Playwright’s Notes

I started the slow process of writing this play much like the characters do in the first act of *The Valley* -- by tracing back my own interaction with the police over the years: from beach parties when I was seventeen, to having my purse stolen the first hour of my first visit to New York. I became intrigued by how much policing had changed in my lifetime. These days in Vancouver well over half the calls police go out on are related to issues around mental illness. As I began to write I was interested in examining that in particular and in the concept of **protection**. *a: one that protects, b* ***:*** *supervision or support of one that is smaller and weaker –* protection as it relates to being a police officer, sure, but also for me as a mother, a member of society, what it means to protect and feel protected. So that’s how this play started, but there is always a large gap between what I think I'm going to write and what actually gets written. In the end this play resides on the same turf as most of my work, in that it looks at an issue through the lens of family – or, in the case of *The Valley,* two families -- and trying to figure out what makes these families, and all of us, connected.

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