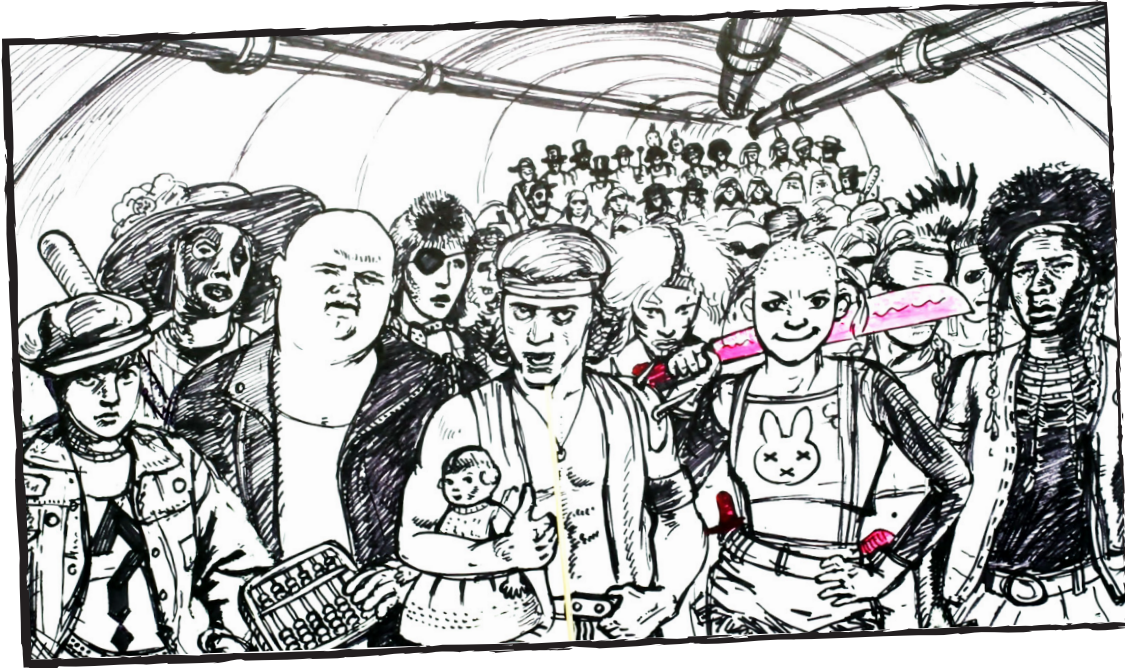


Topic 3 — Freedom Fighters



Introduction

Being a girl or being a boy begins to carry even greater significance as young people hit puberty. In this session we will consider how social expectations change as we get older, and how some of these expectations relate to common ideas about what is ok for a girl to do, and what's ok for a boy. Gendered expectations can hamper a young boy or girl's best self especially when they judge themselves and others by criteria that can be limiting and unfair. There is also correlation between violence and the way people perceive men and women and the relationships between them (Lacasse 2007).

Activities

1. Freedom fighters

Time

50 minutes

Video

Freedom Fighters (Please review this video before showing it to your students. It contains drawn images of genitals. You could stop the video before that section.)

Background Material

Video transcript: *Freedom Fighters*

For more reading about gender representations in the media you can go to: <http://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/media-issues/gender-representation>

ACTIVITY 1: FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Time: 25 minutes

Overview : In this session the students will explore their attitudes about gender. They identify specific gendered expectations they have grown up with and then critically evaluate them. Students are encouraged to consider the negative affect of these expectations on how they see themselves and their relationships with others. If you would like to use this session as a launch pad for further investigation of gender diversity, sexual diversity and intersex topics go to *All Of Us* (see link below).

Key Messages

- Gendered expectations can impact negatively on girls and boys.
- Gendered expectations can affect people treating each other with fairness and respect.
- Gendered expectations can limit young people being their best self.

Preparation and Materials

- VIDEO – *Freedom Fighters*
- Video transcript: *Freedom Fighters*

Method

1. Explain that we are going to consider how some social expectations affect how young people judge themselves and each other. We are going to watch a 6-minute video 'Freedom Fighters' and see if you think its ideas are relevant to your experiences.

Debrief after video:

- What surprised you most about the video?
 - Do you think there are different expectations for boys and for girls?
2. Tell the class that you are going to ask for their opinions on a range of topics. Place three cards (Disagree, Unsure, and Agree) on the floor and

ask students to move to the card that best represents their response to the following statements. When everyone has taken a position the teacher will ask for volunteers to explain why they took that position. Remind students of the Group Agreement (no put-downs, use I statements etc).

3. Choose 3 to 4 of the following statements:

- Boys have to be sporty to fit in.
- It's ok for a girl to ask a boy out.
- I'm allowed to catch public transport by myself (note to teacher: is there a gender split?).
- Girls and boys should not be friends.
- Boys can hug their male friends.
- A boy is weak if he cries.
- My family/carers have talked to me about puberty.
- A girl who is with lots of different boys deserves to be called a 'slut'.
- Girls should wait for boys to make the first move.
- When it comes to romance, girls have to like boys and boys have to like girls.

4. Debrief:

- How easy was it to offer an honest opinion about these statements? Why?
- How easy or difficult is it to be different? What/who makes it that way?
- Does anyone win or lose from these kinds of expectations?
- Would your families answer these questions differently?
- Do different cultures/religions/families have different beliefs?
- How might a young person feel about themselves if they don't fit their family's expectations, or their peers' expectations?
- What do you think young people can do about it?

NB Gender and sexual diversity: *All Of Us*

If you would like to use this session as a launch pad for further investigation of gender diversity, sexual diversity and intersex topics go to *All Of Us*.

All Of Us is a collection of short videos and teaching activities designed by Minus18 and Safe Schools Coalition Australia to help students understand these issues. The resource supports the Health and Physical Education learning area of the Australian Curriculum. It is available for free download.

www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au

B1: VIDEO TRANSCRIPT - FREEDOM FIGHTERS

GENDER

Across the gulf of space...alien intellects vast and cold and unsympathetic, regarded this earth with envious eyes and slowly and surely drew their plans against us.

When the Martians came to earth they gathered the nations together and asked their questions. And the first thing they wanted to know about was girls and boys.

'Children of the earth'

That's your Martian voice?

Yes. 'Children of the earth, tell us, traditionally and throughout time, girls are *what?*

Girls are what?

Traditionally and throughout time'

I dunno. I guess traditionally girls are...

Pretty? Sexy? Look after the home, want to have babies, like shoes, like ponies, caring, soft

Cute, good dancers, hot, good talkers, sensitive

'Good! Now.' Traditionally throughout time'

(said the Martians)

Boys are what?'

I dunno I guess, traditionally boys are...

Strong? In charge? Powerful, go to war, take the bins out, like football, weapons, cars, good on the tools, tough, funny, uncommunicative, hard

So is this list correct?'

(said the Martians)

(mutters) well, no, no, no

(mutters) you don't have to do those things if you're a boy

(mutters) you don't have to do those things if you're a girl

'Silence!

said the Martians

There will be no deviation!' On our planet things are almost exactly the same except the other way around. So from now on earthlings things are going to be like this'

(swap headers)

From now on...Boys will be emotional and good talkers and be nurturers and be sexy and skinny.

Girls will like weapons and be the bosses and fix the cars and be uncommunicative and hard.

There will be no deviation!

In every class 5 people will be appointed and be the keepers of boy & girl purity: And to those keepers of purity I say..

If you see any boy or girl straying from the list, if any boy is not being emotional or a good sewer, or any girl doesn't want to fix cars and throw a good punch then raise the alarm with these Martian words..

WHAT ARE YA??'

Welcome back to IPBC

(Interplanetary Broadcasting Corporation)

Our special program tonight gives us a sneak peak into the daily lives of boys and girls on Mars, and an idea of what you can expect things to be like here on Earth once we've all settled into our new roles

Come with us now to "Life in a Martian Schoolyard".

There are the girls, mucking round, free running..

Jenny says 'yeah! I am so pumped! I just leapt up to the first ledge, over that, then off the balcony and onto the roof! Hoo!

Susie says 'woo! Freakin' awesome!'

There's Bob, Julio and Alex in the boys' toilets, fixing their hair

Touching up their make-up

Bob says to Alex - hey Alex, will you look at your legs!

What? Oh I forgot to wax.

Come on, look after yourself.

Gary notices Judy in a corner. "Judy?

What do you want Gazza?

Are you OK Judy? You look like you've been crying

Ha.. Yeah right. What am I a boy? Just leave me alone.

Are you sure, do you want me to get some help?

I'm fine. (Then Judy goes off by herself and punches her locker)

In another corner, Joe and Stephen are comforting Andrew

Andrew says, 'I just feel so awful, you know'

Joe says 'come here, give us a hug'

'I know how you feel,' says Stephen, 'but you ARE a good person, you shouldn't feel bad'

'He's right, Andy, and we are gonna see you through this'

This has been Life in a Martian schoolyard stay tuned next for "Desperate HouseHusbands"

de de de de de de de de de de

All looks grim for the earth...

But...

But...

Whenever a bunch of Martian oppressors take over the world and start forcing its people

You can be sure the earth will fight back

A resistance movement is growing in the shadows

Bold young people, determined not to be pushed around and not push each other around

Resistance fighters like...

Billie! Billie is a natural leader who also likes to play with dolls

Sydney is the comedian of the group, very smart, very funny and Sydney is good with knives but she still loves pink. She paints all her weapons pink.

Here's Song. Song does the cleaning and most of the cooking, Song is also our best mathematician.

Audrey is our runner, strongest endurance in the group. Audrey also loves reading.

Max is our builder and engineer and a very good dancer.

Billie steps up. He has something to say to the Resistance:

'Here's how we play it people

Everyone does their own thing

Is it a boy thing? Is it a girl thing?

Stuff that.

I don't care about that

You're not gonna care about that

This is how we beat those Martian bastards who say you have to be a certain way just because you're a boy,

You cant do other stuff just because you're a girl

We're not gonna care about that

We're gonna do what we wanna do

Were gonna be who we wanna be

I'm gonna lead you guys to victory and then I'm gonna go home and enjoy my

collection of vintage dolls
Because we're free, damn it
And they may take our footballs
They may take our make-up
But they will never take our freedom!

(now for something completely different)
Did you know that at 5 weeks old
A human embryo
That's a Martian!
Actually, it's a 5 week old human embryo
At 5 weeks an embryo has not begun to develop a penis or a vagina
And the bits between its legs are one and the same

And as the foetus develops in following weeks, this happens
The little buttony bit becomes the sticky outy bit of the clitoris
The bits in the middle separate into a pair of labia and between them develops
the urethra where you pee
And the outside bit become the outer labia
Now wind it back, rewind, rewind
And as the foetus develops in following weeks this happens
The buttony bit grows and the bits in the middle fuse together so the urethra
you pee through goes up inside what becomes the penis
And the bits on the outside fuse together to become the scrotum

It may seem freaky, but take a look at yourself
No, no, not now, in private
If you've got a penis you can still see the seam running down it and joining
your balls together where the bits fused
A little alteration in your genetic makeup and that scrotum of yours is not a
ballsack but your set of outer labia
Those of you with a vagina, yes, your outer labia would have been a scrotum,
and if you have ever noticed the tip of your clitoris looks a little like the head of
a penis, that's because it is
Well, they both started as the same thing
We're not saying there aren't important differences between bodies
But it's good to be reminded that there is actually more that unites us
I mean, haven't you ever wondered why on earth those of you with a penis
have nipples
Why on earth do I have nipples?

We carry in our bodies the signs of male and femaleness
We all started as the same thing
And there is heaps of variation within male and female bodies
I mean, take a look at each other
No, no, not now, not now
There is so much variation
And there's a lot of stuff we have that's the same
Our bodies are telling us the same message as before:
You don't have to be a certain way just because you have a penis
You don't have to be a certain way just because you have a vagina

We're not gonna care about that
We're gonna do what we wanna do
We're gonna be who we wanna be
I'm gonna lead you guys to victory and then I'm gonna go home and enjoy my
collection of vintage dolls
Because we're free, damn it
And they may take our penises
They may take our vaginas
But they will never take our freedom!

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