

Responsibly teaching *The Radicalisation of Bradley Manning* and other trans plays

The Radicalisation of Bradley Manning is about the life of Chelsea Manning. This play was published in 2012, and Chelsea publicly came out as trans in 2013. Sometimes a text and a real person's life don't match up – it's how we talk about them in the here and now that makes the difference. When talking about Chelsea, use she/her pronouns and try to avoid deadnaming her (using her old name). Remember that Chelsea Manning has always been Chelsea Manning.

We will never fully know who is in our classrooms and what they're going through. You may find that this text might bring up some things that you're not sure how to deal with – we'll share some ways to support someone if that comes up, and some everyday tips to help along the way.

In rehearsals:

- As a part of your check-in at the beginning of your rehearsal, make sure you're including pronouns. We use pronouns when we talk about someone else – "She has a yellow jacket" or "They have a brown dog."
 - This can become a part of your routine if you're asking people to introduce their names, their pronouns and "how they're doing today?" for example. [Find out more about pronouns here.](#)
- Make it good practice to use gender-neutral language, so avoid grouping students into "boys and girls" and group them in a different way.
- Challenge gender stereotypes and offensive language if it occurs, and ensure that your space is safe for all students.
- Have some awareness resources in your rehearsal space, consider putting small pride flags in your room as well if you're allowed.

Ideas to explore:

- When working with a piece like *The Radicalisation of Bradley Manning*, consider who you want to cast in that role – *The Radicalisation of Bradley Manning* is an ensemble piece, and you can explore Chelsea's identity with who you cast in those roles.
- What are you saying with the clothing and costumes that you put your actors in? You can explore army fatigues, or using traditionally feminine clothing, or even ignore this altogether and explore something else.
- There are several time shifts in the play, what impact do these have on Chelsea and her identity?
- What impact do props, set, sound and lighting have on the piece?
- When doing character exploration and research, encourage your students to explore recent resources around Chelsea, and remember to use she/her pronouns and try to correct these in your rehearsals.