

green thumb theatre presents



tagged

by dave deveau



a study guide for grades 7 & up

Green Thumb Theatre
5522 McKinnon Street | Vancouver, BC | V5R 0B6
T: 604.254.4055 | F: 604.251.7002
E: info@greenthumb.bc.ca | W: greenthumb.bc.ca

Green Thumb Theatre presents

tagged

by Dave Deveau

cast & crew

Constable

Webber

Jerri

Gili Roskies

Scott Button

Agnes Tong

Directed by

Leslie Jones

(based on the original direction by
Patrick McDonald)

Stage Manager

Anthony Liam Kearns

Costume Design

Connie Hosie

Video and Set Design

Craig Alfredson

green thumb staff

Artistic Director

Patrick McDonald

General Manager

Nadine Carew

Artistic Associate

Shawn Macdonald

Production Manager

Rachael King

Tour Coordinator

Michele Frazer

Marketing Coordinator

Robyn Lamb

Bookkeeper

Susan Cai

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how to use this guide

BC teachers are interested in supporting their students to understand the responsible use of social media, but educators are navigating uncharted waters, and are sometimes struggling to keep up with youth and technology. I hope this guide will help to facilitate classroom discussions that focus on the very vulnerable human relationship themes in *tagged*. After all, the biggest challenges in social media are the social skills, not the media skills.

In preparing this guide, I consulted Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs) for several subject areas in the BC Curriculum, including Psychology, Law, Leadership, Planning 10, Communications, and Civic Studies 11. However, discussions around the themes in *tagged* are urgent at all grade levels and in all schools. Thanks are due to many BC secondary teachers for their input and feedback.

tagged deals with themes related to peer pressure and online popularity (through likes, shares, subscribers and followers) and looks at social responsibility and accountability for actions taken online. Audiences should be prepared for strong images and language. In many schools and communities online bullying, harassment and assault are forefront in the minds of students, parents and educators, and this play may evoke feelings and reactions related to these topics. Our hope is that *tagged* will engage students and act as a catalyst for meaningful discussions on these themes.

I hope this guide and its exercises are helpful. If you have additional suggestions for Green Thumb Theatre, please be in touch!

Amy Clausen
Study Guide Author
Green Thumb Theatre
info@greenthumb.bc.ca

synopsis

Online. Out of line.

The anonymous online world gives us permission to say and do things we would never do in real life. But where do we draw the line between fun and maliciousness? The harsh realities of cyberbullying and what happens when we're discovered come to a head in *tagged*.

As an Officer investigates Jerri and Webber, two young adults, in the incessant online harassment of a fellow student, not all is as it appears to be. Do these teens actually understand the consequences of their actions? Or have they even caught the right people? How responsible are we for the words that we type and what they lead others to do?

Torn from the headlines, *tagged* dissects the dangerous potential for harm that exists between social media and young minds.

about the playwright



Dave Deveau is an award-winning writer and performer whose plays and operas have been produced across Canada and in Europe. He is the Playwright in Residence for Zee Zee Theatre who have produced his plays *Nelly Boy*, *Tiny Replicas* (GayVancouver's Top 10 Productions of 2011, now in development as a feature), the critically-acclaimed *My Funny Valentine* (Sydney Risk Prize, Jessie Nomination, Oscar Wilde Nomination – Dublin) and most recently *Lowest Common Denominator*. In addition to tagged Dave's other Green Thumb play include *Out in the Open* works extensively for Green Thumb Theatre: *Out in the Open* and *Celestial Being* (on tour this spring). He is one of the Associates at Playwrights Theatre Centre where he is developing his play *H(OUR)*. He is currently working on two new commissions for Zee Zee Theatre: *Dead People's Things*, and *Elbow Room Café: The Musical* (with Anton Lipovetsky) which opens in March, presented with Studio 58. He was recently included in Xtra's Top 30 Under 30 and OUTtv's *Queers of the Year* and is the 2014 recipient of the Pride Legacy Award for Art. www.davedeveau.com

themes

Cyberbullying
Social Pressure
Technology
Consent
Ethics
Responsibility
Privacy
Depression



Lindsay Winch, Scott Button. Photo by Moonrider Productions

background & discussion

The landscape of bullying in this country has changed drastically with the advent and popularity of social media. Gone are the days of being bullied on the schoolyard but being able to go home to the safety of closed doors; the internet exists beyond doors, beyond walls beyond structures of any kind.

Green Thumb Theatre approached me to write this play just as Amanda Todd's horrendously sad story hit the mainstream press. Amanda (from Port Coquitlam, BC) was by no means the first young person to take her life as a result of the toxicity of social media, and she has by no means been the last. Rehtaeh Parsons in Dartmouth, NS, Todd Loik in North Battleford, SK and countless others have received massive media attention leading to a major shift on how we, as a nation, approach cyberbullying and online accountability. Many provinces have stepped up to the plate and brought in massive legal changes.

So how to discuss that with a high school audience? As honestly and relatably as possible. The core of the piece, in its research phase and later in workshop was really about trying to honestly discuss the way young people engage online and its implications. This is a generation who grew up with the internet, it's a fundamental part of how they communicate. Rather than focusing on the sad realities of the prominent cyberbullying cases in Canada, my task became to look at the psychology behind online behaviour: the posting and subsequent reposting of images and text, the quest to be seen, or even to find fame through online activity, and the reliance on social media as the mouthpiece of this generation.

The play is not about any of these cases, but becomes a theatrical conversation about their underlying themes. It is a play about the here and now that hopefully can introduce the possibility of honest conversation in the classroom and the hallways. I hope it does.

Dave Deveau
October 2013

terms & concepts

Terms from Social Media

Most Secondary School students with access to social media will be very familiar with these terms. Teachers and other adults may want to review the following concepts if they are unfamiliar.

Video Podcasting / Video Blogging

Creating original content and broadcasting on a website, or on an account on a video site, like YouTube.

YouTube Channel

A dedicated account used to post videos by one individual or a group.

Facebook Wall

The digital “wall space” that is visible to the public on a Facebook account. The privacy settings can be adjusted to create a more personal space.

Likes, Shares, Comments

These are the virtual “social fabric” of social media. A posting, photo or video can be “liked” by other users, shared by other users, and commented on. All these can be limited in privacy settings for most social media sites. For example, a YouTube video can be closed to comments.

Posting to someone’s wall

The act of attaching a text comment, video file or photo file to the “Wall” of another person’s Facebook account.

Privacy Settings

The individual settings on a social media account that make it more private, invisible to strangers, or open to all who search for it. Many privacy settings and options are hidden deep within account details and sub-menus. This makes many social media accounts publicly visible by default.

“Going Viral”

The phenomenon of a photo, video or meme becoming immensely popular instantaneously. Often this will involve many users sharing the same or similar content with their social networks within a short period of time.

“Meme” (pronounced Meem)

A popular image or visual joke shared in a viral way. These are often altered by individual users with Photoshop or other software. The result is a very popular and often short-lived cultural symbol. One example is the recent “Grumpy Cat” meme.

Forms of Cyberbullying

Insulting: Posting or spreading false information about a person that will cause harm to that person or that person’s reputation.

Targeting: Singling someone out and inviting others to attack or make fun of them

Identity Theft: Pretending to be someone else to make it look like that other person said things they don’t believe or that aren’t true about them.

Uploading: Sharing images of a person, particularly in an embarrassing situation, without their permission, or sharing emails without the writer’s permission.

Excluding: Pressuring others to exclude someone from a community (either online or offline)

Harassment: Repeatedly sending someone nasty, mean and insulting messages.

Source: <http://mediasmarts.ca/backgrounders/cyberbullying-law-fact-sheet>

discussion topics

What is a Digital Code of Ethics?

Pre - Discussion Reading

Vancouver's John Oliver Secondary School is developing a student-led digital Code of Ethics based on recent events:

A trend flared up last year that saw B.C. students posting negative comments about their schools, teachers and peers on Twitter. The trend spread to secondary schools that include Vancouver Technical, Magee, Killarney, Kitsilano, Tupper and John Oliver. The pattern was and, in some cases, continues to be tagged to problems at individual schools. Administrators at JO jumped on the situation. "There was some racial stuff going on there and some talk about individuals that was really hurtful," said principal Tim McGeer. JO brought in local social media expert Jesse Miller to hold workshops with student leaders last April to get them thinking and talking to their friends about digital citizenry. Last week, JO hosted school-wide assemblies and groups where students discussed how they can be kind citizens online....

"... if you're in possession of information that could become a firestorm at school tomorrow, that you make a smarter decision with the information you have," [Miller] said. "And whether that's a photo of a boy-friend or a girlfriend or some text that you got from somebody by accident because they meant to text somebody else, being that person who disseminates information negatively may not bode well for you because you're going to have to answer to somebody tomorrow."

Excerpt from:

*John Oliver secondary school gets social media 101 course
Disturbing twitter trend prompted lesson*

By Cheryl Rossi / Vancouver Courier September 17, 2013 02:12 PM

© Copyright 2013 <http://www.vancourier.com/news/john-oliver-secondary-school-gets-social-media-101-course-1.627902>

Discussion Prompts

- What do you think it would mean to be a "kind citizen online"?
- How could your school create a code of ethics for digital citizenship?
- Consider the quote "...being that person who disseminates information negatively may not bode well for you because you're going to have to answer to somebody tomorrow." Who do the characters in the play have to answer to for their behaviours online? Consider both social and legal aspects.

debate topics

This exercise, in two parts, will help a classroom to organize a debate around some of the issues raised in *tagged*. Remember that students don't have to agree with the position they are taking in a debate. This is an exercise to develop critical thinking skills, develop a strong argument, and understand possible counter-arguments.

Part One - ten minutes

In this exercise, students will pair up and take eight minutes to develop their arguments. Student A and Student B are assigned a position on the topic of anonymity online.

Student A

- I believe that individuals should have complete anonymity online •

Student B

- Individuals should always be identified online •

Student A will speak for the first two minutes while Student B takes notes. Give the class a signal to switch speakers after two minutes. After Student B has had their two minutes, Student A will get a two minute follow-up or rebuttal, and finally Student B has their two minute follow-up/ rebuttal.

After the eight minutes is up, each student should take an additional two minutes to review their notes, reflect on their debate and make note of convincing arguments from their opponent.

Part Two - fifteen to twenty minutes

Divide the classroom into two groups so that all Student As are together, and all Student Bs are together. Working from the notes they took in Part One, ask the two groups to brainstorm and report back on the following questions: What were the most convincing arguments on their side of the debate? What were the most convincing arguments on the other side of the debate?

More Debate Topics

If your class would like to continue with class debates, consider the following questions:

- Are anonymous online environments necessarily abusive places?
- Are humans inherently cruel beings? (Are teenagers more cruel than adults?)
- Is everyone a bully? (Is bullying behavior something we are all capable of?)
- Does online bullying affect girls differently than boys?

Ask students to propose debate topics too. If there seems to be interest on both sides of the issue, encourage further exploration of the topic. Consider asking students with strong convictions to debate against their own ideas.

writing prompts

The Apology - a letter

Write an apology from Jerri or from Webber. It must be sincere; the point is to find the words to take responsibility for actions, and to offer solutions to "make it right".

The Forgotten Scene - a dramatic scene

Consider a character not described in the play. It could be a parent, a teacher or a friend of the students. What do you think they might have done to change the outcome of the play? For example, could a friend at the party have changed things? What about a teacher at the school, or a parent of one of the students at the party? Write a scene from the perspective of one of these new characters, and see whether this new part of the story might have changed the outcome of *tagged*.

- Imagine a scene between Jerri and her father (a police officer) talking about the party coming up this weekend.
- Imagine a scene between the school guidance counselor or a trusted teacher and Webber, perhaps talking about his feelings for Sam.
- Imagine a scene between Sam and another friend at the party, before Sam passed out and things got out of hand.

The News Story - a piece of journalism

"We need to discuss how young people learn about bullying and empathy from the way adults treat them and each other. We need to discuss what support is needed for young people to be healthy and care about the well-being of others. We need to have conversations about the sexualization of girls and violence toward them."

Michelle Stack, "Not whether to cover suicide, but how" *Globe and Mail*, December 12 2012.

In this exercise, students should work together in pairs or small groups to create a news story that covers the events in *tagged*. The team will be bound to the ethics of good journalism. These are intended to provide respectful, balanced coverage of a news event while pursuing deeper conversations. Above all, the news item must not sensationalize the events.

Teams of students should act as journalists interviewing each other. Students confident with public speaking may "give a statement" to the class in the character of the police, a teacher at the school, the parents and/or the friends of those involved in the story. Journalists will then use the source's interview or statement and, combined with the events that unfolded in the play, will write an expository news story in keeping with respectable journalism standards. Ask students to conclude their news story with a reference to educational resources or bullying prevention programs in their school or community.

Alternately, a class with access to video cameras and editing equipment could create a news story appropriate for the television news.

To read the rest of the article, visit:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/commentary/not-whether-to-cover-suicide-but-how/article6218954/>

To learn more about ethics in Canadian journalism, visit:

<http://www.caj.ca/?p=1776>

group project ideas

Creating a Digital Code of Ethics.

Pre Activity Warm-up

Belonging to a community comes with some rights and responsibilities. Spend a few minutes brainstorming what rights and responsibilities we have as students and teacher in a classroom, a minor living with a family, a citizen of Canada, etc.

Activity

Have students work in small groups of three or four. Each group will identify a social media site, for example Facebook, Twitter, Reddit or 4chan. All students in each group should be familiar with the site they choose.

Students must create a Digital Code of Ethics for their social media site.

State the rights of the user (uploading content, commenting, sharing, etc.) and the social and legal responsibilities (properly crediting others for creative content, maintaining a supportive community for others, not harassing or spamming, etc.).

Post Activity Discussion

Have each group share their Digital Code of Ethics. Ask them to consider adding or editing rules in their code based on feedback from the group. Post final rules in a computer lab or add them to your school's resources for students and parents.



Bonus

If you have an IT , Web Design or Media Arts classroom or lab, ask your students to design a digital poster, banner, or badge for your school website, reminding the school community about responsible and respectful conduct online.

virtual portrait

Research has shown that perceived anonymity on the Internet may encourage some young people, who might not otherwise do so, to initiate or participate in bullying behaviour. In this activity, students learn about online privacy and ethical behaviour by exploring their digital footprints through a drawing or creative collage. When we see our online identities mapped to our "real" identities, we realize that our online interactions may not be as anonymous as we think they are!

Virtual Portrait activity - one hour or more

Supplies: *This exercise uses magazine cutouts or other print media for collages. Choose media relevant to the students' interests, including magazines about technology, fashion, celebrity, sports, culture and the arts. Each student should also have access to paper, pens, scissors and glue sticks or clear tape.*

Ask each student to pre-plan their collage by listing all their social media sites and web-based activities that use identities, login names, handles, or profiles. For example, this should include all email addresses, twitter, YouTube and Facebook accounts, multi-player gaming sites, as well as "frequent buyer" or "points accounts" with clothing stores and other retailers.

Now, ask each student to draw out his or her online "portrait" as overlapping circles on a sheet of blank white paper. The accounts used most frequently (ex. email, facebook), should be the biggest circles. Smaller circles can represent special hobbies and other online activities that seem less visible or less important. Circles can then be filled in with collage images from magazines that represent the type of content they share, search or comment on. For example, if an email account is used primarily for communicating with school or family, the images should represent these communications. Other social media circles can include images of music videos, sports, friends, or celebrities that students "like" or "follow."

The result should be something of a conceptual "map" or "portrait" of a student's online persona(s), a digital map of their Web-based activities and the various identities they assume by using a nickname or avatar online. They determine whether the "virtual worlds" where these identities exist are distinct and separate from one another by choosing the composition of the circles.

Post Activity Discussion

Ask students who are comfortable sharing their thoughts to explain how they "see" themselves based on this portrait. For example, are their online characters different from their "real life" persona? In what way? (i.e., are they more gossipy, more outgoing, funnier, more cynical, unafraid of saying what they think, able to respond aggressively if upset by an online comment...)

With further discussion about accounts and privacy settings, students will understand how to assess and measure their personal privacy online, their vulnerability to cyberbullying, and the importance of ethical behaviour and "virtual reputation" in various Web environments.

Note: The object of this exercise is to help students delve into their online identities. If they wish, students can choose not to publicly share their work, although they should be encouraged to fill in the information privately.

This lesson was adapted from mediasmarts.ca

table of ethical actions

Consider the following actions, which are described by characters in the play. Is the action good or bad? Allowable or forbidden? Why or why not?

Mark the chart under the columns for Good or Bad, AND Allowable or Forbidden. If you believe this action is also illegal, mark the column under Illegal.

	Good	Bad	Allowable	Forbidden	Illegal
Reading private texts on another person's phone					
Drinking underage at a party					
Posting cat videos to Jerri's Facebook wall					
Posting private photo of Webber onto Facebook					
Sam and Jake beginning a relationship without telling Jerri					
Undressing Sam at the party while she is asleep					
Photographing and filming Sam while she is asleep					
Webber kissing Sam without consent while she is asleep					
Sharing, liking, commenting on photos of Sam online					

This exercise is intended to spark personal reflection on ethical and moral acts, as well as legal and illegal acts. Sharing the results of students' tables is likely to spark a lively discussion on the definitions of "good", "bad", "allowable" and "forbidden"!

cyberbullying quiz

Pre Activity Brainstorm

What constitutes cyberbullying? As a class, brainstorm as many possible types of cyberbullying as you can think of. Ask students to consider behaviours from many different types of social media.

Post Activity Discussion

Read or share the following list to help clarify forms of cyberbullying. Revisit the brainstorm activity from the beginning of this exercise and review what you might have missed.

Forms of Cyberbullying

Insulting: Posting or spreading false information about a person that will cause harm to that person or that person's reputation.

Targeting: Singling someone out and inviting others to attack or make fun of her or him.

Identity theft: Pretending to be someone else to make it look like that other person said things he or she doesn't believe or that aren't true about him or her.

Uploading: Sharing images of a person, particularly in an embarrassing situation, without her or his permission, or sharing emails without the writer's permission.

Excluding: Pressuring others to exclude someone from a community (either online or offline).

Harassment: Repeatedly sending someone nasty, mean and insulting messages.

Source: <http://mediasmarts.ca/background/cyberbullying-law-fact-sheet>

quiz: is it cyberbullying?

Mark **CB** for *Cyberbullying*, or **NB** for *Not Bullying* next to each action:

Sharing a photo or video of someone without their permission _____

"Unfriending", "blocking" or "unfollowing" someone online _____

Forwarding a private email to a group _____

Creating an online group to harass or threaten an individual _____

Disagreeing with someone in a comment thread _____

Repeatedly posting harassing messages to someone's social media account _____

Sharing someone's personal information (ex. phone number) online without permission _____

Revealing personal details meant to embarrass or shame another _____

table of ethical actions

Students are likely to disagree about what constitutes Allowable and Forbidden actions. Use your judgment.
Boxes marked with an (I) are Illegal.

Students may have questions about the legal status of some of the following actions. Illegal acts online include an element of stalking, harassment or defamation. Dial-a-Law is a service provided by the Canadian Bar Association that provides general information on BC legal topics. For clarification on illegal acts and cyberbullying, consult <http://cbabc.org/For-the-Public/Dial-A-Law/Scripts/Criminal-Law/206>

	Good	Bad	Allowable	Forbidden	Illegal
Reading private texts on another person's phone					
Drinking underage at a party					I
Posting cat videos to Jerri's Facebook wall					
Posting private photo of Webber onto Facebook					
Sam and Jake beginning a relationship without telling Jerri					
Undressing Sam at the party while she is asleep					I
Photographing and filming Sam while she is asleep					I
Webber kissing Sam without consent while she is asleep					I
Sharing, liking, commenting on photos of Sam online					

quiz: is it cyberbullying?

Mark **CB** for Cyberbullying, or **NB** for Not Bullying next to each action:

Sharing a photo or video of someone without their permission	CB
"Unfriending", "blocking" or "unfollowing" someone online	NB
Forwarding a private email to a group	CB if intentional or malicious, NB if accidental. Ex. Hitting "reply-all" by accident
Creating an online group to harass or threaten an individual	CB
Disagreeing with someone in a comment thread	NB
Repeatedly posting harassing messages to someone's social media account	CB
Sharing someone's personal information (ex. phone number) online without permission	CB
Revealing personal details meant to embarrass or shame another	CB

For more information on what to do if you are being bullied online, or how to protect yourself online, consult the following sources:

Kids Help Phone has excellent resources for teens, including confidential help at www.kidshelpphone.ca

The Cyberbullying Resource Page at www.cyberbullying.ca

Web Aware is an excellent resource for parents www.bewebaware.ca

Information and resources for online safety at The Canada Safety Council www.safety-council.org

Victim Link BC provides support and referrals for victims of crime at www.victimlinkbc.ca

The Victim Link Line is available 24 hours a day at 1.800.563.0808

what can you do if someone is stalking, harassing, or cyberbullying you?

First, if the harassment is attempted communication with you, tell the person to stop. Otherwise, they may not know that they are harassing you. Never reply to harassing messages – except to tell the person to stop.

Call the police to report the problem. Record the details of every incident, including time, date, place, who was involved, and what was said and done. Keep letters, notes, voicemail messages, emails, texts, instant messages, and social media and internet posts. Give them to the police.

If the harassment happens at school, report it to the school authorities, as well as to the police. If it happens at work, report it to your boss, plus the police.

Report cyberbullying or other harassing communication to your internet or cell phone company. Most companies have policies on acceptable use of their services, and can cancel the service of a customer who violates those policies. The company can also help police find a cyberbully who is using their network.

If you get a harassing phone call on a landline, dial *57 immediately when the call ends. The phone company will record the phone number that made the call, so the police can get it. If you receive harassing calls on your cell phone, call the phone company for help in tracking the calls.

Source: *The Canadian Bar Association, British Columbia Branch*
<http://cbabc.org/For-the-Public/Dial-A-Law/Scripts/Criminal-Law/206>