

APR 28–
MAY 13



HARRY CLARKE

thriller by **DAVID CALE**
directed by **MARK SUTCH**
starring **THOMAS AZAR**

warehousetheatre.com

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Recommended Reading &
Resource List

We Play Ourselves By Jen Silverman

Book Jacket:

Not too long ago, Cass was a promising young playwright in New York, hailed as “a fierce new voice” and “queer, feminist, and ready to spill the tea.” But at the height of all this attention, Cass finds herself at the center of a searing public shaming and flees to Los Angeles to escape—and reinvent herself. There she meets her next-door neighbor Caroline, a magnetic filmmaker on the rise, as well as the pack of teenage girls who hang around her house. They are the subject of Caroline’s next semidocumentary movie, which follows the girls’ clandestine after-school activity: a Fight Club inspired by the violent classic.



As Cass is drawn into the film’s orbit, she is awed by Caroline’s drive and confidence. But over time, she becomes deeply troubled by how deeply Caroline is manipulating the teens in the name of art—especially as the consequences become increasingly disturbing. With her past proving hard to shake and her future one she no longer wants, Cass is forced to reckon with her own ambitions and confront what she has come to believe about the steep price of success.

Connection to *Harry Clarke*:

The debut novel from the playwright of this season’s *Witch* deals with identity construction on multiple levels, from the protagonist’s need to escape her past and reinvent herself in a new locale to a group of teenage girls’ prompting by an ambitious director to build out increasingly risky public personas. As the title suggests, the book explores the myriad ways we “play ourselves” when under the watchful eye of the public.

Guiding Questions:

- Have you ever felt the need to escape from a past failing? How have you managed or resisted that urge?
- How do you feel about Caroline’s work with the girls? Is her work manipulative in your mind?
- What, in your experience, has been the chief cost of ambition?

We Play Ourselves will be the subject of our Connections Book Club event on Wednesday, May 10th at 7 pm. The conversation will be facilitated by Director of Education & Community Engagement and the director of Silverman’s *Witch*, Jay Briggs. For more information or to register for the event, contact Jay at briggs@warehousetheatre.com.

Psychology Today: “The Roots of our Stories: Family and the Forging of Identity”

By Blake Griffin Edwards, LMFT

[Read the article here](#)

Connection to *Harry Clarke*:

Though, as the play unfolds, it's reasonable to question some of the choices that Phillip/Harry makes. They seem self-serving and opportunistic. Some might even question his mental stability. Still, at the root of all these later-life behaviors are an incredibly traumatic and abusive childhood. As Edwards points out in this article, our lives are set, by default, to reflect our families of origin. It's only through maturity and self-awareness that one is able to forge a path forward that is uniquely our own.

Guiding Questions:

- In what ways do you think Phillip/Harry's life was shaped by the stories from his childhood?
- What are the most persistent stories from your childhood? How have they shaped whom you've become in the world?
- What are some ways you've recognized the patterns in your family of origin and intentionally tried to move away from them?

A Practitioner's Resource Guide: Helping Families Support Their LGBT Children

[Read the Article Here](#)

Connection to *Harry Clarke*:

Through the stories that Phillip tells of his childhood, it's easy to see why he would have wanted to escape his family of origin and build an entirely new identity. It's reasonable to speculate whether the full persona of Harry Clarke that develops in Phillip's adulthood would have even been necessary if Phillip had been free to express his whole self in a relationship with his family in South Bend, Indiana. While *Harry Clarke* pushes this exploration to the extreme, there remain many LGBTQ+ identifying youth that lack the support they need from their families for healthy maturation. This resource guide, published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), provides a plan for practitioners in various social and medical services arenas to help foster supportive family relationships for LGBTQ+ youth.

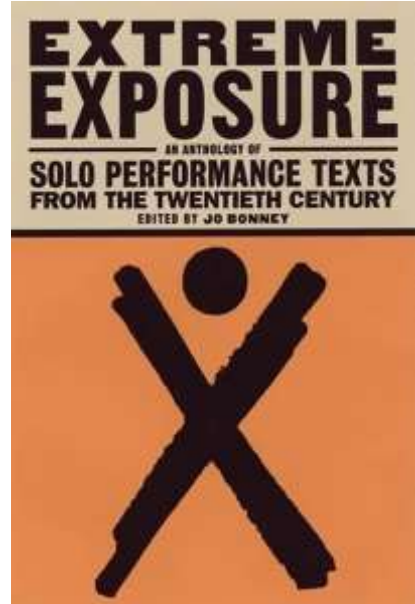
Guiding Questions:

- Research has indicated that LGBTQ+ youth with supportive families display greater well-being, better general health, and significantly decreased risk for suicide, depression, and substance abuse. What insight does this research give you into Phillip/Harry's story?
- Are there people in your life that you think could benefit from reading this research?

**Extreme Exposure: An Anthology of Solo Performance
Texts from the Twentieth Century**
Edited by Jo Bonney

Book Jacket:

Extreme Exposure: An Anthology of Solo Performance Texts from the Twentieth Century, edited by director Jo Bonney, features the work of 42 solo artists spanning the century—from Beatrice Herford in 1869 to Dawn Akemi Saito in 1994. Each artist's work is introduced by a journalist, artist, critic, agent, producer, or educator who is intimately familiar with the material and its links to other forms such as vaudeville, theatre, cabaret, music, standup comedy, poetry, the visual arts and dance. In Bonney's words, "This anthology documents a part of our literary/stage history and offers the possibility of its being appreciated in a new context, for a new generation."



Connection to *Harry Clarke*:

Jo Bonney is one of the foremost directors and observers of solo performance in the last century. This collection, organized by chronology, helps outline the evolution of the discipline. David Cale, the author of *Harry Clarke*, is featured in the book. His piece and its commentary provide further context for the observations and explorations in Harry's story.

Guiding Questions:

- What surprised you reading Cale's other work?
- What did you recognize from Harry Clarke in reading some of Cale's earlier work?
- How do you think Cale fits into the broader scope of solo performance as it has been curated by Bonney?

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