and develops strategies to promote health and safe behaviours

Students learn about:

- influences on health decision-making and risk behaviours
 - individual factors, eg values and attitudes
 - sociocultural factors, eg family, peers, gender, culture
 - political factors, eg laws and regulations
- empowering individuals
 - individual action

Students learn to:

- recognise that health decisions and risk behaviours are not simply an individual responsibility but are shaped by a range of influences
- analyse the range of influences that impact on an individual's ability to behave in health and safe ways in relations to :
 - sexual health
 - personal safety
 - accessing support services
- propose and evaluate strategies that take into account influences on health decision-making, and support young people to behave in healthy and safe ways

Learning Experience

Resources

Scene 1 Health Lesson

The opening scene of 'Taboo' depicts a health lesson about safe sexual health practices.

- In small groups, students identify safe sexual health practices, including methods of contraception. As a class collaborate a list of safe sexual health practices.
- In small groups, students use the *Family Planning Association* website to gather information about safe sexual health practices, including methods of contraception. (Teachers can download appropriate information if computers are unavailable).
- From the research gathered from the website, students evaluate the practices by ranking them from safest to unsafe. Students share their rankings with other members of the class to compile an agreed list.

Scene 2 After School

On the way home, Leah and Xenia talk about the boys they have met on line and the plans for the evening.

- As a class students suggest what ground rules and boundaries would be beneficial to suggest to Leah and Xenia when forming new relationships.
- In pairs, students examine personal values and attitudes related to sexual health and identify factors that have contributed to their formation.

Scene 3 Leah's House

At Leah's house, plans for the evening with the boys continue.

- Students identify and recognise the possible abusive situations that could occur for Leah and Xenia meeting someone on the web.
- Students examine power, conflict and cooperation in the different settings (meeting the boys, going to the movies, friendship groups, going out in cars and drinking).
- Students suggest which forms of abuse may occur and suggest possible protective strategies for each of the settings identify.
- For each situation students practise *trust, talk, control*, as a strategy for dealing with abusive situations

Scene 4 Xenia's House and Scene 5 CLT.TZR

Xenia's family has different values and attitudes about young people, in particular, going out.

- Students identify the influences on **Leah and Xenia** and **Nick and Mo** when making decisions and taking part in risk behaviours. Students use the worksheet provided

Scene 6 Waiting outside Fox and Scene 7 TABOO

Leah and Xenia are waiting outside Fox Studios for I Boy and Will who are in Will's car with TABOO on the number plate.

- In small groups, students formulate a safety plan to meet the particular needs of the situation (meeting a new person for a date, driving in a car and drinking alcohol). Students list choices and consequences and making a decision about the best choice.

Scene 8 and Scene 10 The Oxford Tavern

Nick and Mohammad are at the Oxford Tavern, a well-known stripper pub in Sydney.

- In small groups, students analyse how Nick and Mo's sexual attitudes, behaviours and sexuality are influenced by gender expectations and assumptions.

Scene 9 The Date

I Boy, Leah and Xenia are in the lounge room in Will's apartment overlooking Tamarama beach.

In small groups, explore how I Boy and Will manipulate the use of personal power to gain Leah and Xenia's confidence.

Scene 11 The Rape

Leah, Xenia, Will and I Boy are back at Will's, and have had a few drinks.

- Students will explore what they know and think about date rape and sexual assault. The teacher reads out a number of statements and then asks students to respond to each statement by taking a position along a continuum between 'strongly agree' and 'strongly disagree'. After students have taken their positions, some students can be asked to volunteer to explain why they have chosen to place themselves where they have and the class can be invited to discuss the statement and various responses. Students can change their position after the discussion if they want to.

Suggested statements include:

- Rape is sex
- It's okay for someone to apply pressure on another person to have sex, but not physically force them
- Rape is much worse for men than it is for women
- Women are more at risk of rape from strangers than from someone they know
- If a woman wears 'sexy' clothes or accepts a list from someone she doesn't know very well, she is asking for trouble.
- 'No' sometimes means 'yes'.
- If there is no signs of a struggle, there can't have been a rape.
- It's okay to make someone have sex if they have led you on.
- You can have a good relationship with someone without having sex with them.
- If partners are going to have sex, it should always be something both parties want to do.

(Taken from *Negotiating Consent: Teaching and Learning Activities about safer sexual relationships consent and date rape*. (2005) Prepared by the Violence Against Women Specialist Unit

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- As a class, students identify situations where abuse may occur
- For each of the situations identified, examine how power, conflict and cooperation are illustrated.
- In small groups, allocate a situation for students to suggest possible protective strategies. Students then rewrite the scene using the suggestions they have come with *to deal with the abusive situation.*

Scene 12 TABOO, Scene 13 Outside Fox and Scene 14 CLT.TZR 2

Will and I Boy drive Leah and Xenia back to Fox Studios. Leah is very uncomfortable. When they arrive at Fox Studios Xenia runs to the nearest bush to be sick. Nick and Mo arrive to take the girls home.

- As a class, students suggest why Xenia does not speak up about the rape.
 - Some reasons may include:
 - She feels embarrassed, shame or guilt.
 - She may feel fear; experience a loss of personal safety or have been threatened
 - She was somewhere she was not supposed to be
 - She has been drinking and is afraid to say this or she thinks it is her fault because she was drunk
 - She may not remember the details because she was drunk
 - She may not know where to go for help
- Students rewrite the scenes to analyse the range of influences that impact on an individual's ability to behave in health and safe ways in relations to :

Values and attitudes

Xenia's family has different values and attitudes about young people, in particular, going out. Identify the influences on Leah and Xenia when making decisions and taking part in risk behaviour.

	Individual Factors	Sociocultural Factors	Political Factors
Leah			
Xenia			
NICK			

MO			
----	--	--	--