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Chelsea's Choice: an exploration of the role of theatre as an educational device to subvert, challenge and tackle sexual violence and exploitation. In: Sibéal Feminist and Gender Studies Network Conference: Voices and Choices: Intersecting Global Feminisms, 16-17 November 2018, University of Ulster, Belfast, Northern Ireland. (Unpublished)

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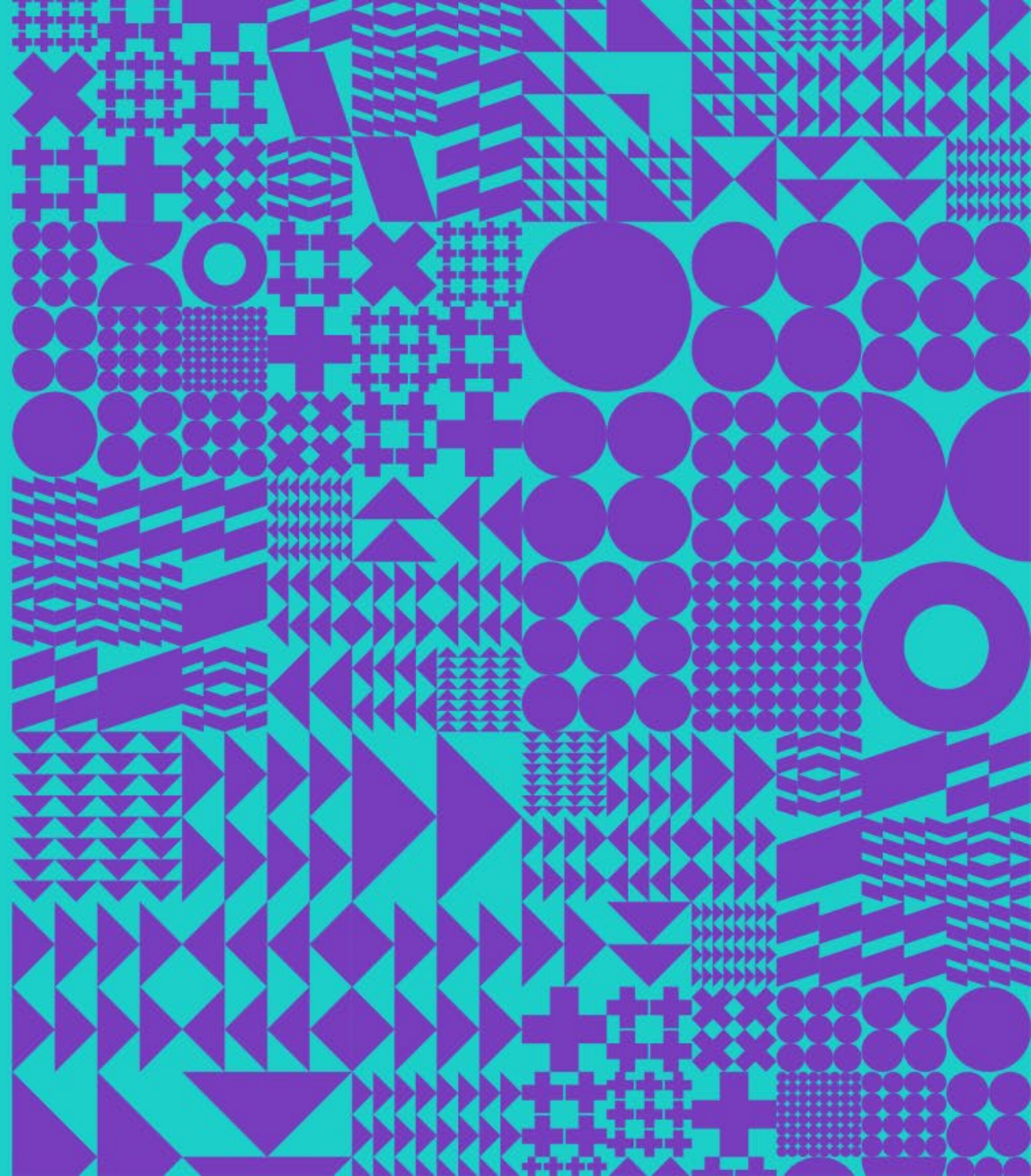
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*Chelsea's Choice: An*  
**exploration of the role of  
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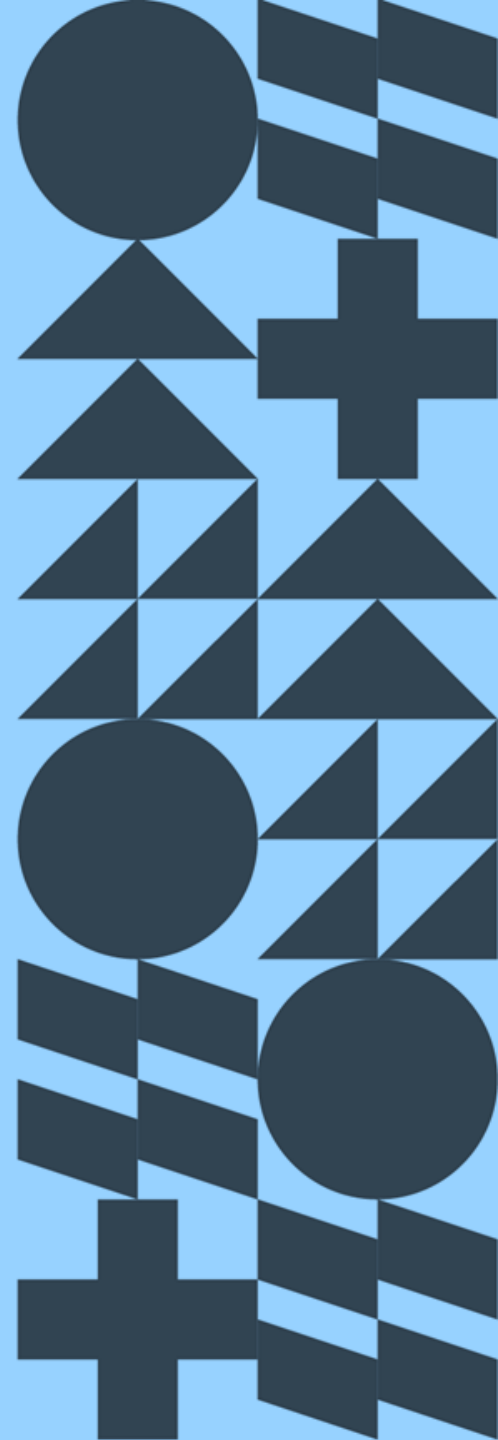
Carolyne James

Senior Lecturer Criminology & Policing  
University of Cumbria



# Overview of Presentation

- What is *Chelsea's Choice*
- Aims of the Play
- Theoretical Perspectives
- The Research – my aims
- Findings
- Concluding Comments



# Chelsea's Choice – aims of the play

To raise awareness of the issues relating to sexual exploitation

Reach out to young people to give them skills and knowledge to be able to protect themselves from this form of abuse

**ALTER EGO CREATIVE SOLUTIONS**

To book your place please contact  
**02380 832 995**  
Or email  
hcb@seathampton.gov.uk

**CHELSEA'S CHOICE**  
Raising Awareness around Child Sexual Exploitation

www.alteregocreativesolutions.co.uk

Come and see the play that has been seen by over 240,000 young people and hundreds of professionals around the UK

**Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June, 7pm**  
Central School  
Central School  
Lymington  
Southampton  
SO41 1AA

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June, 7pm**  
St. Mary's Academy  
Adrian Court  
Southampton  
SO9 4AA

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June, 7pm**  
St. Mary's Academy  
St. Mary's Hall  
Southampton  
SO9 4AA

**For help, advice & support**  
contact Dorsetshire Police at our  
Virtual Surgeries every  
Tuesday & Thursday 4pm - 5pm  
from 4 November to  
18 December 2014  
Log on at:  
<http://www.dorsetshire.police.uk/ChelseaChoice>  
Police 101 or  
Social Care: 01025 333100

**Chelsea's Choice**  
"Chelsea's Choice" is an Applied Theatre Production based on real-life stories that has proven highly effective in raising awareness around Child Sexual Exploitation, Trafficking, The "Grooming" Process, Safety Relationships and Safe Internet Use.

**Who can you ask for help or advice?**  
If you – or someone you know – are in immediate danger call 999 and speak to the police. They are there to help!  
If you need help or advice – or if you are concerned about a friend – call Childline for FREE on 0800 11 11.

**Want to know more? Go to:**  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
[www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk)  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)  
[www.brook.org.uk](http://www.brook.org.uk)  
[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

**ALTER EGO CREATIVE SOLUTIONS**

Raising Awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation

# Chelsea's Choice

*'find different ways to imagine  
and symbolise experience'*  
(Nicholson 2009:45)



# Theoretical Perspectives - Critical Pedagogy

*Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) Paulo Friere

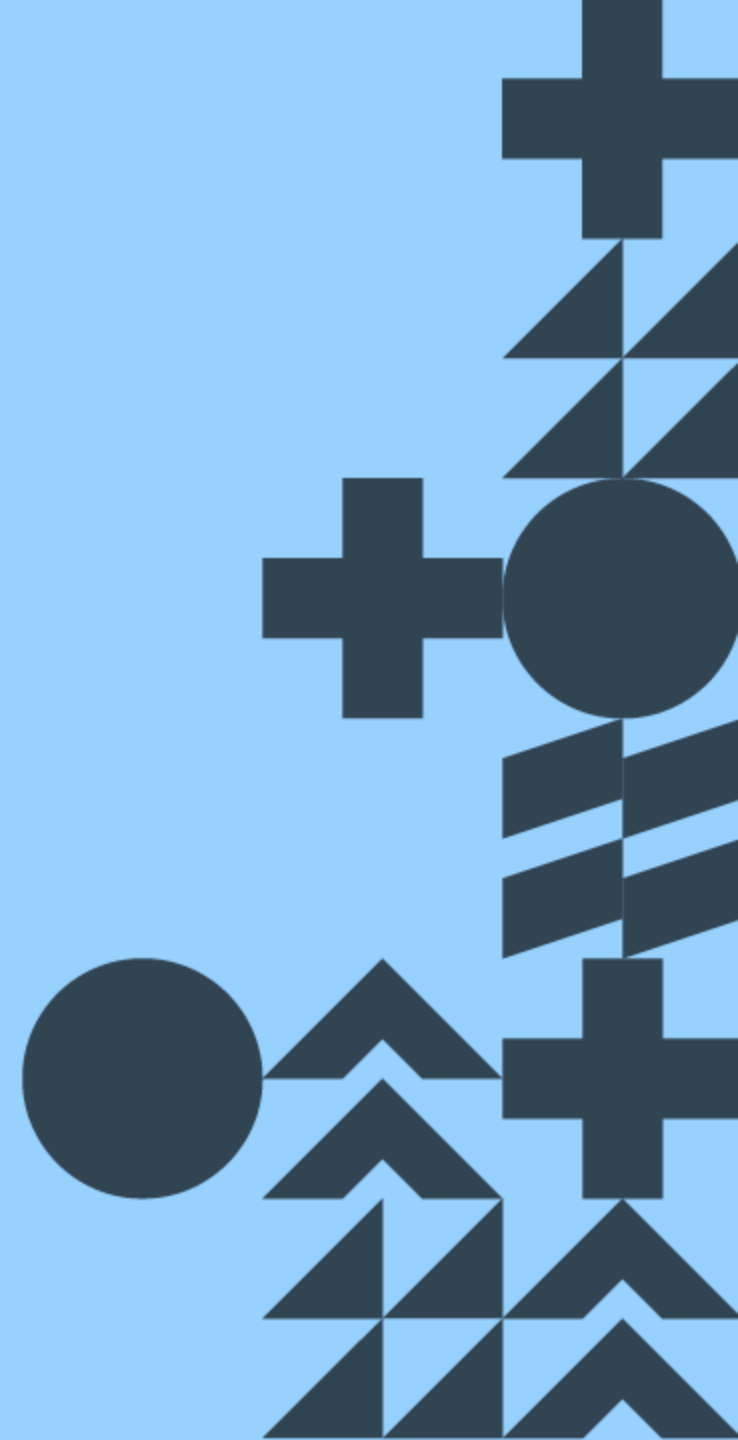
Purpose of education →

- to allow the oppressed to gain a perception of their own humanity
- play a part in their own emancipation
- empowered '**consciousness**' amongst learners
- people can transform their lives and improve social justice in society



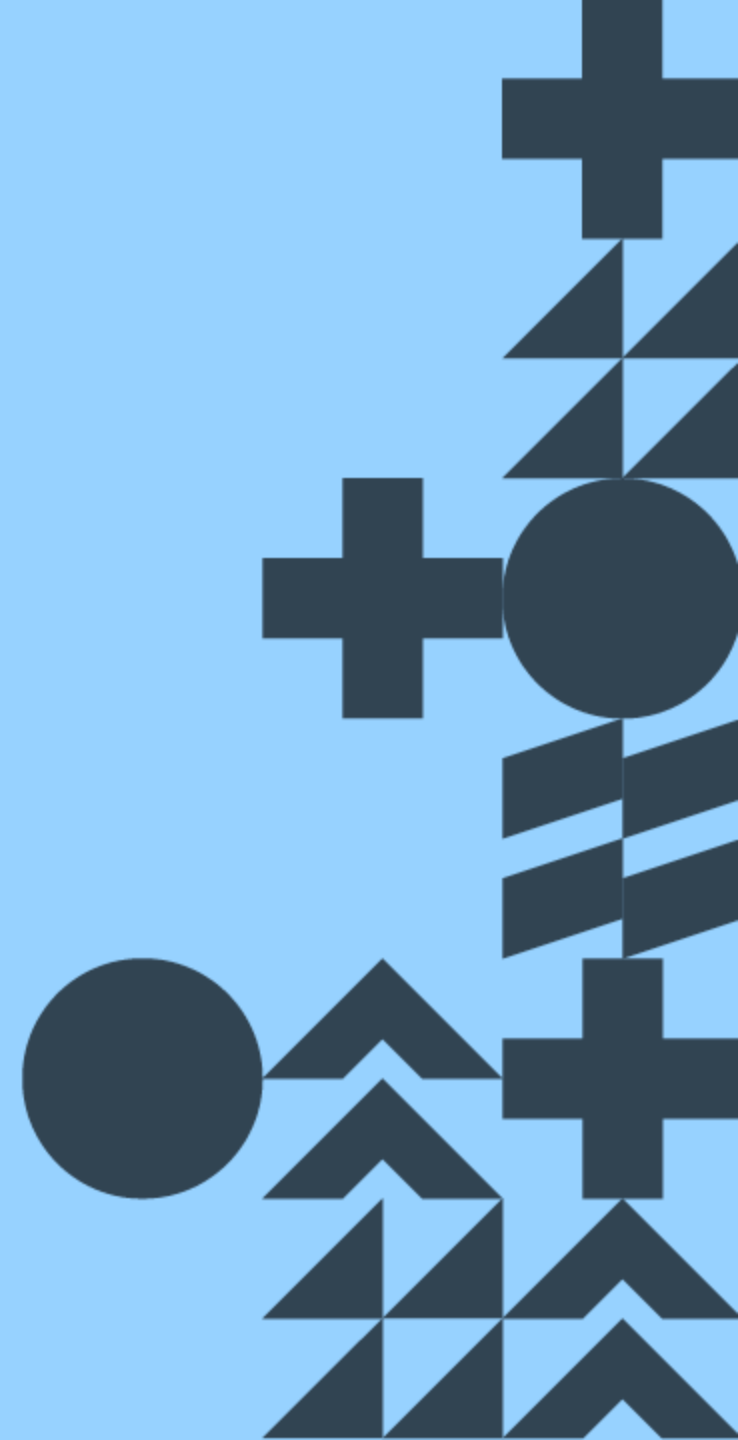
# Theoretical Perspectives – Theatre In Education (TIE)

- **Critical Pedagogy** –often uses arts as a primary pedagogical means
- ***Theatre of the Oppressed*** (1973)  
Augustus Boal – Brazilian theatre director
- The use of drama and role play creates a **space**;
- But also some **distance** for the participants to be both '***engaged***' and '***detached***'



# The Research

- Available secondary survey data and written testimonies from professionals via theatre co website
- I went to see the play 😊
- Semi- structured interview with a Women's Aid in Northern England CSE Prevention Advisor - *Beatrix*
- Written feedback from students who had seen the play collated by WA & given to me by *Beatrix*

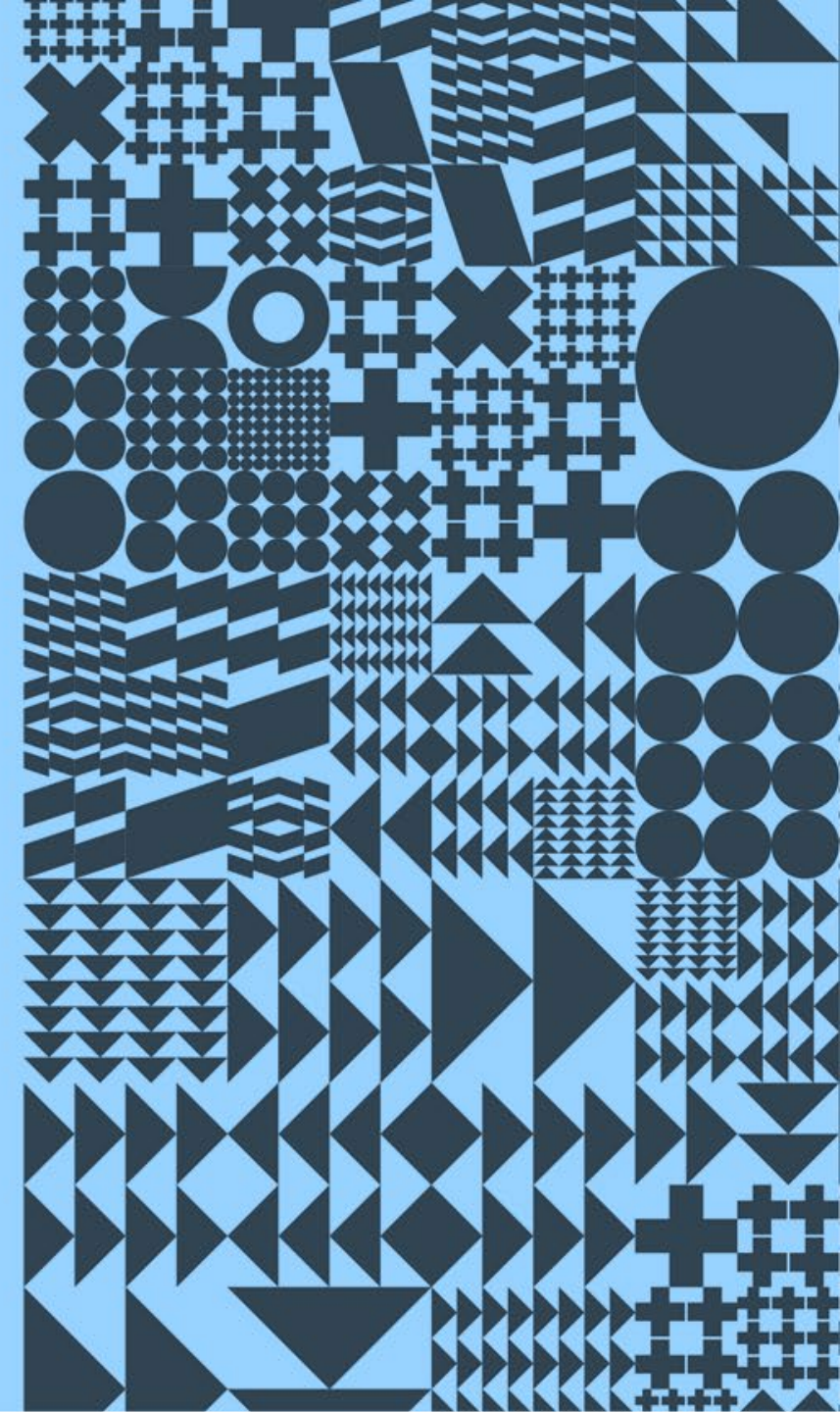




# Three Interlinked Themes

*Thematic approach to categorise and analyse the findings*

- 1) Awareness raising of sexual violence and CSE
- 2) Prevailing perceptions of sexual violence in society
- 3) The role of TIE to help challenge and tackle sexual violence



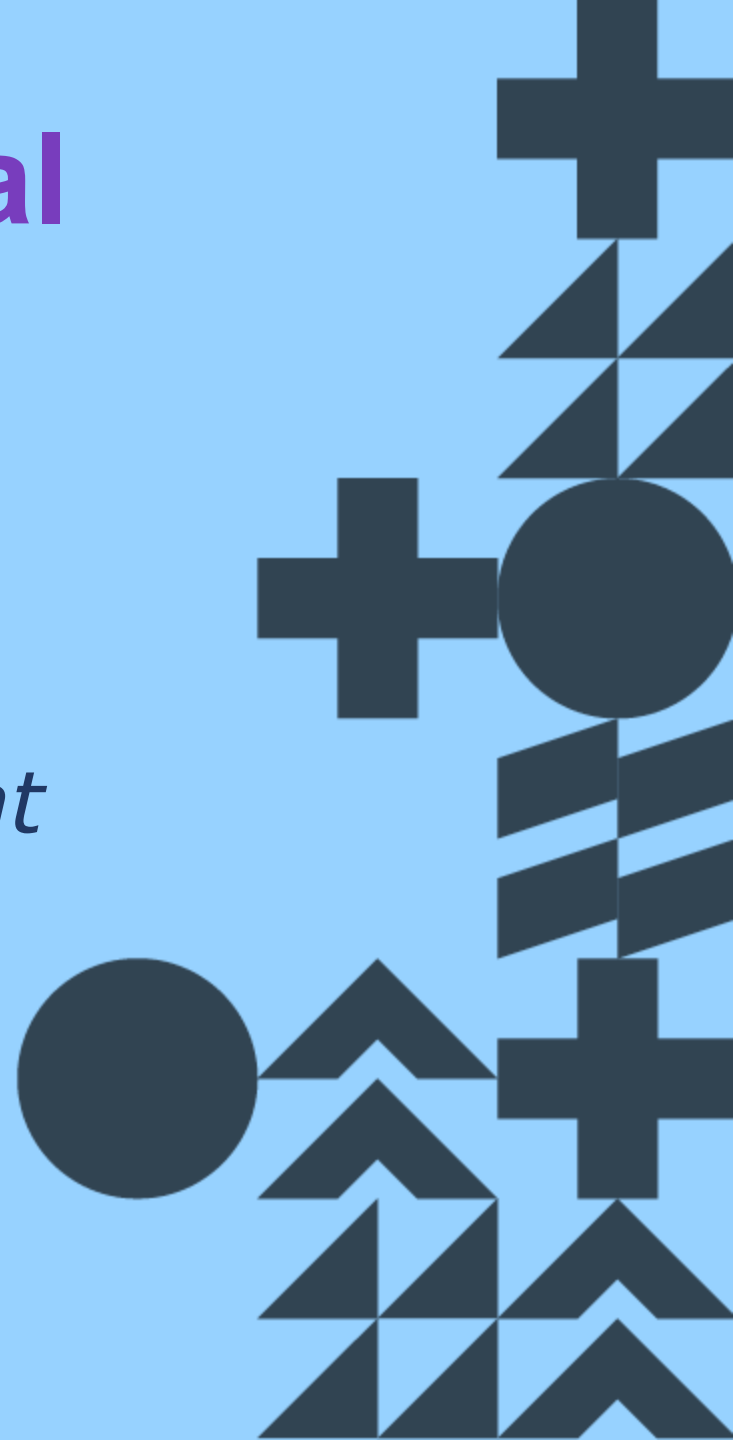
# Raising Awareness of Sexual Violence and CSE

*'performance opened my eyes to the terrible things that can happen and is happening'* year 9 student

*'gave me an understanding of the situations and made me aware of what can happen'* year 12 student

*'it taught me a lot about staying safe and saw awful things that can happen to young people'* year 10 student

(WA research)



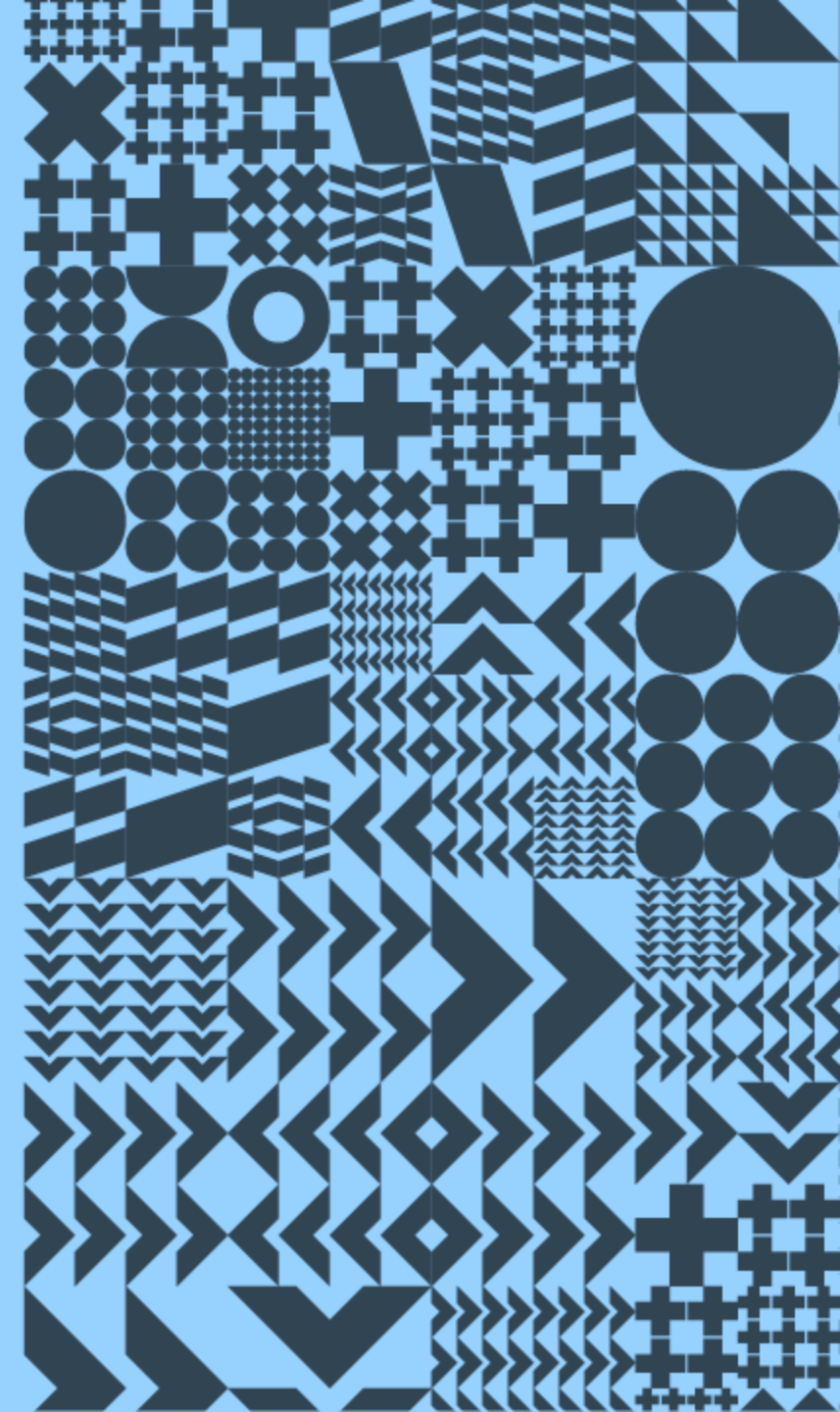
# Prevailing perceptions of sexual violence in society

***Victim Blaming*** - there were a handful of comments in the WA feedback that did 'victim blame'

*'Chelsea made the wrong choices'*  
year 10 student

*'Chelsea shouldn't't have done that'* year 9 student

*'Chelsea shouldn't have caused Gary to get angry'* year 11 student



# The role of TIE to help challenge and tackle sexual violence

*'showed a very serious subject in a clever way'*  
year 11 student

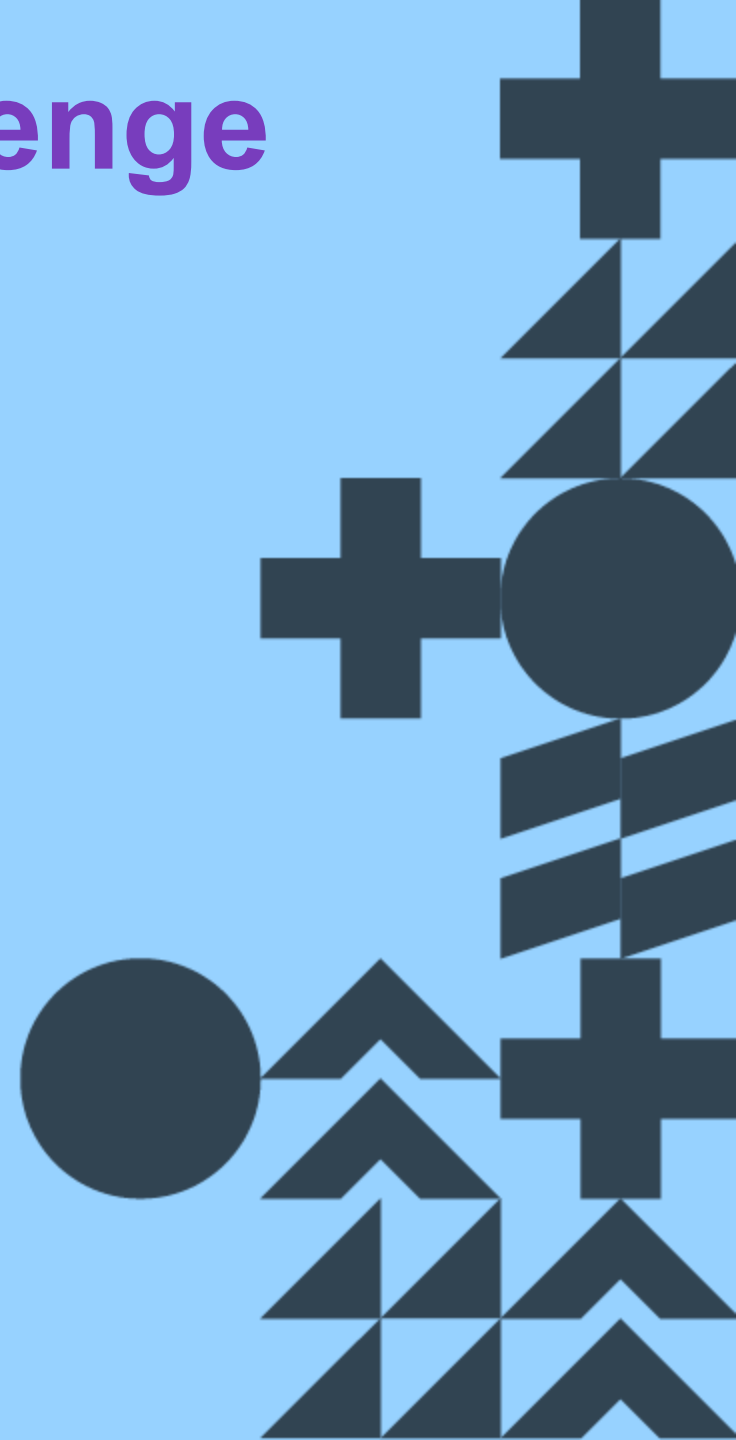
*'the transitions between the diary extracts and classroom were effective'* year 13 student

*'true story made it real'* year 9 student

*'effective using young people to play parts'* year 11 student

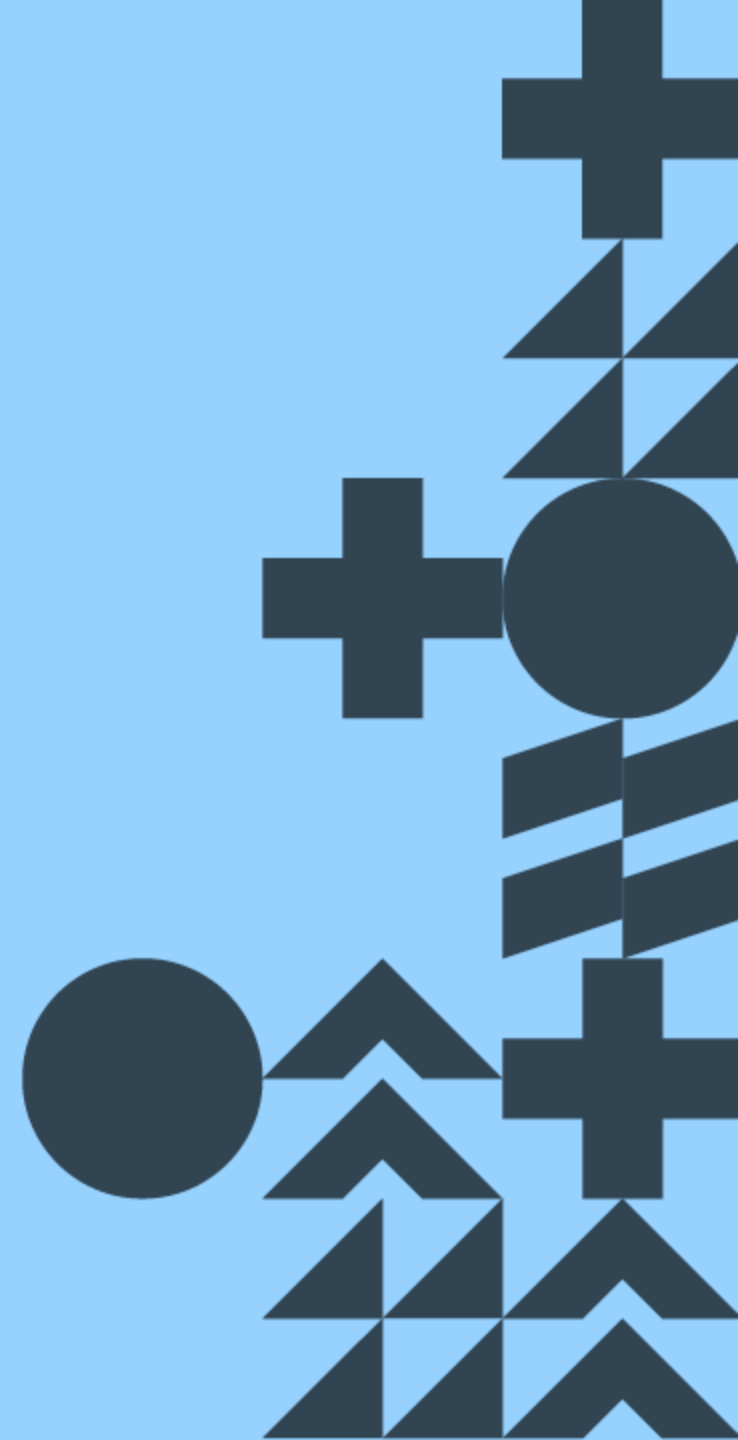
**Beatrix** → story being true is key part of its success

YP often ask the actors afterwards – ***'Do you know Chelsea?....Is she ok now ?'***



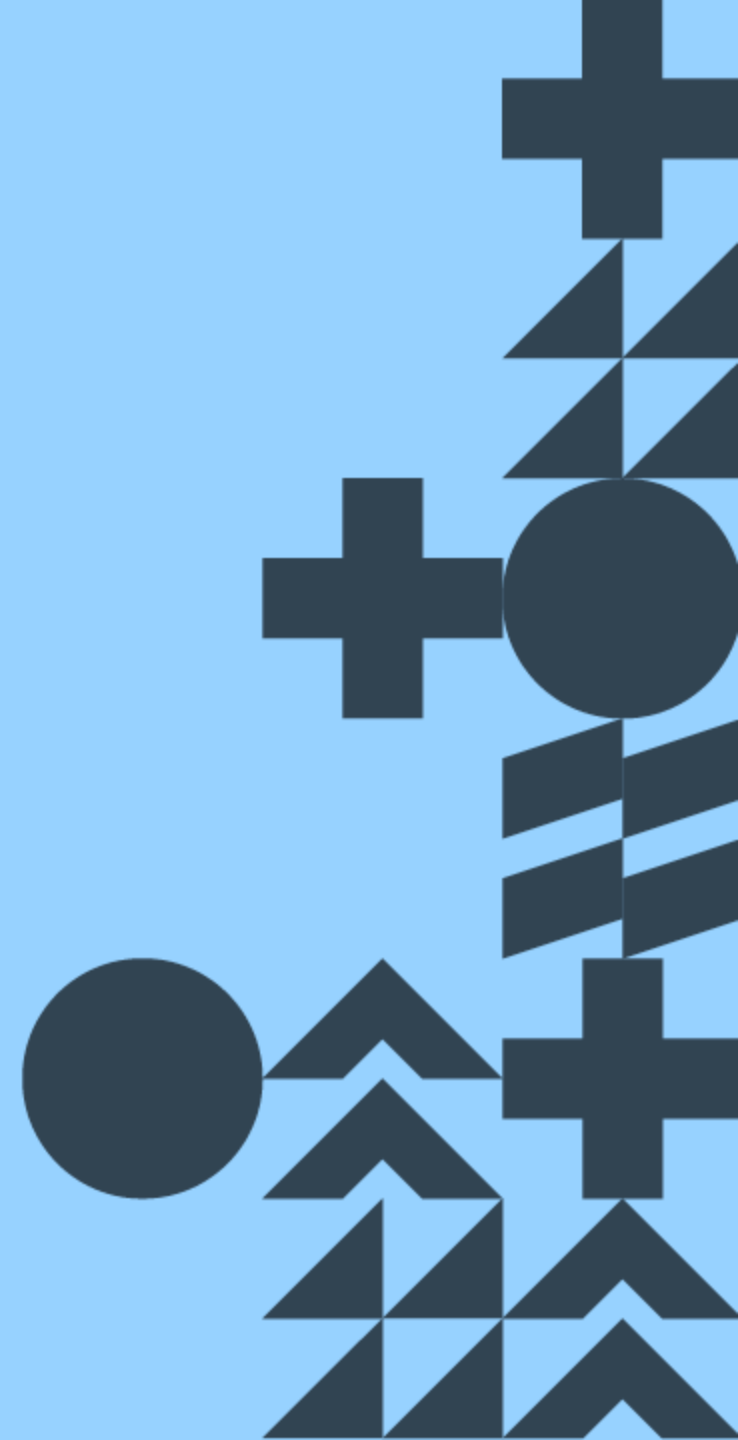
# Concluding Comments

- The research shows that in a number of ways ***Chelsea's Choice*** is an effective and valuable educational tool in challenging and tackling sexual violence;
- Creates a powerful opportunity for reflection and instruction in a topic they are either illiterate in or hold erroneous views about
- Establishes a safe place and alternative lens whereby young people can process a very difficult subject matter
- Contributes towards fostering resilience in young people and safeguarding them from maltreatment and harm



# Concluding Comments

- CC is only one tool in what is a very incoherent and disjointed provision in SRE in schools
- Whether CC is seen/staged is very dependent on the culture and attitude of individual schools & working with other agencies, organisations and NGOs etc
- Needs to be re-commissioned on a yearly basis
- Might not be seen in the schools that need it most



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