

Curricular Connections

A guide for teachers and students to Company One Theatre's Production:



Dear Educators and Students,

We are pleased to present to you our Curricular Connections Packet for Company One Theatre's production of Aditi Brennan Kapil's THE DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY. We've developed these materials to facilitate your understanding and engagement with the production and we encourage you to adapt the material to suit your needs.

Enclosed you will find:

- A conversation with the playwright
- Articles on:
 - Hinduism
 - Post-Colonialism
 - BRAHMAN/I and Intersex Identity
 - School Bullying and THE CHRONICLES OF KALKI
 - Modernist Poetry and SHIV
- Lesson plans

Throughout this packet you will find excerpts from script of Aditi Brennan Kapil's play that help highlight and illustrate central ideas and themes. In addition, the lesson plans provide creative opportunities for students to engage with these themes and connect with the world of THE DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY.

If you have any questions, please contact us at stageone@companyone.org.

See you at the theater!

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Myth-making and Code-Switching: a Conversation with Aditi Brennan Kapil

Playwright Aditi Brennan Kapil previously worked with Company One Theatre on her complex and beautiful play LOVE PERSON, a story about the intersection of four people, four languages, and how the possibility of true communication exists beyond the



limits of words and text. We've been in love with Aditi's multi-layered artistic voice for some time, and are thrilled to bring her back to Boston with this epic trilogy, which premiered last year at Mixed Blood Theatre in Minneapolis. Over the past season, Aditi has been working with Company One to further workshop SHIV, and we're proud to have been part of the growth of these dynamic new plays.

Aditi's background has a lot to do with her obsession with language and communication, as seen in LOVE PERSON, and with her investigation of the immigrant experience, as seen in THE DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY and another recent play, AGNES UNDER THE BIG TOP. Aditi is an Indian-Bulgarian woman, raised in Sweden, and now lives in Minneapolis. She has spoken about the feeling of being displaced many times over, of carrying her multiplicity of heritages and mythologies with her as she traveled through the world.

During Aditi's visits to Boston over the past six months, Dramaturgs Ilana M. Brownstein and Jessie Baxter asked her to talk with us about the trilogy.

C1 Dramaturgs: As a playwright, you have a habit for tackling the impossible. What sparked the undertaking of this particular ambitious endeavor?

Aditi Brennan Kapil: When I first conceived THE DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY — three plays riffing on the three deities of the Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva — I was looking for my way into the Indian part of my heritage, as a woman, as a person of mixed race, as an immigrant twice over, as a person who lives amidst an amazing diaspora that flies in the face of any attempt at stereotyping. I believe that all immigrants engage in an act of re-mythologizing. We need stories to understand ourselves, both individually and in the context of society.

C1D: So in this trilogy, you took on the act of re-mythologizing quite personally.

ABK: Yes, I decided to take the Hindu trinity and their principles — creation, sustainer (but I kind of think of it as survival), and destruction for the purpose of rebirth — and see what that means to me. First, I took each deity and I put them in the body of a displaced immigrant in the west, and I spun a story just to see what would happen. My rule was I needed each story to stay distinct because I feel the form of a play should reflect its content, and I wanted each play to stand alone as a complete experience. However, I also created a shared cosmology for them all to live in.

C1D: How does this impact the experience of watching the plays? Was that something you were concerned with?

ABK: You can see one play, or all three, in any order you wish. They're not reliant on one another plot-wise. But if you do experience the entire trilogy, you may also notice that there are resonances between the plays, that objects and ideas echo and reappear.

C1D: In re-mythologizing these deities, what elements became most important to you for each of the three plays?

ABK: In THE CHRONICLES OF KALKI, the final avatar of Vishnu (otherwise traditionally male) is a badass girl facing down the demons of high school and puberty. The Shiva character in SHIV is a woman caught between past and present and the necessary act of destruction that leads to re-birth. In taking on Brahma the Creator for



Playwright Aditi Brennan Kapil with the Company One Theatre director and cast of THE CHRONICLES OF KALKI

BRAHMAN/I, I was drawn to the over-arching principle of Brahman, the cosmic spirit, genderless, omnipotent, omniscient, described as “neti neti” — which translates roughly as “not this, not this.” Some of the most powerful Hindu deities are depicted as being of

both genders, and why wouldn’t god be both male and female? “Neti neti.”

Our society habitually categorizes, by religion, by nationality, by color, and in our first few seconds of life — by gender. More and more, these categories and assumptions grow obsolete, but our brains resist, sorting and grouping is how we understand the world. For me, a lifetime of resisting categorization, as an Indian/Bulgarian/Swedish-American speaking multiple languages, code-switching from country to country, being of ambiguous color and cultural background, emigrating, immigrating, experimenting, becoming, led to the creation of the character “B” in BRAHMAN/I, a person who doesn’t and won’t fit into any single category, ever.

C1D: One of the things that we’ve found so compelling about the trilogy is that it is rooted in some of the oldest myths and beliefs on the planet, but presents them in a deeply personal and perhaps challenging form. How have you balanced that for yourself?

ABK: I feel strongly that if you’re coming here to learn about Hindu mythology, you’re in the wrong place. It’s completely my riff. However, I’m taking liberties from a very firm foundation, so if you already know Hindu mythology there’s a lot of fun to be had, but don’t look to these plays as theological. My dad was atheist. He was raised extremely

Hindu — he was a Brahmin in Punjab and was supposed to be a priest. But then he became a modernist poet and went to Delhi, and left his religious life behind. My mother, who was Bulgarian, also came from a long line of priests, but because she was raised under a Communist government, she too was an atheist. I grew up in this environment, but with a ton of information about numerous religions. So I come to this project as a person raised in an atheist household, fed on the myths and stories of both my mother and father's heritage, who then rebelled and became agnostic.

My question has been: what can the principles of the Trimurti — Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva — mean to me? I don't make a claim that they should mean the same to you, but this is a way for me to embrace a piece of my heritage and interpret it through a lens that I can use for creation, survival, and destruction towards rebirth. It's how I make sense of it, spiritually. To this end, I changed all the deities to be female, or in the case of Brahman/i, intersex. At that point, it's not like I'm going to hold back. It was important to make these characters **my** gods, not anyone else's gods, because this (like all art) is an act of myth-making. And if you find that these myths I've reimagined are useful to you, take them. If not, there are other myths out there, waiting. I felt like knowing what I was departing from, from being rooted in the traditions, was important — it allowed me to treat these stories intelligently and with care. Anytime I echo anything from the standard Hindu traditions, it's very purposeful, and when I depart from them, it's similarly purposeful. Contemporary people struggle with the religions of their parents, I just decided to struggle really openly.

Hinduism in THE DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY

Loosely inspired by the Hindu trinity of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the protector and Shiva the destroyer, THE DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY posits that the three greatest Hindu deities dwell among us in the bodies of the most unexpected underdogs. While they are *not* history plays, the plays in the trilogy hinge on the ideals and practices of the Hindu religion that go back some 3500 years ago.



Quick hitting facts:

- Hinduism is the third largest religion, after Christianity and Islam.
- Hinduism is more commonly practiced throughout India and Nepal
- About 80% of the Indian population regard themselves as Hindu
- About 14% of the world population is Hindu
- Hinduism has over 900 million adherents across the globe
- The 2001 census recorded 559,000 Hindus in Britain, around 1% of the population
- 0.4% of Non-Asian adults practice Hinduism

The Indian religion has no single founder, scripture, or set of rules, however, adherents all agree upon a common system of values known as **dharma**, meaning ‘duty,’ ‘virtue,’ and ‘morality.’ Dharma refers to the power that upholds the universe and society; it makes the sun shine, the ocean swell, and gives humans the opportunity to be a virtuous and righteous people. But the idea of morality, although universal, is particular. Different people have different obligations and duties according to their age, gender, and socio-economic status. So what is right for a child, might not be right for an adult and what is right for a woman, might not be right for a man.

Hindus also believe existence is a cycle of life, death, and rebirth, governed by **karma**, which refers to the law that every action has an equal reaction, either immediately or at

some point in the future. Ideas of creation, life, and death for the purpose of rebirth are at the root of Kapil's trilogy. Each play examines the ways that the three displaced Hindu gods try to reimagine their duties while in human form. Brahman, a young inter-sex comedian, battles through radical acts of self-creation and identity. Vishnu's final avatar, Kalki, is a 15 year old girl stuck in the hell that is high school, and Shiv, the daughter of an Indian post-modern poet, struggles with the physic residue of post-colonialism.

The theories behind dharma, karma, and existence are often thought to have been revealed in the Vedas. Despite the lack of set rules, **Vedas** are an ancient religious text which define truth for Hindus. Considered one of India's most sacred books, the Vedas were believed to have been a direct message from God that was passed on to future generations by word of mouth, as early as 1500 BC. Other common holy texts include:



The Epics: Mahabharata, which contains the Bhagavad Gita, and Ramayana.



Mahabharata, one of India's great epics, is often thought of as the longest poem ever written. Three times the length of the Bible, it tells the story of the early ancestors of ancient India. Hindus regard Mahabharata as both a text about moral law- or dharma- and history. Although it is unlikely that any one person wrote the epic poem, it's authorship is most commonly attributed to the divine sage Vyasa.



Bhagavad Gita, just a small section of the great epic Mahabharata, has nearly shrouded all other sacred texts in Hinduism. The Bhagavad Gita tells the message that Lord Krishna, one of Vishnu's avatars, conveyed to Arjuna, the



great hero of the Mahabharata. The great peace activist, Mahatma Gandhi, often read and referred to the Bhagavad Gita in times of stress and doubt. The text and its message of finding mental peace are as useful today as they were 3000 years ago.

The second of the two great Indian epics, the **Ramayana**, is a story of duty and devotion. One of India's best known tales, the Ramayana tells the story of Prince Rama, Vishnu's seventh avatar. Rama is banished from his rightful kingdom of Ayodhya by his stepmother and is sent into exile for fourteen years. He is accompanied by his wife, Sita, and best friend/half-brother, Lakshmana. At one point in the story, Lakshmana and Rama go hunting and leave Sita in a protective circle in the forest, similar to the circle Girl 2 steps out of in *The Chronicles of Kalki*. Ravana, the king of demons, lures Sita out of the circle and kidnaps her. Ultimately, Sita is rescued by Prince Rama with the help of the monkey god, Hanuman. The Ramayana, written in 24,000 couplets, sends a message of duty through the triumph of good over evil.

BRAHMAN

Bullet-point recap of the Ramayana:

Horrible ten-headed demon tries to take over the world!

Visnu sends avatar in form of super-noble Prince Rama to save world!

Romantic comedy side-plot: Rama and Sita fall in love and get hitched, woohoo!

Oh no, Rama is banished due to horrible conniving second wife of clueless Dad!

Rama and Sita go to live in the forest, and the entire town follows him weeping and begging him to stay, but Rama says "no no, my people, I want all the men and women to go back home to their lives, I must suffer this banishment alone" or something equally noble.

Sudden segue into action flic: Sita is kidnapped by demon!

Rama and side-kicks kick Demon ass, and Sita is rescued, woohoo!

They return to Ayodhya as heroes!

I mean this story is like epic summer blockbuster awesome, I'm loving this shit!



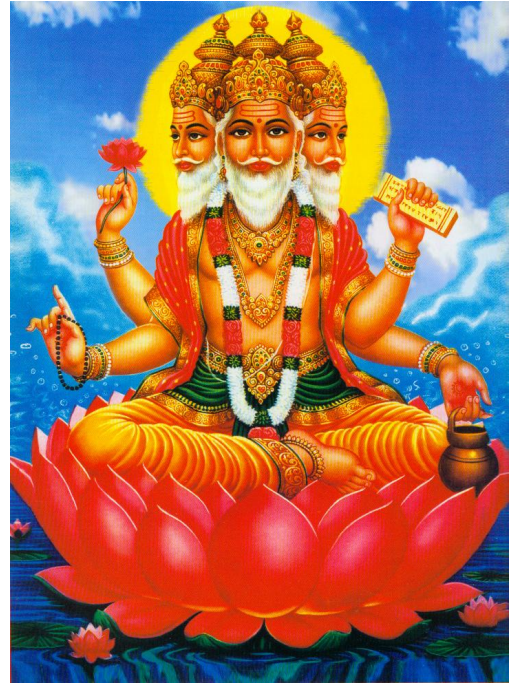
From left to right: Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva

In Hinduism, God is thought to be made up of three gods. This holy trinity is known as the **Trimurti**. The triad is made up of the three great gods **Brahma**, **Vishnu** and **Shiva**. Hindus believe that these deities represent the following three aspects: creation (Brahma); preservation (Vishnu); and destruction for the purpose of rebirth (Shiva). It is important to remember that behind all great gods, there are great goddesses to assist and support them in their duties. These goddesses are the consorts of the trimurti: Sarasvati, Lakshmi and Parvati.

“The power of God is with you at all times; through the activities of mind, senses, breathing, and emotions; and is constantly doing all the work using you as a mere instrument.”

-Bhagavad Gita

Brahma, the least worshiped god in the Hindu religion, is responsible for the creation of the world and all the living things upon it. There are only two temples in the whole of India devoted to him, compared with the many thousands devoted to the other two. Brahma has four heads, which are often thought to represent the four Vedas. Unlike other gods, Brahma does not carry a weapon, but instead, keeps a carafe of water with him at all times. This carafe is thought to contain the source of all life. In order to create the world and produce the human race, Brahma made a goddess out of himself, who came to be known as Sarasvati. One half was woman and the other half was man.



BRAHMANI

Myself, I was named for Brahman, the creator God of the Hindu Trinity, said to be eternal, genderless, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, and ultimately indescribable in the human language. It think it fits, no?

...

BRAHMAN/I

(Asok) So why you got your eyes closed, man?

(Young B) Because this entire world is but a moment in Brahman's dream. And when I wake. It will all be over. And you will all disappear.

(Asok) That's Vishnu, dude.

(Young B) What?

(Asok) The dream thing, that's Vishnu.

Brahma is the boring one, he's just the beginning of everything, and that's pretty much it.

Vishnu's role in the great trinity is that of the invincible protector and sustainer. It is said that good and evil forces are constantly fighting for control of the world- the gods work to preserve good, and the demons work to spread evil. Generally, when things are going well, good and evil are in balance. When things turn into chaos, however, Lord Vishnu takes a trip to Earth to preserve justice. Sometimes he comes as himself, a blue four armed god, but he can also appear in the form of his many avatars. So far, he has been incarnated nine times, but Hindus believe that he will be reincarnated one last time, close to the end of this world, in order to vanquish all evil.



Vishnu's most popular avatars are seven, eight and nine, Rama, Krishna, and Buddha.

*“For whenever the law of righteousness
Withers away, and lawlessness raises its head,
Then do I generate myself on earth
For the protection of the good,
For the destruction of evildoers
For the setting up of righteousness
I come into being, age after age.”
- Bhagavad Gita*

Vishnu is represented with a human body, often with blue colored skin and with four arms. His hands always carry four objects in them, representing the things he is responsible for. The objects symbolize many more meanings than are presented here:

- The conch: represents the primeval sound of creation
- The chakra, or discus: symbolizes the mind
- The lotus flower: an example of glorious existence and liberation
- The mace: represents mental and physical strength

KALKI

Do you even know what final avatar means? You can't summon me and then expect me to be popping back and forth whenever it's convenient. I'm stuck in this s hole til the demons are slain and evil is vanquished.***

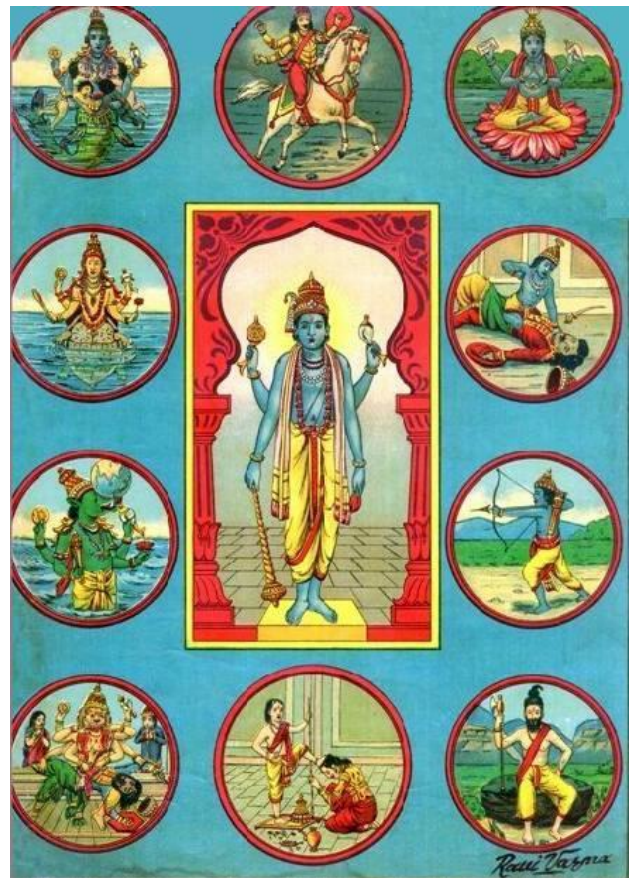
Vishnu is usually represented in two positions:

- Standing upright on a lotus flower with Lakshmi, his consort, close by him
- Reclining on the coils of a serpent, with Lakshmi massaging his feet. They are surrounded by the cosmic ocean.

Vishnu has 10 avatars, or physical incarnations, used to descend to earth.

The 10 avatars of Vishnu:

1. Matsya (the fish)
2. Koorma (the tortoise)
3. Varaha (the boar)
4. Narasimha (the human-lion)
5. Vamana (the dwarf)
6. Parasurama (the angry man)
7. Lord Rama (the perfect man, king of Ayodha)
8. Lord Krishna (the divine statesman)
9. Balarama (Buddha)
10. Kalki (the mighty warrior)



KALKI

You ever dream?

Like things that happened, but they didn't really?

And then you start to lose track of what's real and what's something else...

GIRL 1

Yeah

KALKI

I was a turtle once. I liked that. And I had to stay really still, move so slow, because if I bumped the world on my back there would be earthquakes and tsunamis and countless dead. And that went on a really long time until they figured out that the earth is round. That was a relief.

The worst is when I'm human. I don't like being human. Why do there have to be so many mistakes? I was a prince once. To be loved so much for doing so little. For being so flawed. It hurts. Do you understand?

Shiva, one of the oldest gods of India, is the god of destruction, transformation, and regeneration. Hindus believe his powers of destruction and recreation are used even now to destroy the illusions and imperfections of this world, paving the way for beneficial change. According to Hindu belief, this destruction is not arbitrary, but constructive. Shiva is therefore seen as the source of both good and evil and is regarded as the one who combines many contradictory elements.



PROFESSOR

Well of course not. But if anyone can understand the true nature of colonialism, it is the Indian. As you must know, my dear, given your name?

SHIV

I should (go)...

PROFESSOR

You were named for Shiva, were you not? The Destroyer god? Destruction for the purpose of rebirth? That is the nature of Shiva, Gerard, Destruction and Rebirth. Colonialism was an act of destruction, there is no denying, but out of this was born modern India! In all her glory.

SHIV

She's still in labor, actually. We expect a birth announcement any decade now.

Shiva is known to have untamed passion, which leads him to extremes in behavior. Sometimes he is an ascetic, abstaining from all worldly pleasures. At others he is a hedonist. It is Shiva's relationship with his wife, Parvati which brings him balance. Their union allows him to be an ascetic and a lover, but within the bounds of marriage.

While other gods are depicted in lavish surroundings, Shiva is dressed in simple animal skin and in austere settings, usually in a yogic position. Parvati, whenever she is present, is always at the side of Shiva. Their relationship is one of equality.

Shiva is represented with the following features:

- A third eye: the extra eye represents the wisdom and insight that Shiva has. It is also believed to be the source of his untamed energy.
- A cobra necklace: this signifies Shiva's power over the most dangerous creatures in the world. Some traditions also say that the snake represents Shiva's power of destruction and recreation. The snake sheds its skin to make way for new, smooth skin.
- The vibhuti: three lines drawn horizontally across the forehead in white ash. They represent Shiva's all-pervading nature, his superhuman power and wealth. Also, they cover up his powerful third eye.
- The trident: the three-pronged trident represents the three functions of the Hindu triumvirate.

BAPU

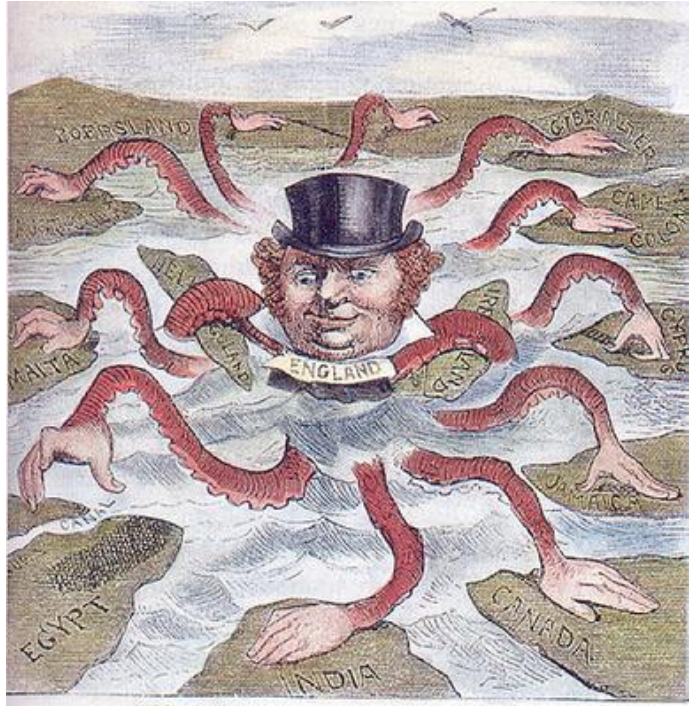
Should we reel in our ugly kite, or cut it? It's probably against the rules here to cut the string, it would disrupt all those other pretty store-bought kites. It is your decision, what do you want to do? Come now, Shivratri. We're not dainty little decorative kites, you and me. We are fighting kites. What do you say?

SHIV

Cut it.

Post Colonialism in the DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY

Aditi Brennan Kapil has discussed her plays in THE DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY as an immigrant's encounter with the psychic residue of post-colonialism. The presence of this theme is more explicit in the plays BRAHMAN/I and SHIV, but it serves as a unifying thread that weaves all three plays together. Post-colonialism is an academic discipline that aims to examine, explain, and challenge the cultural legacies and impact of colonialism and imperialism on



groups of people once ruled by a colonial authority. Post-colonialism can also serve as a theoretical tool for research and dialogue within multiple disciplines – world history, anthropology, critical theory – but the principles of post-colonial theory are rooted in the social, economic, and political systems that defined most of the global, human interaction in the 19th and 20th Centuries.

Imperialism and Colonialism

Imperialism is the practice, theory, and attitudes of a dominant metropolitan center ruling a distant territory; a prominent example of this, often referenced in Kapil's work, is the colonization of India by European powers, mainly the British Empire, beginning in the early 16th Century until its independence in 1947. **Colonialism**, almost always a consequence of imperialism, occurs when settlements of the imperialist power establish settlements on a foreign nation for the economic exploitation of its people and resources. By the 18th Century, the English East India Company had established political, economic, and military dominance over Indian coastal cities, enabling the

British Government to eventually annex and rule over most of India in the mid 19th Century. Examples of imperialist and colonialist relationships between a dominant, centralized, Western power over a subjugated, Non-European, non-



Queen Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and Empress of India from 1857-1901

English-speaking population exist throughout modern history, though

the relationship can be broadly applied to describe any system that replicates this dynamic between two groups.

Post colonialism does not reference the specific time in a nation's history immediately after its independence from a dominant European authority, rather, the broader function of post-colonialism is to provide an intellectual territory that engages and challenges colonialist and imperialist dynamics, power structures, and social hierarchies that impact and shape the history and cultural identity of a nation before and after its independence. In BRAHMAN/I we see the protagonist, Brahman, frequently poke fun at the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized through this post-colonial lens.

BRAHMAN

When you are the oppressor, you get to have fun!

It applies in interpersonal relations, and in societal ones.

Take colonialism- the British had fun! The Indians did not!

No upside for the Indians. Which we mentioned.

Today, much of India's political, education, and economic systems replicate those put in place by the British Government during colonization. Recognizing this impact on previously colonized groups within the context of post-colonial theory aims to empower those groups to speak out against the imbalance of colonial hierarchies and to establish a new cultural and political identity.

Binaries and Essentialism

Colonial powers maintain their control and imbalance of power through the construction and acceptance social and political binary values that advance the agenda and interests of the ruling class. **Binary** attitudes, as perceived by Western thought, see the world in terms of clearly defined oppositions that establish relations of dominance and inferiority, often manifested as an “us-and-them” or “Western-and-Non-western” point of view. This values system is compounded by the application of **Essentialism** to assign basic sets of attributes and functions to the people of a colonized nation that classifies them as fundamentally different or inferior. The enforcement of binary and essentialist perspectives allows the Western, colonizing nations to govern and exploit colonized populations during occupation continues to define their cultural and historical identity after independence is achieved. The agenda of post-colonial theory aims to present and challenge these unequal relations of power in both their historic and contemporary contexts.



Hegemony

A **Hegemonic** structure exists when the ruling class in a colonized territory establishes their civic interests, binary values, and essentialist attitudes as beneficial and necessary to the success of the colonized population. This is achieved even when the size of the controlled population greatly outnumbers that of the ruling class or occupying military presence in that controlled territory. Enforcement and acceptance of this hegemonic structure by the colonized populations is introduced and maintained through subtle control over the territory’s economic structures, educational systems, and media. In the British Empire, Indians were sent to attend British universities and return as part of an Anglicized, native-born ruling class to facilitate control of the colonized population and disseminate the values of the British ruling class.

Brahman, in one of his comedic riffs on the history of Indian colonization, bluntly describes the hegemonic relationship between the two nations.

BRAHMAN

They didn't just colonize continents, they colonized the language centers of your Brains, people!

And y'all don't even know it!

Throughout their occupation, the desire of colonized subjects for collective self-determination and identity is suppressed by the notion of serving the “greater good,” the outcomes of which – social order, civic stability and advancement – become defined by the Euro-centric lens of the colonizing power.

Applications of Post-Colonialism

Post-colonialism can be used as a textual effect that shapes the imagery, narrative structure, or voice employed by an artist to create their work. It can also serve as a reading strategy, or lens, through which other disciplines can be engaged: historians continue to apply post-colonial theory to question and reinvent the ways

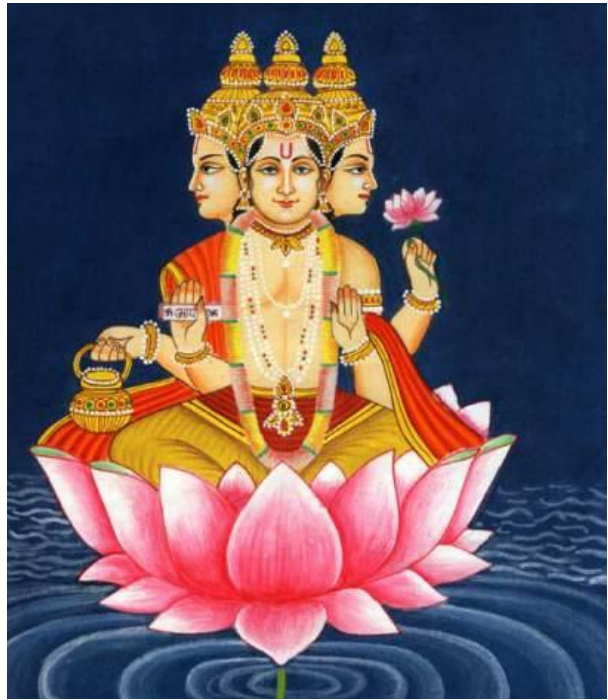


Mahatma Gandhi leads a protest against the British occupation of India

contemporary society views past cultures and civilizations; in an anthropological context it is a way of understanding how to record human relations between imperialist nations and the colonized populations; and in critical theory post colonialism can draw on examples from the humanities – history, art, film, religion, language – to identify and explain the presence of colonialist ideology while elevating the stories and perspectives of the colonized people.

BRAHMAN/I and Intersex Identity

Brahman/i was named for Brahma, the Creator God, an eternal, genderless, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Hindu deity. According to the Puranas, an ancient Hindu text, Brahma was self-born in a lotus flower. In addition to the four Vedas and lotus flower, he also carries with him mala beads for meditation and a carafe of water- the source of life.



When Brahma wanted to create the universe, he designed a goddess out of his own flesh and blood. She came to be known as **Sarasvati**. Revered as the goddess of wisdom, she is often closely identified with culture, language, speech, intellect, creativity and inspiration. She contains all forms within her, pervades all creation, and is the power of intelligence and thought. Because Brahma created a female version of himself, he is often considered genderless. This notion is where much of the inspiration for Brahman/i stems from. In the play, B is born with both female and male parts, and is considered “intersex.”

BRAHMAN

What is man and what is woman?

These are questions that a young intersex um ... dude-girl... girl-dude... agonizes over.

What is Intersex?

Intersex is an umbrella term that describes people born with intersex conditions or Differences of Sex Development (DSD) - though not all people with DSD consider themselves intersex. Intersex is a socially constructed category that reflects biological variation. Problems in the formation of chromosomes, gonads, or external genitals can lead to a range of intersex conditions. There are over 30 different conditions that cause intersex people to have physical differences inside and/or outside their bodies.

Though we speak of intersex as an inborn condition, intersex anatomy does not always show up at birth. Sometimes a person is not found to have intersex anatomy until he or she reaches the age of puberty or dies of old age and is autopsied. Some people live and die with intersex anatomy without anyone (including themselves) ever knowing. Roughly 1 in every 2,000 people are intersex.

BRAHMAN

I submit to you a series of syllogisms created by yours truly:

Syllogism #1:

***All girls have breasts
Brahman has breasts
Brahman is a woman***

So, good right? Except that then there's this one-

Syllogism #2

***No women have penises
Brahman has a penis
Brahman is NOT a woman***

But wait, it gets better-

Syllogism #3

***All humans are male or female
Brahman is neither male nor female
God is neither male nor female
Brahman is God***

I remember this period, actually.

There was something in this world that neither logic nor mathematics could resolve.

*Leaving me unmoored... without gender, sure, but also without faith, without a name,
without a single certainty upon which to build a new reality.*

Intersex and Gender

Intersex relates to biological sex and a person's genetic traits, internal and external reproductive organs, and hormones, whereas **gender** is more about the way somebody feels or identifies. An intersex person may identify as male or female or as neither. Intersex people experience the same range of sexual orientations and gender identities as non-intersex people. **Gender binary** refers to the classification of sex and gender into two distinct opposite and disconnected forms of masculine and feminine. Brahman/I is constantly fighting against today's gender binaries and argues the following:

BRAHMAN/I

*See a couple of things Dr. Hugh was confused about in my opinion...I mean when you're gender-fluid as I am, there are a shit-load more options than two! I mean am I a straight man, a straight woman, a gay man, a gay woman, a straight, gay, or bimale transvestite, a straight, gay, or bi female transvestite... a bisexual man, a bisexual woman, I mean the options are... Twelve! Not two, Twelve. Don't mess with an Indian with the Mathematics. We invented the zero. Twelve options?!? How is a person to choose?
Most of you lucky sexually simplistic creatures have all these social safety nets to narrow
down the endless choices that threaten to explode your brain.*

Lesson Plan 1: Monologue Writing and Solo Performance

Objectives:

- Perform a self-written monologue for the class that shares personal experiences and encourages a “characterization of self.”
- Identify the goals, objectives, and obstacles from a real-life situation and craft a monologue that captures the essence of that moment.

Materials:

- Journals

Length:

- Two 45 minute classes

Activity:

Part One: What Is A Monologue? (10-20 minutes, depending on video selections)

- Prompt a class discussion on monologues. Students can share experiences of monologues they have seen in movies, plays, or TV. A good sample of character-driven stand-up monologues is Whoopi Goldberg’s Direct from Broadway 1985 performance: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Onqx3svb92Q
 - Portions of this video contain adult themes and language.
 - Segments of Whoopi Goldberg’s performance worth viewing for the objectives of this lesson plan include:
 - 20:45 – Surfer Girl
 - 28:10 – 7-year-old Girl
 - 35:00 – Jamaican Woman
 - 51:00 – Physically-Challenged Woman
 - Discussion Questions
 1. *What are the circumstances required to perform a monologue on stage or on screen?*
 2. *What makes it different than a scene or ensemble presentation?*
 3. *What can a writer or character say in a monologue that they can’t say in a scene?*

Part Two: Brainstorm (10 minutes)

- On a page in their journals, instruct students to create three columns with the following headings:
“What Scares You” “What Angers You” “What Do You Find Ridiculous”
- The goal is to come up with about 10-15 items per column.
 - Discussion Questions:
 1. Were there items that you placed in more than one column?

2. *Are the items on your list tangible (e.g. fear of snakes, spiders) or abstract (e.g. fear of heights, losing someone you love)?*

Part Three: Background Information (20 minutes)

- Students decide on a real-life event when their emotions or reactions to that experience strongly connect to one of the three themes: fear, anger, or amusement.
- Encourage students to think of an experience when multiple items from their brainstorm list can be included (e.g. A bad first-day of school when they had to meet a lot of new people (fear) and were also assigned a lot of homework by unfair teachers (anger).
- Ask students to begin free-form writing about this experience, in first person narrative. Students should be as descriptive as possible, keeping in mind the following questions and areas of focus:
 - *Where did it happen?*
 - *Who were you with?*
 - *What did you want?*
 - *What was in your way?*
 - *Focus on magnifying the themes from each column (fear, anger, amusement) to shape the perspective and attitude of the narrative.*

Part Four: Monologue Writing – First Draft (30 minutes)

- From the free-form writing response, instruct students to select the key phrases, ideas, and incidents from their experience to craft a 1-minute monologue that captures the essence of how they felt during that experience and how it defines their character in that moment.
- To collect feedback on their first draft, encourage students to read their composition in pairs or small groups. The feedback should focus on identifying the parts of the narrative that worked well, need clarification, or were hard to follow. Discourage students from providing flat, one-dimensional feedback, such as “it was funny.”

Part Five: Monologue Writing – Final Draft (10 -15 minutes)

- After collecting feedback from peers, students make edits and adjustments to their final composition in preparation for performance.

Assessment

With a student-generated rubric and set of expectations for solo-performance, students perform their monologues for the class.

School Bullying and *THE CHRONICLES OF KALKI*

The great god Vishnu is seen as the protector of the universe. Vishnu descended to earth ten times as various avatars whenever the earth was threatened by evil. His avatars followed an evolutionary pattern, from fish and reptile through mammals and men and finally to the future creator. It is through his avatars that Vishnu maintains his role as the great preserver of creation.

Kalki, the mighty warrior, is the tenth and final Maha Avatar (great avatar) of Vishnu, the sustainer god. He is to appear at the end of the present Age of Darkness, when the environment is polluted and society is shrouded in corruption. Only then will Kalki arrive as a one-man army to demolish the imperfect earth. He will appear as a crusader riding a white horse, brandishing a flaming sword, and acting as the final judge and savior of mankind. Kalki does not tolerate ego and those souls who are spared his wrath will be purified and go on to start life again in the new era known as the Golden Age.



In *THE CHRONICLES OF KALKI*, one of the three plays that make up the *DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY*, the world has reached the Age of Darkness and Vishnu's final avatar, Kalki, is summoned by a fifteen year old girl trying to ward off evil demons. When Kalki arrives, Girl 1 and Girl 2 are on the brink of destroying their friendship. The

girls, fraught with trying to survive high-school, need some serious help before things start to get ugly.

KALKI

*You're not the only girl who can summon powers you got no clue how to control! ...You need to understand something. You can be meat or you can be beast. There's no happy slappy jane austen ending where justin bieber comes floating down on a cloud with a bow and arrow and takes you off to his castle in the sky where you live happily ever after. This is a battle and you need to pick a f***** side. And right now, look into my eyes, I would strongly advise you to choose mine, or I will cut you down you right here and now with my damn tongue piercing.*

You get me?

Kalki's mission is to vanquish all evil and destroy the demons of the dark age. In THE CHRONICLES OF KALKI, she has her work cut out for her. There's nothing quite like the demons that come with puberty, high-school, and trying to fit in. One of the most significant demons in the play is bullying, and we watch as the many different forms of bullying start to unravel their lives.

GIRL 1

You laughed at me. You stood there.

KALKI

Oh cut her some slack, no one goes up against the high school hate machine. Besides, I thought it was funny. Victims disgust me.



Bullying:

“Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.” - stopbullying.gov

Types of bullying include verbal, social, physical, and cyberbullying.

Verbal Bullying is saying or writing mean things.

- Teasing
- Name-calling
- Inappropriate sexual comments
- Taunting
- Threatening to cause harm

Social Bullying involves the threat of hurting someone’s reputation or relationships.

- Leaving someone out on purpose
- Telling other children not to be friends with someone
- Spreading rumors about someone
- Embarrassing someone in public

Physical Bullying deals with the ways someone can physical hurt or cause harm to another person’s body, or physical state of being.

- Hitting/kicking/pinching/spitting
- Tripping/pushing
- Taking or breaking someone’s things
- Making mean or rude hand gestures

Cyber Bullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology or communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites.

- Mean text messages or emails
- Rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites
- Embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

In the Chronicles of Kalki we see examples of just about all types of bullying. While the cool crew at school causes most of the emotional and physical harm to Girl 1 and Girl 2, they are often viciously, verbally attacking one another.

GIRL 1

- so I'm pissed at her. She's all trying to get in with the popular girls this year, and like a month ago, she was like, 'you have to get cool or we can't be friends. Which is stupid, cause it's not like anyone else wants to hang with her.

In terms of physical bullying, there are probably few experiences more savage and scarring than what happens to Girl 1 in her high school yard. Girl 1 believes that a boy she has been fantasizing about is coming on to her in the schoolyard, but what soon escalates is a horrific example of not only physical, but also social and emotional bullying.

GIRL 1

And I like look up at him kinda like 'now what the f*?' and he's not looking at me he's like looking at his friends. And then someone's like 'do it! do it!' and I thought they meant me, but then the dead fish in my hand like spurts up for a second, and then he f***** pisses all over me.**



Rehearsal photos from Company One Theatre's production of THE DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY by Aditi Brennan Kapil

Who plays a part in bullying?

- **Kids who Bully:** These children engage in bullying behavior towards their peers. There are many risk factors that may contribute to the child's involvement in the

behavior. Often, these students require support to change their behavior and address any other challenges that may be influencing their behavior.

- **Kids who are Bullied:** These children are the targets of bullying behavior. Some factors put children at more risk of being bullied, but not all children with these characteristics will be bullied. Sometimes, these children may need help learning how to respond to bullying.
- **Kids who Assist:** These children may not start the bullying or lead in the bullying behavior, but serve as an "assistant" to children who are bullying. These children may encourage the bullying behavior and occasionally join in.
- **Kids who Reinforce:** These children are not directly involved in the bullying behavior but they give the bullying an audience. They will often laugh or provide support for the children who are engaging in bullying. This may encourage the bullying to continue.
- **Outsiders:** These children remain separate from the bullying situation. They neither reinforce the bullying behavior nor defend the child being bullied. Some may watch what is going on but do not provide feedback about the situation to show they are on anyone's side. Even so, providing an audience may encourage the bullying behavior. These kids often want to help, but don't know how.
- **Kids who Defend:** These children actively comfort the child being bullied and may come to the child's defense when bullying occurs.

GIRL 2

What's happening in the yard?

KALKI

Don't look.

GIRL 2

What's going on?

KALKI

Hey! Get that look off your face. You want to join her? Good. Come on, let's get in for a closer look! OOOOOOOOOOOHHHHH Sh*t! Watch out, don't let her touch you! That stink never washes out! Run! Run!

GIRL 2/KALKI

Run. Run. Run! Run! Run!

KALKI
Good girl. You my girl, Betty!

GIRL 2
Why...?

KALKI
Hey. It's war. And we don't travel with losers.

GIRL 2
Why? Why is it war?

KALKI
*It's f***** High School.*

...

GIRL 1
She stood there laughing with the rest of them. Both my so-called friends did. I know, because there were so many people that I couldn't break through the circle of bodies, I just kept running back and forth like some animal in a ring, and the circle keeps like moving with me because no one wants to actually touch me, "Run! Run! Run! Run!" I'm all covered in piss, but no one's stepping aside to let me out, so I got a good look at all their faces. A couple of times.

What You Can Do?

Are you being bullied? Do you see bullying at your school? There are things you can do to keep yourself and the kids you know safe from bullying.

- *Treat Everyone with Respect*
- *What to Do If You're Bullied*
- *Protect Yourself from Cyberbullying*
- *Stand Up for Others*
- *Get Involved*

Treat Everyone with Respect

- Stop and think before you say or do something that could hurt someone.
- If you feel like being mean to someone, find something else to do. Play a game, watch TV, or talk to a friend.
- Talk to an adult you trust. They can help you find ways to be nicer to others.
- Keep in mind that everyone is different. Not better or worse. Just different.

- If you think you have bullied someone in the past, apologize. Everyone feels better.

What to Do If You're Bullied

- Look at the kid bullying you and tell him or her to stop in a calm, clear voice. You can also try to laugh it off. This works best if joking is easy for you. It could catch the kid bullying you off guard.
- If speaking up seems too hard or not safe, walk away and stay away. Don't fight back. Find an adult to stop the bullying on the spot.
- Talk to an adult you trust. Don't keep your feelings inside. Telling someone can help you feel less alone. They can help you make a plan to stop the bullying.
- Stay away from places where bullying happens.
- Stay near adults and other kids. Most bullying happens when adults aren't around.

Protect Yourself from Cyberbullying

Bullying does not always happen in person. Cyberbullying is a type of bullying that happens online or through text messages or emails. There are things you can do to protect yourself.

- Always think about what you post. You never know what someone will forward. Being kind to others online will help to keep you safe. Do not share anything that could hurt or embarrass anyone.
- Keep your password a secret from other kids. Even kids that seem like friends could give your password away or use it in ways you don't want. Let your parents have your passwords.
- Keep your parents in the loop. Tell them what you're doing online and who you're doing it with. Let them friend or follow you. Listen to what they have to say about what is and isn't okay to do. They care about you and want you to be safe.
- Talk to an adult you trust about any messages you get or things you see online that make you sad or scared. If it is cyberbullying, report it.

Stand Up for Others

When you see bullying, there are safe things you can do to make it stop.

- Talk to a parent, teacher, or another adult you trust. Adults need to know when bad things happen so they can help.
- Be kind to the kid being bullied. Show them that you care by trying to include them. Sit with them at lunch or on the bus, talk to them at school, or invite them to do something. Just hanging out with them will help them know they aren't alone.
- Not saying anything could make it worse for everyone. The kid who is bullying will think it is ok to keep treating others that way.

Get Involved

You can be a leader in preventing bullying in your community.

- Find out more about where and when bullying happens at your school. Think about what could help. Then, share your ideas. There is a good chance that adults don't know all of what happens. Your friends can go with you to talk to a teacher, counselor, coach, or parent and can add what they think.
- Talk to the principal about getting involved at school. Schools sometimes give students a voice in programs to stop bullying. Be on a school safety committee. Create posters for your school about bullying. Be a role model for younger kids.
- Write a blog, letter to the editor of your local newspaper, or tweet about bullying.

The Do's and Don'ts of how to stop bullying on the spot:

Do:

- Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
- Separate the kids involved.
- Make sure everyone is safe.
- Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
- Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
- Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

Avoid these common mistakes:

- Don't ignore it. Don't think kids can work it out without adult help.
- Don't immediately try to sort out the facts.
- Don't force other kids to say publicly what they saw.
- Don't question the children involved in front of other kids.
- Don't talk to the kids involved together, only separately.
- Don't make the kids involved apologize or patch up relations on the spot.

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/respond/be-more-than-a-bystander/index.html>

Lesson Plan 2: Be More Than a Bystander, Be an Avatar

Objectives:

- Students learn to distinguish good-natured teasing from bullying. Students learn about serious forms of cyberbullying.
- Analyze online bullying behaviors that “cross the line.”
- Learn about the various ways that students can be cyberbullied, including flaming, deceiving, and harassing.
- Adopt the point of view of teens who have been cyberbullied, and offer solutions.

Materials:

- Journals or composition books
- Old magazines, catalogues, photography, and images
- Color pencils, markers, crayons
- Scissors, tape, light adhesive
- Poster board or large paper, construction paper

Length: Three 45 minute classes

Activity:

Part One: Create Your Own Avatar (10 minutes)

After reading the articles on THE CHRONICLES OF KALKI and bullying, split students into groups of 4-5, depending on class size.

Each group will create their own tenth and final avatar of Vishnu, whose mission is to overcome demons, and restore the balance of good and evil. For the purpose of this exercise, bullying is the evil their avatars must overcome. Start by having students come up with the following information, making sure they understand that their mission is to help prevent and respond to bullies, bystanders, those who assist, and those who reinforce.

- The avatar must have a name
- The avatar can be animal, human, or anything in between
- The avatar must carry with them an object of choice (no weapons please, have them be creative). For example, Vishnu always carries a conch shell, which symbolizes his power to create and maintain the universe.

Part Two: 7 line stories (20 minutes)

Once each group has an avatar, they will then create a short story that details a specific scene in which their avatar tackles bullying. The avatar must use at least one method mentioned in the above article in order to prevent and/or respond to bullying. This can be done using 7 line stories. 7 line stories provide a simple, yet effective map to creating

short stories that include exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution. The idea is that you can tell any story by using the following 7 lines to guide you:

- Once upon a time...
- And every day...
- Until one day...
- And because of that...
- And because of that...
- Until finally...
- And ever since then...

Part Three: Show Don't Tell (30 minutes)

Each group will then take 10-15 minutes to create tableaux (a depiction of a scene usually presented on a stage by silent and motionless still images using the body) to present their story. The story must be presented in four tableaux. There should be no sound or speaking during each of the images. Students may move in between each tableau to prepare for the next, but should not move during the tableau.

The following are examples of some stage tableaux:



Each group will then present their stories in four tableaux in front of the class.

After each group presents, discuss the following:

- *Who played what roles in the story (e.g. bully, the person being bullied, reinforces, outsiders, bystanders, etc.)?*
- *What steps did the avatar take to prevent and/or respond to bullying?*
- *What are some ways the students can help prevent bullying before it happens?*
- *What are some of the ways they can respond, if they see bullying going on?*

Part Four: Be More Than a Bystander Posters (45 minutes)

Based on their avatar and 7 line story, students will create a comic-book style panel drawing of their four tableaux, to be used as a poster for Bullying Prevention and Awareness. Encourage students to be creative when imagining their panel drawings. Materials can include, but are not limited to:

- Construction Paper
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils
- Magazine images
- Images from the internet
- Photographs
- Stickers

Assessment

With a student-generated rubric and set of expectations for ensemble performance, assign students to write feedback for their peers, identifying what components of their tableau were most effective and least effective in conveying a story. To assess the illustrated posters in Part Four of the lesson, students should produce self-evaluations based on the effectiveness of their poster, not on the artistic quality of their work.



Modernist Poetry in SHIV

In SHIV, part of Aditi Kapil's DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY, the title character navigates her personal mythology on a cosmic ocean, simultaneously exploring her past relationships and discovering new ones. Her father, a poet, makes strong use of the styles and forms associated with the Modernist literary movement in both his own poetry and in how he participates in the journey with his daughter.

Modernism is a cultural and literary movement that accompanied the industrial growth and urbanization of Western society in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. The poetry and literature that developed from this movement is characterized by a self-conscious rejection of traditional styles associated with realism, romanticism, religion, and enlightenment movements. Influential figures of modernist poetry like Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, and James



T.S. Eliot

Joyce all created open form, free verse

fiction that dealt with the internal struggle, soul, or consciousness of the modern individual while experimenting in new, fragmented narrative structures. Modernist poetry aims for complete clarity, without abstraction or ornamentation, and exists as self-sufficient units with their own defined set of rules and logic.



Ezra Pound

Ezra Pound was a major figure in early Modernism who developed the poetic application of Imagism: short, compact, and precise use of language, derived from classical Japanese and Chinese poetic styles. Pound's imagist work was a reaction against the ornately descriptive literature that flourished during the Victorian Era. His emphasis on presentation of imagery and the economy of language became central to

the work of other modernist poets. His axiom "make it new" is credited as the defining attitude of Modernism, clearly and concisely stating the values of the movement and advocating for the creation, or rebirth, of ideas. Pound played an integral role in the publication of T.S. Eliot's 1915 poem *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrok*, which, along with Pound's development of imagism, is considered a masterpiece of the Modernist movement and instrumental in the cultural transition away from the Romantic and Enlightenment era in the late 19th Century. Eliot's poem uses a technique that became a popular approach to narrative structure by his contemporaries: stream-of-consciousness. The inner monologue of the protagonist Prufrok, in *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrok*, represents the disillusionment and nihilism associated with the modern individual, striving for a new, deeper understanding of his origins and surroundings.

James Joyce's *Ulysses*, published in 1922, is a prime example of influential stream-of-consciousness prose and in-depth expression of the narrator's inner monologue. The action of *Ulysses*



is limited to the events of an ordinary day in the life of a single individual. Through his character's internal struggle, Joyce challenges the traditional conventions and attitudes of his own origins and upbringing in the Irish Catholic Church. Joyce fragments and minimizes the scope of events in his narrative arc to elevate the effective use of language, connecting the action through heavy use of metaphor and symbolism to create a unified story.

In SHIV, these Modernist forms and attitudes make their way into the character Bapu's approach to poetry, and even into the Kapil's overall style and structure of the play. Early on, Bapu (Shiv's father) reminisces about his beginnings as a poet, and the necessity of writing his prose in a short, clear, and effective style:



A rehearsal photo from the Company One Theatre production of THE DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY by Aditi Brennan Kapil

BAPU

***I would fly my kite so far it was only a speck in the distance.
Or sometimes I would fly it just across the street, send love notes to the police
chief's daughter.***

Words pieced together. This is how I became a poet, trying to seduce this girl in a window on a scrap of paper this small tied to the tail of a kite. You have to be very particular with your words when you have only so much space.

Similar to the narrative forms of Modernist poets, the structure of the play itself is not unified by a central narrative arc; it is fragmented into pieces of scenes and dialogue that are unified by the recurring metaphor of the cosmic ocean, navigated by the protagonist, Shiv, as she struggles to discover her own personal mythology. Both the playwright and the characters in the play make conscious use of this metaphor. As Shiv and Bapu sail on their raft in a cosmic ocean, Bapu visualizes themselves at an earlier point in the same journey:

BAPU

Wait, do you see something else in there? Sailing upon the ocean. Look at that, it's Shivratri and Bapu, aboard a spaceship with a kite for a sail! Look out "new worlds and new civilizations!"

Well that explains everything. It's hard to say which is reality and which is Vishnu's dream, us or them. What do you think of that? Is our existence not magical?



A rehearsal photo from the Company One Theatre production of THE DISPLACED HINDU GODS TRILOGY by Aditi Brennan Kapil

Bapu's imagery is sparse and sharp, not abstract, yet the use of metaphor is large in scope; he makes a strong connection to their existence as a product of the dreams of the Hindu God, Vishnu, as well as their own conscious imagination. Much like the characters from early Modernist poetry, Shiv's journey is a fluid stream-of-consciousness that occurs

as she imagines and reminisces on the events and relationships from her past; she is disillusioned by these events but also strives for self-reflection and rebirth from their meaning.

Lesson Plan 3: Modernist Poetry and Exploring Personal Mythology

Objectives:

- Experiment with new forms and structures of poetic narrative
- Explore and synthesize events from personal history through poetic dialogue
- Demonstrate a minimalist and imagist use of metaphor and symbolism in writing

Materials:

- Journals or composition books
- Old magazines, catalogues, photography, and images
- Scissors, tape, light adhesive or glue
- Samples of Modernist poetry
- Personal objects and mementos from childhood or recent memory that have sentimental value or are emotionally connected to a specific event (student supplied).

Length:

- Three 45 minute classes

Activity:

Part One: Object Work (20 minutes)

- Assign the class to bring in three objects or mementos from home that have sentimental value or are emotionally connected to a person, place, or experience. The objects should not be so valuable or important that the students feel uncomfortable with their peers touching or moving them.
- Instruct students to place all of the objects on the floor in the center of the room, or on a table, so long as all students can see all of the objects. After a period of observation, students can take turns grouping objects in whatever way they like: by size, color, shape, weight, function, medium, etc. Prompt class discussions about why items are grouped that way.
 - Discussion Questions:
 1. *What similarities do you see between these objects?*
 2. *In what fictional/non-fiction setting would this group of objects exist (e.g. pawn shop, souvenir shop, museum)?*

Part Two: Free Form Narrative (20 minutes)

- Instruct students to write about the value or meaning associated with these objects in their journals, focusing only on writing as much as possible, (free form). Do not be concerned with structure, grammar, or punctuation, as long as they are writing non-stop and have the chance to write thoughtfully and descriptively.

- Students review their stream-of-consciousness writing and highlight or underline key words or phrases. These can be names of people, objects, feelings, or actions. Each of these words or phrases is then placed into one of three lists on a separate page in their journal: 1. Creation; 2. Sustaining; 3. Destruction.
 - Discussion Questions:
 1. *How were your selected words or phrases distributed between the three categories? Were there more in one category than the others?*
 2. *Was writing in a stream-of-consciousness style hard or easy?*

Part Three: Image Research (20 minutes)

- After completing these lists, provide students with old magazines, images, photos, postcards, scissors and glue. Students cut out and collect shapes, images and symbols from these resources that connect to the themes, descriptions, and ideas from each list. Encourage students to not look for literal depictions of the words or phrases in their list, but instead to look for metaphorical imagery and abstract visualizations.
- Students can glue or tape these images into specific sections of their journal that correspond with the heading themes: creation, sustaining, and destruction. Students should continue to image research for homework and bring in more images collected from home.
- Once completed, place their work on a table, on the floor, or hung on the wall for a period of reflection, looking for common themes or relationships between images that stand out. If possible, have the students present their work with the objects they brought to class on the first day. These can be grouped by student, or by the heading categories to prompt further discussion.
 - Discussion Questions:
 1. *What images or symbols do you see repeated in other students' collages?*
 2. *How well does your collage represent the story or event that's connected to the original object you brought into class?*

Part Four: Poetry Research (20 minutes)

- Provide students with samples of Modernist poetry from late 19th – early 20th Century poets and fiction authors like Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce.
- In groups, ask them to identify any use of metaphor, symbolism, fragmented narrative, and imagist language, then report back to the class.
 - Discussion Questions:
 1. *What do you notice about this style of poetry?*
 2. *Does the use of imagism in poetry limit the potential of language or concentrate its potency?*

Part Five: Poetry Assignment (30 minutes)

- Based on their free-form writing response, categorized lists, image research, and their exploration of modernist poetry, assign students to create a three-stanza poem, one stanza for each thematic category (creation, sustaining, destruction). Students can replicate phrases or words from their earlier writing responses. This can take the rest of the class or be assigned as homework.

Part Six: Poetry Reading (25 minutes)

- Students present their work for class the next day. Allow students to have a friend read their poem if they choose to have it read out loud in another voice.
 - Discussion Questions:
 1. *How does each student's work adhere to the style and characteristics of modernist poetry?*
 2. *How has your perspective and memory of the events in your writing changed through this process?*
 3. *Which stanza was easiest/hardest to write (creation, sustaining, destruction)?*

Assessment

With a student-generated rubric and set of expectations for creative writing, ask students to reflect on the poetry project with a self-assessment of their final poem, their level of engagement working within a defined style of poetry, and their ability to connect the meaning and experience of their initial object prompt into poetic verse.

Resources

Online Articles

- *Religions: Hinduism*
Published by the BBC
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/hinduism>
- *Hindu Gods and Goddesses*
By Harish Johari
http://www.sanatansociety.org/hindu_gods_and_goddesses.htm#.VDLuqminTzI
- *Religion: Hindu Gods*
Published by Useful Charts
<http://www.usefulcharts.com/religion/main-hindu-gods-chart.html>
- *Post Colonialism: Definition, Development, and Examples from India*
By Nils Gluck
<http://www.nilsole.net/referate/post-colonialism-definition-development-and-examples-from-india>
- *A Brief Guide to Modernism*
Published by poets.org
<http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/brief-guide-modernism>
- *Modernism*
Published by the Poetry Foundation
<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/learning/glossary-term/modernism>
- Stopbullying.gov
Published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<http://www.stopbullying.gov>

Resources

Company One Theatre Dramaturgy Blog Posts

- *A Primer on Modernism*
By Ilana M. Brownstein
<https://displacedgodsc1.wordpress.com/tag/modernism/>
- *A Primer on Post Colonialism*
By Ilana M. Brownstein
<https://displacedgodsc1.wordpress.com/tag/post-colonialism>
- *A Primer on Hinduism*
By Ilana M. Brownstein
<https://displacedgodsc1.wordpress.com/2014/09/03/a-primer-on-hinduism>
- *A Primer on Intersex*
By Jessie Baxter
<https://displacedgodsc1.wordpress.com/tag/intersex>

Books

- *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*
By Edward W. Said
- *Postcolonialism: Theory, Practice, or Process?*
By Ato Quayson
- *Little Book of Hindu Deities*
By Sanjay Patel
- *A History of Modern Poetry*
By David Perkins