



## PRE- & POST-SHOW QUESTIONNAIRE

### PRE-SHOW QUESTIONNAIRE

#### OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this document is to lay the foundation for engaging in a dialogue of Social Consciousness and Values Clarification. It is designed for those who are about to see “The Black Jew Dialogues” to give teachers/group leaders a context for the type of issues that are brought up in the performance.

Part 1 is to be used prior to the performance to get your students thinking in terms of these two bigger themes:

#### 1. Empathy

\*The capability to share and understand another's emotions and feelings. It is often characterized as the ability to "put oneself into another's shoes".

#### 2. Citizenship

\*Citizenship is an act of being a citizen of one community.

\*Citizenship status, under “social contract theory”, carries with it both rights and responsibilities.

One of the key components that we try to impart to our audience is that every racial, ethnic, religious, and social group in America has been oppressed and ostracized at some point in its history in the U.S. or elsewhere. This point often becomes a kind of “red herring” used by one group or another to distinguish their history and pain as unique and separate. It is important to note that not every group has endured every or the same indignity, and the truth of anyone’s individual history should not be minimized, but the damage done by colonialism, religious or cultural intolerance, slavery, military

occupation and genocide should never be pitted one against another either. It is a zero sum fight. It is also true that, if we look at our own cultural, national, or religious history we have been in the role of the oppressor in one way or another, so casting blame in the here and now towards the misdeeds of those in the past is mostly an exercise in misplaced responsibility. By and large, it is also a counterproductive course.

Another point that we try to make is that, America, by part of its constitutional and declarative mandate proclaimed that this would be the place where all people would be treated equally. The whole of our American journey encompasses our pursuit of this “more perfect union”; correcting the flaws and injustices of a less tolerant past as we move forward. By looking at the 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the constitution you can see evidence of this. These are things we all share.

Our hope is that through the pre-show preparation, our performance and the post show discussion, we have provided you with the tools to have what will be an ongoing and transformative dialogue with your students/groups.

Key in having the kind of experience that we strive for is encouraging everyone involved to be as honest as possible about themselves and their biases. Part of moving toward this end is being willing to look at the whole of our cultural, religious, sexual selves, honestly. This is where empathy comes into play. Our objective is never to, by design, hurt, disrespect, or dishonor anyone in an effort to understand them, so we must encourage all to keep empathy in play even as they may be asking the most difficult questions. Similarly, to those being questioned, empathy would dictate that you give the asker the latitude to make a mistake in the always awkward effort of getting to know you. It is fear that usually keeps us from engaging the unknown. Every teacher knows that the fear of asking a “dumb question” makes most students ask no questions. The principle is the same. We the teacher/leaders must work to foster an environment of comfort, so as to reduce fear and maximize openness.

Part 2 is to be used after the performance. (We will speak more about that later.)

### **Expected Results:**

It is our hope that by using this outline and engaging your students in the discussions we hope it will generate, you can help your students to address some of what might be their own biases, prejudices, and mis-beliefs about other racial, ethnic, religious, and social groups and gain a deeper sense of our commonality. For the college audiences, we

hope that they will take the opportunity to investigate groups/organizations on campus that represent perspectives different than their own (ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, etc.)

#### PRE/POST QUESTIONS AND GAMES

The questions we supply can be used the way the teacher/group leader sees fit to use them. We do not intend for you to use them all (This includes the “diversity bingo” questions). Please pick and choose the ones that you think will resonate most strongly with your group. We also give you license to use them before or after the performance. You can revisit some if you think your group will have gained deeper insight after the performance. Basically, do what you do, improvise, adapt, conquer.

#### GAMES

We know that just asking a series of questions may not work for every group so we have supplied a couple of game models that we use in our more intensive workshops to give you a chance to be playful with your group and get them moving. These games are just a frame that gives a more active structure for asking questions. What we often have done is add questions that are less issue oriented for the sake of keeping the groups relaxed and engaged. There will be many examples on the following list, but first the games

#### STAND UP/SIT DOWN

As you ask the questions; ask people to stand up if the question applies to them. If they are already standing, ask them to sit if the question does not apply to them.

#### FOUR CORNERS

Mark out four corners in the room; or at least four places that are separate and distinct from one another in your space. You may want to number them or use colored paper to distinguish one from another. As you ask a question ask the students to move to the number or color that you assign to the question. They can move around the space as the questions apply to them.

#### WIND BLOWS/ALL MY NEIGHBORS

Have all the members of your group sit in a circle (in chairs). The leader will begin standing in the middle of the circle with a chair and a hat full of statements made from the list. The leader will read a statement prefaced with the phrase “The wind blows for...”/ “All my neighbors who...”. The statement must apply to them as well as a few other people in the circle (i.e. “the wind blows for everyone who grew up in a major city”, or “All my neighbors who have more than one sibling”). Once the question has been stated; if the statement applies to you then you must get up and move to a different chair. You cannot move to either chair that abuts the chair you were sitting in. The next question gets asked by the person who finds themselves without a chair at the end of the round.

#### DIVERSITY BINGO (please see attached bingo documents)

This game is played just like the standard bingo game with a couple of exceptions:

1. No one should be sitting.
2. The players do not fill out their own cards.

Pass out a card to each player. The group leader should read from the supplied list of statements (see “diversity bingo questions”). Once the statement is read the players have to find someone in their group to whom that statement applies. They can do this by asking around or if that person knows the statement applies to them they can volunteer the information. The players need to get said person to initial the square that applies (no one can initial their own card). The game continues until a few people have gotten BINGO. Then verify the winners. Prizes are always a bonus.

#### WRITTEN/ HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

We encourage teachers/group leaders to give their groups a “pre-show research assignment” as a way to introduce them to the sometimes difficult outcomes of hate and bias.

For Colleges:

\* Can they find out the on campus statistics of acts of bias/hate/vandalism/assaults (sexual, racial, religious, etc.)

For all groups and Schools:

- Can they find out local, regional, or national statistics of criminal acts of bias/hate/vandalism/assaults (sexual, racial, religious, etc.)
- Can they find out the number of active extremist/hate based organizations operating in U.S. currently (recommended sites)
- Can they find any specific acts of bias or hate in the news.

Once they have compiled the information, ask them:

1. What did they learn that they did not realize?
2. How has it effected them?
3. Has it changed the way that they view things?
4. If so, what will they do differently?

#### *Essential Questions:*

Our hope is that students will be able to answer the following essential questions about themselves and relationships between different ethnic, cultural and social groups:

1. What biases/prejudices do I have?
2. How much do I allow those prejudices to affect my behavior and decisions?
3. What motivates prejudice or bigotry?
4. Do I engage people who are different from me openly?

## GENERAL QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

- What % of your good friends come from a different background than you?
- How many (first generation) different nationalities do you engage with on a regular basis (look at your regular movements over a week and point out how many people are different than you by color accent or religion)? What is the nature of your relationship with them?
- Have you ever been in love?
- Are you in love right now?
- Have you ever felt lonely in a crowd of people?
- Have you ever witnessed a violent act?
- Have you ever been the victim of a violent act?
- Have you ever felt so bad that you didn't want to live?
- Can you communicate openly with your parents?
- Can you communicate openly with your teachers?
- Are you not sure of who you are sometimes?
- Are you an only child?
- Have you ever cheated?
- Do you know when your ancestors arrived in the U.S. (pre-slavery, post-slavery, post-WWII)?
- Do you know where your ancestors come from?
- How far back can you trace your ancestry?
- Do you think most older people understand young people?
- Have you ever rushed to a friend's aid in a fight?
- Have you ever rushed to a stranger's aid in a fight?
- If I found a wallet with \$100.00 in it, I'd keep the money.
- If I could cheat on my partner and know I wouldn't get caught, I would.
- I have thought sexist thoughts about specific people?
- I have thought racist thoughts about specific people?
- I have done something, that if my parents found out they'd be pissed.
- I have broken a bone.
- I have been in the hospital for more than a night.
- I have lost a loved one.
- I have someone in my family who is gay.
- I have a good friend who is gay.
- I am uncomfortable around gay people.
- I have a car of my own.
- I know people who are racist.
- I know people who are sexist.

- People in my family are racist.
- I love pizza.
- My family would have a problem if I dated out of my race.
- My family would have a problem if I dated out of my religion.
- I have stood up to someone who made a sexist statement.
- I have stood up to someone who as made a racist statement.
- I like to exercise.

## POST-SHOW QUESTIONNAIRE

These questions are based on you students having seen “The Black Jew Dialogues”. Some of the sketches are used as the heading to address a series of questions. Others are meant to stand alone, but are placed where they are brought up in the performance. We will address some of these questions in the post-show discussion, but given time constraints, this discussion will only scratch the surface. We hope that you will be committed to following up with the issues and ideas raised.

Some questions may not apply based on the content of the show you see. The show is sometimes edited down for time or content. We have chosen to keep all the questions because even though they may not covered in the show, they still have substance.

### THE BIG QUESTIONS (to be raised right after the show)

- What stuck out in the show for you?
- What did you agree/disagree with in the show?

### SCENE BASED QUESTIONS

#### OPENING

- Have you ever told a \_\_\_\_\_ joke?
- What are some of the ones that you have heard?
- How honest do you believe people are about their feelings toward another cultural group?

#### SLAVERY SKETCH

- What role do you think slavery played in American life now?
- Do you believe people look honestly about the role slavery played in America?
- What do you know about slavery on a worldwide scale?
- How much do you know about your own peoples’ history both good and bad? (“everybody’s dirty”)

#### MABEL AND ESTHER (The Old Ladies)

- What stereotypes have you heard about any group? (“Why are you people so violent/cheap.”)

- Do/Have you challenged their creditability?
- Have you challenged the people who have used them?

#### RELIGION (The Bar-Mitzvah boys)

- What role does religion play in your life?
- What do you know about others faith?
- How well do you understand others faith?

#### CULTURAL SENSIVITY (How does it feel to be.....)

- What do you know about the \_\_\_\_\_ experience?
- What do you understand about \_\_\_\_\_ experience?
- Do you believe America is bias? (If not, why? If so, how?)
- What biases do you think exist in America?
- What evidence do you have to prove this?
- What do you think it is like to be (a)\_\_\_\_\_?
- Do you believe you have a responsibility to/for others? (If so, how? If not, why?)

#### FEAR AND COMFORT (Rednecks, O.N.E Program, Feareotypes)

- Do you believe “feareotypes” exist?
- What do your parents fear that you do not?
- Can you point out a policy, pattern, or behavior that you see in you daily life that seems to be fear based?

#### FEAR (“What do Jews/Blacks fear the most?”)

- How much do you know about the struggles of any group in America/ The World?
- What can you do about it?