

Prompt 2: SAYING "ENOUGH"

Have you ever been to a point in your life where something you were experiencing or experienced made you say, "Enough!"? Keeping this in mind, what did you do or at least attempt to do next? Did you just accept that whatever it was you were experiencing was your "new normal?" Or did you attempt to do something like take action?

For this writing prompt, we want you to explore what it means to have had enough in response to gun violence. Write a short moment responding to one of the following questions:

What can one do when one has had enough?

What can a community do when it has had enough?

PRO TIPS:

Alvaro Saar Rios



Playwright **Alvaro Saar Rios**, wrote the above prompt and addresses this very idea of saying "Enough" in his play **Blue Bullets**. *Blue Bullets* is set in Houston, Texas in 1977. As protesters organize in the wake of rampant police brutality, the owner of a Mexican bakery discovers her oven is broken for good. The owner's attempts to raise money are slowed when the bakery's sole employee becomes involved in the protests. As more police brutality occurs and the owner continues her focus on saving her livelihood, she soon discovers the dangers of ignoring the needs of the community.

Where did the impulse to write this piece come from?

"*Blue Bullets* was inspired by research I conducted on the Houston Police Department in the late 1970's. At that time, HPD was getting national attention because there were instances where unarmed men were shot by the police. The cases were put in front of grand juries and most times nothing would happen. As I read about this, I couldn't help connecting it to what continues to happen today. Unarmed men with dark skin are still experiencing gun violence at the hands of police officers. The

1970's may seem so far away and yet I wonder "have things actually changed for those who were born with dark skin?" As I thought about that, I created my own story inspired by what happened then and what continues to happen now."

How did you choose to address gun violence through your art?

"Like all plays I write, I don't go in with the idea that I'm going to write about a specific issue. With *Blue Bullets*, I set out to tell a story about the Latino community in 1970's Houston. I feel if I can tell you about a community and get you to care about the characters who live there then maybe I can also get you understand what this community is experiencing (then and now). In the play, there is a character who is like many of us. She doesn't think gun violence at the hands of a police officer is an issue because she isn't personally connected to it. Why do we only get involved once it happens to someone we know? Why aren't we more proactive about this?"

Alvaro Saar Rios' plays have been performed in Chicago, New York City, Hawaii, St. Louis, Milwaukee and all over Texas. He is a Resident Playwright at Chicago Dramatists and a Playwright-in-Residence at First Stage. He is a member of the #ENOUGH Advisory Committee.

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