

Study Guide for Teachers

“Little Brother”

A Collective Consciousness Production
Dexter Singleton, Director



Young
Audiences
Arts for
Learning
Connecticut

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Written, Directed and Performed by Dexter J. Singleton, Little Brother is a one-man, multi-character theatrical piece that tells the story of a young journalist assigned to write about a murder trial and how this assignment affects his career and community. In its Poe-like unfolding, the audience relives the story through his eyes, while meeting all those involved including victims, suspects, witnesses, lawyers and media. All fifteen people from varying walks of life are brought to life through one actor. It makes for a compelling and insightful theatre experience that explores themes of racism, genocide, and stereotypes within the media. An audience discussion follows the performance. Length: 45 minutes. Grades: 6 - 12

OBJECTIVES

- To help students understand the impact the media can have on our lives and opinions.
- To teach students not to judge others without learning about that person first.
- To teach students about some of the struggles young African American men face and how to overcome these difficulties.

BEFORE THE PROGRAM

- Do you feel that the opinions expressed within the media are biased at all; based on age, race, gender, religion or ethnicity?
- What are some stereotypes that are portrayed by the media? Do you think these stereotypes are accurate?

AFTER THE PROGRAM

- How can those who feel they are being stereotyped by the media change the public's opinion of them?
- Discuss the difference between opinion and objectivity. Do the students feel the media is objective in its reporting all of the time? If not, why would the media tell a story that was not objective.
- Have the students write a short newspaper article about the Brian Howard case, see if they can be objective, only focusing on the information presented within the play. After the piece is written discuss whether it was difficult to stay objective or not? Why are some of the articles opinion and others objective?

VOCABULARY

Journalist
Public opinion
Victim
Suspect
Witness
Racism
Genocide

RESOURCES

BOOKS/INTERNET:

Students:

Books:

Tuned Out: Why Americans Under 40 Don't Follow the News by [David T. Z. Mindich](#)

To Kill a Mockingbird by [Harper Lee](#)

Artist's Way, The PA (Inner Workbook) by [Julia Cameron](#)

Internet:

<http://www.buildingblocksforyouth.org/media/exec.html>

A study on the ways which media creates stereotypes of minorities, youth, and crime rates.

<http://www.webster.edu/~woolflm/idabwells.html>

A quick bio on Ida B. Wells, America's first female African American reporter. She was also a civil activist, and a suffragette. This woman teaches us how the press can be used in a positive way.

<http://newzcrew.org/webx?50@440.dpqXa7A0eOQ.0@/>

A community for teens to discuss current events and news happenings. Teens can join small three-week long discussion circles, or look over the sight for interesting and informative discussions teens are having on current events. Also a link for teachers.

CURRICULAR LINKS

Connecticut State Department of Education

Source: The Arts - A Guide to K-12 Program Development

- ✚ Goal 3: Responding in Theater
Students should select, observe, describe, analyze, evaluate and explain works of theater, film, television and video (content standard 7)

Source: The CT Framework – Language Arts

- ✚ Standard 4: Information Processing
Students will apply evaluative criteria to the selection, interpretation, analysis, reorganization and synthesis of information from a variety of sources and formats.
- ✚ Standard 5: Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation
Students will reflect upon, describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate their own and others' work.

MORE RESOURCES

Books:

The Reporter's Notebook : Writing Tools for Student Journalists by [Mark Levin](#)

School Newspaper Adviser's Survival Guide by [Patricia Osborn](#)

Create Your Own Class Newspaper: A Complete Guide for Planning, Writing, and Publishing a Newspaper by [Diane Crosby](#)

Internet:

<http://www.utexas.edu/coc/journalism/SOURCE/j363/newswatch.html>

Review of NewsWatch website, with link. NewsWatch gives news readers a summary of the day's news articles and tries to make it easy for readers to understand the articles. Also has many links to other news sights.

http://highschooljournalism.org/teachers/LessonPlan_Display.cfm?Type=L&LessonplanId=105&AuthorId=59

Study guide for teachers to initiate student's interest in reading newspapers.

<http://www.mcgillreport.org/objectivity.htm#>

A report written by practicing reporter, David McGill. Discusses the history, critiques, and practice of objective journalism.

Think about it...

Dexter J. Singleton portrays all of the characters in "Little Brother."

Can you write a short scene in which the actor portrays more than one character?



COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS THEATRE

Under the able leadership of Dexter J. Singleton, Collective Consciousness Theater was formed to bring to light issues of social justice and civil rights.

Dexter J. Singleton began his professional theatre career as a company member with the world-renowned Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit. He is the former artistic director of the critically acclaimed Kalamazoo Youth Theatre and has worked with many schools and colleges. He currently is lead theater instructor at Regional Center for the Arts in Trumbull, CT.

Additional Collective Consciousness programs include:

- ✚ "Shakespeare – The Remix"
- ✚ "No Lie"
- ✚ "I'm Just a Superhero"
- ✚ "Harriet Tubman"
- ✚ "Struggle for Freedom"

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