



American Players Theatre
Presents



William Shakespeare's

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

2018 STUDY GUIDE

American Players Theatre / PO Box 819 / Spring Green, WI 53588
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Measure for Measure by William Shakespeare

2018 Study Guide

All photos by Liz Lauren

Many Thanks!

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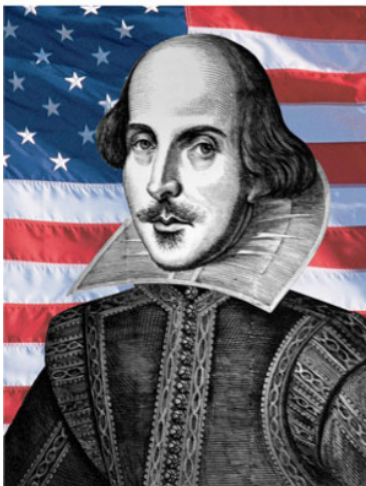


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Who's Who in *Measure for Measure*

In order of appearance



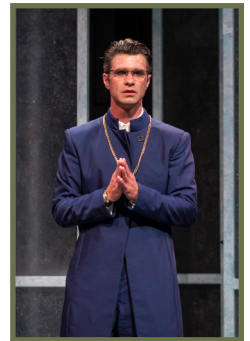
The Duke (James Ridge)
After making a show of leaving the city, he disguises himself as “Friar Ludowick” in order to walk unnoticed among the citizens of his corrupt dukedom.

Escalus (Gavin Lawrence)
A lord, he urges a more lenient government.



Varria (Carolyn Hoerdemann)
A close friend of the duke.

Angelo (Marcus Truschinski)
The duke’s cold and authoritarian deputy, he falls violently in love with Isabella, but finally marries Mariana.



Claudio (Roberto Tolentino)
A young gentleman, he is condemned to death for impregnating his lover.

Juliet (Cher Desiree Álvarez)
Beloved of Claudio, she is not his wife but is pregnant with his child.



Provost (Alejandro Cordoba)
A law officer who knows the secret of “Friar Lodowick’s” identity.

Mistress Overdone (Carolyn Hoerdemann)
A bawd, or brothel-keeper, she worries about the new clampdown on sex crime offenders, until jailed by authorities herself.



Who's Who in *Measure for Measure*



Pompey (David Daniel)

A clown, he is jailed for pimping, but accepts a reduced sentence in exchange for a prison job.

Lucio (Casey Hoekstra)

Claudio's indiscreet and "fantastic" friend, he tells "Friar Ludowick" all about Duke Vincentio.



Friar Peter (Christian Wilson)

He officiates the marriage of Angelo and Mariana.

Isabella (Melisa Pereyra)

Chaste and religious sister to Claudio, Isabella refuses to have sex with Angelo to save her brother's life; at the end, when the duke asks for her hand in marriage, she doesn't reply.



Francisca (Emily Daly)

A nun in the Catholic order of St. Claire.

Elbow (Eric Schabla)

A simple constable, he hauls pimps and prostitutes off to prison.



Froth (John Pribyl)

A foolish gentleman.

Mariana (Emily Daly)

Betrothed to, but rejected by, Angelo, she is disguised as Isabella for a rendezvous with Angelo - aka "the bed trick."



Who's Who in *Measure for Measure*



Abhorson (Eric Schabla)

A executioner, he has more work than he can handle when Angelo comes to power.

Barnardine (John Pribyl)

A dissolute prisoner.



Officers under Angelo's command.

Reese Madigan, Jack Schmitt, Alejandro Cordoba (as the Provost), Chris Klopatek & Michael Goldstein.

About the Play

The Duke decides to transfer leadership of the city to his deputy Angelo, assisted by Escalus, purporting to leave on a mission. In fact, he stays in the city, disguising himself as Friar Lodowick, which he explains that he would like Angelo to implement a strict moral code on his behalf.

Angelo enthusiastically begins the strict enforcement of the laws, including the death penalty for fornication, or sex outside of marriage. This affects Claudio, who has made his fiancée Juliet pregnant, and he is arrested for lechery. Claudio asks his friend Lucio to approach Isabella, his sister who has just entered a convent, to intercede for him. At the same time, a constable Elbow brings Pompey before Escalus, on suspicion of keeping a brothel.

Isabella approaches Angelo, and asks him to be merciful. Angelo refuses, but is taken with Isabella's beauty, and tells her to return. He offers to release Claudio if Isabella will sleep with him, but she refuses. Meanwhile, 'Friar Lodowick' is on his way to visit the prisoners, when he meets Juliet and hears about her and Claudio's love.

'Friar Lodowick' overhears Isabella telling Claudio of Angelo's proposal. Claudio shocks her by asking her to agree. The 'Friar' intervenes, suggesting that she meet with Angelo, but that Mariana, a girl Angelo had jilted some years before, should take her place. The 'Friar' arranges a meeting between Isabella and Mariana, who agrees to the plan.

Elbow is taking Pompey to be seen by Angelo, when they encounter Lucio. Pompey asks Lucio for bail, but Lucio refuses. The 'Friar' is present, and engages Lucio in conversation, asking him what he thinks of Duke Vincentio. Lucio paints a black picture of the Duke's character. Escalus and the Provost take Mistress Overdone to prison. Escalus expresses his sympathy for Claudio to the 'Friar'.

The Provost gives Pompey a job assisting Abhorson, the executioner. Both Claudio and an unrepentant murderer, Barnardine, are due to die the next day. 'Friar Lodowick' is present when a message arrives from Angelo; but instead of it being the expected pardon, it is an instruction for Claudio to be executed early in the morning, and for the head to be brought to him. Following the 'Friar's' suggestion, the head of a dead prisoner is substituted for Claudio's.

Isabella arrives expecting to be told of Claudio's release. Instead, 'Friar Lodowick' tells her that Claudio is executed, and that she should obtain justice from the Duke, who is about to return. Duke Vincentio then arrives in the city, and is approached by Isabella, who accuses Angelo of his attempted seduction. The Duke pretends not to believe her, and has her arrested. To support her, Mariana reveals herself and affirms that she has slept with Angelo. 'Friar Lodowick' is called for, and the Duke leaves, returning as the Friar to defend the women. Condemned by Angelo as a false witness, he reveals himself. Angelo admits his guilt, but is pardoned on condition that he marries Mariana. Claudio is reunited with Juliet, and the Duke proposes to Isabella. She doesn't answer.



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American Players Theatre's Measure for Measure



The disguised Duke (James Ridge) tries to talk a skeptical and shaken Isabella (Melisa Pereyra) to help with his plan to bring Angelo down (after putting him in charge in the first place).

Measure for Measure is one of Shakespeare's three "problem plays" (along with *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Troilus and Cressida*, which were written around the same time as *Measure for Measure*). The word "problem" in this case doesn't mean that the play is bad. On the contrary, *Measure for Measure* has a lot to say, and it says it in a smart and beautiful way, with some of the richest and most poignant dialogue of any Shakespearean play. Rather, Shakespeare's problem plays are plays that don't easily fit into the category of comedy or tragedy. While *Measure for Measure* has many of the characteristics of a comedy, including some very funny scenes and a wedding (maybe two weddings?) at the end. But the subject matter is very serious, including questions about the nature of good and evil, leadership, religion, sexual harassment and the death penalty. Doesn't get much more serious than that.

For those reasons, *Measure for Measure* has also been called a play of ideas, working to both entertain the audience and give them something to think about, all in a beautifully poetic way (62% of the dialogue is in verse). Let's dig into some of those ideas a little bit more in depth.

Leadership

There are many issues at hand in *Measure for Measure*, but maybe the most present theme is leadership. What makes a good leader? What makes a bad one? The answer seems to be that there is no one perfect way to lead; that everyone makes mistakes and dukes are no different. And that being a good person doesn't necessarily make one a good leader. Director Risa Brainin says those questions didn't end in Shakespeare's time. "There are so many contemporary resonances in the play. It's really a play about what makes good leadership. The Duke has not been a great leader – he admits that he hasn't been a great leader. He's kind of put his head in the sand as everything in his dukedom has exploded. And so he puts Angelo in charge, who is a very strict person. And he takes a law that's been on the books for 19 years, but hasn't been used, and he starts using the law to put people in jail and put people on death row for sleeping with someone outside of marriage. And so those are two examples of leadership we get from this play. Whatever you may personally believe makes a good leader, there is no denying that the challenges of governance are enormous and complex. I guess that's why we'll always be looking for great leaders."

People tend to classify characters – and especially characters like Angelo, who are so clearly and frighteningly flawed – as either "good" or "bad." But Shakespeare likes to point out all the ways that every person is flawed, and the reality of this play (and of the human condition in general) is that nothing about us is that simple.

Marcus Truschinski, who plays Angelo in this production, agrees, saying, "As an actor you can never really look at a character as a good person or a bad person, because we have to kind of be empathetic to them or we can't play them. But I think having "Angel" in his name, that's who he's always wanted to be, and who he's portrayed himself to be. And so he follows an extremely strict moral code. And I think that he is trying, according to his own moral code, to be the best person that he can be. And I feel like what makes him most interesting as a character are his flaws. He succumbs to temptation, which is a very human thing to do. And he does terrible, terrible things, and lies about it and tries desperately to hold onto his own moral codes. But his faults break him

apart, and he becomes something else.”

Religion

Faith plays an enormous role in this play - Isabella is, after all, planning to become a nun when the story begins, and it is, in part, her faith that fuels her arguments with Angelo about sacrificing her virtue for the life of her brother. Even the title of the play comes from the Bible, from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7:1-2): “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” That sounds like good advice to Measure for Measure director Risa Brainin, who says “That’s good for life, that’s good for leadership. But what should we think about the second half of the Sermon: “...and with what measures ye Mete, it shall be measured to you againe.” What happens when a corrupt leader comes to judgment? If a leader puts someone to death for a certain crime and then commits that same crime, is it right to put that leader to death? Is “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth” the right way to enact justice?”



Angelo (Marcus Truschinski) struggles with his faith and his flaws, but is unable to make good choices.

Angelo, flawed though he is, also struggles with faith. His severe moral codes are rooted in his faith, but he ignores the religious credos that call for empathy and forgiveness. Marcus says “The best part about the play is that the people show him mercy later on. Which is funny, because his religious beliefs are all kind of based on that – forgiveness and mercy. And yet he can’t offer it. He can’t do it. Which makes him a great character to play, because I don’t want to play the characters where you just show their strengths. I’m not interested in that as an actor. I’m interested in people’s flaws. Even in my comic parts, I think the weaknesses in humans are what’s interesting to see on stage.”

But of course, the character with the largest and possibly most complicated relationship with religion is Isabella herself. She starts out well on her way to becoming a nun, and ends up...where exactly? The end of *Measure for Measure* is unusually ambiguous. Melisa Pereyra, who plays Isabella, has some thoughts on Isabella’s shifting relationship with the church. “Her faith waivers. In her second scene with Angelo. We hear an Isabella who has decided that pleading for her brother’s life must be an ordinance from God. That this is a trial she must live through. She says, “That I do beg his life, if it be sin/ Heaven let me bear it.” Then she contradicts herself later when she says, “I something DO excuse the thing I hate/ For his advantage that I dearly love.” I think this mild confession here is the second step she takes out of her faith. She admits her own hypocrisy and in this moment, when her faith seems to waiver before the eyes of Angelo, he sees her vulnerable and fully flawed. She admits faults in front of him that he can only speak about in his soliloquies.”

Melisa continues, “After Isabella is assaulted by Angelo in this scene, she begins to spin. Clinging onto her faith with all limbs, and being floored when her only brother asks her to go ahead and give up her virginity to save his life. It is at this third vulnerable moment that she meets the Duke dressed as the friar. Ashamed of the harsh words she has shared with her brother, she reluctantly agrees to listen to his plan. When she sees the Duke in Act 4 (after the bed-trick has happened) and he tells her that even after all the sketchy scheming they have done to save her brother’s life and get back at Angelo, her brother’s execution still took place, this is where I have tracked her faith going away. In her mind, I have her asking the age-old question, if God exists, why would they let these awful things happen? Has not her faith been tested enough? This is all to say that her perspective and questioning of her own beliefs take a big journey as the play unfolds. I am left thinking, can she influence more people outside the convent? What weapons will she use in the next battle she is called to fight?”



Claudio (Roberto Tolentino) and Juliet (Cher Desiree Alvarez), just before their arrests for the crime of pre-marital sex.

Contemporary Relevance

There are ongoing arguments about whether or not Shakespeare is still relevant in contemporary times. *Measure for Measure* is one of those plays that makes a strong case that his work still resonates today.

Sexual Harassment and #MeToo

One of the more obvious cases to be made for *Measure for Measure's* continuing relevancy has to do with sexual harassment, and the power that people can wield over others, and women in particular. Angelo's "offer" to Isabella to trade her virginity for her brother's life may be an extreme case, but it's also something you wouldn't be all that surprised to read about today. Stories about powerful people who have sexually harassed employees and other people that they see as "subordinate" dominate the news today. These difficult, painful subjects were clearly on Shakespeare's mind when he wrote the play in 1604, and obviously still on our minds more than 400 years later.

Though this production isn't set today, it is set well past Shakespeare's Elizabethan time period. Melisa says this is important because it doesn't allow the audience to distance themselves from these sensitive topics. "Being at the height of the #metoo movement, I feel like more people can identify with Isabella's need to choose when she will give up her virginity vs giving it up because a man in power has felt entitled to ask for it," she says. "The ownership of her own body and choices resonate in a much more visceral way because the conversation about consent is finally at the forefront of our minds. Not that long ago, people would watch this play and say, 'Why doesn't she just say yes to giving up her virginity and save her brother?' If this is a question you are still asking, then perhaps one needs to look deeper as to why she should HAVE to do that."

Family Separations

Measure for Measure clearly has something to say about antiquated laws and the way they're enforced. Though APT had already decided to produce this play more than a year ago, before family separations were making headlines, putting a Latinx family at the heart of it is another way to bring this production up to date with what we're seeing in the news, and the issues that we continue to struggle with in this country. Melisa says, "Isabella, Claudio and Juliet are all being played by Latinx artists. The way our director chose to use the law in our play made a huge impact for us. This was not easy. But it made us look at law enforcement today. It made us show our audiences that police brutality and family separation affect our community in a real way. TODAY. #keepfamiliesstogether."

"This wasn't us putting something on the play, but rather allowing the artists on the stage to bring their whole selves to the narrative," she continues. "Not ignoring that we are actors of color telling these stories. It made the cast talk about these things in a real way. When politics and political views begin to play a key role in the rehearsal room, we have the opportunity to have a more thorough conversation that includes more voices. The text remains the same, but the way in which each word is seen changes depending on how we walk through the world. This is important. It is the reason I do theater. The way other people have read the text in the past is



The set acts as both the city and the prison.

never ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. There is not just ONE way of looking at a piece of poetry. However, if most conversations only exist in a vacuum, people begin to think that one point of view is more valid than the other. The loudest or most common point of view on ANY issue is never the only one. I like being in rooms full of actors of color who make me question and learn from my own views as well. I was able to have that experience in this cast because we shared an understanding of the issues that affect our community.”

Conclusion

Measure for Measure is a study in contradictions. Righteous and wicked. Thoughtful and ridiculous. But in the end, the takeaway is that people, no matter how flawed they are, have the capability to forgive and evolve.

“How does Isabella forgive Angelo?” Melisa asks. “Why does she forgive the Duke? Or DOES she? All of those questions were ever-present as I built her psychological and emotional journey. What does forgiveness mean, anyway? Do we forgive others because we want to show mercy? Or do we do it because forgiveness means we can release ourselves from those that hurt us? Maybe it’s a little bit of both. Isabella goes on a journey of trying to figure out what the right thing to do is, and at every step, her boundaries are pushed and the “right” thing becomes harder and harder to identify. I don’t know if forgiving Angelo or the Duke are the “right” things to do, but perhaps it’s what she does to release herself from all the pain they have caused her. Perhaps it’s her way of throwing in the towel. Perhaps saving Angelo’s life will mean that he will have more time alive to contemplate what he has done to the womxn around him. Perhaps she doesn’t say ‘no’ to the Duke’s business agreement because she knows he has got much more to learn from her. Perhaps, perhaps, perhaps. These are things that I tossed into my character-making recipe. What the observer gets out of it all is completely in the control of their own psyche and life experience.”

Risa concludes, “I think that’s a beautiful thing about the play, is that all of the characters, are flawed. And they all have great journeys in the play to self-discovery. And you know, at the end of the play, everyone has changed. And that’s a great thing about this play.”



Measure for Measure Design Team

Director: Risa Brainin
Voice & Text Coach: Sara Becker
Assistant Director: Am’Ber Montgomery
Costume Design: Devon Painter
Scenic Design: Nayna Ramey
Lighting Design: Michael A. Peterson

Sound Design & Original Music: Victoria Deiorio
Fight Director: Brian Byrnes
Assistant Costume Design: Misti Bradford
Stage Management Team: Heather Sopol
Stage Manager: Laura F. Wendt

Measure for Measure

Photo Summary



1

"Your scope is as mine own, so to enforce or qualify the laws as to your soul seems good"
- Duke,
ACT I, SC I

The Duke, leader of Vienna, places Angelo in charge and then pretends to leave town but instead dresses as a friar to observe his people.



2

Angelo arrests Claudio for impregnating Juliet before they were married and sentences him to death.

"Thus can the demi-god, Authority, make us pay down for our offence by weight."
- Claudio, ACT I, SC II.



3

"Go to Lord Angelo, and let him learn to know, when maidens sue, men give like gods."
- Lucio,
ACT I SC IV

Lucio convinces Claudio's sister, Isabella, to plead for her brother's life.



4

Elbow, a constable, brings two prisoners, Pompey and Froth, before Angelo, who eventually leaves their trial to Escalus.

"How would you live, Pompey? By being a bawd? What do you think of the trade, Pompey? Is it a lawful trade?"
- Escalus, ACT II SC I



5

Angelo will let Claudio live if Isabella agrees to have sexual intercourse with him. She refuses.

"Sign me a present pardon for my brother, or with an outstretch'd throat, I'll tell the world aloud what man thou art" - Isabella, ACT II SC IV

"Wilt thou be made a man out of my vice?"
- Isabella, ACT III SC I.



6

As Isabella tells Claudio she will not yield up her virginity, he pleads with her to let him live even on these terms.



7

The Duke, dressed as the friar, intervenes and forms a plan involving Angelo's former lover, Mariana, who will go to Angelo in Isabella's place.

"If the encounter acknowledge itself hereafter, it may compel him to her recompense; and hear, by this is your brother saved, your honour untainted, the poor Mariana advantaged, and the corrupt deputy scaled."

- Duke, ACT III SC I

"No, indeed will I not, Pompey; it is not the wear. I will pray, Pompey, to increase your bondage."

- Lucio, ACT III SC II



8

Pompey is carried off to prison, and Lucio refuses to provide bail money for him.



9

Lucio slanders the Duke to the "Friar."

"I never heard the absent Duke much detected for women; he was not inclined that way."

Duke, ACT III SC. II



10

Mistress Overdone, the bawd who is also arrested, tells Escalus that Lucio fathered an illegitimate child with Kate Keepdown.

"My Lord, this is one Lucio's information against me, Mistress Kate Keep-down was with child by him in the Duke's time, he promised her marriage." -Mistress Overdone, ACT III SC II



11

Mariana agrees to go to Angelo in Isabella's place.

"She'll take the enterprise upon her, father, if you advise it." - Isabella, ACT IV SC I

"One Ragozine, a most notorious pirate, a man of Claudio's years; his beard and head just of his colour. What if we do omit this reprobate till he were well inclin'd and satisfy the deputy with the visage of Ragozine, more like to Claudio?" - Provost, ACT IV



12

The provost, after the "Friar's" convincing, sends Angelo the head of a dead pirate, and Angelo, believing it to be Claudio's, thinks his orders have been obeyed to go ahead and kill Claudio anyway.

13



“Unhappy Claudio!
Wretched Isabel!
Injurious world!
Most damned Angelo!”
- Isabella, ACT IV, SC III.

Claudio will be safely hidden in a secret prison cell, but Isabella is told by the “Friar” that her brother is dead and that she will soon be able to get revenge on Angelo when the Duke returns.

14



Angelo, after finding out the Duke is returning, expresses his anguish that he has raped Isabella and killed Claudio.

“Alack, when once our grace we have forgot, nothing goes right; we would, and we would not.” - Angelo, ACT IV, SC IV.

15



“These letters at fit time deliver me. The Provost knows our purpose and our plot.”
- Duke, ACT IV SC V

The Duke makes plans with Friar Peter, whom he sends away on errands.

16



The Duke arrives, and Isabella is arrested for slander at accusing Angelo of violating her chastity.

“To prison with her! Shall we thus permit a blasting and a scandalous breath to fall on him so near us?”
- Duke, ACT V SC I

17



Angelo protests his innocence and refuses that Mariana is his wife.

“Was fast belock'd in thine: this is the body that took away the match from Isabel and did supply thee at thy garden-house.” - Mariana, ACT V SC I

“Show your knave’s visage, with a pox to you! Show your sheep-biting face, and be hanged an hou! Will’t not off?”
- Lucio, ACT V SC I.

18



The “Friar” is called for, and Lucio strips him of his hood, revealing the Duke.

19



Mariana and Isabella plea for Angelo's life after he confesses to his crimes and is sentenced to marry Mariana and then be put to death.

"Let him not die. My brother had but justice, in that he did the thing for which he died."
- Isabella, ACT V SC I

20



Claudio is revealed, and Angelo's death sentence is revoked.

"If he be like your brother, for his sake is he pardon'd."
- Duke, ACT V SC I

21



Claudio is instructed to marry Juliet.

"She, Claudio, that you wrong'd look you restore."
- Duke, ACT V SC. I

22



The duke offers his hand in marriage to Isabella, who doesn't reply.

"Dear Isabel, I have a motion much imports your good; whereto if you'll a willing ear incline, what's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine.." - Duke, ACT V SC I

What Does Power Look Like?

1. Gather your students into groups (a minimum of three and a max of five)
2. Each group is then asked to define power. After some time supply the following prompts for further exploration:
 - a. Possession of control, authority, or influence over others (Merriam-Webster)
 - b. The ability or capacity to perform or act effectively (Free)
 - c. Can power be measured without comparing it to something or someone else? For example, that team is stronger than the other, or that battery is the most powerful of them all.
 - d. Is power negative or positive? To which is it often attributed?
 - e. How can a person's power shift according to situation?
 - f. Can there be power without OPPRESSION?
3. Ask each group to define oppression. After some time supply the following prompts for further exploration:
 - a. Only doing what another wants you to do who has power over you due to their social position, rewards and coercions, their technical expertise that you lack.
 - b. How can someone be their own oppressor?
 - c. Not being able to VOICE what you want because you do not believe in your voice
 - d. Can a person not be conscious of their oppression?
4. Introduce the process.

Two students volunteer to be statues. The two volunteers would position themselves in poses as directed by the rest of the group. The group poses the statues in a way that best demonstrates the "look" of power and oppression within the situation they will choose in a moment. Each group shares their sculpture with the class and facilitates any comments or questions regarding their statue.
5. Looking at the world around you, power shows up in many ways. You can actually SEE power in how people physically relate to each other. Choose a situation: classroom, home, work, school hallway, a first date, in a car, or create your own.
6. Talk through the process again. Once you've addressed any questions give the groups about two minutes to create their statues. Once all groups have shared their statues with the class, ask the groups to choose another situation and another two volunteers and then repeat the process.
7. When you've felt there has been a rich experience of power physicalizations, shift into examples from Measure for Measure.
 - a. If your students have not seen the play yet, you have two options:

- i. From your reading, ask students to identify specific moments within the play where power is clearly at play.
- ii. If students have not read the play, have them choose from this list:
 1. Being arrested
 2. Being granted authority
 3. Pleading for leniency
 4. Judging a court case
 5. Refusing to obey directions

Using the same technique from above and have each group create statues of those moments.

- b. If your students have seen the play, ask students to identify moments where the physicalization of power was quite clear and where it was muddy or unclear. Using the statue technique, invite them to restage any moment from the play and explore the power dynamics at work.
8. At the conclusion of the exercise, we strongly suggest that you as an educator end by discussing possible positive and peaceful means of dealing with and changing power dynamics within your students' world.