

DIALOGUE MAT 1: PASSION AND POSSIBILITIES

In groups, critically consider the questions – write your group responses on the dialogue mat.

- 1** What is beauty?
- Where do we get our images of beauty?
 - Are the images we see stereotypes or are they fair representations of all women?
 - Susie Orbach wrote a book in 1978 called *Fat is a Feminist Issue*, and argued that “the beauty and variety of the female form are judged unacceptable, and instead slimness is promoted for profit and control”. What do you think she meant by this and why do you think the issue still exists for women today?

- 2** Shakespeare wrote 788 male characters and 141 female characters. Discuss the representation of women in theatre in light of this fact and the following five quotes, which are taken from reviews of Phyllida Lloyd’s all-female production of *Julius Caesar* at the Donmar Warehouse.
- Why do you think Phyllida Lloyd chose to stage an all-female production of this play? Do you think there should be more productions like this?
 - Why do you think there are more opportunities for men than women in theatre?
 - What difference does it make to a production whether the cast is male, female or mixed?

“Imagine you are trained and capable of playing Beethoven’s piano concertos but you are forbidden to perform them because you are a woman ... People have come up with the most ridiculous excuses for why women aren’t on stage more: “Women can’t do the physical stuff” or, “Women can’t be funny” or, “women aren’t in touch with aggression” – these attitudes should be exposed for the rubbish that they are.”

The Times 29/12/12, Harriet Walter

“All-female cast makes past interpretations look cissy”. Harriet Walter as Brutus is “pale, handsomely chiselled, androgynous and tragic, her thoughtful bright dangerous eyes command every scene ... if this extraordinary human being gets shoved back full-time into frocks it will be a shocking crime against theatre. Harriet Walter could play Hamlet, Iago, Leontes, Richard III, Macbeth, in a mixed cast, without jarring.”

The Times 05/12/12, Libby Purves

“Shakespeare’s account of the conspiracy to assassinate a dictator and the messy mistakes in the power vacuum left behind is an aggressively men-only affair. That’s why the play is such a calculatedly provocative choice for the all-female cast in Phyllida Lloyd’s intense and bracing revival.”

The Independent 06/12/12, Paul Taylor



“Women make up just 35% of actors, 17% of theatre writers, 23% of theatre directors and 9% of film directors in the UK. This production of *Julius Caesar* is an exciting attempt by director Phyllida Lloyd to redress that imbalance.”

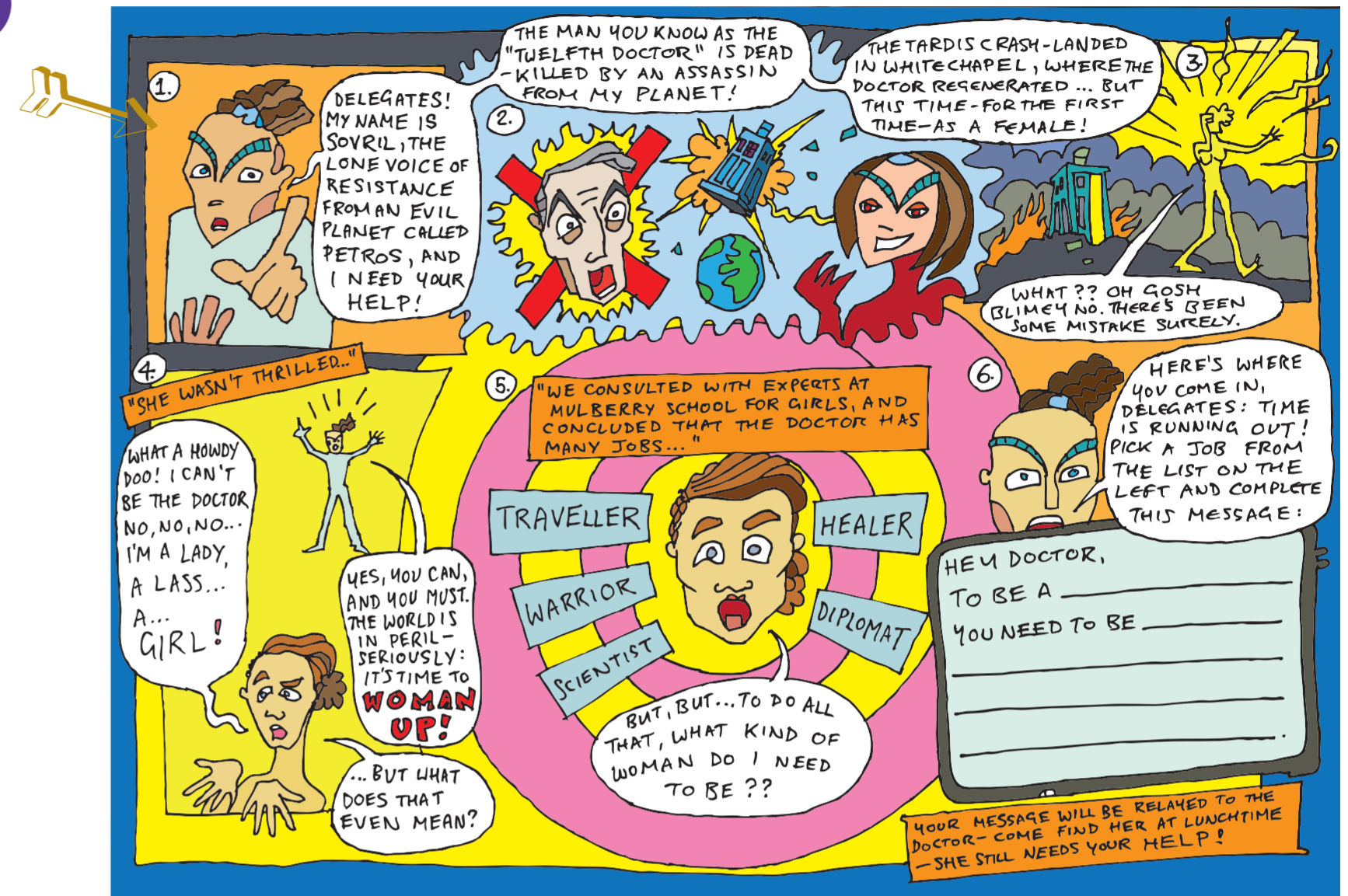
The Independent 04/12/12, Emily Jupp



“Who would have guessed that the London production currently boasting the greatest testosterone also happens not to have a single man in its cast?”

The International Herald Tribune 11/12/12

3 Dr Who



- 4** Since 1989 (that’s around 300 monthly issues), only nine black women have been featured on the cover of *US Vogue*.
- Why do you think there are fewer women of ethnic minorities in media?
 - How do you think this might make young women feel about themselves?
 - What responsibility do we have? How can we campaign for better representation, which reflects the diversity of women?



DIALOGUE MAT 2: POWER

In groups, critically consider the questions – write your group responses on the dialogue mat.

1 Research in the past has divided behaviours into gender-specific categories. Reflect on the list below. Do you agree that these behaviours are typically 'masculine' or 'feminine'?

This research extract is taken from Coleman 2002: 100, quoting the Bem Sex-Role Inventory 1974, p.157

Masculine Behaviours	Feminine Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aggressive • ambitious • analytical • assertive • athletic competitive • defends own beliefs • dominant • forceful has leadership abilities • independent • individualistic makes decisions easily • self-sufficient • self-reliant strong personality • willing to take a stand • willing to take risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> affectionate • cheerful • childlike • compassionate does not use harsh language • eager to soothe hurt feelings feminine • flattering • gentle • gullible • loves children loyal • sensitive to the needs of others • shy • soft spoken sympathetic • tender • understanding • warm • yielding

a) To be a successful leader, does one have to emphasise more masculine behaviours?

b) Which of the words in the table above apply to the following female leaders?



"I love argument. I love debate. I don't expect anyone just to sit there and agree with me - that's not their job."

Margaret Thatcher, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom



"We all need to look deeper and discover for ourselves... What is the problem? Where is it? How can we help to solve it?"

Angelina Jolie, Actress and Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



"I would like to be remembered as a person who wanted to be free... so other people would be also free."

Rosa Parks, Civil Rights Activist

2 Women are sometimes represented unfairly online and in the media, but there are some brilliant recent examples of women using the internet to campaign for positive change.

Petition:

Lucy Anne Holmes, who started the 'No More Page 3' petition on change.org "because boobs aren't news", now has over 200,000 signatures. www.change.org/p/david-dinsmore-take-the-bare-boobs-out-of-the-sun-nomorepage3

Twitter:

'Everyday Sexism', a Twitter campaign "documenting experiences of sexism, harassment and assault to show how bad the problem is and show solidarity", now has over 170,000 followers. @everydaysexism

Blog:

'The Vagenda' blog was started by two students who felt uneasy after laughing at "the ridiculous 'circles of shame' detailing minor weight fluctuations of female celebs, or the shocking presence of armpit hair". They have now published a book called Vagenda: a Zero Tolerance Guide to the Media. vagendamagazine.com

- Choose an issue that you have heard about today and write your own tweet about it, in no more than 140 characters. We will tweet your responses after the conference.



3 Have a look at the selection of toys in this catalogue:

- What careers/roles are these toys preparing girls and boys for?
- How might looking at this catalogue affect children's view of themselves?



4 Discuss the role of women in religion in light of the following scriptural quotes and your own knowledge of different faiths.

"All women and men are equal like the teeth of a comb"
Bilmen, Ömer, Nasuhi, Hukuk-u slâmiye ve stilahat-ı Fikhiye Kamusu, II. 73-74

"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus".
Galatians 3:28 New International Version (NIV)

