

GW THEATRE COMPANY

ONE EXTREME TO THE OTHER



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FROM 'ONE EXTREME TO THE OTHER' POST-PERFORMANCE LESSON PLAN

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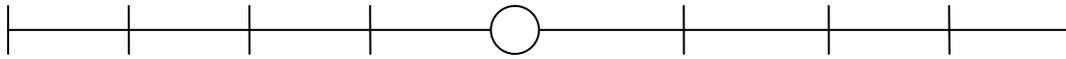
POST-PERFORMANCE LESSON (FOLLOWING UP ISSUES RAISED IN THE PLAY)

LESSON MATERIALS:

Pen, paper, flip chart or board, synopsis, ('Bradford Marches Banned' article), continuum line, 'Background Notes on the Families', (articles on youth organisations).

1. Brief re-cap of events of play (see **synopsis**.) We are going to explore some of the issues raised in the play.
2. You might like to read the article from 'The Mirror' – '**Bradford Marches Banned**' and discuss with pupils whether, in a 'free' country, such events should be banned and why.
3. Place the following characters on the 'Extremism' continuum line. **Use only the centre and the right hand side of the line and use above the line for the Muslim characters, below for the white British characters.**

Ali - Sara - Sheikh Google - Mo
Tony - Karl - Jess - Neville Parkin



4. **The following questions can be answered by whole class discussion, or individually (written responses, followed by plenary) or by dividing the class into groups, or – if people feel confident – by asking some pupils to either 'hot seat' or act out the characters.**
5. Read '**Background Notes on the Families**'.
Are there any things which have happened to the characters which help us to understand their beliefs and attitudes / anger?
6. Who is the most vulnerable character(s)? Why? (**There are two articles in the pack about how young people are exploited – firstly Hitler Youth, then BNP camp** – these are interesting from the point of view of 'brainwashing' young people, but they could also be used as an activity to compare the use of fact and opinion in an English lesson.)
7. Look again at your continuum line. What do the people in the two groups have in common? (They should find parallels, of course.)
8. How do the two girls, Jess and Sara, try to help the young men in the play to resolve the conflict?

9. What would have happened if the torching of the mosque / church hall had gone ahead? (This could be **acted out** as the following day's **news bulletin**, or written up as an **article for a newspaper**, preferably with a particular political bias.)

10. Brainstorming activity - Who is being manipulated? By whom? How? (As many different responses as you can think of.) You may want to give pupils some guidance here by providing categories, such as:

religion

politics

emotional manipulation

'buying' allegiance

peer or community pressure

being set up by others

the role of the press

etc.

11. Have any of the characters changed by the end of the play? How?

12. Are there any lasting answers to this type of conflict? Is violence the right / only way? **Brainstorm** some ideas of ways in which we can better understand one another's views.

'FROM ONE EXTREME TO THE OTHER' BY MIKE HARRIS BRIEF SYNOPSIS FOR PUPILS.

The play deals with issues of violent extremism through its impact on two families. Ali, Sara and Mo are Muslims; Tony and Karl are white British. Jess, a former friend of Ali, Sara and Tony and now a journalist on a national newspaper, has returned to the northern town of Tolmer to report on a march by members of the National Democratic Party due to take place through an Asian area of town. The march has been banned by the police, but the NDP plan to go ahead, and the Muslims are not going to stand by and do nothing...

Mo is in the process of being radicalised by Yussuf Omar (aka Sheikh Google), Ali too has found a purpose in Sheikh Google's message (though he is more moderate than his younger brother), and Tony has joined the NDP, led by the ex-Nazi Neville Parkin. Both Mo and Karl have been drawn in by the leaders of these extremist groups and are being exploited to do their 'dirty work' by torching a mosque and a church hall respectively so that the NDP / the Muslims can be blamed in order to stir up racial tensions in Tolmer.

Bradford Marches - BBC News website: Weds 4 July 2001

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/1421728.stm>

Hitler Youth - History Learning Site: Modern World History: Nazi Germany: Nazis Education

http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/Nazis_Education.htm

BNP gun camps - The Mirror website: 3 Sept, 2008

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/top-stories/2008/09/03/bnp-running-gun-camps-for-kids-115875-20722309/>



BACKGROUND NOTES ON THE FAMILIES

Tony is 23. His dad left when he was born. He did drugs and stole from his mum to buy them. He was involved in gang fighting. He went out with Jess, and then with Sara, Ali's sister. Ali didn't like Sara going out with a non-Muslim boy, so beat Tony up, putting him in hospital. He never went back to college, but he is trying to clean up his estate, getting rid of the drug pushers and cleaning up the church hall for the old folk. He resents what he sees as the preferential treatment the Asians get and also the fact that they don't want to be 'English', though he can't actually say what this means! He is easily taken in by Neville Parkin's racist talk.

Karl, his brother, is 14. He too has been doing drugs. He messes about at school, and he longs for a time when things were better than they now are on the estate.. He is easily taken in by Neville Parkin, who takes him back to his flat and shows him DVDs which suggest that 'pakis and asylum seekers' are taking over everything. Parkin is able to use him to torch the church hall (which his brother has been doing up) in order to incite riots between whites and Muslims in the community.

Ali is 23. He used to go out with Jess, a non-Muslim girl. He did drugs for a time and was involved in gang fighting. He beat up Tony for going out with Sara, his sister, and was sent to prison for it. When he came out, his dad had died and his mum had been placed in a mental institution. He never went back to college, but he has dedicated himself to the Muslim religion. He has persuaded lots of his friends to get involved in religion too. He is taken in by Sheikh Google, who 'showed me where to put all the anger'.

Sara is also 23, and is Ali's twin sister. After Tony was beaten up and Ali was imprisoned, her parents sent her to Pakistan and tried to get her married off to her cousin, but she came back to England to look after Mo when their dad died and their mum was put in hospital. She is quite a strong and determined character and has a job working for the council.

Mo is 14, has been wild at school and is now doing drugs. He has been brainwashed by Sheikh Google and believes Sheikh Google's interpretation of the Koran. He is easily persuaded to torch the mosque in order to anger local Muslims and make them more extreme.

GLOSSARY:

Gora – whites (not a derogatory term)

Haraam – forbidden

Ijtihad – independent reasoning (having a mind of your own)

Jihad – struggle (interpreted by some Muslims as 'holy war')

Jizya tax – paid by non-Muslims to Muslims to become 'Dhimmis', protected people.

Kuffers – non-Muslims, non-believers

Mujahadeed – Muslim on jihad (ie in war or personal struggle for religion)

Summarise both aspects; We have rights concerning speech and expression.

We also have responsibilities towards others. In conclusion consider how we might balance those two aspects. What kind of laws should there be to allow both aspects to exist.