

THERAPEUTIC THEATRE: THE WEAVING OF SELF AND THEATRE

**A PERFORMATIVE INQUIRY
of the
COLLABORATIVE PLAY-CREATING PROCESS
and
OPTIMAL ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT**

David Merritt Beare

B.A. (Psychology), University of Windsor, 1989
B.A. Honours (Drama in Education), University of Windsor, 1990
B.Ed. (Secondary School), University of Windsor, 1991

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts**

**in
The Faculty of Graduate Studies
Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology and Special Education**

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

Dr. Marla Arvay

Dr. Marvin Westwood

Dr. Lynn Fels

**THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Vancouver, B.C.
November 2002**

copyright David Merritt Beare, 2003

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of EDUCATIONAL AND COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY + SPECIAL EDUCATION.

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date JAN 3, 2003

ABSTRACT

Based on the overlapping principles of social constructivism, performance psychology, drama therapy, and therapeutic theatre, I explore the weaving of self and theatre. The main purpose for this performative inquiry study is to reach the most well-informed and sophisticated interpretation of how the collaborative play-creating process fosters optimal adolescent development. For the past three and a half years, I have facilitated hundreds of high school students through five separate collaborative play-creating processes. I position myself in this research with the belief that development is relational and that the teaching of theatre arts would be better served with the shift from the development of theatre to the development of people. The central interpretative site from which I will construct all my interpretations for this study are based on the transcription of five interviews (four youth and one facilitator) and all my field notes (as facilitator and researcher). From the transcribed interviews and field notes, I have conceptualized a theoretical framework, which involves nine themes, divided into two sections: theatre and self. The theatre section involves four collaborative play-creating process steps: script-writing, rehearsing, performing, and ongoing reflecting. The self section involves five developmental stages: inclusion, control, intimacy, empowerment and vision. In addition, selected sections of the transcribed text were used to create a script depicting eight characters operating at different developmental stages. Overall, I share with the readers my interpretations and analysis of the construction of the nine themes and the script. Conclusions of my study are made based on various stakeholders' evaluations of my interpretations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT / ii

TABLES / vi

FIGURES / vii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / viii

CHAPTER ONE / 1

My Story / 1

My History / 6

My Philosophical Positioning / 8

Overview of Study / 9

Research Concerns / 13

Research Concerns in Drama/Theatre in Education / 13

Research Concerns Regarding Youth / 14

Research Concerns Regarding Youth and Counselling / 16

Research Concerns Regarding Drama Therapy / 17

Research Concerns Regarding Extracurricular Programs / 19

Research Questions / 20

Summary of Study / 21

CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review / 24

Youth / 24

Optimal Adolescent Development / 24

Youth Organizations / 28

Alternative High School Counselling / 31

Drama / 33

Drama as Theatre, Education and Therapy / 33

Drama as Theatre / 34

Drama as Education / 36

Drama as Therapy / 36

Boundary Blurs of Drama as Theatre, Education and Therapy / 37

Drama Therapy / 38

Drama Therapy and Psychodrama / 38

Definition of Drama Therapy / 39

Role-theory / 41

Distancing / 41

Therapeutic Theatre / 42

Recreational Therapy / 42

Definition of Therapeutic Theatre / 43

Chapter Summary / 44

CHAPTER THREE: Research and Method / 46

Philosophical Foundation / 46
Social Constructivism / 46
Performance Psychology / 48
Method / 52
Performative Inquiry / 52
The Collaborative Play-Creating Process / 58
Research Procedures / 59
Text / 59
Participants / 60
Interview Question / 61
Analysis Procedures / 62
Evaluation / 65
Comprehensiveness of Nine Themes / 65
Reflexivity of Researcher / 66
Resonance of Fiction / 66
Multivocality of Script / 67
Genuineness of characters / 67
Implications and Limitations / 68
Implications for Participants / 68
Implications for Research / 68
Limitations of Drama Therapy, Therapeutic Theatre & Performance Psychology / 70
Chapter Summary / 72

CHAPTER FOUR: Analysis / 73

A Conceptualization of Self & Theatre / 73
Four Steps of the Collaborative Play-Creating Process / 75
Step One: Script-Writing / 75
Step Two: Rehearsing / 77
Step Three: Performing / 78
Step Four: Reflecting / 79
Five Developmental Stages / 79
Stage One: Inclusion / 81
Stage Two: Control / 82
Stage Three: Intimacy / 83
Stage Four: Empowerment / 85
Stage Five: Vision / 87
The Weaving of Self & Theatre: A Closer Look / 89
Four Beacons of Light / 89
The Change Process / 91
Chapter Summary / 92

CHAPTER FIVE: Script / 94

CHAPTER SIX: Discussion / 121

Review of the Eight Characters and Developmental Stages / 121

Steven and Stage One / 121

Daniel and Stage Two / 122

Kristy and Stage Two / 123

Shelly and Stage Three / 124

Pam and Stages Three / 124

Paul and Stage Four / 125

Karen and Stage Four / 126

Mike and Stage Five / 127

Critique / 128

Feedback from the Five Interviewed Participants / 128

Feedback Involving Evaluation Forms / 130

Recommendations for Further Research / 132

My Conclusions of this Study / 133

Pieces Falling Together: A Construction In the Making / 137

APPENDIXES

A. Parental Consent Form /149

B. Consent Form /151

C. Interview Protocol /153

D. Fifty-four Possible Categories /154

E. The Weaving of Self and Theatre Evaluation Form / 155

REFERENCES / 158

TABLE

1. The High School Performing Arts Youth Evaluation Results / 156

FIGURES

1. Spectrum of Theatre Teaching /140
2. Overview of Study / 141
3. Drama Therapy: Distancing / 142
4. The Weaving of Self and Theatre / 143
5. Schutz Three Dimensions of Interpersonal Behaviours Part 1 /144
6. Schutz Three Dimensions of Interpersonal Behaviours Part 2 /144
7. Developmental Stages of Therapeutic Theatre /145
8. The Journey in Therapeutic Theatre /146
9. Beacons of Light /147
10. The Change Process in Therapeutic Theatre /148

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

i dedicate
my years of reflections
on the weaving of self and theatre
to my theatre students,
past, present and future....

thanks
to my thesis committee
marla, marv and lynn
and
to my family, friends
and my loving partner, glen....
you all have been exceptionally
kind, supportive and patience
as I have journeyed
for three and a half years
through a dark cave
which led to
deadends, obstacles, surprises
and finally
vision....

special thanks
to andrej marko
and my students
for helping me
create this video
and
to those who
openly shared their stories....

eternal thanks
to carole mayrand
for showing me the light
and
to patrice keats
for being present with me
as I sat, often afraid,
in the dark....

may we all strive to shine....

(I can be contacted at)

CHAPTER ONE

According to the philosophies of social constructivism, the subjectivity of a researcher cannot be separated from the research itself. Therefore, social constructivists are required to share all their personal viewpoints and biases in order to emphasize the constructivism principle that researchers do not discover research truth, but in fact, *construct* it. This is my story.

“What is essential is invisible to the eye.” (Saint-Exupery, 1943)

My Story

Writing this thesis has been the most difficult academic experience of my life. It has forced me to see the ugly shadow parts of myself, but even scarier, my beautiful shining parts. After nearly three and a half years of wandering in the darkness with this study, I have come to see an invisible process. It has taken me awhile to realize that the moon had “Eclipsed” my light, and instead of being in awe of its mystery, the darkness had filled my heart with fear. Fear chained me to be self-loathing with everything I wrote. I hated myself for not being a great researcher. I hated myself for being a lousy writer. I hated myself for not writing fast enough, good enough, brilliant enough. Then one day, in the midst of desperation, frantically searching for an idea (any idea!) to prove my academic worthiness, I came across Nelson Mandela’s inaugural speech:

*Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
 Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
 It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.
 We ask ourselves, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?"
 Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God.
 Your playing small doesn't serve the world.
 There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that
 Other people won't feel insecure around you.
 We are all meant to shine as children do.
 We were born to make manifest the Glory of God that is within us.
 It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone.
 And as we let our own light shine,
 We unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.
 As we're liberated from our own fear,
 Our presence automatically liberates others .*

(Maryanne Williamson, 1992, pp. 190-1)

*When I first read this prayer-like poem it resonated within my soul but I could not understand why. It resonated with me so strongly that I guided my students to work from this poem which shaped one of our latest plays, **Eclipsed, Ben's story**. We've discovered that in spite of our fears, in the end, after all is said and done, it is ultimately our responsibility as individuals to shine. I never knew shining required so much courage in addition to support from friends and love ones.*

Of course, this awareness has only come to me in hindsight. During the actual process of this study, all I knew was that I was extremely busy teaching full-time, counselling, creating plays with my students, and (damn!) I had this stupid thesis, like a dark cloud, hanging over my head. Even though, I had writer's block with my research, I could easily co-create plays with my students. There was a parallel that I did not see between the process of writing my thesis and co-writing plays with my students. I did not know that I needed to co-create deeply with my students before I could know what I needed to write about. I realized that I knew something but I did not know what I knew.

*Presently, during this current 2002-2003 school year, my students and I are busy writing a musical comedy, **Stardumb**. It's a humorous story about all the shenanigans that occurs when a group of youth strive to become superstars. We are having a blast writing it. It is fun to write wacky characters, situations, and songs! This will be our fifth play in a row that involves the collaborative play-creating process.*

*Our first attempt at this process occurred during the 1998-1999 school year where we co-created an adaptation of the children's story, **The Little Prince**. I had just finished the play **Macbeth** and was finally ready to venture into something more alternative. Also, I really wanted to explore the whole script-writing process; however, I still needed the safety net of a preset storyline that was well known by the community.*

*During the 1999-2000 school year we co-created **Murder in the Cathedral**. We adapted and re-interpreted this classic play into a modern rave setting, in which a drug-addicted male youth replayed the same self-destructive scene over and over, each time slightly different, until he found a non-violent solution to his problem. This play was in response to the Reena Virk murder and the Columbine shootings. While I still needed the safety net of the preset text, I was able to take more risks and venture further away from the original text.*

*In the following 2000-2001 school year we decided to lighten up the mood and explore the word "love". We based our play around the bible passage, "Love is kind, Love is patient." This original play, **Dance... through a glass darkly**, was a romantic comedy in which a troubled boy and his unkind girlfriend both learned, through the expression of dance, the meaning of love. This was my first experience totally venturing into the unknown, with no safety net of a preset text or known storyline. This entire*

process was my most powerful and successful theatre experience to date.

*In response to the September 11 attack, during the 2001-2002 school year, we asked ourselves what prevented people from loving. Why do people want to blow up buildings and destroy one's another communities? Through intense discussions, we decided that this absence of love could be narrowed down to one word-- "fear". At that point, we decided that our next play would be based around "fear" as explained in the famous Nelson Mandela's speech, written by Marianne Williamson (See page 2). From there we created **Eclipsed, Ben's Story**. This was a drama in which a boy, Ben, struggled to write a story because he was afraid to face his deepest fear--risking failure to become a writer.*

*The Ben character was originally derived from the play, **Dance. through a glass darkly**, and he was initially written as a wise and gentle character. He wrote profound love poems, which helped another troubled boy to better understand the concept of love. In this past year, we asked ourselves, what made Ben so wise about love? What made Ben a strong writer? What fears did he have to overcome to be able to understand that he did not have to be ruled by fear? What were his self-destructive behaviours, which we never explored in **Dance**? Thus, we decided to rewind time to answer these questions; this is how **Eclipsed** became a prequel to **Dance**--just like Star Wars! We pulled Ben back from a wise, sensitive and confident character to a youth that was depressed, fearful and full of self-loathing. He hated his writing ability--his own narrative creations!*

Only after the fact, had I begun to see the eerie parallels of my personal story to Ben's story. Here I was, for the past three years, teaching, directing, and preaching to

my students to shine and not be "Eclipsed," and little did I know that I, too, was seeing "through a glass darkly" the whole time. Like the Ben character, I had to learn to stop beating myself up, focus more on what I can do well, and what I can do better in the world.

*Since Ben was a poet/writer in **Dance**, we decided that the product of his writing would be the main focus of his fear. As the play unfolded, his everyday life and his fantasies in the form of his written stories began to blur together. This was symbolized by a scene in which the school wall-mural and the school itself ran a risk of being burned down by school vandals. The audience, like Ben, was left in a state of confusion, because they could not separate the difference between reality and fantasy--between foreground and background. Nevertheless, Ben slowly learned to face his fears (unresolved past issues related to a fear of rejection) and, in turn, rewrites his story. This altered both his life and the outcome of the written story. In the end, he learned that it was his responsibility to shine "in spite" of obstacles.*

*From these plays, I have come to develop a deep appreciation and understanding of the collaborative play-creating process. However, on a far deeper level, I surprisingly received the incredible gift of being able to embrace myself as an **artist**. This was something I could never do before without shame. I can now say without shame, "I am an artist." Somewhere along the way as I was co-creating, a part of me got healed, and as I looked around, I had noticed that some students, not all, got healed, too. It was like their true self simply bloomed! I saw them expanding--glowing. I saw them become freer to interact with others. They were freer to create and explore ideas and less closed to the creative process and others. Now that I am more in tune with my*

sense of self as artist, I am now very curious to better understand how youth unfold as performing artists. At last, I finally have something to write about!

My History

As a child, I grew up with a strong tendency to create. I remember putting on little one-man shows for my family. My desires to create, entertain and express myself were very strong. It was not until grade five that teachers began to notice my creative side. While I was language-delayed due to a hearing loss at birth, I won a writing contest, entered an oral speaking contest, and got roles in school plays. I remember the moment when I realized that theatre could change people. It was in a grade seven Christmas concert where I played a quiet, yet wise, character that saved Santa from his depression! I convinced Santa to give the toys back to the children; I saved Christmas! Yes, the script was awful, there was hardly any direction or movement, people forgot their lines, my friends who played the reindeer kept banging their fake antlers into one another, but, what a rush! It changed me. I became more confident and open.

Unfortunately, my years in high school from grade nine to thirteen were difficult ones as I never felt like I quite fit into my small steeling-making town, in Northern Ontario. I spent a great deal of my energy studying and hiding from my peers so I did not have to admit to anyone, including myself, that I was gay. While I was not ready to come out of the closet, theatre provided me with a safe haven in which to hide and a creative outlet to express myself. In short, instead of turning to self-destructive behaviours, such as suicide or drugs, I turned to theatre.

As a young adult, I began to blossom again. During my university years I found

other like-minded people who accepted me, and loved me, thus allowing me to accept my sexual orientation and many other aspects of myself. After obtaining a degree in psychology, I enrolled in an honours drama in education program. Here the drama gurus such as Brian Way, Viola Spolin, Dorothy Heathcote, David Booth and Richard Courtney profoundly inspired me and greatly expanded my practice of utilizing drama as a developmental tool. Afterward, in order to obtain my teaching certificate I enrolled in an one year faculty of education program with a specialization in secondary theatre arts and psychology. In all these cases, I was (and still am) passionate about using theatre, drama and creativity as ways to help people to become more true to themselves!

I started my teaching career in inner-city middle schools within the downtown Toronto area. Now I teach high school theatre classes in Greater Vancouver. The majority of these students come from middle and upper class Caucasian and Iranian homes. A high percentage of them tend to advance on to post-secondary institutions. While teaching secondary theatre, I have also enrolled in a masters in counselling psychology program where I have studied and practiced in the areas of drama therapy, psychodrama, high school counselling, group counselling, male survivors of sexual abuse, and the developmental and coming out processes of sexual minority youth.

While working on my thesis, I have come to learn that there is a great deal of literature indicating how therapists, educators, and artists have used the creative tools of music, dance, literature, art, and drama to reach the psychological realms of the human spirit. In a nutshell, I believe the acts of creating and expressing creativity are healing processes. My interest in healing and creativity stem from my own childhood

and school experiences, as well as my twelve years of teaching and directing performing arts with youth. In general, I am interested in understanding how theatre as a creative process helps youth emotionally, psychologically, socially, and spiritually. I anticipate that much of my future work will be based around combining theatre, education, and psychology to better understand how creative expression ignites the spirit of human beings.

My Philosophical Positioning

In alignment with social constructivism, this section will explain my philosophical positioning. From my research on secondary theatre arts teaching, I have noticed that the philosophies and practices of theatre arts teaching tend to fall on a product versus process spectrum, as shown in Figure 1 (Booth, 1985; Bramwell, 1996; Brown, 1999; Courtney, 1989; Errington, 1999; Heathcote, 1984; Jackson, 1996; Way, 1967). At one end, theatre is viewed as a *product* with its main focus on the development of theatre itself. This end of the spectrum is well researched, easy to describe, and has clear step-by-step procedures. At the other end, theatre is viewed as a *process* with its main focus on the development of people. This end is not as well researched and harder to describe, since a great deal of this process is harder to grasp. The product view usually sees theatre as an event and the human change process as a major turning point, while the process view usually sees theatre as people on a journey and the human change process as a subtle and complex continuum that has no beginning or end.

In terms of the product-process spectrum, I believe that theatre arts facilitation would be better served with a shift away from the development of theatre and more

towards the development of people. This philosophy of directing, counselling and teaching youth stems from all my professional, personal, and creative experiences, as well as reading the literature review. In short, I have come to believe and position myself in this paper that development is relational. In other words, we grow as a result of our interactions with others. Since I believe that development is relational, then it follows, reality, role-playing, and research are also relational. Therefore, ideas, roles, and truth unfold through relationships whether these interactions are real, fictional, internal, or external. The following section provides an overview of my study, which explains more specifically my philosophical foundation, method, and topic areas.

Overview of Study

As shown in the outer ring of Figure 2, *social constructivism* is the main foundation of this study; all the other rings fall within the philosophical principles of social constructivism. Guba and Lincoln (2000) write that social constructivists believe that multi-realities are co-existing at the same time, changing from moment to moment. Reality is not something out there to be discovered, but rather, it is subjectively constructed through the interaction between individuals. From a social constructivist's perspective, everything that researchers examine, write, and create is filtered through their personal views and biases. Each new experience they encounter presents an opportunity, which may or may not alter their perspective and interpretation of the world. Researchers cannot step outside the realms of their experiences. The very essence of who they are will influence how the participants in the study will behave and respond, and the essence of the researcher's interactions with the participants will

influence them. Therefore, research is relational, where researcher and participant shape one another's perspectives. Simply stated, the words used to write up a research study are ultimately the researcher's creation. Each individual researcher draws out different conclusions in the same study.

The second ring in Figure 2 represents my choice of method, *performative inquiry*. Fels (1999) states that performative inquiry is a process of knowing, doing, being, and creating. Rooted in the combined theories of enactivism, performance and complexity, performative inquiry investigates the interrelationships between people. This includes within relationships and between ourselves, in addition to the playing out of the performance within a certain space and moment. Performative inquiry aims to capture, not so much the facts, but rather the *experience of realizing/recognizing* through performance, otherwise known as the "space-moment" of learning, or the "aha!" moment. Performative inquiry provides me with the freedom to move through and examine a creative process, and then to use my own creative process to express my interpretations in return.

In this study, performative inquiry closely examines a *drama therapy* process, as shown in the third ring in Figure 2. In short, Johnson (1982) states that drama therapy is any therapeutic use of role-playing. Role theory, which is the foundation of drama therapy, falls within the principles of social constructivism. People are constantly creating and recreating reality, playing out different roles with different attitudes, thought patterns and behaviours depending on the relationship with objects (whether real, fictional or inanimate) and the quality of the interaction (Courtney, 1989; Doyle, 1998; Jennings & Minde, 1993; Landy, 1993; Landy 1990; Meldrum, 1994b). These

roles and realities can be formed and shaped through the interaction with an inspiring teacher, a friend, a character in a film, or an abstract painting on a wall. Overall, I believe that drama therapy includes various psychological principles of performance and allows me to examine more closely the developmental processes of adolescents.

Readers must be cautioned that during the process of this study, I was never doing therapy with my performing arts youth, but instead doing something creative that I felt was therapeutic both for them and the facilitators. Also, I am not advocating in this paper that therapy should be brought into the drama classroom. This would be, at best, inappropriate, and, at worst, detrimental. Instead, in this paper, I turned to a branch of drama therapy that focused, not so much on the therapy components of role-playing, but more its therapeutic components.

This led me to *therapeutic theatre* as shown in the inner core section of Figure 2. This inner core section is central to my study. According to Anderson-Warren (1996) therapeutic theatre is a branch of drama therapy that focuses on the healing process of the individuals in a theatre group, the various components of the theatre process, and the relationships between the performers and audience. The experience of being heard, validated and able to portray honest emotions on stage are examples of how theatre help performers to develop self-worth, self-confidence, and community support.

There are many different types of therapeutic theatre, but this study only examines the collaborative play-creating process, as seen in the left side of the inner core section of Figure 2. The *collaborative play-creating process* is a term, coined by myself, in which performing arts youth and facilitators co-create a play by moving back and forth between four overlapping components: scriptwriting, rehearsing, performing

and ongoing reflecting. The focus is less on the development of theatre, but more importantly in this study, on the development of people. This is not to say that the final product is not important, but merely one aspect of a highly complex process.

As also shown in the inner core section of Figure 2, therapeutic theatre also examines *optimal adolescent development*. I borrow this term from Kaczmarek and Riva (1996). Optimal adolescent development examines the protective factors that are needed for successful growth in youth throughout their teenage years. It also examines the positive qualities needed to foster and facilitate optimal growth in youth. In this study therapeutic theatre facilitates and fosters optimal adolescent development within a collaborative play-creating process.

As suggested in the title of this study, therapeutic theatre is the weaving of self and theatre. Ultimately, the overall focus in therapeutic theatre is on the development of an artistic and caring community. In turn, the actual act of creating, expressing, and reflecting within an artistic and caring community impacts the performing arts youth. These youth are encouraged to become more aware of internal changes, their social community, and their art. Therefore, when I examine optimal adolescent development, I am examining the ideal qualities needed to foster and nurture youth's sense of self as artist.

Overall, my key purpose of this paper is directed towards theatre teachers and secondary school counsellors. I anticipate that they will acquire a better understanding of therapeutic theatre and how the collaborative play-creating process fosters optimal adolescent development. For example, in therapeutic theatre, participants are engaged in social and recreational activities that do not require any self-disclosure. Facilitators,

while not doing any type of therapy will become more aware of the therapeutic benefits of the social interaction and see the activity as a means towards positive mental health (Anderson-Warren, 1996; Larson and Kleiber, 1993). The following section examines various research concerns regarding this study.

Research Concerns

Research Concerns in Drama/Theatre in Education

Bramwell (1996), Catterall and Darby (1996) and Errington (1999) all state that too many research designs and findings for drama/theatre in education examine the procedures and tasks in drama/theatre in education, but not the intrapersonal and interpersonal processes that occur for the individuals involved. According to Catterall and Darby (1996) much of the empirical research on drama in education has focused on individual learning and development, limited to psychometric models. They highly recommend that researchers move from exclusive emphasis on individual assessment towards group assessment and collaborative products. Also, much of the research is based on theories of drama in education, yet, little research actually indicates findings that stems directly from students' views.

There are few studies on the experiences of high school theatre teachers and even less on the experiences of high school theatre students. Catterall and Darby (1996) state that there is little "research on what students learn through the performance process" (p. 152). They advocate for researchers to use methods such as phenomenological or ethnographic forms of inquiry to better understand the performer's perspective. They also call for the use of "Integrated Inquiry" methods so that practice

and research complement one another.

While there are many examples of high school drama teachers using theatre to promote positive personal and social development, Cockett (1996) found that most theatre arts teachers tend to use drama for theatrical purposes but rarely social, educational, or psychological ones. They had clear theoretical views on teaching concepts such as acting skills and theatre history; however, they did not see drama as an agent of personal and social change. Theatre arts researchers tend to avoid theoretical principles that examines how to intentionally foster positive developmental effects on youth. Research indicates that practitioners do know that something meaningful and significant is occurring for their students, yet still “their aims promoted learning *in* drama rather than learning through drama” (Cockett, 1996, p. 214).

Research Concerns Regarding Youth

Biddy and Posterski (2000) get to the heart of what matter most to adolescents-- friends. Between 1984 and 1992 they conducted an impressive Canadian National longitudinal study by surveying 15,000 teenagers and adults across Canada. Across this eight-year span, they consistently found that teens value their relationships with others the most. In general, 26% of teens picked being with *friends* most enjoyable, followed by 19% for *sports*, then 15% for *sex, music and partying*. Surprisingly, only 21% of teen in 1984 and 22% of teens in 1992 reported *being popular* was *very important* to them, while 91% of teens in 1984 and 84% of teens in 1992 reported that *friendship* was *very important*. The three top things teenagers value as very important are friendship, freedom, and being loved.

Biddy and Posterski compared their data of Canadian teens in the 80s and 90s to the data of Canadian teens in the 50s, 60s, and 70s, and they found that in all five decades, research showed teens choosing *being with friends* as their *most enjoyable* activity, followed by *listening to music*. In other words, teens' core value system has been constant over the past fifty years. Teens, like people of all ages, are social beings who value significant relationships beyond anything else.

In many development models, such as Erikson (cited in Barker, 1996), youth form their identity by becoming independent. Contradictory research indicates that youth develop through connection with others. Perhaps, Erickson's model should be shifted so that youth are not thriving for independence but rather interdependence.

Biddy and Posterski (2000) write:

There is no question that today's teens value relationships above everything else. However, at precisely the same time, they are mirroring Canadian society's unprecedented emphasis on the importance of the individual--personal freedom, personal rights, personal values, personal dreams, personal fulfilment, and personal power. (p. 164)

Unless youth can balance between connection and separateness, society's push for individuality can crush the quality of relationship which youth most value. Biddy and Posterski continue:

Among Canadians young and old, what is needed is the replacement of radical individualism with a relational model where self and society are merged. We have to do a better job of getting the message across to teens that they, like the rest of us, are not islands unto themselves. Rather, we all find optimum fulfilment and productivity in being connected to others. Emphasis needs to be given to the importance of commitment, not to self-gratification per se, but to good relationships as the means to personal and social well-being. (pp. 169-170)

Research Concerns Regarding Youth and Counselling

Biddy and Posterski (2000) also examine the type of people youth turn to for support. When asked whom they would turn to for help/support *when something big goes wrong*, 61% of teens said they would turn to *friends*, 22% turn to *family* (with 10% for *Mom*, 2% for *Dad*, and 10% being other family members such as *siblings*). Surprisingly, less than one per cent of teens reported that they would turn to *teachers* or *counsellors* for help. When asked who they would most likely turn to *when making a decision*, in terms of *career decision*, 55% of teens turn to *parents*, 11% turn to *friends*, and 20% turn to *school counsellor*. In terms of *major personal problems*, 48% of teens turn to *friends*, 37% turn to *parents*, and only 2% would turn to *counsellors*. In other words, one in five students turn to school counsellors for career/school concerns and only one in 50 students turns to school counsellors for personal problems. When it comes to making major life decisions, such as college, job placement, career choice, teens tend to turn to parents first, and when it comes to personal day-to-day concerns and typical adolescent behaviours, teens tend to turn to each other. In both cases, high school counsellors are left out of the loop. Overall, adolescents have a strong need for privacy as well as connection with peers who will provide privacy.

When youth turn to peers for support, this enhances important social and personal development; however, optimal adolescent development calls for well-trained professional support and guidance. Offer and Schonert-Reichl (1992) found that only 9% of youth perceived turning to mental health professionals as a possible option and that the majority of youth were unaware of the professional helping agencies available to them in their community. Also, while youth turning to friends for help is highly

beneficial socially and psychologically, research also indicates that most teens do not have the life experiences, education, or the resources to support friends that are at serious psychological risk. In other words, the youth who need help the most are not getting the right kind of help. Thus, helping professionals need to look for alternative means to reach out to these youth. One example of this is the use of recreational organizations, which are natural social places where adolescents meet, and where ideally, well-trained caring adults can give supervised support (Elmen & Offer, 1993; Kaczmarek & Riva, 1996; Offer & Schonert-Reichl, 1992; Santrock, 1996).

Research indicates that 80% of youth appear to cope well as they move smoothly from childhood through adolescence to adulthood but there are few studies on how this transition works (Elmen & Offer, 1993; Kaczmarek & Riva, 1996; Offer & Schonert-Reichl, 1992; Santrock, 1996). Their findings indicate that research on adolescence is mostly based on dysfunctional adolescents, and in comparison there is less research on optimal adolescent development, even though this group makes up 80% of its population. This study aims to explore this population group, and use a high school theatre program as an alternative way to reach youth.

Research Concerns Regarding Drama Therapy

Drama therapy, like psychodrama, uses aspects of theatre, acting, and audience within its therapy to assist participants in working through emotional crisis and blocks (Kedem-Tahar & Felix-Kellermann, 1996; Snow, 1996). Unlike psychodrama, which has clear and well-researched theoretical constructs and methods spanning over six decades (Blatner, 1973; Yablonsky, 1976), research in drama therapy is lacking. Drama

therapy, originally founded in the late 1970s, is still trying to establish its' own theoretical identity. Drama therapy is difficult to research because of concepts such as self, feelings, and creative process are unobservable processes. Additionally, drama therapy is extremely eclectic and richly experimental, which tends to blur the boundaries (Landy, 1984; Landy, 1986; Landy, 1994; Landy 1997b). Overall, more research in drama therapy is needed to help establish a clearer theoretical framework.

Landy (1994) argues that drama therapists need to return to theatre and other creative arts therapy as a way to gain support, but more specifically, as a way to expand research possibilities. For example, Fink (1990) provides an excellent and comprehensive framework linking drama in therapy models to variety of theatre philosophy and psychotherapy. du Rand (1997) claims that drama therapists need to be true to the artistic process of theatre and to continually re-experience theatre as an actor, director, and scriptwriter. In my research, I utilize the high school theatre process in search of knowledge for therapeutic theatre, a branch of drama therapy.

As editor-in-chief of the journal, *Arts in Psychotherapy*, Landy (1994) claims that he receives few articles on the practice and research of drama therapy. He restates these claims again in 1997, discussing the state of drama therapy and encouraging masters students in drama therapy to move from descriptive research to "more methodologically-based" research which examines the "creative, therapeutic process" (Landy, 1997b, p.8). Based on Landy's original recommendations dated back to 1986, my study attempts to work with a method that examines

drama therapy as a creative process, specifying which parts of the process to investigate, how the process works, and what effects that process has upon the functioning of subjects. (p. 228)

In this study, I take Landy's challenge as my key aim.

Research Concerns Regarding Extracurricular Programs

Sports, art, hobbies and organizations are the most consistent indicators for immediate positive development of youth (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Davis and Tolan, 1993; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Holland & Andre, 1987; Impara, Enders & Beecham, 1996; Larson and Kleiber, 1993; Marsh, 1992; McNeal, 1998; Rauner, 2000; Santrock, 1996). These activities provide structure to practice skills, which helps adolescents become functional adults. However, activities such as socializing and deviant activities that involve little adult supervision are not likely to produce ideal constructive behaviour if left unmonitored for long periods of time. Larson and Kleiber (1993) write:

Sports, socializing with friend, involvement in a club, and getting drunk provide the high points in teenager's experience. They are what teenagers look forward to, what gets them out of bed in the morning, and what sustains them through weeks when school stress or family tensions fill life with dread. Lacking these free-time activities, it is safe to predict, many "normal" teens would be on clinical rolls. (Larson & Kleiber, 1993, p. 141)

Therefore, more research is needed to better understand how adolescents experience structured activities and how this enhances optimal adolescent development.

There is research that examines the success of a program. Csikszentmihalyi (2000) found that extracurricular activity was perceived by adolescents as most like work and play, where participation was enjoyable in the present and important to their future. Youth tend to join organizations because they want to have fun, socialize and participate in a wide variety of activities that reflect their particular interest and culture.

Nevertheless, Davis and Tolan (1993) found that most research and evaluation procedures of youth organizations tend to not focus on the youth's experiences, but rather on attendance patterns in order to justify funding requirements.

Davis and Tolan (1993) also state that the loss of an inspirational leader usually causes the organization to die out because the program's success is built around the leader and not the program itself. Unfortunately, they report that the turnover rate of leaders in many youth organization is quite high hindering the ability to effectively evaluate the success of the program. While the effectiveness of the program can not be made, inferences can be made that the personality and skills of the leader greatly shape the "feel" of how the program will unfold and serve as an indicator whether or not youth will mingle together within the structured environment. This makes sense, since most students are intrinsically drawn to the social and relational aspect of the activity.

While youth organizations are said to be helpful, Davis and Tolan (1993) reveal that there has been actually very little research on how these type of organizations impact on the lives of youth and enhance their mental health. In this study I aim to delve below the surface of the organization of my theatre program in order to explore the hidden, subtler, more complex operations of adolescent development and therapeutic theatre.

Research Questions

In alignment with the principles of social constructivism, the purpose of this performative inquiry is not to answer questions, but rather to stimulate more questions. Preliminary questions were used to guide the direction of the study during discussions

between participants and facilitators about the collaborative play-creating process and the development of self as artist. I based my discussions and reflections around three main questions. How do performing arts youth and facilitators experience the collaborative play-creating process? How do performing arts youth and facilitators develop their sense of self as artists while participating in the collaborative play-creating process? How do performing arts youth and facilitators find the collaborative play-creating process helpful or hindering?

I also had other supplemental questions. What are the relationships and boundaries between the collaborative play-creating process and drama in theatre, drama in education, and drama in therapy? What are the relationships between the collaborative play-creating process and the development of self as artist? What can high school theatre teachers and counsellors learn from this performative inquiry? Can the collaborative play-creating process, as an extra-curricular high school program, be considered therapeutic theatre? If so, how? If not, how else can high school theatre teachers shift their view of theatre from being a theatrical product to a process of development? Together, these questions have guided me through this study.

Summary of Study

Chapter one outlines how I have observed and reflected on the theatre process and the developmental process of my performing arts students and myself. I provide an overview of my study, which is based on social constructivism principles and how the collaborative play-creating process might foster optimal adolescent development. I share my personal story, which indicates my history, belief systems, biases, training in

theatre, education and psychology, and experiences as a facilitator of five collaborative play-creating processes. I position myself in this paper with the belief that development, reality, role-playing and research are all connected to relationship and human interaction, whether real, fictional, external or internal. Therefore, I believe that the facilitation of theatre arts programs would be better served with less emphasis on the development of theatre and more emphasis and awareness around the development of people.

In chapter two, I provide a literature review on adolescent development, youth organizations, alternative high school counselling, drama in theatre, drama in education, drama in therapy, drama therapy and therapeutic theatre. I provide greater detail about role-theory and distancing, two core drama therapy concepts used in therapeutic theatre.

In the third chapter, I provide more details regarding the principles of social constructivism, performance psychology and performative inquiry. The central interpretative site from which I will construct all my interpretations for this study are based on the transcription of five interviews (four youth and one facilitator) and all my field notes (as facilitator and researcher). From the text (or condensed text), I narrowed down the study into nine core themes. I explain in chapter three the analysis procedures and the evaluation procedures. I base my evaluation on five criteria: comprehensiveness of nine themes, reflectivity of researcher, resonance of fiction, multivocality of script, and genuineness of characters. Also, some implications and limitations of this study are provided.

The fourth chapter explores in detail each of the nine themes, which are divided into two sections: theatre and self. The theatre section is composed of four steps of the

collaborative play-creating process: script-writing, rehearsing, performing, and reflecting. The self section is composed of five distinct developmental stages of performing arts youth: inclusion, control, intimacy, empowerment, and vision. Figures are provided to illustrate my construction of how these nine themes interrelate with one another, and how the collaborative play-creating process promotes optimal adolescent development.

In chapter five, I construct the selected sections of the raw text (or condensed text) and the nine themes into a script format. Students in a video format performed the script, which I will use for my presentation of my study. In short, all the themes from my interviews, field notes, textbook knowledge, and experiences with the five collaborative play-creating processes have been fictionalized and organized into eight characters.

In the final chapter, I present a case study description of each of the eight characters and how they relate to the eight stages. Afterwards, I present the feedback of five groups of stakeholders (interviewees, thesis committee, University of British Columbia Faculty of Education Secondary Theatre Arts Curriculum student-teachers, and my current and past high school performing arts students, which include some of the actors in the video.)

Finally, in the last chapter, I write eight fictional case studies to summarize the nine themes and I share the feedback from various stakeholders. I present my conclusions regarding this study, and I share my final thoughts regarding my construction of this paper, the nine themes and the script, which all together helped me to better understand the invisible processes of when self and theatre are interwoven.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Youth

Optimal Adolescent Development

I borrow the term *optimal adolescent development* from the works of Kaczmarek and Riva (1996). Kaczmarek and Riva examine the protective factors that are needed for successful growth in youth throughout their teen years. They also examine the positive qualities needed to foster and facilitate optimal growth in youth. Additionally, they argue that too much research time is spent on adolescent dysfunction and limitation, rather than youth health and strength. Their research indicates that 80% of adolescents are “well-adjusted and do not go through extreme or unusual periods of storm and stress as so commonly believed” (p. 400).

Kaczmarek and Riva (1996) suggest several research directions for examination of optimal adolescent development. One direction focuses on how adolescents spend their leisure time within extra-curricular activities. In this way, prevention, not intervention, is the key goal in promoting optimal adolescent development. While the usual focus is on stopping pathology, there is a current shift towards focusing on how youth might build up their self-confidence, resiliency, and other protective factors that will help them to reject deviant and self-destructive behaviours and embrace healthy and self-constructive behaviours. They also suggest that an examination of social interactions with peers, friends, and other groups may help to better understand how to reinforce protective factors in youth today.

Elmen and Offer (1993) concluded that in spite of persistent stereotypes regarding teenager, most adolescents are well-adjusted and cope successfully with the unique stressors of the teenage years. At all developmental stages, humans have unique forms of stressors to work through, and upon comparison, the number of adolescents that are classified as functional or dysfunctional are in proportion to people at other developmental stages (i.e. infants, children and adults). In other words, normal teenagers do not go through disproportionate or extreme turmoil as so often indicated by societal stereotypes. As a result of this misconception of adolescence, deeply troubled teenagers are often ignored and classified as experiencing normal adolescent angst; therefore, they do not get the professional psychological support that they need.

Erikson (as cited in Barker, 1996) presented eight stages of psychosocial crises and development, with adolescents working through an *identity versus role-confusion* stage. For adolescents to move through this stage they "must have achieved a separate identity based on an understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses" (Baker, 1996, p. 34). Newman and Newman (1986) offer a different view of adolescent by stating that adolescents are working through a *Group Identity versus Alienation* stage. They concluded positive adolescent development occurs when

adolescents perceive an existing group that meets their social needs and provides them with a sense of group belonging. This sense of belonging facilitates psychological growth and helps integrate the development task. (Newman & Newman, 1986, p. 97)

Newman and Newman found that identity is formed not from being separate from others, as implied in Erikson's developmental model, but rather from interaction with others, especially peers.

In contrast, Santrock (1996) strives toward the middle of this controversial issue and proposes that independent and interdependent factors are both necessary for effective adolescent development. Blewitt and Broderick (1999) wrote

the search for identity, considered the primary developmental task of the adolescent period, is very much affected by the social world: peers, parents, schools, and neighbourhoods. (p. 1)

They state that dependence upon peers is an important component that fosters adolescent development. This is especially true for early adolescence where they shift from being influenced by their parents to their peers. Adolescents tend to match up with same age peers who are also moving through similar developmental experiences.

Rauner (2000) wrote about caring in youth development and community life and she described development less in terms as turning points but rather continuity. For her, development is a process, not an event. She examines caring, (or in academic terms, prosocial behaviour) as the necessary relational ingredient needed to foster continuity in adolescent growth. She states that more research is needed to better understand how facilitators can foster intentional caring experiences for adolescents, and how adolescents experience caring adults within a caring environment. For example, Blewitt and Broderick (1999) summarized studies where students showed greater academic effort and expression of prosocial goals when their teachers were more caring and supportive versus uncaring and unsupportive.

Newman and Newman (1986) and Santrock (1996) provide a scope of different developmental models for adolescents. For example, Piaget's cognitive model suggests that many adolescents are shifting from concrete to abstract thinking labelled as the formal operational thought stage. In this model, adolescents plan for future goals and

anticipate possible consequences. In Kohlberg's moral development model, he suggests that adolescents shift from a mutual perspective-taking stage to an in-depth and societal perspective taking stage. For Kohlberg, adolescent thinking related to moral problems is conventional and progresses in a fixed sequence, based on the need for approval from authority figures such as police, teachers, or gang leader.

Adolescent development can also be understood through Bandura's (1977) concept of Social Learning in which imitation serves as a method of learning. By observing a model, adolescents can learn new behaviours, such that, over time, imitation turns into identification. Bandura (1977) writes that adolescents tend to imitate others who have prestige or status, such as a peer group leader or famous people. They tend to imitate models who are reinforced for their behaviour, such as a school bully or star-of-the-month classmate, or they imitate models who control the flow of resources to others, such as a parent, teacher, or boss. These implications illustrate the powerful effects of role models on adolescents and how adolescents internalize the positive, as well as negative, qualities of these role-models.

Courtney (1989) makes links between drama and adolescent development by combining various development models as described above. Of the ten stages from birth to age 18, he labelled the teenage years as the *role stage*. According to Courtney, during the of ages 12 to 15, adolescents become aware that they play many different roles depending on the situation they are in or the people they are with. Yet they are unclear which role is the *real me*. Through abstract thinking, adolescent imagine an ideal by engaging in trial and error processes to test out personal theories and to explore ways to understand the difference between self and other, as well as private and public. From

ages 15-18, adolescents have a clearer understanding of the purpose of role and how their personality has many sides, which are constantly shaped by experience. For those who reach these abstract stages, dramatic arts are seen as a way of communicating ideas with an audience.

According to Larson and Kleiber (1993), adolescents can only develop as people when they are given opportunities to practice specific skills, which fosters personal identity, self-responsibility and emotional independence. Since individuals are “producers of their own development” (p. 127) youth need a vehicle to work from. This is similar to Csikszentmihlyi’s (1984; 1990; 1996) concept of *Flow* where development occurs when one’s skills are paired up with a related challenge. In other words, a container is needed to foster positive adolescent development.

For this study, I have named this container the *collaborative play-creating process*, which will be explained in more details in chapters three and four. The next section provides a broad scope of research regarding youth organizations.

Youth Organizations

In a nutshell, free-time can be constructive, destructive, or boring. Helping professionals aim to guide youth through or towards activities which are constructive as a way of improving well-being. Yet not all structured activities are constructive. For example, Davis and Tolan (1993) and Larson & Kleiber (1993) indicated that, if not monitored carefully, unhealthy degrees of competition in sports and academics can undermine youth development. In some cases, heavy involvement in sports without exploration of other life interests can limit or stunt social/emotional development.

Most studies indicate positive correlations between participation in extracurricular activities and positive adolescent outcomes (e.g., higher grade point average, higher self-esteem, higher career aspiration, increased social and civic responsibility, higher involvement in volunteering in political and leisure activities, improved interpersonal and organizational skills, reduced alienation & isolation, reduced amount of discipline referrals, greater chance of fulfilling college educational goals, lower delinquency rates, and decreased rates of involvement in risk behaviours) (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Davis and Tolan, 1993; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Impara, Enders & Beecham, 1996; Holland & Andre, 1987; Larson and Kleiber, 1993; Marsh, 1992; McNeal, 1998; Rauner, 2000; Santrock, 1996).

For example, in one comprehensive study, Davis and Tolan (1993) summarized various studies on youth organizations. From the compiled studies of others, they found that approximately 20% of youth between ages 11 and 18 were enrolled in a community youth organization such as Scouts, religious clubs, youth political groups, and various extra-curricular school programs. From their review on various youth services (e.g., peer counselling, mentoring programs, sports leagues, volunteer opportunities), they found that action-oriented approaches helped youth development.

In another example, Silliker and Quirk (1997) studied the group leaders of extracurricular activities. They found that regardless of the type of activity or percentage of participation, in most cases, the key factors in the success of the extracurricular programs (positive outcomes in youths) lay in the presence and quality of the adult supervisors or coaches.

Davis and Tolan (1993) and Holland and Andre (1987) argue that many of these

studies on extracurricular activities are co-relational, and may indicate the differences between the type of youths who do or do not participate in these activities. Presently, there is no evidence that extracurricular activities actually cause positive effects in youth. It may be that youth having already acquired these positive effects may be the ones joining extracurricular activities. These calls for longitudinal studies in area are missing at the present time.

Eccles and Barber (1999) state there is little research on how the role of constructive activities affects adolescent development. Their impressive longitudinal studies examined over 1,800 youths through eight waves of data collection beginning from 1983 and ending in 1997 (from age 11 to age 25). In over two dozen extracurricular categories, they found that 45.6 % of females and 66.7 % of males were engaged in school team sports, while 13.0 % of females and 6.1 % of males were involved in drama. Participants in both sports and the performing arts claimed they liked school and had a greater likelihood of attending post-secondary institutions. Participation in sports linked to an increase use of alcohol, yet for males, participation in the performing arts, linked to a decrease use of alcohol. Youth who participated in prosocial activities (e.g., church and student council) had the highest and most consistent positive outcome.

Some research indicate the percentage of high school students that are involved fine arts, which include theatre, dance, music and visual art. McNeal (1998) studied over 14,000 students involved in extracurricular activities and he found that 58% of youth were engaged in sports, 36% in academics, and 38% in the fine arts. His results indicated gender and racial differences in the different areas of extracurricular activities.

In another study, Marsh (1992) found that 11% of youth are engaged in the extracurricular drama programs and 23 % are involved in the dance/chorus programs.

While involvement in youth organizations are important for youth, research indicates that youth find the activity of socializing as most importance (Biddy & Posterski, 2000). In one study, Csikszentmihalyi (1984) conducted a large-scale investigation on adolescence, and he found that socializing (not including sleeping) is the single largest activity adolescents are engaged in. Socializing, on average represented 16 %, nearly 1/6, of their waking hours, in comparison to only 12% in class-work. Within the categories of leisure, adolescents only engaged 3.4 % of their time in sports and games and 1.5% of their time in art and hobbies. He also found that adolescent spent 40 to 45 a week in leisure activities in comparison to only four hours per week on homework. In another study, Larson and Kleiber (1993) found that the unstructured activity of socializing is the most frequent use free time for adolescents, especially with girls. They also found that many high school students were involved in at least one non-sports extracurricular program at school. However, compared to sports and socializing, the amount of time engaged in non-sports clubs and organizations was small. Therefore, counsellors may need to think of alternative ways to reach adolescents by combining youth's strong socialization needs with extra-curricular activities.

Alternative High School Counselling

Research indicate that high schools often have a counsellor to student ratio of one to 600 making it nearly impossible to maintain an effective counselling program that meet the needs of youth (e.g., academic, personal, social and career planning needs)

(Kaczmarek & Riva, 1996). Over half of high school counsellors' duties involve some type of paper work and meetings, leaving little time for effective student contact, facilitation of preventative programs, and other interventions that foster adolescent development. Instead of reacting to pathologies and crises, use of counselling resources may be better served by promoting optimal adolescent development. To achieve this, Kaczmarek and Riva (1996) advocate for counsellors to move outside of the counselling office and to become more directly involved in the lives of youth and what concerns them--in this case, socializing.

Blewitt and Broderick (1999) stated that high school counsellors could benefit more by examining peer networks. Instead of counselling from an individual and reactive perspective, counselling needs to turn more towards a social and proactive perspective. Since youth turn to peers, and rarely counsellors, for support, interventions such as peer mediation, peer leadership programs, and peer counselling may better serve and match the developmental needs of youth.

Barker (1996) describes various ways high school counsellors can interact with youth in non-traditional ways. Various methods, such as extramural counselling, multiple impact counselling and activist counselling, demonstrate ways to promote social activism. Without these methods, traditional high school counsellors are too passive and uninvolved in the needs of the students, but rather focus on the needs of the institution itself. Counsellors need to be more active, more directive and more challenged to make an impact on the lives of the students and their families outside the school and counselling office.

In this study, drama is the tool utilized to reach out to youth interested in the

performing arts. The next few sections examine drama, drama therapy, and therapeutic theatre as a way of fostering optimal adolescent development.

Drama

For the purpose of this study, the exploration of the creative process will be limited to the artistic medium of drama. According to Courtney (1989), drama is defined as the process of behaving, thinking, and feeling "as if". The "as if" experience serves to help participants step outside their frame of reference and see the world and self from a different perspective. This new awareness complemented with role rehearsal can lead participants to develop intrinsic qualities such as self-concept, self-identity, social awareness, creativity, problem solving skills, and healing (Courtney, 1989; Landy, 1986; Heathcote 1984; Johnson, 1982; Way 1967; Spolin, 1963).

Drama as Theatre, Education and Therapy

Drama can be divided into three branches: theatre, education, and therapy. The overlapping goal of drama in theatre, education, and therapy is to utilize the dramatic elements to impact a target group (Courtney, 1989; Moore, 1997; Way, 1967). In theatre, drama utilizes actors to entertain or emotionally affect an audience. In education, drama provides students with the experience to learn about aspects of the curriculum, their environment, their peers, and themselves. In therapy, drama restructures the participants' emotional, cognitive, or behavioural process. Drama, whether in theatre, education or therapy, aims to deepen the participants' level of self-awareness. However, participants in drama therapy work through dramatic elements to

unlearn undesirable behaviours and practice role-playing more desirable ones. In other words, drama therapy aims to change the participants' internal structure (Courtney, 1989; Jennings 1987; Landy, 1986; Moore, 1997; Way 1967). Below, I expand on these ideas.

Drama as theatre.

In most cases, theatre companies entertain or impact the audience in relation to a message or point of view. This can range from the musical *Les Miserables* which depicts a historical story about a French revolution, or the comedy *The Vagina Monologues* which explores, in a humorous manner, female sexuality. Others use theatre as a means to address social issues. For example, a local Vancouver group, *Headlines Theatre Company*, present plays that intend to expose the effects and processes of prejudice related to groups such as Native Canadians or street youth.

Another example of an innovative theatre project was highlighted in the HBO (2002) video, *The Laramie Project*. This movie was based on a theatre company that interviewed several Laramie townspeople after the gay bashing and killing of a young man, Mathew Sheppard. All interviews were transcribed and the raw text was selected and turned in a script, which was then performed on stage. Eventually it was produced for a HBO movie. This movie profoundly touched me and now I have a deep sense of how a senseless killing can affect a community of people. Hopefully, this important message will make a difference in our society and teach people to be more tolerant of differences.

High schools in the Greater Vancouver area have also used theatre for a variety

of reasons. At University Hill Secondary School, a Vancouver theatre teacher, Sally Stubbs (1999), runs her school program as a theatre company that promotes the arts, fosters a rich cultural life, and facilitates the development of her students in a holistic way. At Frank Hurt Secondary School in Surrey, B.C., another high school drama teacher, Nancy Knickerbocker (1999) engaged her students in creating and performing a play based around the death of Reena Virk, a 14 year girl murdered by her peers in Victoria, British Columbia. The actors and audience deeply reflected upon youth violence, its symptoms, and possible solutions. She argues that anti-violence activities such as dramatizing Reena's death teaches students to lead, not follow.

I found two recent studies involving the lived experiences of high school theatre teachers and students. In the first, Brown (1999) looks at the qualities of an effective female high school theatre teacher, who reflects on the reasons for her longevity in the high school theatre teaching profession. In the second, Gonzalez (1999), both as researcher and high school theatre director, examines her practice of using experimental theatre to produce student empowerment. Unfortunately, she found that equal, democratic, and emancipated directing was unattainable. Instead of engaging students through a process of artistic discovery, it shifted between freedom and constraint. She concludes that power struggles between youth, for roles and creative expression of ideas, stunted rather than promoted optimal personal growth. Overall, more research is needed on the lived experiences of secondary theatre arts teachers and high school students in order to better understand the developmental effects of theatre on youth.

Drama as education.

Drama in education serves as a medium for providing an experience for individuals and groups to gain educational awareness of self, others, and society. It is holistic because it focuses on all levels including physical, emotional, cognitive, social, cultural and spiritual aspects (Booth, 1985; Courtney 1989; Heathcote 1984; Way 1967). Courtney (1989) describes numerous types of educational dramas including child drama, children's theatre, school plays, community theatre, improvisation, theatre in education, drama in education, creative language, creative movement, creative play, dramatic movement, and creative dramatics. While they are all rooted in the idea of role, each has its own unique history, philosophy, and practice.

Jackson (1996) provides a point of view in which theatre in education is not the most effective mode to communicate factual information to an audience or class, but rather, is better suited to *illuminate* a phenomenon. Instead of providing the facts, it provides experience. As indicated in chapter one, there is much debate whether a good drama program should focus on the development of theatre skills or the development of human beings.

Drama as therapy.

Healing through dramatic acts originated with shamanism, a religion where the village shaman cured the sick and controlled events through spiritual rituals, theatrical acts, community witnessing, and magic. Robert Landy (1997b), the founder of American drama therapy, illustrated the interrelationship between theatre and healing explaining that religious rituals and shamanic ceremonies are woven throughout our

history in different forms. Snow (1996) provides a powerful metaphor of a *Shamanic Tree* where the trunk represents the original Shamanic healing rituals, and the branches represent various drama in therapies, such as drama therapy, psychodrama, sociodrama, play-back theatre, therapeutic theatre, and role-play techniques in psychotherapies (i.e. gestalt therapy). Snow recommends that the different dramatic art therapies embrace and share ideas with one another since all dramas have healing potential.

du Rand (1997), a member of the Playback Theatre Company claims that both theatre and healing occur simultaneously and can not be separated. Talerico (1986) believes that through working with the symbolic language or metaphor people are able to express their innermost feelings. Landy (1995) confirmed this idea when he examined the parallel between a client's expressive art form and his/her often-unconscious expression of personal thoughts and feelings. Additionally, Manheim (1998) also found that there was a high correlation between creative work and self-actualizing growth. He states, all creative and expressive arts therapies are based on two assumptions. First, all people have access to expressing their creativity in one symbolic form or another. Second, the creative process has the potential to reach an intangible and fluid realm of the human psyche.

Boundary blurs of drama as theatre, education and therapy.

Often in drama, the boundaries between theatre, education, and therapy are blurred. For example, Feldhendler (1994) described Augusto Boal's work regarding Theatre of the Oppressed as a blend all three factors. Also known as popular theatre, participants are encouraged to create, act out, and emotionally work through scenes of

oppression that occur in their daily lives as a way of finding liberation from prejudice.

Feldhendler (1994) writes:

Boal defines theatre as the first discovery of humankind. Theatre emerges in the moment in which the human being recognizes that s/he can see himself or herself (the function of the mirror); s/he recognizes who s/he is and is not; s/he imagines who s/he could become. For Boal, the therapeutic effect lies within the dynamic of seeing and being seen, in the recognition of the self and the other, and the subsequent expressions of desire for change in everyday life. (p. 94)

Therefore, healing acts of witnessing and being witnessed occur organically within the actor and audience in the relationship of theatre. Boal did not see his work in the traditional therapeutic or educational sense; he saw his work as a healing phenomena on a socio-political level. Boal believed that healing and social liberation from oppression occurred when monologues turn into dialogues.

In this paper, I acknowledge that there is a drama boundary blur between theatre, education and therapy, which can not be separated; however, for the sake of clarity, I will only focus on the realm of drama therapy.

Drama Therapy

Drama Therapy and Psychodrama

There is confusion between psychodrama and drama therapy, which are two leading types of drama in therapy. Kedem-Tahar and Felix-Kellermann (1996) wrote that they both have the same philosophical premises and uses of role-playing and role-playing techniques. Both therapies embrace humanistic ideals where all humans have a unique set of challenges and abilities, and with support and insight, we can choose to replace undesirable behaviours with desirable behaviours. Both claim to be eclectic, but

drama therapy breaks away from the traditional three stage psychodramatic process of warm-up, enactment and closure, by incorporating art, music, dance, movement, mime, and literature (Blatner, 1973; Casson, 1996; Davies, 1987; Kedem-Tahar and Felix-Kellermann 1996; Snow 1996; Yablonsky, 1976).

While there are many similarities, these two therapies are very distinct in how the dramatic elements unfold. Psychodrama aims to role-play a protagonist's unfinished business in the *here and now*, while drama therapy tends to engage the entire group to role-play fictional stories as a way of protecting any participants from overwhelmingly confronting feelings (Casson, 1996; Davies, 1987; Kedem-Tahar and Felix-Kellermann, 1996; Snow 1996).

Both therapies suggest through research that youth benefit more from an action-oriented approach than traditional talk therapy (Cossa, 1992; Knittel, 1990; Ozbay et al., 1993; Sasson, 1990). Some research indicates that youths usually do not go to high school counsellors or therapists for support because of their strong need for privacy and connections with peers. Drama therapists argue that psychodrama is too revealing for most adolescents in a school setting. They believe role-playing in drama therapy provides youth with a safe, therapeutic and creative outlet, without the need for a great deal of self-disclosure. While most youths may not gravitate towards therapy, students may be open to a artistic and therapeutic environment.

Definition of Drama Therapy

At its broadest range, drama therapy can be described as "any therapeutic use of role-playing" (Johnson, 1982, p.83). Drama therapy is "the intentional use of creative

drama toward the psychotherapeutic goals of symptom relief, emotional and physical integration and personal growth" (Johnson, 1982, p. 83). Emunah (1994) defines drama therapy as "the intentional and systematic use of drama/theatre processes to achieve psychological growth and change" (p. 3). Doyle (1998) states that drama therapy has two goals: "To develop and refine roles which aid in self consolidation and the building of self structure," and "To integrate role repertoire and affect into a cohesive experience of the self" (p. 224). In all cases, role is the key ingredient in drama therapy because without role there can be no drama (Landy, 1990).

Drama therapists have worked with a wide range of groups including children with various special needs, schizophrenic adults, prisoners, alcohol and drug abusers, the elderly in nursing homes, and people with eating disorders, to name a few (Fryrear & Stephens, 1988; Furman, 1988; Johnson, 1982; Johnson, 1991; Landy 1997a; Landy, 1997b; Pearson-Davis, 1989; Petitti, 1989). In one example, Cossa (1992) combined drama therapy with a theatre program for adolescents that aimed to improve their self-image and ego development. Unfortunately, only one case study is provided. A greater variety of adolescent experience would be needed for the readers to determine if the program was as successful as they have claimed.

There is a great deal of overlap in the theoretical models on which drama therapy is based. According to Johnson (1982) much of the research of drama therapy is grounded in play theory, role theory, and psychoanalytical theory. Yet for Landy (1986, 1990) drama therapy is rooted in symbolic interaction theory, role theory and distancing. While for Meldrum (1994a) she derived here theoretical framework of drama therapy using four different models: 1) theatre, 2) fictional literature, 3) role

theory, and 4) anthropology, which include ritual and shamanism. While all these models are relevant and overlap, to limit the scope of this study, only two key drama therapy concepts are important to my study--role theory and distancing.

Role-theory.

Role theory leaders advocate that humans have a wide range of roles which are shaped and reinforced by powerful social influences including family, peers, schools, media, and culture (Meldrum, 1994b). Further, Courtney (1989) describes role as "a patterned sequence of learned actions and deeds performed by a person in an interaction situation" (p. 170). There is no one core aspect to a personality, but rather a person is made up of overlapping layers of roles each which has its own behaviours and attitudes. Different situation draws out different roles and determines how these roles will be performed. For example, how one acts at work with a boss is different from how one acts at a party with friends. Based on role theory, drama therapy aims to bring these hidden or unrefined parts of the self into action, and through the enactment of these roles, participants work towards integrating these different, and often contradictory, aspects of the self (Doyle, 1998; Jennings & Minde, 1993; Landy, 1990; Landy, 1993). In practice, role-playing can help to produce distancing, another key concept in drama therapy.

Distancing.

As shown in Figure 3, the theoretical heart of drama therapy is based around the concept of aesthetic distancing (Landy, 1983; Landy, 1986; Landy, 1997a). The key

concept of distancing requires participants to project themselves into their roles. As a result, they create a distance from their own personal conflict allowing the participants to see their projections in these roles (Meldrum, 1984b). According to Davies (1987) this symbolic distance helps the participant to “safely distance the self from the role as far as he or she wishes... stay[ing] within the ‘common denominators’ of the group” (p.119). Landy (1997a) states that distancing moves the participants outside their frame of reference. This allows room for the participants to perform new behaviours. Over time, the desirable behaviours performed in the roles are integrated into the participant’s ways of behaving in real life. Landy expands on this view by describing distancing as either underdistancing (little separation between reality and role), as seen in psychodrama, or overdistancing (great separation between reality and role) as seen in therapeutic theatre. To meet the privacy needs of high school students, I have selected on only one branch of drama therapy, therapeutic theatre, which embraces one of the most extreme form of overdistancing.

Therapeutic Theatre

Recreational Therapy

Therapeutic theatre is similar to recreational therapy concepts. Recreational therapy focuses on the involvement of people in group activities in order to foster psychological well-being. The acts of participating in a group reduce isolation and alienation, which, if left unchecked, can be detrimental to emotional health. Research indicates a need for a closer investigation of youth’s experiences of recreational therapy (Elmen & Offer, 1993; Kaczmarek & Riva, 1996; Offer & Schonert-Reichl, 1992;

Santrock, 1996).

Larson and Kleiber (1993) explain that there is little research on recreational therapy because many mental health professionals do not see recreational therapy as *real* therapy. Recreational therapy is not well respected by psychological helping and researching professionals, even though many studies indicate that youth do not tend to go to helping professionals when in trouble. Since the term recreational therapy is not well accepted, I decided to focus on therapeutic theatre. While the term therapeutic theatre is not well known, there is acceptance of this type of therapy within the drama therapy community.

Definition of Therapeutic Theatre

Therapeutic theatre, a branch of drama therapy, is an extreme form of overdistancing where disclosure of personal concerns (past and present) is not needed to foster personal growth. Therefore, therapeutic theatre may serve as a counselling tool to be used in an extracurricular high school theatre setting. Anderson-Warren (1996) states that therapeutic therapy is

the gap or distance between the character and ourselves we elect to play... [this] permit[s] us to examine traits, emotions, and their corresponding body positions that we would not, for a variety of reasons, chose to associate ourselves with other circumstance. (pp. 116-117)

The aim of therapeutic theatre is not to draw out unconscious issues of participants, but rather, to foster a model of a "healthy environment" in which healing naturally occurs with active participation in the creative and expressive processes.

Therapeutic theatre is a return to the classical times when theatre originally

served as the celebration of personal relationships. Like recreational therapy, therapeutic theatre provides a constructive activity, which people in a community can build themselves around. These acts of connecting within a community and creating through role-playing are therapeutic experiences. Having a community of people working together on a project helps to reduce feelings of meaninglessness and isolation, two elements that, if left unchecked, erodes psychological well-being. Therapeutic theatre focuses on a number of aspects, such as the individuals in the group, script-writing, processes of rehearsal, and performance, and the healing relationships between the performers and audience. The experience of being listened to and validated along with portraying honest emotions on stage, help performers to develop self-worth, self-confidence, and community support.

There are numerous examples of counsellors using therapeutic therapy. For example, Anderson-Warren (1996) and Emunah (1994) used therapeutic theatre with patients in a mental health hospital. While not called therapeutic theatre, Gullotta and Plant (2000) provided an arts-based prevention program that aimed to serve the needs of the youth. Cossa (1992) mixed drama therapy and theatre when working with adolescents referred from various educational and counselling agencies. In these cases, therapeutic theatre fostered a positive self-image through the mastery of drama skills, developed positive connections between people in community, and created a desire to give back to the community and participate in new social roles and personal reflection.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a literature review around two areas--youth and drama.

Definitions of optimal adolescent development and therapeutic theatre were provided. Various adolescent development models were highlighted as well as a description of benefits and limitations of socialization of youth, extra-curricular programs, and alternative high school counselling. Various studies on drama as theatre, education and therapy were examined, with a closer examination of drama therapy, role theory and distancing. Overall, I believe that therapeutic theatre is the best fit for this study because it meets the socialization and privacy of youth. The next chapter will highlight the philosophies and methods used to investigate this phenomenon that weaves theatre and self.

CHAPTER THREE

Research and Method

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994) qualitative research is an interpretative practice in which no one method is privileged over another. Different methodologies produce different stories because "qualitative research is endlessly creative and interpretative" (p. 14). While many different methods could provide a window from which to view my study, I use performative inquiry. I understand performative inquiry from the philosophical foundations of social constructivism and performance psychology.

Philosophical Foundations

Social Constructivism

According to Guba and Lincoln (2000) the ontological position of social constructivism is that reality is constructed locally and specifically according to the views of individuals who are shaped by their social environment. Social constructivists do not deny or accept a universal *truth*, but rather, believe that multiple truths and multi-realities are created by individuals within a given culture. Reality is shaped through dialogue and is determined by group consensus, or influenced by the person or people in a position of power. Thus, reality is always changing as people change and develop--evolving to higher levels of sophistication (or lack of sophistication) depending on the current views and values.

In social constructivism, the relationship between the knower and the known (epistemology) is constructed by people and through ongoing dialogue about knowledge; a core concept of social constructivism is that language shapes reality. The focus of social constructivism is not on finding a truth but on searching for interpretations of the current reality. Schwandt (2000) states that all knowledge is interpretative, and all interpretations of knowledge are subjective, created, and in constant flux depending on the political, social, and cultural background of the interpreters.

One way social constructivists create knowledge (methodology) is by using methods that are hermeneutical and dialectical. Knowledge is created through ongoing dialogue between people from multiple perspectives and through an ongoing search for the most well-informed and sophisticated knowledge at a given moment in time. The goal of social constructivism is to understand the construction of the inquiry and then to share this knowledge, as a reconstructed interpretation. The goodness or quality of the interpretation is evaluated by the group reaching a consensus about its' accuracy (Guba & Lincoln, 2000; Schwandt, 2000).

With social constructivism as the foundation of my methodological choice, I sought a method that included hermeneutical and dialectical aspects within the performance process. I needed a method that could give me the freedom to engage my students in a creative process, to examine the process itself, and to use the process to report my interpretations. In my search, I was assisted by the ideas of Performance Psychology, which I have found complements the philosophy of social constructivism.

Performance Psychology

Mary Gergen (2000) is considered one of the North American leaders in innovative qualitative research. Most of Mary Gergen's works are based on feminist social constructionism theories and she has written a considerable amount of literature on performance psychology. Gergen advocates for innovative writing as a viable means of capturing the lived experiences of people being researched and for academic acceptance of methods such as performance psychology. Performance psychology uses performance as a means to obtain, reflect upon, and portray psychological constructions.

She writes:

Performative psychology supports the notion that human communication is embodied and affective, as well as intellectual, and that all our sense modalities operate at once during communication activity... Visual images, dance, poetry, role play, music, drama, and sounds, among other means, expand the rhetorical strength of a performance and allow the actors and audience to work intuitively as well as logically. (Gergen, 2001, pp. 168-169)

Gergen argues that a great deal of psychological research is accessible mainly to elitist academics, and that performance psychology is a viable means of sharing information and knowledge with the general public.

In short, performance psychology stimulates dialogue with a wider range of people. This belief is in alignment with the hermeneutical and dialectical principles of social constructivism. Performance promotes conversations between participants and observers, leaving room for people to arrive at their own interpretations. For examples of various innovative methods see writings that embrace performance psychology such as Bank and Bank (1998), Childress (1998), Ellis and Bochner (1996), Fels (1999), Gergen, (2001), Gergen, Chrisler and LoCicero (1999), Gergen and Gergen (2000),

Jones (1999), Kotarba (1998), Rambo Ronai (1999), and Richardson (1994).

Generally, there is very little research in the area of performance psychology. Many of the studies on this topic are found in the fields of feminist constructionism and ethnography. Additionally, there are many interchangeable terms that parallel the ideas of performance psychology methods such as performance ethnography, ethnographic performing texts, ethnographic plays, ethnodrama, ethnotheatre, and dramatically scripted research. All these methods include the elements of theatre and performance as a means of exploring a particular phenomenon.

For example, Saldana (1999) used ethnographic performing texts to examine the lives of high school theatre students. He coined the term ethnographic performance texts where the performance text represents the meaning of lived experience. He used a vivo-coding system in which the participants' own words formed the text. He believes that researchers strategically edit the interviews with participants to create a script highlighting all the "juicy stuff for dramatic impact" (p. 63). Here, interviews are condensed and summarized into monologues and dialogues. Ethnographic performance texts allow the researcher to take on multiple roles including artist, educator, and director. This offers ways of exploring alternative forms of representation. Saldana states that many ethnographers argue that the original interview text should never speak for itself. Thus, he offers ways for the researcher's voice, along with other forms of knowledge, to be incorporated in the final performance text.

Miller (1998) used dramatically scripted text to examine mother-daughter relationships. She (1998) coined this term with an aim to capture, in a performance text form, the lived experiences of the participants. Her method includes the researcher's

emotional involvement and an examination of the process of the phenomena. Miller calls the concept of balancing both the participant and researcher's voice, multivocality. The researcher's voice is neither privileged nor ignored; it is interwoven in script form, with a wide range of other voices, including the voice of research, theory, and other sources of knowledge. Depending on the study, Miller used independent coders, focus groups, and informants to code, label and select the most useful analysis, themes, and narratives. She writes:

Dramatically scripted narratives can disseminate information with clarity, show rather than report on interaction, report self-reflection, engage audience empathy and rationality, and represent process. (p. 69)

In other words, dramatically scripted research breathes life into the data.

Mienczakowski (1996) wrote an article in script form based around the consensus of people involved in the detoxication process. By blending theatre and ethnography, a play about the phenomenon of detoxication was created around verbatim ethnographic accounts, which was confirmed or denied by informants and audience members as truthful. Through a series of discussions and adaptations of the script and performance, a consensus was reached. At times when no consensus was achieved, scenes were deleted from the play as a way of ensuring authenticity. Mienczakowski warns readers that an ethnographic performance is only a construction of truth. Researcher can only represent a similarity or derivative of truth, but never the truth itself.

In Mienczakowski's work, analysis of transcripts and audience/cast discussions lead to a phenomenological reduction of themes. Sometimes fictional inclusions (e.g., setting, characters, and subplot) and other sources of knowledge can be added to ensure

multivocality and to link the verbatim transcriptions of interviews. In general, Mienczakowski stated that performing ethnographic narratives is a process of creativity where the participants and researchers work through and create together. The aim is to inform a general audience and to emancipate the voices of the participants.

Goldstein (2001) wrote an ethnographic play about racism that involved the lives of Hong Kong-Canadian high school students. She reminded readers that while the verbatim dialogues are real, the setting and characters are fictional. Thus, ethnographers invent rather than represent truths. She stated, "ethnography is an interpretative, subjective, value-laden project" (p. 294). Ethnographic plays are open to a general audience. Together actors and audience are moved by the experience and together they offer feedback and analysis of the play. Ethnographic plays present multi-perspectives and engage a wide range of significant participants (e.g. interviewees, cast, support people, authority figures, general audience members). McCall (2000) wrote the most thorough description of performance research. He writes:

[When] writing an ethnographic performance script... *orientating information* and *analytic points and commentary* are unnecessary. The first is embodied [in the script], and the second can be done by the *characters*. And of course, dialogue replaces description and narration. Still, ethnographic scriptwriters must read and reread their field notes or transcripts to *create and elaborate analytic theme* and *organize some of these into a coherent story*. (p. 427)

In one study, McCall reduced 120 pages of transcripts to 10 pages of script. He used verbatim text from the transcripts but often rearranged them to link topics, themes, characters, questions, and answers. McCall believes that much of the analysis of text lies not in the ethnographer's interpretation, but exists within the transcriptions themselves as stated by the interviewees. Hence, both the text and analysis come from the

participants; the researcher is merely one of many voices.

Method

Performative Inquiry

Most of the above examples are based on ethnographic principles in which the original text is turned into a script in order to illuminate through live performance the shared experiences of the participants in a study. These ethnographic performance methods study the nature of a particular social phenomenon, highlight the explicit interpretation of meaning, and illustrate how humans function in their environment. While I am fascinated by all of the methods described above, I am most interested in studying the actual act of performance and how performance affects people. I want to examine the creative performing arts process very carefully and use any artistic medium necessary to show my interpretations. In order to explore this topic area, I chose performative inquiry as my method.

Specifically, I will use performative inquiry as described by Lynn Fels (1999) as it complements the philosophical foundations of social constructivism and performance psychology. It is hermeneutical and dialectical, as it requires researchers to engage in ongoing dialogues with participants and deep self-reflections about the processes of the inquiry topic. Performative inquiry researchers are required to share their interpretations, biases, and social influences regarding the research topic, because they will greatly influence the study and the people in the study. In reaction to these interactions, the study and the people in the study will greatly influence the inquirer. Then through the circular flow of various dialogues, wide ranges of interpretations are

explored in search of the most well-informed and sophisticated interpretation.

Performative inquiry encourages researchers to use creative expression when sharing final interpretations. The actual act of creative expression emphasizes that the conclusions are a created interpretation, and therefore, merely a reconstruction. Performative inquiry suggests that fiction, a creative expression of the inquiry, may be a more direct pathway to describing the heart of an inquiry. The act of the creative expression reminds the reader that the construction is merely an interpretation, and aims to strike resonance--an emotional cord--with the reader. The aim of using creative expression is not to state a truth about a topic but rather to emotionally illuminate the topic, and stimulate dialogue about the topic. The aim is not necessarily to *answer* questions, but rather to *ask* questions. This ideally leads to a more sophisticated understanding of the topic.

Performative inquiry is rooted in the principles of learning, knowing, exploring, and coming into being (Fels, 1999). In a recent study with her students, Fels (1999) searched for a creative framework to illuminate her constructions on the experience of elementary student-teachers teaching science through drama. She chose to represent her interpretation in a narrative-poetic format. Fels felt that the study on performance should not be limited and restrained by the expression of performance; thus, she created her own method that offered an alternative method to performative writing.

Fels (1999) describes performative inquiry as a

(re)search methodology that recognizes explores honours the absences, journey-landscapes, and space-moments of learning realized through performance. To entertain performative inquiry as a (re)search vehicle is to recognize the risk, the unexpected, the stop embodied in action and interaction through performance that opens us to possibility. (p. 30)

She believes that performative inquiry is a process of knowing, doing, being, and creating. Rooted in the combined theories of enactivism, performance, and complexity performative inquiry investigates the interrelationships between and within people. She also stresses the playing out of the performance within a certain space and moment. Performative inquiry aims to capture not so much the facts, but rather the *experience of realizing and recognizing* through performance. This is known as the *space-moment* of learning, or the *aha!* moment. I really resonate with the *aha!* moment because as a teacher I experience and witness this while co-creating with my youth.

Like ethnographic performance methods, performative inquiry uses the elements of theatre: stage, audience, characters, themes, conflict, tension, climax, and reflection. As Saldana (1999) states, instead of being a storyteller, the researcher becomes a *story-re"teller*. While the uses of theatrical elements are similar, the philosophies and aims of performance ethnography and performative inquiry are quite different. Ethnographic performance methods are interested in using performance to illuminate a phenomena to an audience, while performative inquiry is more interested in understanding the processes of the participants in the performance. Ethnographic performance methods tend to present constructions mainly in stage or video presentations, while performative inquiry presents constructions in a wider variety of modes such as art, music, poetry, report, narratives, or academic articles. Fels (1999) writes:

Performative Inquiry is a (re)search vehicle that embraces performance in creative action and interaction as a space-action of learning and exploration. Its tools of inquiry are our bodies, our minds, our imagination, our experiences, our feelings, our memories, our biases, our judgments, and prejudgements, our hopes and our desires -- simply, our very being, becoming. The catalyst for inquiry may be... any phenomenon we wish to explore through performance. (p. 33)

In performative inquiry, interpretations and constructions are expressed in a wide variety of creative ways, whether they are alternative or traditional modes of expression. The aim is to reach the spirit of the inquiry, which, according to Fels, emerges from the researcher's own creation in collaboration with participants that is inspired from the exploration of the inquiry. The aim of performative inquiry is not to describe the final product of the performance, but rather, to explore new ideas and possibilities. Performative inquirers explore what is occurring during the performance process that is promoting learning/discovery, stimulating growth, and facilitating people. Yet, these types of inquiries are difficult to explore because as Fels (1999) writes, "One of the challenges of performative inquiry is to language what is essentially unlanguageable (p. 83)." It is not that these hidden processes can not be expressed in words, yet, compared to examining the finished performance product, it is far more difficult to express hidden processes and emergent learning realized throughout the journey of creating a performance piece.

Fels (1999) summarizes Daignault's seven rules for writing which guide writers to move towards a creative text:

welcome words welcome characters welcome body emotion feelings
welcome intertextuality welcome grace welcome the unknown (p. 18)

This performative inquiry mantra helps the researcher to embrace the more subtle processes of experience, which is more difficult for researchers to grasp. Fels (1999) draws from her research when she proposes:

performance as (re)search is a journey of 'knowing doing being creating'
and that it is through performative inquiry that we may come to
interstanding of our journey-landscape(s) that is the imagining of our
universe. (p. 30)

She defines a journey-landscape as:

both the action and space realized in interaction through time. The term acknowledges a recognition and reading of landscapes and journey as simultaneously enacted through time, action and space, each embodied within and through the other interchangeable... Journey-landscape speaks of a journey and place through which a landscape is realized by both presence and absence. Neither journey nor landscape exists without the traveler(s) whose presence or absence spells a journey-landscape into being. I first understood the importance of presence and absence embodied within a landscape during a winter walk with a friend, our footsteps tracing our journey through the snow-blanket field. (p. 15)

The journey is in the interaction of the creative acts in a landscape--where each creative act is forming and shaping within a particular space. This interaction of the creative act in a specific place at a specific time, known as journey-landscape, is the container needed for learning to occur by the participants involved. In this case, the four components of the collaborative play-creating process (script-writing, rehearsing, performing and reflecting) would be similar to the journey-landscape, serving as a container that, ideally, would lead to **aha!** moments.

According to Fels (1999) these **aha!** moments do not happen in isolation. They happen "in action and interaction with multiple worlds co-emerging, co-evolving through our knowing doing being creating with others" (p. 43). Knowledge is relational and happens in interaction or relationship between "learners, object or action of inquiry, context and environment" (p. 44). For Fels, performative inquiry is the study between the known and the unknown, between the "real" and the "not yet real worlds." Performative inquiry allows the researcher to study the process when those involved in the inquiry (including the researcher) are floundering through the dark and finally seeing a connection or a new idea. Exploring these new discoveries can be gathered by

researchers observing, deeply reflecting, writing field notes, dialoguing with participants, journal-writing, video-taping, forming group discussions, exploring script work, art work or other creative works that resulted from the performance process, and others. Attempting to grasp these **aha!** moments is similar to researchers looking at how participants leave their footprints in the snow blanketed field.

In performative inquiry there are no guarantees of **aha!** moments. All we can do is trust the creative process and see what or what does not unfold. The researcher needs to be able to freefall into this unknown space, which is the very core source where the creative process begins--creating something from nothing.

The main challenge in studying performance lies in the fact that performance is a temporary act. Much is happening beneath the surface. Writing, interviewing, and videotaping, while helpful, can never capture what actually happened in the moment of performance. It is elusive. Fels (1999) states:

Performative Inquiry is a (re)search-performance of fragmentary moments. While I might report matter-of-factly what happened before, during, and after a performance inquiry, the (re)telling co-evolves into an interpretative dance that welcomes both teller and reader to poetic as well as pragmatic musing. (p. 84)

Therefore, performative inquiry aims to capture the magical moments that occur during performance where “nothing anything everything becomes possible” (p. 87). The key is for the researcher through interaction with participants and journey-landscapes to “weave a spell” and create whatever organically unfolds.

While Fels used Performative Inquiry to ultimately explore “How do people learn?” In this paper, I branch away from the cognitive and learning principles in order to explore “What happens to people when they create?” I want to explore how

participants experience the moments of creativity and how they flounder through the darkness searching for that light switch. For me, this process will provide me valuable insight into how youth develop a sense of self as artist while engaged in the journey-landscape container--in this case, the collaborative play-creating process.

The Collaborative Play-Creating Process

I have studied five separate collaborative play-creating processes in the past three and half years. For the purpose of this study, all interviewing and field notes will mainly stem from the 2001-2002 school play. During this school year, over three hundred secondary school students, some parents, and two theatre teachers, including myself, were heavily involved in creating an original Canadian script entitled, *Eclipsed, Ben's Story*. Together, we moved back and forth between four overlapping play-creating components: script-writing, rehearsing, performing, and ongoing reflecting. I believe my multiple roles as play-creating facilitator, high school theatre teacher, school counsellor, director, producer, and researcher provided me with a unique close-up perspective of the development of youth and the collaborative play-creating process.

The purpose of this study is not to evaluate the collaborative play-creating process as a separate entity, but rather to see the parallels between the theatre process and adolescent development. The adolescents shaped how the collaborative play-creating process unfolded, and this, in turn, shaped their sense of self as artists. The entire process began on September 12, 2001, the day after the 9-11 terrorist attacks in the United State. This tragedy greatly influenced and shaped our script.

The scriptwriting component involved various large groups and subgroups of

students who met regularly to discuss and debate about ideas and plot outline. Once the outline was developed, a subgroup of students, otherwise known as the writing team, met to write the script. In the meantime, music and dance student-leaders created new music and choreographed original dances. The rehearsing component began after the audition period, when actors, singers, and dancers were cast in their roles. The performing component occurred the week of April 16, 2002. Students performed the show four times at a local theatre to roughly 2, 200 paying audience made up family, friends, school peers, feeder school preadolescents, and school staff. The reflecting stage occurred throughout the entire collaborative play-creating process. The process ended April 23, 2002 when we met for the last time as a large group to collectively reflect upon the process and celebrate its success. More details of the collaborative play-creating process will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Research Procedures

Text

My interpretations for this study are based on the transcription of my personal field notes and the interviews with five participants. My personal field notes include my personal experiences as participant-observer, my interactions with and observations of hundreds and hundreds of adolescents in five separate collaborative play-creating processes, and my observations of partial video-taping of the four components of the collaborative play-creating process. The five interviewed participants are four performing arts youth and one other facilitator who were involved with me in co-creating several school plays. While I examined the past five collaborative play-creating

processes, I examined the process most closely during the 2001-2002 school year.

Participants

Over 300 students participated in the 2001-2002 school play. They were all enrolled in one of six Fine Arts curricular courses: Fine Arts 8, Drama 9/10, Acting 11, Acting 12, Directing & Performance 12, and Physical Education Dance 11. Of these 300 students, over 100 were also involved in the extracurricular Drama and Dance programs. Around 40 of these students were heavily involved in multiple components of the collaborative script-writing process.

All interested students were welcomed into the extra-curricular programs as long as they attended rehearsals regularly and behaved in a cooperative and constructive manner. There were no cuts from the show--there was a part for everyone. Students were not required to be interviewed in order to participate in this program; however, they all knew that videotaping would occur throughout the play-creating process. Depending on the situation, students who did not want to be videotaped were asked to sit out of view of the camera or the camera was turned off. Students were told that if something was videotaped that they wanted erased, then this section of the videotape was erased. This request for erasure of a video clip was made only once, and afterwards it was immediately erased.

Only four volunteer members of the participating group were interviewed. These were students who defined themselves as artists, as artists-in-development, or saw themselves as highly active in the creative process whether it was performance, writing, or leadership. Since these subjects were under the age of 18 at the time of the interview

as well as enrolled in the public school system, they all were required to obtain written parent or guardian consent (See Parental/Guardian Consent Form Appendix A, and Consent Form Appendix B).

I feel that I have gained the trust, respect and support of my performing arts students as I have been creating plays with them at the school for several years. Both privately in my office and publicly during the theatre process, various students have been very open and forthright in sharing their process with their peers and me. Since I know my senior performing arts students very well, this gave me the necessary background to carefully select the four students to be interviewed. From the adolescents that volunteered to be interviewed, I selected only four students because I felt they were aware enough and emotionally strong enough to clearly and openly articulate their inner process. Also, I felt they could emotionally handle having their text turned into a fictional script. I also interviewed my co-facilitator who has over twenty years of performing arts teaching experience.

Interview Question

All five interviews were voluntary and to ensure that recruitment was not coercive all interviews were conducted in the summer time when student participants were no longer enrolled in any of my classes or my play. All participants selected a pseudonym for their transcriptions, and all references to an individual's identity were removed, altered or fictionalized. Interviews were conducted individually and each interview lasted between one and half hours to three hours. All interviews were video and audio-taped, and later transcribed. The interviewees were not bounded by the

Interview Protocol questions (See Appendix C) nor were they limited to the scope of the questions. The interviews were informal and open-ended, as they were asked to talk openly about their experience of the collaborative play-creating process. I only asked questions if an interviewee asked for a question or wanted more direction during the interview.

Analysis Procedures

In this section I provide a step-by-step description of the analysis procedures. The transcription of the five interviews and field notes are the central interpretative site in which I constructed my interpretations for this study. My field notes included all my observations and experiences with the four steps of the collaborative play-creating process: script-writing, rehearsing, performing, and rehearsing. My field notes also included my observations of the video-taping of the four stages of the collaborative play-creating processes and the seven drafts of scripts. None of the video-tapes were transcribed--they were used only for the purpose of writing field notes. Since I was also a facilitator of the process, I did not have time to write notes during the actual process.

After the interview and field notes were gathered and transcribed, I read through all the documents several times and reviewed all the videotapes to obtain an overall global view of all the inquiry. From these follow-up reviews, I made more notes, which I added to my transcribed field notes. I allowed myself to reflect for several weeks before making any form of analysis.

Once my dwelling was completed, I underlined all relevant information in the transcriptions. Information that was relevant was determined by two core areas--either

they illuminated the *aha!* moments regarding the development of self as artist or they provided descriptions or explanations about the four components of the collaborative play-creating process. Any transcribed text that was not related to the above two areas was ignored.

Once the relevant information was identified, I created a label for each underlined section. For example, "Competition vs. Cooperation," "Feeling Doubt in Process," "Identity Formation," "Love/Hate Relationship with Process," "Validation," and so on. In total, I created fifty-four generic categories (See Appendix D). When I finally listed all these categories it gave me a general sense of the various themes involved of my study.

I then summarized all the underlined text into shorter text. In some cases, I left the original text the same because it was not necessary to condense it further. In other cases, it was necessary to change the wording in order to conceal the identity of the participant or to condense rambling sections. While I fictionalized these raw texts into shorter texts, I aimed to stay true to its original meaning. In the end I was left with a long list of verbatim or condensed quotes.

Based on the two questions I asked during the interview (How was the Collaborative Play-Creating Process helpful? How was it a hindrance?), I divided all theses quotes into two lists: helpful and hindrance. Around 40% of the quotes indicated that the process was a hindrance and around 60% of the quotes indicated it was helpful. I then clustered these quotes together into more categories that I felt expressed a similar or related idea.

As I clustered the helpful and hindrance quotes into groupings, the list of the

original fifty-four categories became outdated. In the end, all these quotes were clustered together into one of the nine themes: script-writing, rehearsing, performing, reflecting, inclusion, control, intimacy, empowerment and vision. After obtaining the nine themes, I conceptualized how these nine themes fit together. I brainstormed and designed a wide series of diagrams and charts in order to make sense of these emergent themes. The nine themes are explained in more details in chapter four and all the related charts and diagrams are shown in Figures 4 to 10.

At this point, I've turned all the helpful and hindrance quotes into a script that involved eight characters. The script consisted of monologues and dialogues that describe aspects of the nine themes. The monologue and dialogue are a collection of various quotes merged together. Therefore, the eight characters are a mixture of the different components of the five interviews and my field notes. The final draft of the script is written up in chapter five.

Afterwards, I met separately with each of the interviewees in order for them to verify my construction of the script. During this time, I provided a copy of their transcribed interview and my script, which led to a dialogue about my construction and how I used their interview. In all cases, participants were satisfied and agreed with how I used their interview in the script. When given the option, only one person requested a section of the text in the transcribed interview and script to be altered. This will be explained in chapter six. Outside of this, they all provided feedback and insight about my script construction, which I then used to polish my script.

After polishing the script, I selected eight actors to perform the script. All scenes were recorded and turned into an edited video. The video is to be used for presentations

of my study and to stimulate discussions with various stakeholders.

Finally, once the video was completed, I shared my video and interpretations with five different stakeholder groups. The five stakeholders groups are 1) the five interviewed participants, 2) my three thesis committee members, 3) thirteen University of British Columbia faculty of education theatre arts student-teachers, 4) twenty-three of my theatre arts secondary school students, including four of the eight actors in my video, and 5) eight past theatre arts students who have graduated in the past four years. The stakeholders in the five groups were asked to evaluate my video and interpretations based on five criteria as shown in the following section. Their feedback is explained fully in chapter six.

Evaluation

Rigor in this study will be determined by the following five criteria: comprehensiveness of nine themes, reflectivity of researcher, resonance of fiction, multivocality of script, and genuineness of characters.

Comprehensiveness of nine themes.

I aim to provide a comprehensive conceptualization that clearly expresses the complexity of the inquiry. While I can not guarantee complete comprehensiveness, I hope through discussions with various stakeholders that I will reach comprehensiveness based on the present information gathered at this time. As indicated earlier, I originally derived fifty-four categories from the transcribed interviews and field notes; however, many of the ideas were redundant or overlapped. Therefore, I kept reducing the

categories into themes, until each theme was distinct and did not overlap with other themes. Based on the current data collected, I have reached a theoretical framework involving nine themes (script-writing, rehearsing, performing, reflecting, inclusion, control, intimacy, empowerment and vision), which has been constructed in order to show the link between theory and practice. During my discussion with various stakeholders and in my evaluation form, I asked participants if the nine themes were comprehensive and asked if any themes needed to be omitted, added or altered.

Reflexivity of researcher.

Throughout this paper, I have revealed my personal interest, my biases, and my personal paradigms so that I might share with the reader my own inner processes and interpretations. My ultimate goal is to share my interpretations in order to stimulate further discussion and reflection upon the topic. Social constructivism calls for well-informed and sophisticated interpretations that are best reached with methods that are performative, hermeneutical, and dialectical. The goal of this inquiry is not necessarily to reach a final answer, but rather to stimulate dialogue, leading to well-informed and sophisticated interpretations of the inquiry.

Resonance of fiction.

In this study, I aim to produce resonance by using fiction to “re”construct the appearance of “truth“. My interpretations of the topic have been transformed into a creative representation that aims to illuminate a “ring of truth” about the topic. Performative inquiry encourages interpreters to use the creative process to “re”present

all interpretations and allow the medium of creative expression to give breath to the inquiry. Performative inquiry principles state that sometimes fiction is the most direct pathway to the heart of an inquiry, rather than facts themselves. For example, sometimes it is easier to use a metaphor when describing a complex event. Fiction can give us a feel for the subtle human processes, while technical descriptions, however accurate, tend to dehumanize them. By representing my interpretations in a creative way, I aim for viewers of the video and readers of the script to vicariously experience the lives of the eight characters and to give them an inside look at the richness and complexity of the collaborative play-creating process. Through open dialogue and the use of evaluation forms I will inquiry if readers or viewers resonated emotionally and/or intellectually with the script or video.

Multivocality of script.

According to Gergen and Gergen (2000) multiple voicing is vital in qualitative research because it challenges researchers to bridge a wide range of different, and often conflicting, interpretations and, in turn, this leads researchers to “avoid reaching a single, integrative conclusion” (p. 1028). In my script various vantagepoints are provided where eight characters present eight different perspectives of the collaborative play-creating process. These eight characters derive from the interviews with the five participants and my field notes, which are based on observations of and interactions with hundreds and hundreds of performing arts youth. In this script, I have aimed to balance the voices of participants and myself as researcher.

Genuineness of characters.

While fictionalizing the script and conceptualizing my models, I have aimed to keep true to the original experiences of the participants as shown in the transcriptions of the interviews and field notes. The eight characters in the script reveal how the collaborative play-creating process has both helped and hindered them.

Implications and Limitations

Implications for Participants

Overall, I believe this study involved minimal risks on the participants; yet even with all the safeguards, it is still difficult to anticipate long term negative effects on participants when portions of their interview become public, even with their identities disguised. Nevertheless, I still believe these risks are minimal since the topic of “creating” is a somewhat safe topic. A main benefit of the participation in the creative process and the interviews was that many participants said that it gave them a “voice”, and that the reflection periods and interviews helped them to examine more closely the creative process and their sense of self as artist.

Implications for Research

Biddy and Posterski (2000) and Offer and Schonert-Reichl (1992) indicate that very few youth actually turn to counsellors or teachers when they need help--most turn to their friends. Davis and Tolan (1993) and Larson and Kleiber (1993) state that there is little research on how extra-curricular activities impact on the lives of youth and how they enhance their mental health. Also lacking in research are the lived experiences of

the high school theatre teachers and theatre students (Catterall and Darby, 1996). Linking a collaborative play-creating process as a therapeutic theatre may serve as an alternative psychotherapy choice for counsellors, teachers and adolescents because it provides a therapeutic and creative outlet, via role-playing, without the need for a great deal of self-disclosure (Anderson-Warren, 1996; Emunah, 1994; Johnson, 1982). Also, the gathering of stories from performing arts youth and facilitators may help to gain a clearer picture of the hidden interpersonal and intrapersonal processes of participants.

Performative inquiry is a newcomer in the field of counselling; both it and therapeutic theatre would benefit from additional research studies. Landy (1994) stated that drama therapy researchers need to be more methodologically based and they need to examine the hidden creative therapeutic processes. He challenges drama therapy researchers to investigate how the subtle interpersonal and intrapersonal processes operate for drama therapy participants. This study uses performative inquiry as a method to examine the hidden processes of therapeutic theatre.

Bramwell (1996), Catterall and Darby (1996), Cockett (1996), and Errington (1999) argue that not enough secondary theatre arts research explains theoretically the hidden processes of theatre arts participants. There is a great deal of literature about the mechanics of theatre and what participants learn in drama; however, there is little research as to how they learn "through drama." This study describes both the surface mechanics of the collaborative play-creating process and delves deeper to illuminate the hidden interpersonal and intrapersonal processes of performing arts youth. As indicated in Chapter 4, I have constructed a theoretical framework based around nine themes--four steps of the collaborative play-creating process and five stages of development. I have

also provided theoretical explanations and diagrams to explain how secondary performing arts youth develop through a change process.

In this study I have addressed the above concerns by observing and interviewing performing arts youth and facilitators. In my field notes I have included my experiences of interacting and creating with hundreds and hundreds of performing arts youth from five separate collaborative play-creating processes. My overall focus was to understand how participants experienced the collaborative play-creating process and how it impacted their lives.

Limitations of Drama Therapy, Therapeutic Theatre & Performance Psychology

Therapeutic theatre is limited to artistic-minded students who want to belong to a theatre group. In general, drama therapy tends to be limited to participants who can actively use their imaginations and can accept the abstract "as if" premise. Therapeutic theatre (and all drama therapy) is not suitable for participants who have difficulty separating fantasy from reality, or who are not in control of their "acting out" behaviours. Many drama activities require the participants to possess strong verbal skills and strong reflection skills; yet there are many cases where the counsellor's creativity adapts to the needs of the population.

In addition, the use of the collaborative play-creating process as a therapeutic theatre is not ideal for participants who are in a crisis situation such as suicide attempts, death of a family member or friend, extreme substance abuses, extreme psychological disorders (i.e., schizophrenia), out of control eating disorders, and slashing. In such cases, these students need immediate and direct one-on-one attention and must be

referred to school counsellors and/or mental health services. While therapeutic theatre can provide a support system for students in crisis, especially as they reintegrate back into the school system, the primary caregiver needs to come from an outside source.

Therapeutic theatre also has limitations for the facilitators. Like most drama therapies, therapeutic theatre places a great demand on the therapist's creativity, and over time, some therapists report being creatively drained as they are constantly adapting to the eclectic and accommodating nature of theatre and therapy (Courtney, 1989; Jennings, 1987; Meldrum, 1984b; Passons, 1975; Blatner, 1973; Carson, 1966). In addition, therapeutic theatre in high school settings requires a great deal of theatrical, educational and psychological training and experience, which may not be practical in terms of training and staffing.

Performance psychology also has some limitations. According to Mary Gergen (2001) a downfall of performative psychology is that performance is only temporary and we only have our memory to turn back to in order to reflect upon the experience; however, writings on paper provides something more permanent for readers to return to over and over again. Therefore, she suggests a combination of performance and printed text. In turn, in order to have a more permanent record, I have decided to write a written script and turn it into video instead of a live performance. It takes a great deal of time and human resources to create a live performance, therefore live performance psychology would not be ideal for projects that lack human resources or time for people to gather regularly together.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of social constructivism and performance psychology as my philosophical foundations and performative inquiry as my choice of method. The analysis procedures were provided, along with five criteria to evaluate my video and interpretation. In chapter six I include the feedback from the five stakeholder groups who have judged the goodness of my study. The five stakeholder groups and myself use five criteria to judge the goodness of my study. This chapter ends indicating the implications and limitations of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis

A Conceptualization of Self & Theatre

The purpose of my study is to provide a conceptualization of how self and theatre interweave with one another. I want to give my readers (and myself) a clearer understanding of how to facilitate optimal development in performing arts youth. More specifically, I want to understand how youth develop as artists within a collaborative play-creating process. As discussed in chapter two, a great deal of research indicates that youth do not turn to professionals for help. Thus, counsellors and teachers could benefit from finding alternative ways to reach youth within social organizations that do not require excessive self-disclosure, especially at the beginning of the process.

As discussed in chapter three, I carefully read and studied over all my transcribed interviews and fields notes, and over time I gradually narrowed down fifty-four possible categories into nine themes. As illustrated in Figure 4 these nine themes are divided into two sections: theatre and self. The theatre section (represented by the blue string and blue circles) is composed of the four steps of the collaborative play-creating process: script-writing, rehearsing, performing, and reflecting. The self section (represented by the red string and red circles) is composed of five distinct developmental stages of performing arts youth: inclusion, control, intimacy, empowerment, and vision.

Before advancing to the next section, a brief description of *Self* and *Theatre* are provided. On the one hand, self includes all the experiences of an individual--thoughts,

feelings, and behaviours, whether they are from the past, present and future, or whether they are real or fictional. Self is not a constant state, but rather a fluid state, which varies and evolves over time, through interactions and from experiences. Self is shaped by and varies accordingly to one's ever-changing social, cultural, and physical surroundings. On the other hand, theatre is not an abstract concept or object (e.g., building), but rather, a group of people who come together to create or participate in a live performance. In other words, when this study examines the weaving of self and theatre, it really is the study of a weaving of *self* and *other*.

As illustrated in Figure 4, each of the red self circles contains five numbers, which represent the five stages of development. During the collaborative play-creating process all participants are constantly interacting with one another at different developmental stages. These interactions are the key ingredient for growth where youth are greatly influenced and shaped by their peers.

Self and *Theatre* are represented as two separate strings (See Figure 4)--one blue string (theatre) and one red string (self); however, by the end of the process, the two separate strings are interwoven together. The boxes inside each of the blue theatre circles indicate that each box serves as building block for the next stage. For example, one can not perform without first rehearsing, and one can not rehearse without first having a script. The only exception in this regard is that the reflecting step is ongoing and continuous throughout the entire process. Nevertheless, reflecting is most prominent at the end of the process, after the performance is over. A closer examination of the nine themes is explored in the following section.

Four Steps of the Collaborative Play-Creating Process

I have decided to describe the four steps of the collaborative play-creating process in this analysis chapter and not the previous method chapter. While these four steps are a part of my procedures, I felt that as I interviewed the participants and analyzed the transcribed text, these four steps would be better expressed as themes. Participants had a great deal to say about these four steps, and I wanted to express these various interpretations in relationship to the five developmental stages. The following are the four steps of the collaborative play-creating process.

Step One: Script-Writing

The *scriptwriting step* is a period of time when a subgroup of students, known as the writing team, regularly meet together to create a script. I have worked with a writing team as small as four to as large as twenty. Usually this process takes about three months, meeting two or three times a week, not including the long hours of individual writings done at home. The scriptwriting step can be divided into six sub-steps: reflecting, brainstorming, storyboarding, writing, editing, and polishing.

The script-writing process usually begins a few weeks after the last performance, with the entire cast and crew reflecting upon the previous collaborative play-creating process. The reflecting period provides valuable and rich information as it points to possible directions to take the next play. In the following school year, a subgroup of students who are interested in participating in the writing team gather together and reflect upon their experiences and ideas in more detail. Afterwards, there is a consensus about the type of play to create and a general overall vision of the play. From there, the

writing team begins brainstorming possible storylines, characters, themes, music, visual effects, and so on. All these ideas are recorded and over a period of time, the writing team reaches a group consensus on general plots, characters and themes.

After the initial brainstorming period, the writing team moves onto storyboarding. Storyboarding allows all ideas to be put into a logical sequential order. For example, the writing team decides that in scene four, three important events need to occur. Then in scene five, two important events need to occur, and so on. Unlike brainstorming, which tends to be free flowing and open-ended, storyboarding is a rigid, selective closed-opened process. A wide range of decisions need to be made to involve a large number of characters. Since actors are not cut from the play, there needs to be enough characters to involve all the participants, especially the senior performing arts youth. However, there can not be so many characters that it would be hard for the audience to follow. Therefore, scenes, dances, and songs, involving large groups of people, need to be integrated into the storyline.

Once the specifics of the storyboarding are in place, students in pairs or small groups are assigned to write various scenes. Script-writing sometimes occurs during the writing team meetings or privately at home. I have found that most students work better in pairs or small groups because they can help each other through any stuck points and with remembering ideas. After a scene is finally written, the writing team sits together and reads the entire scene aloud. Students get feedback from me and the rest of the writing team. Together we begin to edit the script. Afterwards, students return to the writing process to polish the scenes.

Throughout the script-writing process, there are formal and informal meetings to

share the writing team's ideas with the larger theatre group in order to obtain validation or constructive feedback. Often throughout the process, new ideas arise, and there is usually a return to the brainstorming stage. This often leads to a reordering of the storyboard, which in turn, leads to more rewrites. With a constant returning to reflecting, brainstorming, storyboarding, writing, and editing the script becomes more and more polished. Then near the end of the script-writing phase, the student-leader of the writing team and myself usually take over the entire script in order to clean it up so that the storyline and characters flow together from scene to scene. This polishing process also continues throughout the rehearsal process.

Step Two: Rehearsing

The *rehearsing step* can be roughly divided into six sub-steps: reflecting, auditioning, blocking, memorizing, polishing, and other technical factors. After the script is finally written, a copy of the script is given to the participants. Together we read the script and reflect upon the writing and the themes. Before auditioning for roles, youth are informed about the rehearsal schedule and character background information. When working with a large cast it is important for facilitators to be extremely organized since many students are involved in acting, singing, and dancing rehearsals, and as result, rehearsals should not conflict with one another. Also, since students are busy with homework, paid work, and other life commitments, they need support with time management and setting limits.

After all the roles have been cast, the director, choreographer, singing coach, and students-leaders meet regularly with their subgroups in order to begin practicing

various scenes. It is important for the facilitators to have a clear vision of each scene in order to set up a realistic rehearsal schedule. At this point in the process, performing arts youth discuss in more detail the background of their character and the general themes of the play. I talk with each actor about his or her strengths and limitations around performing a role and we set up personal goals to be reached by performance time. Youth are required to bring a script and pencil to each rehearsal and record all the blocking cues or action into their script. Actors are also expected to record their character's motivations and emotions besides each of their lines. After all the blocking is set, youth are given a deadline for memorizing all their lines and blocking cues. As youth are weaned off the script, the scene rehearsals move to deeper levels of commitment. Over time and with repetition, the play becomes more and more polished, as students are able to move from one scene to another without interruption.

Meanwhile, as the performing arts youths are rehearsing, the technical crew is busy working on various technical aspects of the play, such as set construction, costuming, lights, special effects, and props. Over time the cast and technical crew members begin to merge together in order for the play to function in a well polished performance.

Step Three: Performing

During the *performing step* all cast and crew strive to shine. Everyone is working hard to perform better with each performance; the common goals are to put our best foot forward and to entertain the audience. The audience is usually filled with family, friends, school peers, and staff who are there to support the youth and

facilitators. Whether audience members liked or disliked the play, they are usually very supportive of the participants involved and appreciate the hard work that went into creating a play.

Step Four: Reflecting

The *reflecting stage* occurs throughout the entire collaborative play-creating process; however, it is most prominent at the end of the process, especially in the first few weeks after the final performance. Since performing is such a highly charged experience, participants have a strong need to come together to reflect upon and debrief this powerful experience. Usually students share with the group how the process impacted upon them. For some, the experience did not change them in any meaningful way, while for others, it felt like a transformation of self. Youth share stories and memories, both happy and sad ones, while highlighting where they and others were at near the start of the process and where they are at, near the end. They are able to make connections to their personal growth, both as performing artists and as people. They discuss more openly some connections that they have made and how other people have impacted upon and shaped their experiences. As members take risks to share their process with the group, others take more risks, and in turn, the quality of sharing deepens. There is a real sense of hearts opening and connecting with other hearts. They begin to see things that were invisible to the eye.

Five Developmental Stages

Compare to the four steps of the collaborative play-creating process, which are

overt and easy to observe, the five stages of adolescent development are harder to observe as a result of its subtler and more internal processes. The first three of five developmental stages--inclusion, control and intimacy--are derived from the works of Schutz (1958). His views on interpersonal behaviours involve three dimensions, inclusion, control and affection, which are key factors in growth for participants in a group counselling setting. He states that the group must achieve success with each dimension before moving forward to the next dimension. As seen in Figures 5 and 6, Schutz states that as a group moves through these three dimensions together, there is a constant returning to each of these dimensions but on deeper and more meaningful levels.

Expanding off the work of Schutz (1958), I have found similar stages yet with distinct variations. In Schutz's work, participants are involved in a group counselling setting, while in my work, participants are involved in a therapeutic theatre setting. Participants in this study are mainly focused on participating in theatrical and social activities. In Schutz's work, the participants travel developmentally as group, more or less, together, yet in this study, members of the theatre group are all operating at different stages and at different levels. Compared to a small group of people in a counselling group, the number of participants in the theatre group is usually very large, therefore, it is too difficult and unrealistic to hold a container that ensures safety for every member. In my study, often the theatre group breaks up into several subgroups, with each subgroup having very different experiences and processing at different levels of sophistication. Some subgroups met more often than others and some participants attended practices more consistently than others. Nevertheless, in the end, all these

subgroups do eventually come together as a whole group. Also, while Schutz conceptualized three stages, my study revealed two more additional stages: empowerment and vision. While most youth are operating at the first three stages, a handful of students advance on to the fourth and fifth stage.

The following sections are descriptions of the five developmental stages--inclusion, control, intimacy, empowerment, and vision. Figure 7 provides a brief overview of each of the stages and highlights six general topic areas for each stage: 1) type of performing arts youth; 2) youth focus in terms of self; 3) youth focus in terms of theatre; 4) degree of self-disclosure which pertains to distancing; 5) qualities that impede progression at this stage; and 6) qualities that advance progression to the next stage.

Stage One: Inclusion

Normally, youth in the *inclusion stage* are junior students or students new to the program. In the inclusion stage the main focus for these youth is on fitting in. They do not usually want to be too noticed, especially in front of the whole group. They just want to belong. Their way of protecting themselves from the stress of being in a group is to blend in with the group. Often they will easily participate in shared theatre activities but some need to just sit quietly and watch others for a while. Self-disclosure is usually very low because they are not trusting of the group process--they are still "testing the waters." For youth at this stage, facilitators need to exercise overdistancing where self and theatre are separate. Developmentally, youth need the focus to remain on theatre and little on self. The drop out rate is highest in the inclusion and control stages, and begins to level

off with success in the intimacy stage. The following reasons impede progression at all stages, but they are most prominently at this stage. They are feelings of not being accepted by the group, not being able to fit in with some member, over-self-disclosure, not feeling good enough compared to others, strong overwhelming feelings of self-consciousness, or extreme competition, elitism, or criticism. The key factor that advances progression from this stage to the next, is feeling a sense of belonging and identifying with the theatre group.

Stage Two: Control

When performing arts youth feel included in the group, they are ready to move onto the *control stage*. The main focus in the control stage is on group norms around developing theatre skills; youth tests out the boundaries and limitations of acceptable behaviours. Belonging to the group is no longer enough, they want to give their viewpoints on how the group should function; they want to know that what they do, matters. They want a role that highlights their strength. Youth are concerned with developing theatre skills and becoming performers, whether on-stage or off-stage. On-stage performers are actors, dancers, singers, and musicians, while off-stage performers are script-writers, stage-managers, directors, costume makers, make-up artists, set makers, and other technical support crew members.

Although there is some self-disclosure at this stage, facilitators continue to overdistance with these youth. While self and theatre aspects are a bit closer, they are still separate and the main focus still needs to be on theatre. Youth need time to explore the boundaries and limits of the group norms before exposing self aspects to the group.

Often youth in the control stage emulate senior performing arts youth, and spend a great deal of time practicing theatre skills in order to impress them and their same age peers. At this stage, youth want constructive feedback and positive validation about their performance abilities, especially from the ones they are emulating. Their way of protecting themselves from the stress of being in a group is by focusing on theatre skills. For actors, role-playing helps to “save face” because they can perform certain behaviours and feelings that they would not normally do themselves. Through a trial and error process, they are able to place the consequences of performing these actions and feelings on the character and not themselves. They can say, “That wasn’t me, I was just acting.” Some key reasons for impeded progress at this stage are negative feedback, lack of improvement in theatre skills, and being unsuccessful with asserting viewpoints or changes regarding group norms. The key factor for advanced progress at this stage is a feeling of accomplishment over theatre skill(s) and group norms.

Stage Three: Intimacy

When performing art youth feel a sense of control over theatre skills and how to be in the group, they tend to advance to the *intimacy stage*. The key focus in the intimacy stage is forming close friendships and deep bonds. Their way of protecting themselves from the stress of the group is by forming a strong emotional support network. High degrees of self-disclosure between peers, and possibly facilitators, begin to immerse although self-disclosure tends to be kept private from the whole group. At this stage, facilitators are beginning to see some underdistancing. However, youth tend to keep self and theatre separate, or at least very private, until they feel secure with a few

closely bonded relationships. When a support system is not quite formed, youth are still vulnerable. If attempts to form friendships fail or break-up, they need to know they can return to focusing on theatre without feeling too overexposed in the group. With the increased support and encouragement of their friends, youth at this stage tend to be more open and take more risks both in terms of theatre skills and self-disclosure. They are feeling freer to be more "true to thyself." Once these bonds are formed, youth are willing to trust others and are open to form more meaningful relationships. This general building up of a support system serves as a buffer for adolescents to be able to withstand life obstacles and vulnerabilities. The drop out rate begins to level off with success in the intimacy stage. Some key reasons for impeded progress of this stage are unresolved power struggles, excessive gossiping, being unable to make friends, excessive competition that undermines friendship, lack of skills to deal with interpersonal conflicts, or the break-up of friends, boyfriends, girlfriends or groups of friends. Key factors that advance progress at this stage is the feeling of connection to friends, the group in general, characters in the play, and/or the facilitators.

Most performing arts youth are operating at the first three developmental stages with each of their experiences being unique, multi-layered, and complex. Over time there is a gradual evolution in their development and a constant returning to the first three stages, each time going to a deeper level. Only a fraction of these students actually advance onto the empowerment and vision stages. Before reaching the fourth and fifth stages many of the participants have graduated, dropped-out, focused on other areas of their academic or personal lives, or are participating in the theatre process without any desire to move their work to a more advanced stage. As stated before, many of the ideas

of inclusion, control and intimacy are originally derived from the works of Schutz (1958); however, the following two stages are new and they are conceptualized by myself.

Stage Four: Empowerment

Performing arts youth in the *empowerment stage* are usually competent and well-admired students who feel completely at home with the group and the theatre process. The key focus in the empowerment stage is simply to shine--to reach one's fullest potential in terms of mastering a well-rounded and complex theatre performance. The way youth protect themselves from the stress of the group is by feeling confidence. This strong sense of self-confidence stems directly from the success and integration of the three earlier stages: by blending in and identifying with the theatre group, by having control over theatre skills and the theatre group, and by forming a strong circle of close friends within the theatre group. Once these foundational buffers are securely in place, youth in the empowerment stage are ready to stand on their own. These youth usually have some awareness that younger students are emulating them and they feel a sense of responsibility to act as role models. Self-disclosure is very high and often these youth take risks by self-disclosing more meaningful parts of the self to the whole group or subgroups. This self-disclosure in turn encourages more meaningful self-disclosures of others who are in the first three stages.

In the empowerment stage, facilitators need to be aware that underdistancing is occurring as self and theatre are beginning to interweave with one another. It is not that these youth are role-playing events from their actual lives, but rather, they are able to

make complex connections between self and theatre, articulating to the group how their inner personal process affects or limits the theatre process. Some key reasons for impeded progress at this stage are excessive egocentrism, disillusion of self-importance, struggling with the responsibilities of being a role model, and difficulties with mastery over a well-rounded and complex theatre performance. The key factor for advanced progress at this stage is the sensed transformation of self.

For many youth at lower developmental stages, powerful experiences during the live stage performance gives them a potent taste of the qualities of the empowerment stage. However, after the performance they often return to their own developmental stage. While they get a sense of empowerment, they are not ready to integrate it within themselves for they still need to work through internalizing aspects of the first three stages.

For those in the empowerment stage, there is a clear and significant transformation of self. After working through layers and layers of fitting in, practicing theatre skills, forming close bonds, there is a sense of a metamorphosis within--a shedding of the old self and the becoming of a newer, truer self. As a leader I often notice a new aura of self-confidence that radiates from them. They speak with more authority and openness. Often, there is a change in their appearance, but not to be *different* or *cool-looking* as often seen in the lower development stages, but rather the change often reflects how they feel on the inside. While it is true that youth during the first three stages have several mini-breakthroughs, youth during the empowerment stage seems to be working through a major breakthrough.

Stage Five: Vision

Youth in the *vision stage* seem to have crossed some kind of barrier and are distinct from the rest of their peers. They tend to be the natural leaders in the group and have profound insight about the collaborative play-creating process. In the vision stage, instead of the self standing in the middle of the group looking towards to whole group, youth have somehow discovered how to step outside the group and see things from a bird's eye view. From a higher vantage point, they see the whole group, but more importantly, they see how a group of individuals are moving through a creative process. In a sense they are seeing another layer of "what is invisible to the eye." They are making complex connections about art, people, and self. They use their artistic strengths to facilitate the group through a creative process. It is like they are opening their eyes for the first time and finally having vision!

While only a small portion of youth advances to the empowerment stage, only a handful of youth advances onto the vision stage. Usually these are highly competent, sensitive, and articulate students with strong interpersonal skills, and artistic insight. Many of these youth feel they have received a powerful gift from the group and as a result, have a strong desire to give something of themselves back to the group--they want to help others to shine, too! Like the empowerment stage, youth in the vision stage are highly aware that they are serving as role models, but unlike the empowerment stage, the focus is less on the self and more on facilitating others. The way they protect themselves from the stress of the group is by actively and conscientiously facilitating the group through a creative process. These students are committed to the responsibilities of being student-leaders such as head script-writer, head set designer, assistant director,

choreographer, student band leader, assistant singing coach, or head stage-manager. Self-disclosure is very high and they are able to adapt to the level of self-disclosure of other at different stages.

During the collaborative play-creating process, a great deal of dialoguing occurs between facilitators and student-leaders in the vision stage in order to have continuous clarity on the whole artistic vision, to receive direct feedback on leadership skills, and to problem-solve interpersonal, artistic, and technical difficulties. In spite of all its obstacles, pains, and struggles many of these student-leaders discover the reward of manifesting a vision through leading their peers. These youth tend to be able to make connections about how their artistic efforts impact their community, and how to make their community a better place.

With a greater understanding of the creative process and increased vision, these youth are able to link a new vision with potential career choices or a future artistic project. Upon graduation, these youth tend to be looking forward to working on future personal projects without the support of the facilitators. They have a deeper sense of awareness of their own artistic style and they want to exercise it, free from the influence of the facilitators and the limitations of a high school performing arts program. In short, they eventually want to move on and create on their own.

Some key reasons for impeded progress at this stage are lack of sensitivity of others, lack of clear boundaries when facilitating peers, unresolved power struggles, not being able to withstand the stress of being a student-leader, and being unable to clearly understand or articulate an artistic vision. The key factor for advanced progress at this stage is a feeling of having a purpose in life.

The Weaving of Self & Theatre: A Closer Look

Figure 8 provides another way of conceptualizing the weaving of the steps of the collaborative play-creating process and the developmental stages. At one end, theatre and self are furthest apart, which indicates overdistancing as seen in the inclusion and control stages. Self is kept private and the focus tends to be on theatre. Over time theatre and self move closer and closer together, which indicates underdistancing as seen in the intimacy, empowerment and vision stages. Yet, not all participants move towards to underdistancing. Nevertheless, all participants can experience all four steps of the collaborative play-creating process, regardless of their developmental stage. This concept is illustrated in the diagram by the sets of four blue collaborative play-creating circles on the blue line, situated directly above or below each of the five developmental stages. The significant transformation of self occurs when self and theatre intersect with one another. At this point there is mastery over an aspect of the collaborative play-creating process and a successful integration of the first three developmental stages. After this point, youth in the vision stage somehow move onto a different plane. These youth see how self and theatre are interwoven with one another, which is the highest level of sophistication. They are seeing the world through the lens of an artist--through the lens of a leader with vision!

Four Beacons of Light

While Figures 4, 7 and 8 provide clear conceptualizations of the collaborative play-creating process in a logical and sequential manner, readers need to note that youth do not develop in a neat and orderly fashion. For me, coming to an understanding of the

relationship between self and theatre was a difficult and confusing process, as it took me over three years and five plays to fully understand this conceptualization. What made it so hard was that all the participants' experiences were so unique and so vastly different. It was difficult to see anything clearly, I felt lost in the dark most of the time. What I needed were beacons of lights to help me see clearly. As seen in Figure 9, I have come up with four guidelines--four beacons of light--to help me make sense of it all.

Beacon of light one.

Development is relational. Instead of viewing adolescents as striving to be independent, as Barker (1996) highlights in Erikson's work, this study positions itself in viewing adolescents as striving to be interdependent. In other words, optimal growth stems from our interactions with people; it stems from being connected, not separate, from them.

Beacon of light two.

Development is processed through action and dialogue. Development occurs through experience and interaction--through doing something and then talking about what was done.

Beacon of light three.

Development is unique, gradual, complex, and multi-layered. Like snowflakes, no two experiences are alike. For each individual, there are many variables at play that influence development, including all the other forces that lay outside the realm of

theatre. Change does not occur overnight, but rather results from a slow accumulation of experience upon experience, which eventually forms a snowflake with unique patterns and shapes. Also, students are able to work on several stages at the same time or return to various stages but at a higher level than before. This links to the last guideline.

Beacon of light four.

Development is circular and increases in sophistication. Youth are constantly returning to different developmental stages but at more sophisticated levels. Whenever I am lost, I just turn to these four guideposts--these beacons of light--to help me understand what is occurring when self and theatre merges together and how this leads to a change process.

The Change Process

While there are vast differences in performing arts youth as individuals, there seems to be an overall general pattern regarding the change process. Figure 10 illustrates how participants are moving through a never-ending cycle of externalizing and internalizing. Externalizations are visible acts of expression; it is the doing. In this case, one externalizes the components of theatre that involve script-writing, rehearsing, performing and reflecting. Internalization is an invisible process of integrating or incorporating new thoughts, feelings, or behaviours within the self. In this case, one internalizes components of self that involve inclusion, control, intimacy, empowerment, and vision. They externalize parts of theatre and they internalize parts of self--externalizing, internalizing, externalizing, internalizing, and so on. This entire

interaction between externalizing theatre and internalizing self is connected together by one thing-- dialogue.

Dialogue can be real or fictional and stems from interactions with friends, characters in the script, performers, crew members, directors and facilitators, student-leaders, audience and the greater community including school, family, and society. This dialogue involves a circular process of outer dialogue and inner dialogue that is occurring while participants are externalizing theatre and internalizing self. Inner dialogue is thinking about what one *is* experiencing, *has* experienced, or *will* experience. Outer dialogue is talking out loud to others about what one *is* experiencing, *has* experienced, or *will* experience. Inner and outer dialogue indicates self-awareness and shows how participants make sense of the entire collaborative play-creating process. This inner and outer dialogue determines the personal experience and the quality of internalization, and whether a person is progressing through or is blocked at a stage.

Much of the externalizing and internalizing processes are greatly influenced as well and activated when youth listen to the outer dialogue of others and witness the externalizing experience. With healthy doses of inner and outer dialogue, facilitators and student-leaders can provide the support and guidance needed for youth to externalize parts of theatre and internalize parts of self. Awareness and sensitivity regarding this entire change process can lead to optimal adolescent development.

Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed my conceptualization of nine themes and four beacons of light to help understand how self and theatre are woven together. An explanation of the

change process was also presented. In the following chapter I have incorporated the above ideas into a script format.

CHAPTER FIVE

A pool of light appears. A woman in a black robe walks in; we barely see her face. She is holding a ball of light.

PAM:

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

The light consumes Pam. The title of the script appears.

THERAPEUTIC THEATRE **The Weaving of Self and Theatre**

*A Performative Inquiry
of the
Collaborative Play-Creating Process
and
Optimal Adolescent Development*

Script & Video by David Beare

My voice-over as researcher-participant is heard as images of various theatre productions are shown.

MR. BEARE:

As a secondary theatre arts teacher, I feel that my mission in life is supporting youth to shine. I do this by creating plays with them. Through taking high school performing arts students through a collaborative play-creating process, I believe, this is one means of promoting optimal adolescent development. None of the characters or stories you're about to see are real. They are merely actors, and this is merely my construction. This video combines ten years of my academic learning and experiences of drama in theatre, drama in education and drama in psychology. More specifically, this research combines over three years of observations, writings, and reflections about five distinct collaborative play-creating processes, involving interactions with facilitators and hundreds and hundreds of performing arts youth. I have taken all my knowledge, all my experiences and fictionalized them--organized them into eight characters. Together they tell my story.

The image shifts to Mike walking through a forest.

MIKE:

Theatre is a world where we all come together as writers, actors, dancers, musicians, directors, and crew members to create something beautiful. That is where I belong. Where I practice my lines. Where I meet my friends. Where I shine! I've come to discover that this whole creative process has been like a journey--a journey through a forest where I climb up a mountain, one step at a time, and as I travel higher and higher, I get this clearer vision of the entire process--a vision that interweaves art and people.

A closer image of Mike's eye is seen, then the image shifts into a theatre space filled with a lively group of performing arts youth rehearsing a play.

MIKE:

I use to think of art as an ideal, but now I see art as an action, an interaction really. Art is a way of communicating ideas, of stimulating dialogue in people, of linking gaps between people. Lack of communication or miscommunication builds barriers in the world. Art is a way of communicating about these barriers--how barriers affects people and how people overcome barriers. The purpose of art is to question ourselves, to question how the world operates, to question how to make the world a better place. This questioning, this dialoguing between people, within ourselves, is not limited to a theatrical creative process, of course, but this is my tool of choice. For me, everything I create is a reflection of me, I can not separate the two: art and life. Creating something affirms that I exist, that I am not alone. It makes me feel like I am a part of something, part of humanity, part of the universe. I feel this on a very primal level. So when we work through a collaborative play-creating process, the aim is to not reproduce art, but rather to create art... to work organically, starting the entire creative process at its grassroots.

Gradually, images of youth performing on stage are shown.

MIKE:

You see, we're actually experiencing what art wants us to do--unifying people to discuss and exchange ideas--to question ourselves. And the questioning and dialoguing is happening as we're creating the piece itself. It's a double whammy! It's a multiplication of something that is already great! You're multiplying everything by the number of people involved. You're connecting minds, connecting hearts, connecting ideas... all coming together to create a play all squished into a two-hour show.

The images shifts from Mike's eye into a dark space. In the darkness, Shelly lights a candle and holds it to her face. Her face is a bit blurry. She speaks in a serious tone.

SHELLY:

What is essential is invisible to the eye.

More light appears and Shelly is seen on her bed looking at posters and photos on her wall. There are lit candles all around her. Her name "Shelly" is seen on the screen. The

names for all eight characters appear each time they appear next, but only once for each. Shelly is abrasive and hyper.

SHELLY:

Fucking profound, eh? Of course in grade eight, I didn't have a clue what it actually meant. It was just a play we adapted from this strange children's story "The Little Prince" about this odd little boy and his relationship with a rose. It went totally over my head, but that's okay, cause all I really cared about was the singing and dancing! Being in the limelight. "Look at Me!" When I was in grade 9, we adapted "Murder in the Cathedral", this dark Greek Chorus classic, and modernized it into this rave setting. I got to play this raver. I bought these leather pants, died my head red. It was so cool. I had one line, "Two transparents, please." Then in grade 10, we did "Dance: through a glass darkly", a love story all centred around dance. I didn't have a big part, but I got to play this hilarious nerd character. Mr. Beare kept yelling at me to stop upstaging the other actors. He's always yelling at me, telling me what to do. "Shelly, be quiet. Shelly, sit down. Shelly, pay attention!" It's like he's my dad and I'm his adorable A.D.D. love child. *(She laughs, then gets serious.)* We just finished "Eclipsed, Ben's Story", this dark drama about overcoming obstacles, depression and well... I didn't like it that much... I didn't get the part I wanted... no that wasn't it... just that my whole life was going down the fucking toilet at the time and I ended up in the hospital and... well nobody ever said life was going to be easy. Oh, these are some of my best friends. That's Karen. Isn't she a hottie? That's Pam... and Paul. God we've had so many laughs together... I can't tell you how many hours we spent putting these whacked-out shows together. Forever! But you know, I can't imagine not creating them--when I think about it, it's amazing actually.

The first of a series of subtitles appear.

The Collaborative Play-Creating Process

Quick images of various characters are seen, one after the other.

DANIEL: It is HELL!

KRISTY: It is painful.

MIKE: It's incredible!

STEVEN: It's so gay.

PAUL: It's gaylicious!

PAM: It feels satisfying, challenging, and invigorating.

DANIEL: It is meaningless, frustrating, and tedious. Can't we for once do a normal play?

KRISTY: It's hard.

STEVEN: It's boring.

SHELLY: It's FUN!

KAREN: It's not fun when your friends hate you for getting a part.

PAM: I have all these ideas buzzing around in my head.

MIKE: It is the most incredible feeling!

SHELLY: Of course, if I don't get this part, I will simply die!

KAREN: Maybe I should just let her have the part?

PAUL: What? You're changing the script again!

STEVEN: Again?

KAREN: Or maybe I should just drop the whole acting thing already. I mean, I can't go anywhere with it. But really I do love acting.

KRISTY: I wish I could say I love it but it's really stressing me out.

MIKE: I love it!

SHELLY: I absolutely love it!

DANIEL: I hate it! Despise it!

PAM: It has really opened me up.

PAUL: It changed me.

MIKE: It changed my life.

A subtitle appears.

INCLUSION

Fitting In
Belonging

A large group of performing arts youth are participating in a drama game. Karen and Steven are off to the side watching. They are both very uncomfortable because they are new to group. Steven grabs his bag and quickly leaves. Shelly walks up to Karen.

SHELLY:

Hey, you're new, aren't you? *(Karen nods.)* What's your name?

KAREN:

(Karen is having trouble hearing over noise.) What?

SHELLY:

What's your name?

KAREN:

Karen.

SHELLY:

Hi Karen, I'm Shelly. *(She doesn't move.)* We don't bite you know?

KAREN:

Huh?

SHELLY:

We don't bite! Come on! *(Shelly pulls Karen into group activity.)* Hey Pam, this is Karen--Karen this is Pam. Pam's completely insane but we all absolutely adore her!

Shelly hugs Pam. Then Shelly and Pam start participating in the theatre activity. Everyone is laughing and having a good time. Karen does not move very much at first, but then eventually participates. Shelly is laughing a lot. This image fades away and Steven is seen alone, sitting outside on the streets throwing stones.

STEVEN:

My mother kept bugging me to go back to the theatre meetings. I don't know why, it's so gay. Everyone in the caf makes fun of them, you know. And they're always so loud... trying to act cool. Can't they just shut up and act normal or something? And they make these lame plays that make absolutely no sense! *(Pause.)* Yeah, so I went back, for a while, at the beginning of the year, with my friend Scott... he kept bugging me go, saying it would be cool. Yeah, right. We went in there and nobody talked to us... well, that's not true, some of them were alright, but some of them are so phoney. And they think they're so much better than everyone else. And talk about sucking up to Mr. Beare for parts. He thinks everyone is so nice and happy, but he's so blind, he can't see all the fighting that goes on behind his back. Doesn't matter anyway cause it was obvious I wasn't going to have shot at any of the good parts. It really pissed me off when Mr. Beare only gave scripts to the senior actors but not any of us. Talk about unfair, totally elitist. And there were so many frigging drafts, the script kept changing, I didn't even

know what was happening half the time. Oh sure, Scott and I got these bit parts, but talk about lame... And we hardly did any acting stuff, all we did was sit around write and write and talk and talk about nothing... well actually, I kind of liked it when we did those improv games. I did this one scene with Shelly, you know the girl from the improv team, she's hilarious! Well, she said I was kind of good in this one scene... *(Pause.)* Too bad Scott quit after the director started sticking his nose where it didn't belong and asking him all these lame questions about his home life. What a goof. I know Scott's got some family problems, but weren't we there to act? I mean it wasn't group therapy, you know! *(Pause.)* When Scott left, well, there were only two others guy left in my grade, so I quit. about a week later. My mom really ragged on me about that, telling me not be so scared. I told her I wasn't scared, I just wasn't going to waste all my time standing around with these weirdos just to be on stage for five lousy seconds!

He gets up and walks away. The next image shifts to Paul, who is sitting in front of the mirror, getting stage make-up put on his face. He is dressed up as the character of a mysterious woman from his school play.

PAUL:

God, I remember how scared I was in grade eight when I first came in the drama room. Everyone was so big and intimidating. I was horrified that people would look at me funny. *(He puts on some make-up.)* I keep telling Mr. Beare we need to do more fun things, you know, break the ice, play games, get people to laugh more, relax a bit... not be so serious all the time. And God, break up the cliques! You've got the Iranians girls over there, the improv nuts in the middle, and all the fags gossiping in the corner... mix it up. Put them in groups with different grade levels, genders, colour of under-wears, you know, stuff like that. *(Pause.)* But I guess he must know what he's doing. We did have over 200 of our finest youngsters performing at Centennial Theatre last year. Quite a feat, if I don't say so myself. I really respect that Mr. Beare doesn't cut anybody from the play and how hard he works. He's crazy, but I respect him. That's why I get mad when I hear people complain about the play. I just say, "Do you have an idea how difficult it is to write a script that involves this many people? Everybody's working their buns off to create all these parts everyone and all you can do is bitch!" Of course nobody appreciates it; they just want to be stars. Well, get in line honey!

PAM:

(She quickly enters.) Come on Paul, the show starts in ten minutes. *(She quickly leaves.)*

PAUL:

Opps, show time. *(He begins to put his wig on.)* Yes, there's a lot of bitching around here, but we really do love each other. Really we do. Where else in this school can we act this insane and still be accepted? I just remind Mr. Beare that whenever he gets all stressed out about nothing. I just say, "Take a chill pill, Mr. Beare! What do you want to do? Scare all the children away!" *(Pause.)* Is my wig on straight? *(He adjusts his wig.)* Well, my fans are waiting.

He takes a moment to get into character. He smiles really wide and walks away like a diva. Another subtitle appears.

SCRIPT-WRITING

Reflecting
Brainstorming
Story-Boarding
Writing
Editing
Polishing

Mr. Beare introduces Karen to the writing team in the library computer. The camera follows Mr. Beare and Karen who move from the people talking in small groups at a round table to the people writing ideas on the whiteboard, and then to the people typing on computers.

KAREN:

I'm new to school, so this script-writing process is all so new for me. I don't know why I joined the writing team, except that I had this, I don't know, this compulsion to create something. Give or take, we roughly met as a group for about four hours a week for three months. But I can't tell you how many hours I spent at home writing--it felt endless. But I kept at it because I like the idea of creating something from nothing--a bunch of people sitting around brainstorming ideas, playing mental volleyball. You know, exploring options, trying out different thing until you come up with something new. Brainstorming in a group is like an engine piston reaction--there's an explosion at one end and this force is sent to the other end and it fires back and so on, you know, a chain reaction setting ideas into motion, setting ideas in a certain direction. It's like we're all in this one big giant box and we're pushing it from the inside out. It's fun to be in this box, that is, until you get stuck in it. And when we got stuck, it was so painful. Sometimes it gave me headaches. And Mr. Beare kept picking and picking at our brains demanding us to figure how our ideas fit into this logical and emotional story. But nothing fits! So we work even harder spending hours and hours groping through the dark. *(Pause.)* Storyboarding was overwhelming, too. You know, making a rough outline of the plot, subplots, and characters. It's hard to find an idea that most people can agree upon. We had to cut out so many ideas--that's when some of the writers quit. They told me it was too confusing, too unproductive, too intense. I know one girl thought her ideas weren't being listened to, no room for her view, but her writings were, I don't know, weren't working. It was hard to watch her get upset. Even most of what I wrote was crap, or as Mr. Beare would say, "cliche." *(Sarcastically.)* Scriptwriting is like having your heart ripped out, but outside of that, it's fun! *(Laughing.)* No, it was fun... really. Mr. Beare was always telling us not to get attached to our ideas. He warned us to be prepared to have most of what we wrote edited out. He goes on and on how it's not about ownership of ideas but rather being open to what organically unfolds in the

creative process. It's not about ego, but about art! That, Mr. Beare, is easier said than done. I nearly quit myself. Sometimes there was so little progress. It's hard to spend long periods of time floating in space. What if what we write is crap? What if everybody hates it? Even he had all these cheesy ideas of his own and we had to convince him to drop them. But what if he's right? He is older, and I've heard his other scripts were good, so he must know what he's doing, right? Right? I don't know, the whole thing brought up a lot of my insecurities. It would have been easier just to walk away and do my own thing or something. It was so frustrating and painful and it never seemed to end. And just when I don't think I can bear it any longer, we have this break-through. We'd find something that actually fits. Then we'd get excited and we start talking all at once. You know you've stumble onto something amazing when everybody jumps up at once screaming, "That's it! That's it! That's it!"

Fireworks are shown, then psychedelic-looking waves surround her.

KAREN:

Suddenly there's this buzzing energy bouncing all around us. My thoughts are racing and I'm resonating with everyone in the group. It's like we're all connected somehow, no longer alone, stuck in a box. It's like we can read each others' thoughts, our thoughts all racing at a million miles per hour, making all these spontaneous connections we haven't seen before, and before you know it, in a matter of seconds, just like that, the next part of story just flows out of us. Just like that. *(She snaps her fingers.)* It's the most incredible experience. That's when I know we've given birth to a piece of art and that it was worth all the struggle. Mr. Beare's right, I just need to learn to relax and trust the creative process. I just needed a little courage to go into the unknown.

The image fades down on Karen and up on Daniel who is walking angrily and quickly through the school hallway. He is carrying a script as he walks to his locker.

DANIEL:

Writing this script was so bloody tedious! We were all over the map, with no sense of direction, everybody fighting over these petty power struggles. I could have written the whole thing in week or so, but no, we had to spend months and months dragging the whole process out listening to everyone's ideas. We argued and argued for hours and hours, having to listen to everyone's viewpoint before writing anything, and for what? Just to have all our ideas shoot down in the end? We all know Mr. Beare is just going to do whatever he wants to do. What a hypocrite. He tells us to be open to the collaborative process, when all he does is go, "No, your idea sucks. Write it again. I don't care if you spent the whole weekend writing that. It's crap. Rewrite it. *(He points to different imaginary person.)* No, that's cliché. Don't you know clichés are bad? Stop writing clichés. *(He points to different imaginary person.)* No, that won't work. No. No. No. No. Wait. Yes, I like that. We're using that!" How collaborative is that? *(He stops and looks directly into the camera.)* He's just an editor with a totally biased point of view. It's so unfair. He's not interested in my style. *(He opens his locker.)* Mr. Beare just favours all the suck-ups anyway. He goes on and on with their ideas, but he didn't even

take the time hear my ideas. Well he did use my musical number idea at the end of act one, and later on with the fight scene, those were good scenes, but he ruined it by going with Karen's idea. What a cheesy ending. All his scripts are about people caring for people. Sure, that's fine, but come on, let's get real. I had this real cool ending where the main characters disappears after a big fight and the audience is left wondering if he's dead or not. Now that would have gotten the audience talking. Isn't that the point of art? To get people talking, stir things up? *(He locks his locker and continues walking.)* Whatever, it doesn't matter, most of the people in the group voted for Karen's ideas. Don't you see what's really happening here? In the end, after all the talking, after all the wasted hours spent on writing, after everything! It's still Mr. Beare's ideals that are being expressed, not ours. If you ask me, this whole process is one big cliché.

He walks away. The image shifts to Pam who is sitting at a school computer.

PAM:

Actually I like it when Mr. Beare edits my work. I like knowing when I'm on track or off track. I don't like the idea of thinking that I'm letting the group down. Sometimes I get really overwhelmed with all the pressure of writing. I mean we're presenting this at Centennial Theatre, in front of hundreds of people. Everybody at school will see it, and I don't want them to hate it. I want them to at least understand it. So talking with the others writers helps me to think outside the box. It really helps me to stop doubting myself. Having my work edited by Mr. Beare and the group somehow frees me from all this internal negativity. In fact, while it hurts a bit to have my work edited, what I really feel the most is relief. Because I don't have to figure it all out myself--the burden is shared somehow. Talking to one another really helps me, calms me, lets me see things more clearly--gives me another chance to start again with a clean slate. You know, it's really about sharing ideas. And knowing that ideas aren't bad; they either fit or don't fit. It's really "Survival of the Fittest of Ideas"--where the weak ideas get weeded out and the stronger ones move forward. It's just a matter of not taking it personally, even though it's extremely personal. It's a matter of trusting the vision. Trusting that Mr. Beare had some kind of artistic authority and he won't let us down. Really it's about surrendering. Sometimes Mr. Beare reviews my writing, and it's not good, I just know it. Yet he spends time with me and points out what works and what needs more work. Sometimes I see him struggling with editing our work, not knowing whether to be straight forward or beat around the bush, not knowing whether to challenge a superficial idea or just let it slide because the person needs a break. I can see that he's sensitive about that sort of stuff, you know, not wanting to crush the person but not wanting to promote mediocrity. Either way, we still had cut a lot out. I started to see that most of the ideas were just there in order to get to better ideas, and then to get to even better ideas after that. It's hard to do this without hurting people's feelings--we get so attached, you know. Sometimes Mr. Beare even had to override our decisions and cut something we all liked or add something we didn't like and he'd say, "You know what guys, you're just going to have to trust me on this one." Some didn't like it when he did that, but for me, I really appreciated his leadership. His guidance and honesty somehow challenged me. It forced me to think differently about art. It forced me to go places I wouldn't have

gone on my own.

The images shifts to Kristy who is sitting on her bed which is a mess, filled with an array of unorganized school material and clothing.

KRISTY:

I have this love-hate relationship with this whole creative process. One moment I love it and I can't get enough of it and the next moment I hate it and I want to smash it to pieces. You know what I mean? It feeds me and consumes me at the same time. It makes me whine a lot. Even my friends groan when I start complaining, "I feel tired. Nobody's listening to me. My writing sucks. I should just stick to dancing. I wish I was perfect." How stupid is that? I keep telling myself to get a grip and stop this nonsense, but every time I move deeper into this process, sooner or later, it brings up these feelings in me that I don't really want to deal with, these feelings where I'm second-guessing myself.

Angel Kristy appears to the right of Kristy and Devil Kristy appears to her left.

ANGEL KRISTY:

You have great ideas, Kristy. Tell Mr. Beare about your idea of doing the whole fight scene as a Latin dance.

DEVIL KRISTY:

Oh please, that idea sucks. Talk about cheesy.

ANGEL KRISTY:

No, it's good.

DEVIL KRISTY:

No it sucks. Why? Because you suck! You hear that Kristy your ideas suck because you suck!

Kristy shakes her head and Angel Kristy and Devil Kristy disappear.

KRISTY:

I'm so sick of doubting myself... I'm sick of this constant wavering. Back and forth. Back and forth. One moment the voice tells me I'm wonderful and I feel all this confidence pumping through me and then the voice changes and its sucking the life out of me and all I want to do is shut it off, but I can't, because it's a tape recording that repeats the same messages over and over.

Angel Kristy and Devil Kristy begin to argue with one another.

ANGEL KRISTY:

You're beautiful. She's beautiful.

DEVIL KRISTY:

No, you suck. She sucks!.

Kristy flicks off Angel Kristy and Devil Kristy.

KRISTY:

I can't tell you how many times I've just wanted to run away from all of this--all the responsibilities, all the troubles, and never come back. But then we'd have these incredible revelations, these few minutes of bliss, and we're like, "wow, we created that" and then I can't imagine not moving forward. You see, it's both a blessing and a curse, both of what I have absolutely no control over.

Another subtitle appears.

CONTROL
Setting Boundaries
Modelling
Practicing Theatre Skills

We see Pam hanging up lights, followed by her directing two actors in a scene.

PAM:

Some of my girlfriends think I'm turning into this, I don't know, drama freak. I don't like it when they bug me about it, but every time I try to talk to them about it, they just shut me down and I go back to putting on my nice "mask." I don't want to be nice, I want to be me. That's why I like here, it kind of helps me break out of my shell. There's so much happening in my life that I can't fix, the play distracts me, you know, gives me something to fix. I'm the kind of person that needs to make my brain work. For me this whole process is like a giant puzzle with all these pieces needing to fit together into a neat and orderly fashion. If only life was so easy to control. I like directing and writing, I get to problem solve, make decisions about the outcome of the characters' lives and how the characters will interact with one another. I get to tell the actors where to stand and how to act, I get to be the boss! Everyone tells me that I'm a good at directing. You know, it's a real boost to your self-confidence when everyone thinks you're good at something. I better be--I've been here over four years. I've been around so long I can almost always predict Mr. Beare's next thought, you know, anticipate his next move. Of course some of the actors have trouble relating to him, so I kind of translate what he wants to them. Sometimes Mr. Beare is operating at such a fast speed that he forgets to take the time to talk clearly--he just pushes and pushes, expecting everybody to read his mind. That can be so frustrating, especially to actors who are new to all this and they don't understand why he's pushing them so hard. Once during rehearsal, I had to yell at Mr. Beare to slow down and remember we're just high school students, we can't read minds! Everyone was shocked. I was shocked. I've never yelled like that before. I'm

usually the quiet one in the group. It was the oddest sensation. It's funny how I can assert myself with Mr. Beare and order the actors all around, but I can't stand up to my own friends. Maybe I should talk to Shelly about this.

The image shifts to Daniel walking very quickly through the hallway. He is heading toward the school vending machine. Steven quickly follows and takes in everything Daniel says.

DANIEL:

This whole play thing is getting on my nerves. My brother did "Grease" years ago and that was amazing. So why can't we do "Little Shops of Horror" or something cool like that? I mean, I'm not here for the community, I just want to act. Who cares about the process, I just want a major role. Not necessarily the starring role, but a good one, you know what I mean? We spend all this time talking and talking and writing and writing, we hardly spend enough on what's really important--the actual performance! Mr. Beare's too busy running around listening to everybody's sob story, that he hardly has any time left to direct at rehearsals! What about my ideas? I don't see him running to hear what I have to say! *(He puts money into the vending machine.)* Look, you either focus on performance or you focus on people and their pathetic problems, but not both. It's that simple. Come on, Mr. Beare, suck it up. Stop watering the whole rehearsal process down. If you ask me, his last show had so technical mistakes, it was so embarrassing. I keep telling him he's biting off way more than he can chew, but, no, nobody listens to Daniel. *(Daniel bangs on the vending machine.)* Hey, it ate my money. Stupid bloody machine! *(Steven puts in some money, receives a pop and gives it to Daniel.)* Now Mr. Beare wants to do this cheesy musical number that includes the entire cast, over a hundred people. There's no room to move, let alone dance! It won't work. I mean, in end it all comes down to one thing--talent. Either people have talent or they don't. Plain and simple. And Mr. Beare should stop coddling everyone, pick a play, cast the roles and cut the rest out. If I get in, I get in, if I don't, I deal with it. Come on everyone, suck it up!

STEVEN:

Yeah, suck it up.

Steven runs to catch up to Daniel who has already walked away. They exit the school together. The image shifts to Mike walking through the woods.

MIKE:

When I was in grade 9, I thought Derek was the coolest actor in the entire play! I idolized him. I loved everything about his style. Everybody wanted to be like him. Me, I even dressed like him. You know the waxed hair, black sleeveless shirts, tight jeans, loose thick belt with these giant silver rings all around. He represented everything I wanted to be. You can't imagine how excited I was when Mr. Beare assigned him to direct one my scenes. I practiced for hours and hours because I really wanted to impress him. That's when I really learned a great deal about acting, about characterization, about

projection, timing, getting in touch with my feelings, you know, all that theatre stuff. I really wanted to show Derek, Mr. Beare, everyone, even myself, that I could do this. When looking back, I see that being directed by Derek was a major turning point for me. Before that I was hanging around these goofs, you know vandalizing stuff, breaking windows, stupid stuff like that. It's funny, as I'm talking about this, I'm just starting to realize that as I'm going into my final senior year, that I'm going to be a Derek for someone else. It's weird to think that I'm going to be this role-model and someone's going to look up to me, and for better or worst, I am going to have all this power to affect them, the way Derek impacted on me. Weird, huh?

Mike continues walking. The image shifts to Kristy who is in her bedroom, late at night, sitting at her desk doing homework. Her room is very messy with lots of books and papers all over the place. She is in her sleeping wear and she looks very tired.

KRISTY:

I know I should feel grateful and appreciative with having a major part in the play, but I'm not. I know everyone thinks I'm good and all but honestly the whole thing is taking up too much of my time. I have so much homework! At first I felt honoured when the dance teacher asked me to choreograph several of the dance routines, but now it feels like too much responsibility. It's taking away from my studies and I'm totally neglecting my family who really needs me right now. My dad lost his job last summer and my grandmother's back in the hospital and... *(Pause.)* The advanced dancers are fine, in fact, great, but it's the junior dancers that are driving me crazy. Some of them are hardly prepared, or they have such and such excuse for missing practice, and I'm like, *(Loud)* "Hello, I have things to do too, but I'm here!" I hate yelling at them like that but sometimes I just want to strangle them. While everyone thinks we're creating a play, for me it feels like we're creating stress. It's so unorganized and we waste so much time. It would be so much easier if we didn't have so many people in the play. Professionals take years to develop plays, and here we are, trying to do all this in eight months while going to school, doing homework, trying to stay on the honour role, applying to universities and scholarships, working part-time at the mall... I need the money and... *(Pause.)* I'm always feeling like we're rushing, and just when I think I've figure things out, BAM, it changes. Then I have to change the choreography again and--if people would just shut up, stop bitching and listen for a change then we wouldn't have waste so time sitting around doing nothing, and then I can go home and do my homework! I feel like nobody seems to care about how Mr. Beare, the writers, the choreographers, song writers, sacrificed to put this play together. Quite frankly I'm getting to the point, where I'm getting tired of caring about it myself. *(Pause.)* No, that's not true. I'm just tired, that's all. I have this major math test tomorrow that's really stressing me out and I need to study. And I need to sleep. But I can't. I keep waking up at four in the morning with these ideas for the choreography and my mind races along with everything else. It's hard to turn it off, you know. Maybe I'm getting sick again. I've never been sick so much. I think all this rehearsing is burning me out.

A subtitle appears.

REHEARSING

Auditioning
 Developing Characters
 Blocking Action
 Memorizing
 Polishing
 Other Technical Factors

Mr. Beare & Mike are directing a large group of students. Pam also gives some ideas. Some students are frustrated but together they continue on with the rehearsal process. Another subtitle appears.

INTIMACY

Friendships
 Deep Connections
 Private and Confidential
 Support Network

Shelly and Pam are having a serious conversation with one another. Afterwards Karen enters, followed by Paul. They are laughing together. Their arms and legs are all interlocked with one another as they talk.

SHELLY:

Remember, you guys, when we stayed in the theatre until like two in the morning painting the set that god-awful colour.

Shelly and Paul laugh hard.

PAM:

Hey, I liked that colour.

KAREN:

What colour?

PAUL:

It was this pukey purple colour.

SHELLY:

No, it was puce! Who paints a set puce!

Pam laughs with Shelly and Paul.

KAREN:

It was that bad, eh?

SHELLY:

No, no... people just griped about all the painting, but actually we loved it.

PAUL:

Remember when we had those paint fights.

SHELLY:

And Mr. Beare got so mad. "You're going to clean all that up!" *(They laugh.)* And we left these secret little messages for one another, underneath the risers.

KAREN:

Oh, how adorable, I want to write little messages.

Shelly is seen alone with the other three in the background.

SHELLY:

If it wasn't for these guys, I don't think I would be here. I don't mean here, here on this couch. I mean, here, here. You know what I mean? It's funny how when you build stuff with people how you get so attached to them.

Pam is seen alone with the other three in the background.

PAM:

That's the night when I opened up to Shelly, I mean really opened up. We were cleaning up all the paint on the floor when I started telling her about my friends teasing me and everything. I couldn't believe how easy it was to talk to her. I'm usually a very private person.

Shelly is seen alone with the other three in the background.

SHELLY:

So I said, "Look Pam, these so-called friends don't seem like real friends, they sound like nothing but a bunch of prissy tightwads!" Of course she laughed when I said that, but I was surprised when she started crying and telling me all about her family and about how her parents were splitting up. It kind of freaked me a bit, cause I thought she had this like, perfect life, but I kind of liked it. That's when we started becoming best friends--and I mean best friends. I didn't feel as alone, you know what I mean? And I liked knowing that I wasn't the only one with fucked up parents.

Pam is seen alone with the other three in the background.

PAM:

I couldn't believe how much I was opening up to her. I told her things that I've never told anyone. And whenever I got too, too upset, she'd make me laugh by doing stupid things like imitating her parents or something.

Shelly is standing on the couch performing to the other three on the couch. Shelly imitates her parents that makes the Pam, Karen and Paul laugh.

SHELLY:

Shelly, you listen here! You've caused this family nothing but trouble since the day you were born! Hey, I'm talking to you! What do you mean you're going out! You're not going to another one of those goddamn raves, are you? Those raves are nothing but trouble, Shelly. Trouble! Shelly, what you need to do is smarten up. Get a head on your shoulders. Hey, I'm talking to you!

PAM:

I love when you do that.

PAUL:

Do it again.

KAREN:

God, Shelly, you're so funny.

Karen is seen alone with the other three in the background.

KAREN:

God, Shelly is so funny. My mouth hurts from laughing so much. I can't believe how close we've become, and Pam and Paul, too. We're so supportive and caring of one another--it's like we're this one big loving family. You know, when I first came here from Toronto, I kind of thought that, being in grade eleven and all, that I wasn't going to make any new friends. Boy was I wrong. Shelly practically introduced me to everyone in the school, told them to treat me nice or she was going to kick them in the butt, you know stuff like that. Yeah, Shelly's great like that. That's why I love her. She's funny, popular, and confident. Sometimes I wish I could be more like her.

Shelly is seen alone with the other three in the background.

SHELLY:

Can you actually believe my mother thinks I have a "drug problem." Sure I do drugs but only on the weekends. Who doesn't? She forced me to counselling once. What a joke! I don't need to see a counsellor to figure out that I go parties because it's better than hanging around my fucked up family! Oh, can I say fuck on video? Anyway, only my friends really can understand me. Especially, Pam, I mean she really gets it. She listens. Why can't adult figure that out? Well, Mr. Beare's a good listener, but he doesn't count; he's like our drama daddy. One big loveable pushover. *(She laughs.)* I tease him

sometimes and tell him that if I don't get the part I want, I'm going to jump out the window or something. *(She laughs.)*

Karen is seen alone with the other three in the background.

KAREN:

Shelly's trying out for the same part that I'm trying out for. It's a dramatic piece, which is good for me because I'm not very good with comedies. But I keep thinking that maybe I shouldn't try out. You know, I'm new and all. Don't get me wrong, I really love acting, I really do, but maybe I'm just not any good at it. And Shelly's been so great to me and she really wants the part. And she has been here a lot longer. I don't know, who am I fooling? I probably won't get the part anyway.

The four are talking on the couch.

SHELLY:

Hey guys, there's a rave happening Saturday night. Let's go.

PAUL:

Count me in, I'm there.

KAREN:

A rave? I don't know. Sure, why not? What do I wear?

SHELLY:

I've got this perfect outfit that will look absolutely fabulous on you.

PAUL:

You coming, Pam?

PAM:

No, I don't think so.

The image switches to Shelly and Pam sitting side by side, both unaware of the other.

SHELLY:

Don't get me wrong, Pam's my best friend and all, but sometimes she can be so straight. It's like trying to bend a steel bar. I keep telling her she has got to loosen up, you know, like me! *(She does some techno dance moves.)* I remember, a while back, when we were practicing this small scene for class and she had to play this really obnoxious and highly volatile tramp. Talk about playing against type.

PAM:

It was so hard for me to feel the angry emotions of the character. Mr. Beare kept coaching me to yell. I told Mr. Beare that maybe Shelly would be better suited to play

the part.

SHELLY:

But Mr. Beare said that he wanted me to play the "quiet and grounded one." As if! *(She laughs.)* So I help Pam to yell...

PAM:

And I helped Shelly to not--well--well, not overact so much.

SHELLY:

You see, I'm way better at comedy, you know, but this year we're doing this drama, and Mr. Beare said I needed to work on "being emotionally connected to my feelings." *(She laughs.)*

PAM:

It's really hard for Shelly to keep it real, you know what I mean? Yeah, she's funny and all, but sometimes I wish she'd just focus a bit more... but she's still my best friend, she's always sleeping over at my house. Right now we're spending a lot of time in my basement, we're polishing up the final draft of the script for the auditions in a few weeks.

SHELLY:

I loved going to Pam's place. Compared to my home, it's so peaceful. But, you know, she's a bit of a slave master, we're always working on the play. *(She screams.)* It can be so frustrating; I just want it to be fun! But Pam strives on the challenge. I haven't been to a rave in weeks because I'm either stuck with writing the script with her or we're at the school building sets or sewing costumes or doing this or doing that! Even when I beg Pam to stop, she won't. She's just like Mr. Beare; everything has to be perfect. And when we finally finish something, I'm like, "Thank fucking God!" and she's like on this high! You swear she's on drugs. She's weird like that. I love her and all, but sometimes I have this need to, I don't know, bug her.

The begin to argue.

PAM:

No, I don't want to go...

SHELLY:

Come on.

PAM:

No.

SHELLY:

Hi, I'm Pam and I'm a goodie, good and raves are bad! Only drug addicts go to raves!

PAM:

I never said that...

SHELLY:

Drugs rots the brain and I don't want holes in my brain, because I'm really smart and I'm in charge of everything!

PAM:

Why don't you just f... *(She stops.)*

SHELLY:

What? Was little Miss Prissy Tightwad going to tell me to fuck off? Say it! Fuck off!

PAM:

Leave me alone.

SHELLY:

Hi, I'm Pam, and I'm too much of goodie good to say... opps, can't say "Fuck!" *(Pam walks away.)*

Paul is seen alone with the other three in the background.

PAUL:

It's such a drag to rehearse when Pam and Shelly are having another one of their silly tiffs. Of course Karen gets sucked into all the negativity and soon the three of them are fighting. Me? I just want the pettiness to end. But life is a drama, isn't it? It wasn't that much later when the *(he makes quotation marks with his fingers)* "incident" occurred. Some of Pam's friends were sitting around, while Pam was directing Karen and I in a scene. They were waiting for a ride from Pam to go somewhere, I can't remember, but we were running way over time and her friends kept bugging Pam to hurry up. Soon they were fighting and the next thing I hear is Pam telling them to fuck off!

Karen is seen alone with the other three in the background.

KAREN:

Actually what she said was,

PAM:

Listen guys, I need to finish this scene before we go, and if you wait somewhere else, I'll finish it sooner, and then I'll give you a ride.

PAUL:

Of course, they kept fighting, with them saying Pam promised them to give them a ride or something like that.

KAREN:

And then Pam said that maybe they can get a ride from someone else and then one of them kind of like of ordered Pam to quit rehearsing and give them a ride. That's when she said,

PAM:

You know what, it's my car and I need to finish my rehearsal, and if you don't like it, then you can just fuck off! (She walks away.)

PAUL:

Her friends were so shocked when she said that. Of course they just said something stupid back and left.

KAREN:

Afterwards, I thought Pam would be so upset, cause she's so sensitive and all. But she wasn't. She was flying higher than kite. She was walking acting so proud of herself, teasing us throughout the rehearsal, telling us to "f" off when we screwed up our blocking. (Laughing.) When Shelly walked into our rehearsal and saw us mouthing each other off, she must have thought we were on drugs.

Shelly is seen alone with the other three in the background.

SHELLY:

Can you believe that Pam never tried drugs. Never, not once! One time I offered her some but she said she didn't want to mess up her education. I told her, "I'm failing school and look how I'm turning out!" (She laughs, then shows insecurity.) I'm trying out for the lead role. I really, really want it. Pam thinks I'm ready for a dramatic piece. Karen's trying out for the part, too. She's really good. I mean good. I wonder if Paul wants to go to a rave with me this weekend?

Pam is seen alone with the other three in the background.

PAM:

Shelly's really stressing me out. She didn't get that part. Karen did. Shelly has been missing a lot of school again. She's even starting to miss some of the drama meetings. I don't know what to do. Maybe her mom's right, maybe she does have a drug problem. But every time I try to bring up the subject with her, she just brushes me off. God, I don't know how to fix this. Maybe I should talk to Mr. Beare. I don't know, he's always so busy, I don't want to bother him. We only have two weeks until we perform!

The next subtitle appears.

PERFORMING

Everything coming together
Shining!

Various images from four different plays are seen. The last image is of the audience applauding. The following subtitle appears.

EMPOWERMENT

Self-Confidence
Integration
Transformation

We see close-ups of different people's faces, most of them appear to be feeling good, but some are not. An empty pool of light appears in a pitch-black space. Mike appears in the pool of light.

MIKE:

Being in the spotlight has got to be one of the most incredible experiences of my life. I can't describe what performing feels like. It feels--it feels electrifying. It's this rush! I'm standing there and everybody's looking at me, and I can either go run away and throw up, or I can just stand there and just do my thing, you know what I mean? Performing is like basking in the ultimate glow of acceptance, accomplishment, and love. You can feel all the actors, writers, and crew feeling so proud of what we have created. It's like during the writing and rehearsing stages we experienced these tiny mini-sparks, but it was the whole stage thing that was one big spark!

The ball of white light consumes Mike. Karen appears in the pool of light.

KAREN:

It totally changed my life. It's like the entire experience is fused right inside my body, and I don't feel as insecure anymore--at least with my acting that is. And I can't believe how much the audience responded to the play. They may not have liked it or even understood it, but they appreciated what we were attempting to do. Even my Chemistry teacher liked it, if such a thing is possible. And ever since the show, I've gotten nothing but praise from everyone about my performance--my family, friends, even a stranger on a bus. Shelly keeps writing all these Oscars speeches for me, telling me I'm going to be the next Meryl Streep. *(She laughs.)* Shelly's great that way. She said that just because she wanted the part, too, doesn't mean I didn't deserve the part as well. *(Pause.)* Yes, this has got to be the most incredible year of my life. I'm so lucky to have found this group and make all these friends. I told Mr. Beare that I'm thinking about applying for acting school after graduation. It's something I've been wanting to do for a long time, but I was too scared to admit it to myself. You know, I didn't think I was good enough. Or I deserved it. Of course I won't make any money, and I will probably die of starvation, but I don't care, I have to act. It's just something I have to do. I can't lie to

myself anymore.

The ball of white light consumes Karen. Paul appears in the pool of light.

PAUL:

I remember at the end of grade nine, during one of our check-in meetings a few hours before show time. We were all sitting around having a warm fuzzy, you know saying nice things about each other just before show, where everybody gets all huggy and feely. That's when Derek started talking. At the time I thought he was like this God actor that could walk on water. Anywise, he started crying, telling us how much he was going to miss everyone next year, how painful it was going to separate from everyone when he goes off to study French or something cultural like that, and how all this support from the group really helped him to break through some of his barriers and blah, blah, blah. Then he came out. Just like that, "I'm gay." I totally shit my pants when he said that. I mean, of course I already knew he was queer. Hell, we all knew! But he actually said it. Out loud, in front of all of us! Suddenly everyone's crying more and hugging more, saying how much they cherished one another. And me, I just wanted to get the fuck out of there. Things were getting a little too close for my comfort, if you know what I mean. It wasn't until about a year later when I, myself, finally came out. Compared to Derek's giant cry-fest, my outing debut was pretty anti-climatic. But Shelly did get us some fake IDs and afterwards we went clubbing at all the gay clubs. God that was fun. But, you know, I'm not really the party-boy type. I'm just happier living the simple married life with my husband, Arnie. My parents are totally cool with us--except that one time when we kissed each other at my cousin's graduation. Scandalous! I just told my mother. What? You rather I'd be some miserable closeted tight ass that plays football or something? I mean none of my friends care, so what's the big idea? Even Mr. Beare's gay, so what's all the fuss? Then they go on and on about why can't I be as smart as my cousin or why can't I do better in school like her? The truth is I can't wait until I'm done with this whole petty high school thing. If it wasn't for theatre, I might have quit by now or slit my wrist or something. No, school's not for me. I just want to travel to exotic places with Arnie, work in these little cafes, stand by the ocean and just breathe in the salt air. Just one more year of school. One more year and I'm out of this hellhole. Well, I will miss my friends, and Mr. Beare and all our small little talks, you know about art, the creative process, life, being queer. It like there's a part of him right inside my mind and he's speaking to me, "Project. Move to stage right. Go to class. Give your mother a break. Wear a condom!" (*He laughs.*) Yes, I'll miss this. But not the pettiness. In this week's episode of High School Blues, Arnie is obsessively jealous of my newly formed friendship with Mike who is too afraid to tell Pam that he likes her. Does the drama ever stop? Oh wait, I forget to tell you the best part. We're writing a gay character into next year's musical comedy! And not only is he gay, he's dresses up as a woman! (*He smiles.*) God, I want that part. Of course, my parents will totally flip out, but I don't care, the role is perfect for me!

The ball of white light consumes Paul. Shelly appears in the pool of light, then the spotlight disappears and she is left in the dark with some shadows on her face.

SHELLY:

I know everyone told me I did a good job with my part, that I was funny, but so what? I'm trying to not let it get to me, but I really wanted Karen's part. I've been busting my butt doing everything for everyone and being everyone's fucking therapist and for what? What about me? I know I shouldn't feel this way but this show is making me feel second-rate, like I'm a joke, and I'm not, but Mr. Beare never gives me the chance to prove it. He has this thing against something or me. I know Karen did really well playing the part, I mean she was so amazing, but even knowing this, I can't help feeling *(Pause.)* jealous.

PAM:

I'm really worried about Shelly. She hardly comes over to my place anymore. And Mr. Beare had to fight really hard with the principal and her math teacher to keep her in the show. They were trying to kick her out because she was missing so much school. I'm starting to feel guilty. Maybe I shouldn't have told Mr. Beare about her taking drugs. I wish I told him to rewrite Shelly's character so she could show off more acting range. But nobody could have pulled off the humour like she could. If the comic relief didn't work, then the whole play wouldn't have worked; it would have been this big heavy. This was the vision of the script. I've tried to tell her how important her role was to the play, but...

SHELLY:

I kept having to tell Pam that it wasn't her fault or Mr. Beare. I mean, I knew Mr. Beare cared about me, but I kept thinking he had this thing against me or something--always on my case--like I was nothing but trouble. It was real shock when he took me into his office and told me he felt Karen was more right for the role than me. Then he told me that he thought my drug problems were messing up my life and that it was blocking my development as an actor to honestly play the subtle emotions of the lead role. Of course he was right, but at the time, it really pressed my buttons. I just told him to fuck off and stormed out of his office. I remember thinking, "Who in the hell is this fag to me to tell me what's messing up my life. My family is messing my life, not me. And if I want to mess up my life, then I'll mess up my life!"

PAM:

God, Shelly was freaking out so much. I've never seen her so angry. She was throwing things around, tearing down the posters off her wall. I kept saying, "Oh, Shelly, I'm so sorry. I shouldn't have talked to Mr. Beare about all this. It's all my fault. I'm so sorry."

SHELLY:

And when Pam said that, it really pissed me off. I yelled at her, "Pam, stop trying to control everything. There's nothing to fix here. It's my problem. Not yours. Mine! It's my problem to fix!" *(Long pause.)* I didn't quite know it at the time, but when I said that, something clicked in me. It's my problem to fix. It wasn't long after that, when I

sucked it up and crawled my way back into Mr. Beare's office. We talked, I had this long cry, and then he walked me over to one of the school counsellors. Most of them are usually idiots but this one turned out to be nice. She listened. I mean, really listened, and she didn't tell me what to do. She even kept her promise and didn't call my parents, as far as I know anyway. Eventually, she connected me to a youth substance abuse counsellor. And I've been seeing her ever since. About a month after that, a social worker got involved and I moved in a foster home and *(Pause.)* I'm not sure if any of this is helping, but I was surprised that it wasn't that hard to stop the drugs, I guess I wasn't that far-gone. Don't get me wrong, I still crave them, but as my foster mom tells me, that's normal. I like her. She's this tough Chinese woman and she's always saying weird stuff like, *(She mocks her foster mom.)* "You don't need drugs, Shelly; you need water, soil, and sunshine. Why? Because you are like that Rose in 'The Little Prince!'" You are a withering flower that's bursting to bloom. But you see, all this is invisible to the eye, Shelly, yet it's essential. You are essential. People are essential. Understanding this is essential for the survival of the human race! *(Quietly.)* Remember, Shelly, it is only with heart that one can see rightly."

Shelly is consumed into a ball of light. The set of a play is being taken down. The last image fades away. Another subtitle appears.

REFLECTING

Remembering

Evaluating

Seeing More Clearly

We see a group of students sitting in a circle talking with one another. Kristy appears.

KRISTY:

I've discovered that as much I love acting, I have to be clearer on what I can and can't do--you know, my limits. I thought I could just do it all, but that's not true, unless you want a nervous breakdown or something. I really appreciated it when my dance teacher suggested that I only do one of the choreographies and not three and she had Mr. Beare and the writers take my character out of two dance numbers that weren't essential for me to be in. It was getting permission to not be perfect, you know, permission to breathe, and stop making the dances so complicated. Artistically, I'm learning the power of simplicity. Cutting back on the rehearsals and the responsibilities really helped me to cope with the stress better. I finally got some sleep! I was surprised when Mr. Beare apologized to me for the process being so unorganized. We made a pact to improve our *(She says mockingly.)* "time management skills." It felt stupid when he made me sit with him and make a time schedule of my life. You know when to rehearse, when to study, when to sleep, when to see my friends, when to visit my grandmother in the hospital. It was dumb, but it really helped, really. Oh, my grandmother's doing better; she wasn't able to see the show but I did show her the video of the show, she loved it. She was so proud of me. My family saw the show; some of them didn't understand it. But they liked

my dances. Oh, and my dad found a job, which is a big relief. You know what? Now that everything's over, I think that's what I feel the most--relief (*pause*) and tired. I love dancing and everything, it's so rewarding, but right now, I need to rest. I need to just turn off the creative juices and rejuvenate. I need to tend to all the other areas of my life, which I've neglected. I mean, if I don't have a life outside of art, then what can my art possible say about life?

Daniel walks through the hallway, holding a script. Steven is walking behind him along with two other younger students.

DANIEL:

The play didn't meet any of my expectations, except I knew that it would suck. You know me, I tried to keep an open mind, but now that's it over, I can honestly say that the entire experience was empty. It left me feeling frustrated, invalidated, disappointed, and totally disillusioned. Everyone's bickering with everyone, cramping everyone's style, feeling completely shut down. It was a total downer. (*He and others stop by a garbage can.*) You know, having to collaborate on everything with everyone was crazy-making, it didn't work, and quite frankly, I won't be doing it again.

Daniel throws the script into a garbage can. He walks away followed by the others. The image shifts to the script in the garbage can, then it becomes all black. The image shifts to a mountaintop panoramic view of a wilderness. Mike is sitting in an open area at the top of the mountain, reading a script.

MIKE:

Looking back, one of my favourite moments was when Mr. Beare and I were writing the core scene of the play. It was difficult to write and nobody was not able to get it right, so I gave it a shot. I felt honoured that Mr. Beare thought I was good enough to write this scene, he really believed in me. At first I felt all this pressure, all this responsibility, but I liked filmmaking, so I thought doing this would be good experience for me. However, Mr. Beare thought some of my ideas were too dark, too cliché, and I thought Mr. Beare's ideas were too cheesy. So together we started to write this scene, combining our styles together, agreeing and disagreeing on things as we went along the way. It was the most amazing experience. The scene just flowed. It didn't come from me, it didn't from him, it came out of us interacting with one another. It's like we pulled from another these amazing parts of ourselves--parts that we didn't even know were there. Now looking back. Whenever I think about what we wrote, I feel this deep sense of completion that something had taken life. Somehow it opened me up a bit. Through working with the artist in Mr. Beare, this somehow helped me to discover the artist in myself. And when I told Mr. Beare that, he told me that through seeing the artist in me, this helped him to discover the artist in himself. Weird, eh? I can't tell you enough what a satisfaction it was to see everyone coming together, pouring their hearts into the play, giving something of themselves to an audience. So many actors thanked me for directing them. Some of them were the same people who whined and complained at the rehearsals and I had to yell at them all the time. It was like pulling teeth sometimes. This

experience really gave me an appreciation of what Mr. Beare has to deal with. But you know what? All the frustration was worth it. After the show everybody was so happy, family and friends were hugging the cast and crew, some even giving them flowers. It was so incredible to watch. It just gave me the most profound sense of accomplishment. I sat there thinking, "Wow, we did this. We did this." It was like I was seeing the entire process all at once, and I understood how it all worked, and while I probably can't explain it in words, I now feel it. I understand it. It's like this whole play transformed me. It wasn't like this big shift that happened overnight, it was more of a gradual evolution, like this slow awaking, but it set something bigger in motion in me. It inspired in me to create for the rest of my life. I mean, I'm now just beginning to understand what it means to have artistic vision.

The image shifts from Mike's eye to a wide series of images of the collaborative play-creating process images. The final subtitle appears.

VISION

Art and Self are Interwoven

Role-Modelling

Facilitating Others through a Creative Process

Discovers Purpose in Life

We see Pam dancing with her shadow in a pool of light.

PAM:

The most incredible part of the whole process is seeing how the play enriches the lives of so many people. I've seen so many people blossom--like fireworks! Mr. Beare said that I've gone from being this tiny little canoe to being this giant ferry boat that carries people across oceans and with a strong anchor for the storming nights. He's always saying strange stuff like that. I thought Mr. Beare was crazy when he asked me to be the assistant director for next year's show. He said I was a natural leader. Shelly says that I'm the only one strong enough to calm Mr. Beare down whenever he has one of his (*Loud.*) "conniption fits!" (*She laughs.*) See, I can be loud, too. (*Pause.*) Even since Shelly moved to the foster home, I don't see her as much anymore. She seems to like it, but I don't know. Oh, sure, she still calls me up every once and so often, I get to get to direct her and all, but I still feel like we're growing apart. I guess that's part of growing up. Shelly and Karen are still closer than ever, but Paul's spending all his time with Arnie, and for some reason, Kristy. I think Paul must be rubbing off on her, cause she seems to be more mellowed out. I've been dating Mike for about month now. He's going to Simon Fraser; he's hoping to get into film. He's so talented. Right now he's working on this weird David Lynch-type movie, you know the kind that Mr. Beare hates, but Mike's doing it anyway. Mike doesn't like it when everything works out in the end of the story, he wants his art to have more edge, or as Daniel would say, "more bite!" But don't get me wrong, Mike really respects Mr. Beare, and he really appreciates everything that he has learned from him, but now he feels ready to throw "The Mr.

Beare Book" away and start really developing his own style. Me, I don't know my style. Mr. Beare says I have one, but I can't see it yet. It doesn't really matter anyway, cause I'm not going to be an actor or anything. Sure, I might take theatre courses after graduation, but I'm sticking to my plans to be an engineer. I need the job security and beside it gives me something really, really big to fix. Who knows, maybe when Mike or even Karen become rich and famous, they can give me some money and I'll build Mr. Beare his dream theatre. I can see it now...

The image shifts from her eye to people interacting with one another. We hear Pam's voice in the background.

PAM:

A place where a community comes together and creates plays. A place where we grow together, cry together, laugh together.

The last image seen is of Shelly making a whole group of her theatre friends laugh during a rehearsal. A ball of light consumes them all. The ending of Nelson Mandela's inaugural speech is seen.

And as we let our own light shine,
We unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.
As we're liberated from our own fear,
Our presence automatically liberates others.

(Maryanne Williamson, 1992, p.191)

CHAPTER SIX

Discussion

In this final chapter, I summarize all significant points. A review of the eight characters in the script is made in relationship to the theoretical framework of the Collaborative Play Creating Process (See Chapter 4). Using the five criteria of evaluation (comprehensiveness, reflectivity, resonance, multivocality, and genuineness), I critique my research interpretation and I share the feedback that I received while engaged in dialogue with five groups of stakeholders (interviewed participants, thesis committee, UBC faculty of education theatre arts student-teachers, and both my current and past high school theatre arts students--see chapter 3). In addition, I discuss the various implications and limitations of this study. In the last and final section, I share my inner thoughts and conclusions about my research project.

Review of the Eight Characters and Developmental Stages

In a case-study format, the eight characters in the script are described in relationship to the five developmental stages. Various points are made for facilitators to consider when applying these developmental stages with their own students.

Steven and Stage One

Steven prematurely left the collaborative play-creating process during the inclusion stage. For various reasons he did not feel comfortable identifying himself with the theatre group, even though he showed interest in theatre (i.e., improvisation).

Nevertheless, his need for perceived peer acceptance took more precedence over his need to perform.

The drop out rate is highest during stage one. Typically, younger students such as Steven come and go as they make decisions about whether or not the theatre process is right for them. Steven might have stayed in the theatre group longer if his one close friend did not quit. Often youth tend to find it easier to join the theatre group if they have a friend or sibling to go with them, especially if the friend or sibling is already included in the group. This makes the transition into foreign territory a bit easier because the new participant connects with at least one familiar face. Coming into a new group while not knowing anyone is often a scary first step for many youth, and at stage one, facilitators would benefit from encouraging regular participants to go out of their way to make natural connections with the newcomers. Yet, it is important not to draw too much attention to the newcomers while making them feel welcomed--this is a tricky balance.

Daniel and Stage Two

Daniel is stuck in the control stage. He gets caught up in power struggles because he tends to have an egocentric point of view. While he is very frustrated with the group and often threatens to quit, he remains with the group because he has something to prove to himself and/or the group. He has a strong need to be understood, so he often gets in arguments with people. Thus, he tends to be perceived as insensitive, since he is quick to express his impatience. Daniel is capable of showing sensitivity to selected people, if this meets his needs or personal principles. When other viewpoints do

not match his viewpoints, he tends to dismiss other people's feelings and oversimplify very complex human conflicts. Artistically, he knows instinctively when something is not working, but he does not have the skills or experiences to offer an effective alternative that meets the needs of the whole group. In terms of theatre skills, Daniel has the qualities of possibly becoming a student-leader, however, his lack of clear vision and poor interpersonal skills could prevent him from effectively doing so.

Kristy and Stage Two

Like Daniel, Kristy is also working through the control stage, but for different reasons. While, Daniel is dismissive and noncommittal, Kristy is overly polite and takes on too many projects. Kristy has strong empathy skills and she is well-liked by her peers; however, she does not have much free time to spend with her friends because she is so busy with the play, dance classes, homework, work, and family concerns. On one hand, she wants to be able to say, "I did it all" because she does not want to miss an opportunity. On the other hand, she does not want to disappoint anyone; therefore, it is hard for her to say, "No." As a result, various projects and personal concerns easily overwhelm Kristy. She lacks the boundaries needed to manage her day to day living. Kristy's eagerness and dedication to the theatre process clearly puts her in role as a student-leader; however, this works against her because she has a great deal of repressed anger towards her peers and the facilitators. In short, she resents the added responsibilities of being a student-leader. Briefly, Kristy needs support with her time management skills and setting limits.

Shelly and Stage Three

Shelly would argue that she is at stage four but she is still working through the intimacy components of stage three. While Shelly is a weak student academically, she is considered popular. She has many friends and is extremely well-liked. She has a big heart and she goes out of her way to make people comfortable in the theatre environment. She is warm and uses humour as a way of breaking the ice and keeping the process fun. One reason she is still in stage three and not in stage four is because she is not fully in touch with the pain that stems from the dysfunction in her family. Instead of addressing this family issue, she tends to cover her pain by cracking jokes, partying, and taking drugs. She often goes to raves and uses drugs as way of prolonging her "happy" mode. As a result, her partying and drug-taking behaviours have greatly affected her schooling academically. Even though Shelly is at risk of failing school, due to poor attendance and lack of effort, she shows little concern as she is highly focused on her social life. She is often hanging out with friends for long periods of time and spends endless hours in the theatre space. She is highly obsessed with getting the starring role of the play. Her desire for the lead is not to communicate the ideas of art, but because she wants the experience of everyone noticing her and applauding her. She does not understand that the spotlight, like drugs and friends, will not fill her inner void. In short, her risk-taking behaviours and lack of ability to address her family problems prevent her from entering the fourth stage.

Pam and Stage Three

Like Shelly, Pam is working through the intimacy stage throughout the script.

Pam's struggle lies within her relationship with Shelly and other friends that are not involved in the theatre program. Pam and Shelly develop as people because of their close interactions with one another. On one side, Pam had a hard time standing up for herself, yet through her relationship with Shelly, she learned to do so. On the other side, Shelly learned from Pam to get more grounded and connected with herself. Through their relationship with one another, they have internalized the positive qualities of the other person. As a result, by the end of the script, Pam was free to move past stage three. However, Shelly was still at stage three because she was just beginning to get serious about counselling and facing her problems, which have been holding her back from experiencing any form of self empowerment. In Pam's case, she confronted her fears, and, as a result, was able to experience empowerment.

Paul and Stage Four

Paul is clearly in the middle of the empowerment stage. He has strong connections with several members of the theatre group; while he is not one of the stronger actors in the theatre group, he has come to feel confident about his performance skills and contribution to the collaborative play-creating process. He tends not to get caught up in the theatre politics and petty arguments; however, he will openly share his viewpoints and personal experiences during rehearsals and reflection times. Since coming out as a gay youth, he feels totally free to self-disclose to the group and take positive risks in various theatre projects. He is open to exploring new ideas and new options. Even though he does not like school, he likes being a part of the theatre process and uses theatre as a way to stir up conversation. He likes to rock the boat, in a low

keyed nonchalant way. For Paul, the experience of reaching empowerment was not so much an explosive firework but rather like discovering gentle waves that matched his natural rhythm.

Karen and Stage Four

Compared to Paul, Karen advances further in the empowerment stage. Karen was a new student in school and started the theatre group while in grade eleven; nevertheless, her age, maturity, and past theatre experiences, allowed her to quickly move through the first three stages. With the support of Shelly, she quickly identified herself with the group, and took risks by showing her strong acting skills and ability to form deep friendships. With these three foundational developmental stages in place, Karen was able to move into the fourth stage. In short, Karen was extremely open to the artistic process, even though she struggled between following her desire to try out for the starring role and remaining loyal to Shelly who was also trying out for the same role. She embraced the creative process and by standing in the spotlight with all the applause, she discovered that she wanted to be an actor. She came to understand that acting was an artistic form of expressing ideas. She got high from using her body and voice as a tool to communicate those ideas. While Shelly was trying to use the spotlight to seek attention, Karen experienced the spotlight as a means of artistic expression. When performing, Karen felt a profound sense of connection to a larger community and a greater artistic context, while for Shelly, the spotlight was never enough. For Karen the spotlight led to a core validation of self, while for Shelly, the spotlight led to a temporary distraction from her family problem. This feeling of empowerment gave

Karen the self-confidence to be honest with herself and to follow her dream of being an actor. In comparison to Karen, Paul had no desire to become an actor; however, the feeling of empowerment gave him the confidence to accept and express his sexuality and to commit to an alternative life style that falls outside the realm of academic and theatrical life.

Mike and Stage Five

While Pam reached the beginning of stage five, Mike was the only one who, by the end of the script, matured fully through to the vision stage. Not shown in the script, Mike had worked through the earlier four stages, which freed him to be able to step outside himself and clearly see the theatre group as a community. He could also experience how the collaborative play-creating process unfolded. Mike was a natural leader because he instinctively understood the creative process. He had artistic vision and strong interpersonal skills. He was well organized and strove for excellence, without expending people. He took the time to discuss matters of the heart whenever necessary because he could no longer separate theatre from people or people from theatre. After being engaged in a wide series of high school theatre projects, Mike felt ready to move away from high school and begin working on his own project utilizing his own unique style. He yearned to be free from the influences of his facilitators and high school peers. He graduated from high school with a sense of purpose in his life. Whether Mike goes on to study theatre, art, business, or medicine he planned to bring the knowledge and awareness of the creative process into his professional and personal life.

Critique

After completing my video and writing the first five chapters, I shared my construction with various stakeholders: interviewed participants, thesis committee members, UBC faculty of education secondary school theatre arts student-teachers, and my current and past high school theatre arts students. I had various ongoing discussions with these groups about the interpretations of my script and my theoretical conceptualizations. In addition, these periods of open dialogue provided valuable feedback about my interpretations. In total, 44 people viewed my video and presentation of my theoretical framework, and afterwards they filled out evaluation forms (See Appendix E). Whether through discussion or the evaluation form, all groups of stakeholders provided feedback based on the five criteria of evaluation: comprehensiveness, reflectivity, resonance, multivocality, and genuineness (See Chapter 3).

Feedback from the Five Interviewed Participants

I met with all five interviewed participants a second time (between one hour to one and a half hours) in order to discuss their transcribed interview. All five participants (four youth and one facilitator) reviewed their interview. An opportunity was given for them to make any additional explanations, alterations, or omissions. They were also given the opportunity to review the final representation of this study, which lead in some cases to a long dialogue about their interpretations and feedback on mine.

Four of the five interviewed participants read and provided feedback on the script. One participant did not review the script due to time constraints. The other four

reported that the script accurately described the collaborative play-creating process. They gave a rating of four or five out of five in each of the five criteria, where one is low and five is high. Three of the four were concerned that readers who were not part of the process might have difficulty understanding the script because the characters illustrated the collaborative play-creating process in a subtle and indirect manner. From my discussions with them, I have decided to illustrate my conceptualizations of the nine themes before showing my video to other stakeholders. I also decided to explain the nine themes in chapter four before sharing the script in chapter five. This way, the review of the nine themes provides a theoretical framework for the viewers of the video and readers of the script.

In all four cases, the interviewed participants agreed with how portions of their interviewed text were “re”constructed. In terms of strength, all four thought the script demonstrated high comprehensiveness in regards to the nine themes, showed reflectivity from the perspective of the researcher, illustrated various viewpoints through the eight characters, captured the essence of the collaborative play-creating process through fiction, and depicted most of the characters as genuine.

In terms of constructive criticisms, two participants felt that the characters of Daniel and Steven were not realistic enough. They wanted to understand the background and reasons for their behaviours and anger. While I understand the two participants’ viewpoints, I wondered if they had difficulty relating to the characters at the lower developmental stages because they were operating at higher stages.

These same two participants also felt the script was too happy (“borderline cheesy”) and while they said they liked the script, they would still liked to have seen

more realistic characters (“edgier”). Another participant wanted the script to include more interactions between character that would have made the script more realistic. The fourth participant thought that what was missing from the script was the “average” students--those who are laid-back, happy simply to coast along, or want to have fun in the theatre process but do not want to be totally committed.

Three of the four participants did not like or relate to the dialogue “drama freak.” They said that they did not experience this type of overt harassment at school. Instead of the negative comment being overt, peer put-downs were experienced as more subtle. In this regard, the participant pointed out to me that I misinterpreted a section of the interview. As a result, I would need to change this section of the script to better suit his interpretation, which I edited out in the video. At this point of the process, I have not been asked to change any other aspects of the script. However, I realize that with more dialogue with other stakeholders, the script will evolve over time.

Three of the interviewed participants were able to reflect on the five developmental stages. They were able to describe links between the developmental stages and their personal lived experiences. Additionally, they described in detail the aspects of the eight characters with which they most identified. Whether or not they identified with the eight characters, the four interviewed participants were able to provide examples of how these eight characters were similar to their theatre arts peers.

Feedback Involving Evaluation Forms

My video and presentation of the nine themes was viewed and evaluated by twenty-three of my current high school performing arts students, eight past performing

arts students who have graduated within the past four years, and thirteen UBC faculty of education theatre arts student-teachers. Afterwards, they filled out an evaluation form (See Appendix E). Included in these 44 evaluators were four of the eight actors in the video. All questions on the evaluation form were based on the five criteria of evaluation: comprehensiveness, reflectivity, resonance, multivocality, and genuineness (See Chapter 3). Table 1 illustrates all scores and average scores, with one being the lowest and five being the highest. In addition, with my current and past students, I engaged in group and private discussions about my video and presentation, where we debriefed their experience of viewing the video and understanding the nine themes.

Of the five criteria, the 44 evaluators rated three criteria to be strong (the average scores out of five are indicated in brackets): *resonance of fiction (4.5)*, *reflectivity of the researcher (4.4)*, and *comprehensiveness of the nine themes (4.4)*. In terms of these three criteria, stakeholders were able to understand the theory of the five stages of development and how they linked to the four steps of the collaborative play-creating process. The general consensus was that the video and the conceptualization of the nine themes clearly illustrated the rewards, struggles, and journey of the collaborative play-creating process. Many stated how my conceptualization accurately described the process in a clear and reflective fashion. In almost all cases, these stakeholders felt the video resonated a strong ring of truth in terms of the overlapping of the creative and developmental processes.

Most evaluators seemed to identify and relate to the characters of Pam, Mike, Karen, and Kristy, while very few high students were able to relate to Paul. While Shelly received the lowest score, in terms of the overall average, several evaluators

indicated they could relate to her journey. Since Shelly has attempted suicide and is addicted to raves and drugs, the general group may not have related to her unique struggles. Many high school students in this group resonated with Kristy because they could relate to her being extremely stressed out and having difficulty balancing all the different components of her life. Some evaluators could relate to Steve and Daniel, however, overall most felt they were unfairly presented in an unrealistic and/or negative light. In terms of average score, the evaluators did not rate the remaining two criteria as strongly--*multivocality of script (3.9) and genuineness of characters (4.0)*. The rating of the least believable to most believable character is as followed, *Shelly (3.9), Daniel (4.0), Paul (4.1), Steven (4.3), Kristy (4.3), Karen (4.3), Mike (4.4) and Pam (4.5)*.

Recommendations for Further Research

From discussions and reflections upon my study, this research project could be explored in other directions. For examples, researchers could explore whether or not these five stages match the interpersonal and intrapersonal processes of participants involved in a high school theatre programs that do not create plays, but rather, remount pre-existing plays. Is there a developmental difference between the play-creating group and the play-reproducing group? In other words, what are the effects of development while creating? Another possible area for research is to compare my theoretical framework with theatre students from different theatre programs that derive from different cultural, regional, and social-economic regions.

Also, there is some contradictory evidence that for some youth the mastery of the intimacy stage occurs before the mastery of control stage. Perhaps other researchers

based on their study could breakdown or re-conceptualize the five stages in a different manner. Also, quantitative research could be done to provide statistics on the correlation of the four steps of the collaborative play-creating process and the five stages of development that foster optimal adolescent development.

More research is also needed to determine if the positive qualities gained in the collaborative play-creating process are long lasting or extend to other situations. One limitation indicated in drama therapy is that while participants do show improved behaviour within the supportive environment, there is not enough research to indicate whether these new behaviours last after the process is over, or even if these new behaviours are transferable to a different environment.

My Conclusions of this Study

Based on the feedback from the various stakeholders I would make the following changes. In order to improve the criteria of multivocality, I would need to interview more students who are at lower development stages. I consider the five people that I had interviewed to be at stages four and five; therefore, they did not talk a great deal about the components that involved the earlier stages. Unfortunately, participants at the lower developmental stages did not volunteer to be interviewed or they did not have enough self-awareness or trust in me to share their inner processes. Overall, the general group consensus was that there was not enough explanation regarding the average, less dynamic or laid-back participants, the inner struggles of cliques within the larger group, the ways different subgroups affect other subgroups, the experience of individuals within the group who feel like outsiders, the individuals not involved in the group, the

audience, the parents, and others. In conclusion, while there is a general consensus that I have captured the experience of the participants at the higher stages, my study is lacking in regards to the earlier stages.

Another area for improvement in this study is on the criteria of genuineness of characters. While many of the students indicated that they strongly related to different aspects of the characters, the overall weakness of the presentation of the study seemed to fall within the believability of some of the characters and the range of viewpoints of characters. One explanation for the lower scores in the area of genuineness of characters was that the characters were a mix of text (or condensed text) from the transcribed interviews and field notes. Perhaps the characters in the script would come across more honestly if I did not mix the texts, if I had participants write the text themselves, or if I had used the autobiographical format (i.e., *Kitchen Soup for the Soul*) and simply had students write their own story. Also some stakeholders pointed out that if I believed that development is relational, then I needed to show this more in terms of a dialogue rather than a monologue format. Therefore, I conclude that in terms of genuineness and multivocality of characters my script has not yet reached the most well-informed and sophisticated interpretations. While the writings of Pam, Mike, Karen and Kristy are said to be strong, wider ranges of stories need to be gathered, and more research in the areas of experimental writing is needed.

Based on the feedback from the stakeholders, the overall general consensus was that the script and video resonated with them. All three of my thesis committee members indicated that the video strongly resonated with them and that there was a strong connection between my theoretical framework and the stories in the video. Other

stakeholders, such as my current and past students, saw how these stages applied to other areas of their lives and how they were operating at different stages or degrees of stages depending on the situation they were in and the type of people they were interacting with. Therefore, I conclude that for this study, I have reached the most well-formed and sophisticated interpretation in regards to the conceptualization of the nine themes--four stages of the collaborative play-creating process and the five stages of development.

In an earlier chapter I have noted that there is a lack of research in the area of therapeutic theatre and how it can be utilized in relationship to high school counselling as a preventative model. Bidy and Posterski (2000) and Offer and Schonert-Reichl (1992) indicate that very few youth actually turn to counsellors or teachers when they need help as most turn to their friends. Practitioners may better serve youth by turning to organizational groups where youth naturally meet. Davis and Tolan (1993) and Larson and Kleiber (1993) state that there is little research on how extra-curricular activities impact on the lives of youth and how they enhance their mental health. Also lacking in research are the lived experiences of the high school theatre teachers and theatre students (Catterall & Darby, 1996). Landy (1994) argues that drama therapists need to return to theatre and other creative arts to better understand the hidden processes of the participants. This study attempts to address these research concerns through the examination of therapeutic theatre.

Therapeutic theatre, based prevention principles, aims to gather together creative-minded students who focus on theatre and build a support system so that they are better able to withstand the everyday pressures of life stresses and more serious life

crises. Recreational organizations are natural places where adolescents come to meet and socialize with peers, and where well-trained facilitators serve as role-models and provide support and guidance to these individuals.

Two of my thesis committee members question if the term "therapeutic theatre" might create barriers with educators. Teachers could argue that the realm of therapy does not belong in the education system and would be better left for places like hospitals or teen drop-in centres where facilitators are properly trained as counsellors, not as educators. The two thesis committee members also wondered if the term "preventative method" might be more appropriate since it is already accepted and understood in the education system. For myself, the terms therapeutic theatre and preventative model complement one another since I believe the very acts of creating plays with youth, in and of themselves, are proactive and healing. Since I am in search of a more effective way to reach performing arts youth, I have attempted in this research project to expand knowledge by integrating different models from the three worlds of theatre, education and psychology.

Therapeutic theatre does not present itself as therapy, yet it provides a therapeutic and constructive container, which builds on youth's needs for peer connection and a sense of belonging. As Kaczmarek and Riva (1996) stated, preventative models, not intervention models, are best suited to foster optimal adolescent development. Research indicates that youth do not turn to counsellors and teachers for help, but rather, their friends. Whether facilitators use the term therapeutic theatre or preventative model, I argue throughout this paper that facilitators need to turn to alternative and psychological models to better reach teenagers and to better

understand the developmental aspects of optimal adolescent growth. Overall, based on my research and the stakeholder evaluations of my interpretation, I believe that with the right amount of theatrical, educational, and psychological training and experience, theatre arts facilitators can use the collaborative play-creating process, as therapeutic theatre, to foster optimal adolescent development in high school performing arts youth.

Pieces Falling Together... An Afterthought

When I first began this research project, my heart instinctively knew that something essential was occurring during our creative pocesses, but my mind did not have the clarity of what it was. Like a puzzle box without a picture cover, I could see various pieces all mixed up but I could not see how they fit together--there were simply too many pieces to see the whole. Constructing this puzzle was like trying to find a path through a cave without a flashlight--I had to feel my way through. This experience of exploring through all the nooks and crannies of this study was frustrating because, unexpectedly, it took up an enormous amount of my time. I was reluctant to surrender. Since qualitative research was a new area of knowledge for me, often my literature review research led to dead-ends. I resented having to start over again, venturing blindly down another unknown tunnel. However, in spite of these obstacles and urges to quit, in the end I was compelled to find my way through this cave.

It took me over three years to mature into my writing. A reason for the long journey was because it took me a long time to figure out that I was not so much trying to discover a truth, but rather, construct it. According to the philosophy of social constructivism, reality is constructed locally and specifically according to the views of

individuals. Realities are not something objectively "out" there to be discovered, but rather, reality is something subjectively constructed through interaction and dialogue between people. There is this continuous and endless search for knowledge that is always evolving. For me, understanding and actualizing this paradigm shift, while undoing my years of empirical training, was the hardest, yet most rewarding, learning experience.

At the beginning of this journey, a great deal of my writing was forced, contradictory, unclear, detached and filled with self-loathing. I kept searching for the right words--the right truth--to write my paper, when, unknowingly, this was never going to happen until I fully surrendered to the creative process and all readings. I had to commit myself to understand the concepts of social constructivism, performance psychology, performative inquiry, drama therapy, therapeutic therapy, and optimal adolescent development. I did not realize that there would be so many pieces of the puzzle to sort out.

From the last fifty years of research on creativity, Mayor (1999) found that creativity only makes up .01% of all research. One reason for the lack of research in creativity is that it is difficult to research. While the creative products may be tangible, the inner processes are not. Overall, in terms of theatre arts teaching and drama therapy, researchers as such Catterall and Darby (1996) and Landy (1994) state practitioners know a great deal about the mechanics of creating, however, they know very little about the operations of the inner processes. After over three years of co-creating five collaborative play creating processes, I think that I have finally reached an understanding of these invisible processes. I see that as I have become more and more

sophisticated in my understanding of the creative process, my students, co-facilitator, and our creations have also become more sophisticated. As my co-facilitator once said, "The discipline is never greater than the master. As we provide our students with an even more sophisticated experience, they are coming out of it feeling even more empowered and with even greater vision."

*Upon looking back at my entire journey, I realize that when I finally conceptualized the nine themes this was when the research project began to take on a life of its own. The soul of the study began to emerge--it began to breathe. Somehow I have tapped into a world that I have known was there but could never get access to. Now, finally, I have found the gate into this enchanting world! I can see how the pieces of the puzzle fit together. Practice and theory are no longer separated but interconnected. The framework of my construction gave me the structure I needed to explain what I experienced. I am no longer lost in a dark cave. There is light coming through from the end of the tunnel! Through ongoing dialogue, experience and reflection, my constructions have become more precise, the characters have become more clearer, my interpretations more sophisticated. I see more clearly how the collaborative play-creating process, as a therapeutic theatre (or a preventative model) can be utilized to foster optimal adolescent development. I have a greater passion and deeper understanding of the components of theatre, adolescent development, and how the very acts of creating together, in and of themselves, facilitate inclusion, control, intimacy, empowerment, and vision in our youth. At last, my mind has finally caught up to what my heart instinctively has known all along... **"Only with the heart can one see rightly"** (Saint-Exupery, 1943).*

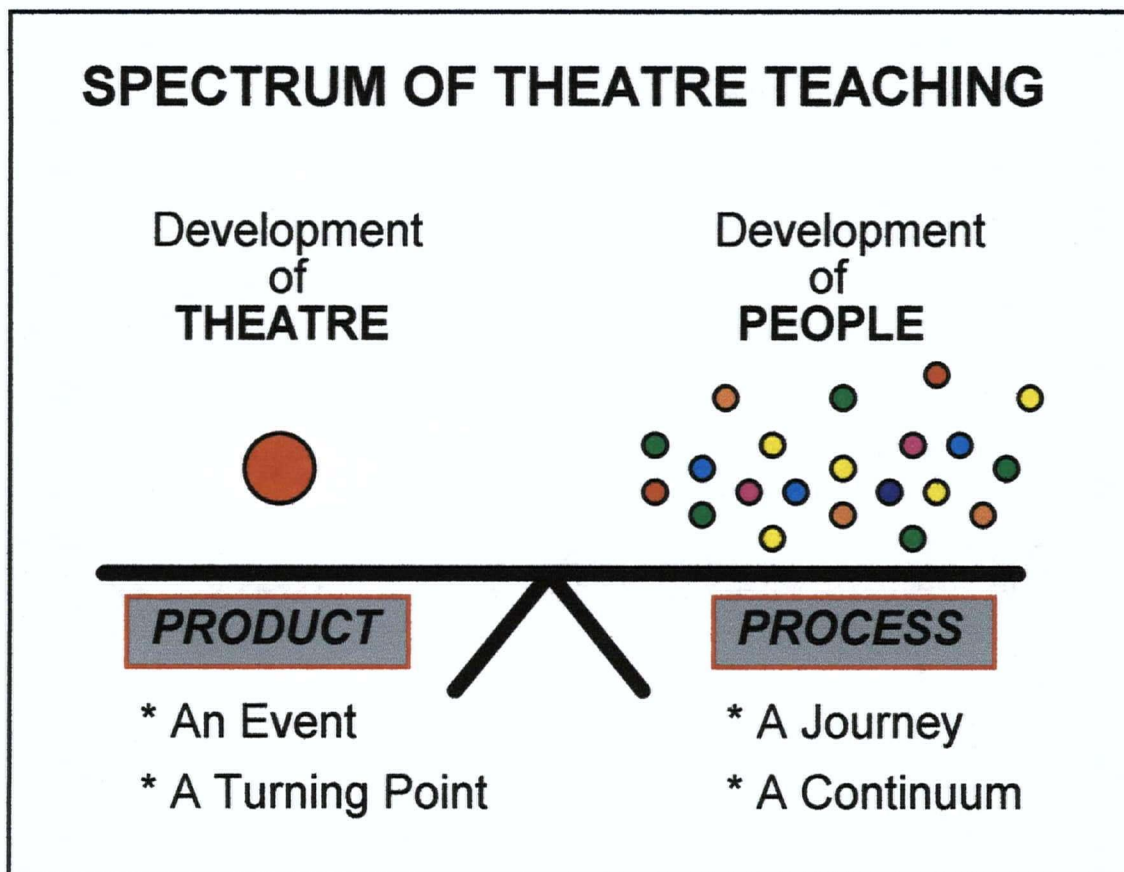


Figure 1: The literature review on secondary theatre arts teaching tends to fall somewhere along the *Product versus Process Spectrum*. The different philosophies of secondary theatre arts teaching tends to fall on the side of the development of theatre or on the side of the development of people, or a combination of the two. Research indicates that theatre arts teachers and researchers understand a great deal about the operations of theatre, but little is known about how theatre affects the interpersonal and intrapersonal processes of performing arts youth.

(Constructed by D. Beare)

OVERVIEW OF STUDY

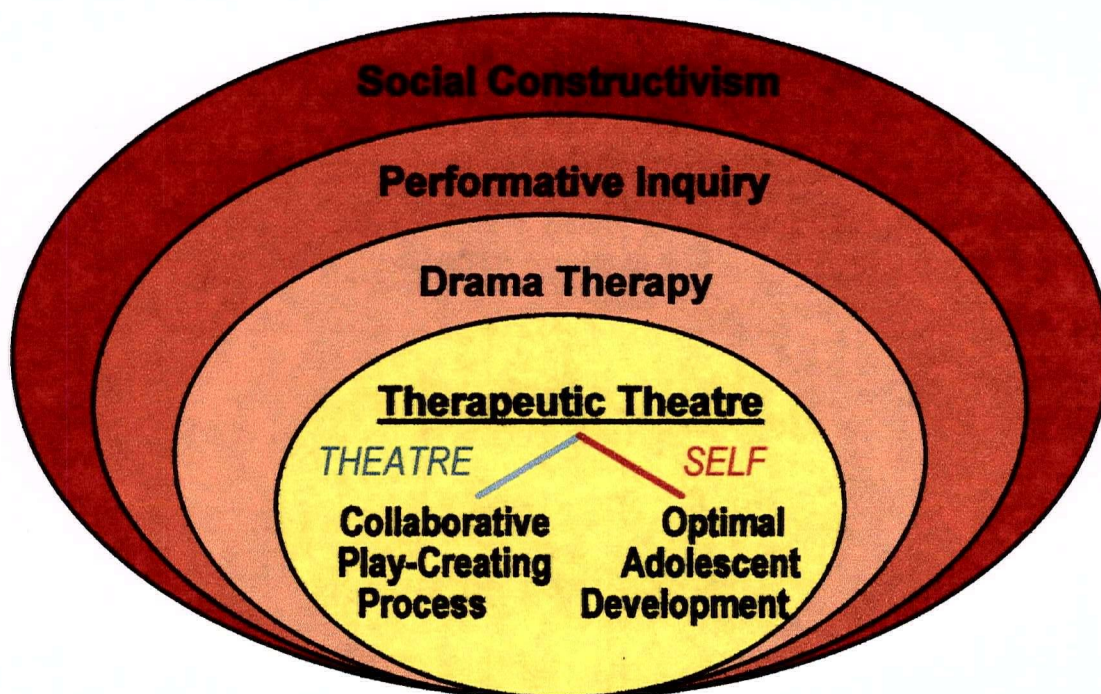


Figure 2: An overview of the philosophical foundation, method, and topic areas of this study.

(Constructed by D. Beare)

DRAMA THERAPY: DISTANCING

UNDERDISTANCING

(ie. psychodrama)



OVERDISTANCING

(ie. therapeutic theatre)



*Self & Theatre
Interwoven*

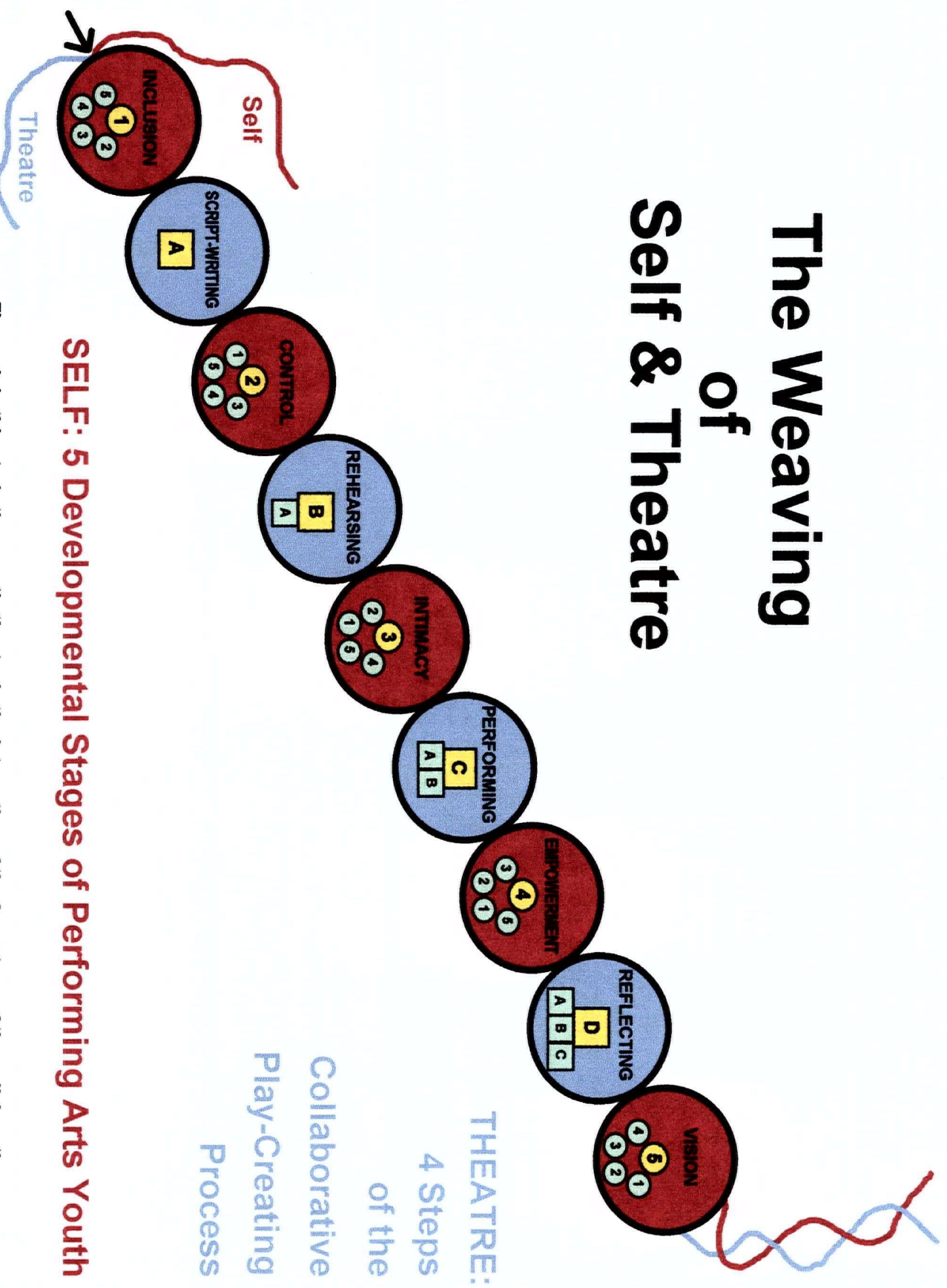


*Self & Theatre
Separate*

Figure 3: A visual presentation of the concept of distancing.

(Constructed by D. Beare)

The Weaving of Self & Theatre



SELF: 5 Developmental Stages of Performing Arts Youth

Figure 4: In this study therapeutic theatre is the interaction of the four steps of the collaborative play-creating process and the five developmental stages of performing arts youth.

(Constructed by D. Beare)

SCHUTZ THREE DIMENSIONS OF INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOUR

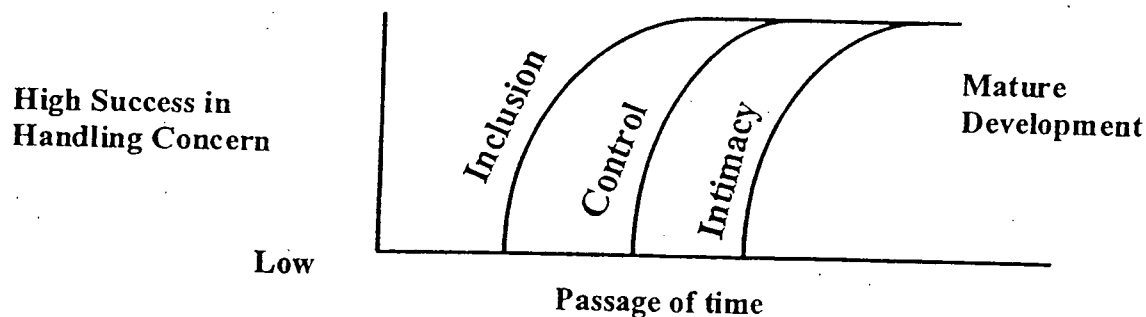


Figure 5. The above diagram is borrowed from the works of Shutz (1958). Each of the dimensions move forward one at a time and each requires the previous one to be in operations before it can develop adequately.

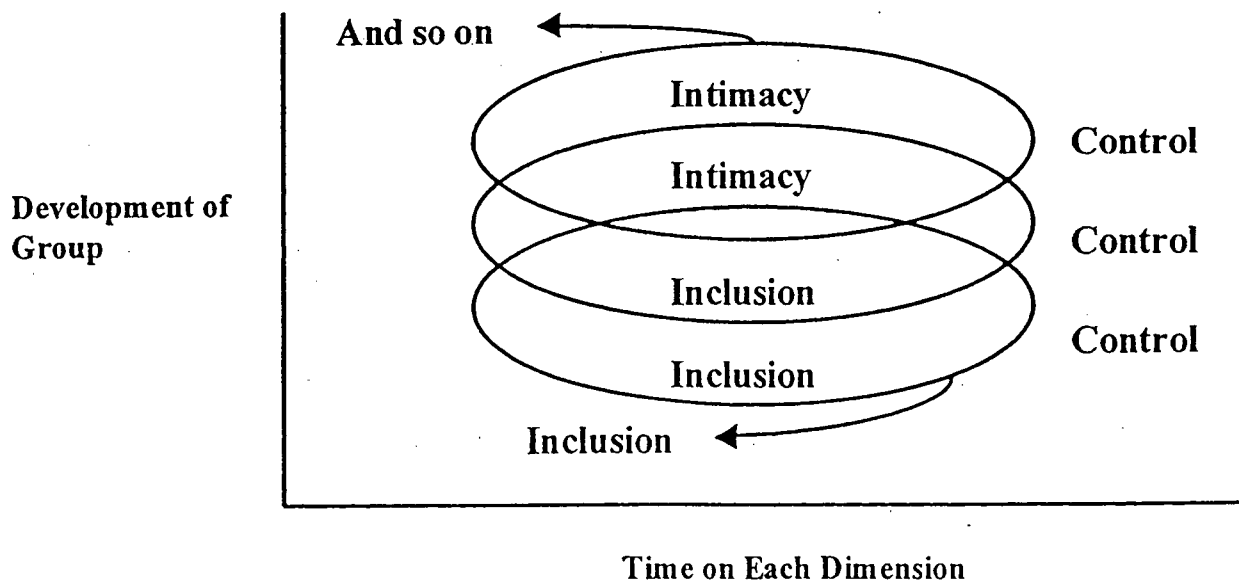


Figure 6. The above diagram is borrowed from the works of Shutz (1958). As the group grows, the three factors are dealt with again at a higher level and for a shorter space of time. In my study, I expand off his work by adding two more dimensions, which I call themes: empowerment and vision.

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF THERAPEUTIC THEATRE

STAGES	INCLUSION	CONTROL	INTIMACY	EMPOWERMENT	VISION
PERFORMING ARTS YOUTH	Usually junior or new students wanting to belong to something personally meaningful	Usually students wanting to improve on their theatre skills and to be noticed in group	Usually students wanting to make meaningful connections with others	Usually highly confident & well-admired students wanting to shine!	Usually highly competent student-leaders with insight on art & people
FOCUS OF SELF	Focused not on self but on blending in with group; striving to "fit in"	Focused not on self but on developing theatre skills & discovering boundaries and norms	Focused on forming a support network of close friends and other bonds	Focused on being true to thyself; self-confidence comes from success and integration of first three stages	Focused on facilitating group; highly sensitive of self, others & the creative process; has a bird's eye view
FOCUS OF THEATRE	Highly focused on participation in shared theatre activities; not committed, just "testing the waters"	Developing theatre skills; understandings mechanics of theatre; often modeling after senior peers	Attempting more complex theatre skills; usually strong support system leads to greater risk-taking in theatre	Striving for excellence in a performance; making meaningful connections between self & theatre	Exploring artistic vision on a highly complex level; facilitating others through a creative process
SELF-DISCLOSURE	Little self-disclosure; does not want to be noticed; high overdistancing	Some self-disclosure; roles <i>save face</i> during trail & error process; moderate overdistancing	High self-disclosure with friends but less with whole group; some underdistancing	Higher self-disclosure and will share self to whole group; high underdistancing	Most self-disclosure; self and theatre are interwoven; most underdistancing
IMPEDES PROGRESSION OF STAGE	Not feeling accepted by or fitting in with group; feeling inadequate as an actor; highly self-conscious; extreme competition; elitism or criticism	Negative feedback; lack of improvement over theatre skills; being unsuccessful with asserting viewpoints or boundaries around group norms	Interpersonal conflicts; Unresolved power struggles; relationship break-ups; excessive gossiping or competition over roles	Excessive egocentrism; disillusion of self-importance; difficulties with mastering theatre skills; being a negative or an ineffective role-model	Feeling overwhelmed or inadequate with the responsibilities of being a student-leader; lack of sensitivity of others; lack of vision; lack of clear boundaries
ADVANCES PROGRESSION OF STAGE	Feeling a sense of belonging or identifying to the theatre group	Feeling a sense of success over basic theatre skills	Feeling a sense of deep connection with members in play	Feeling the sensed transformation of self	Feeling a sense of purpose & direction in life

Figure 7: A brief description of the five developmental stages of performing arts youth in therapeutic theatre.

(constructed by D. Beare)

THE JOURNEY IN THERAPEUTIC THEATRE

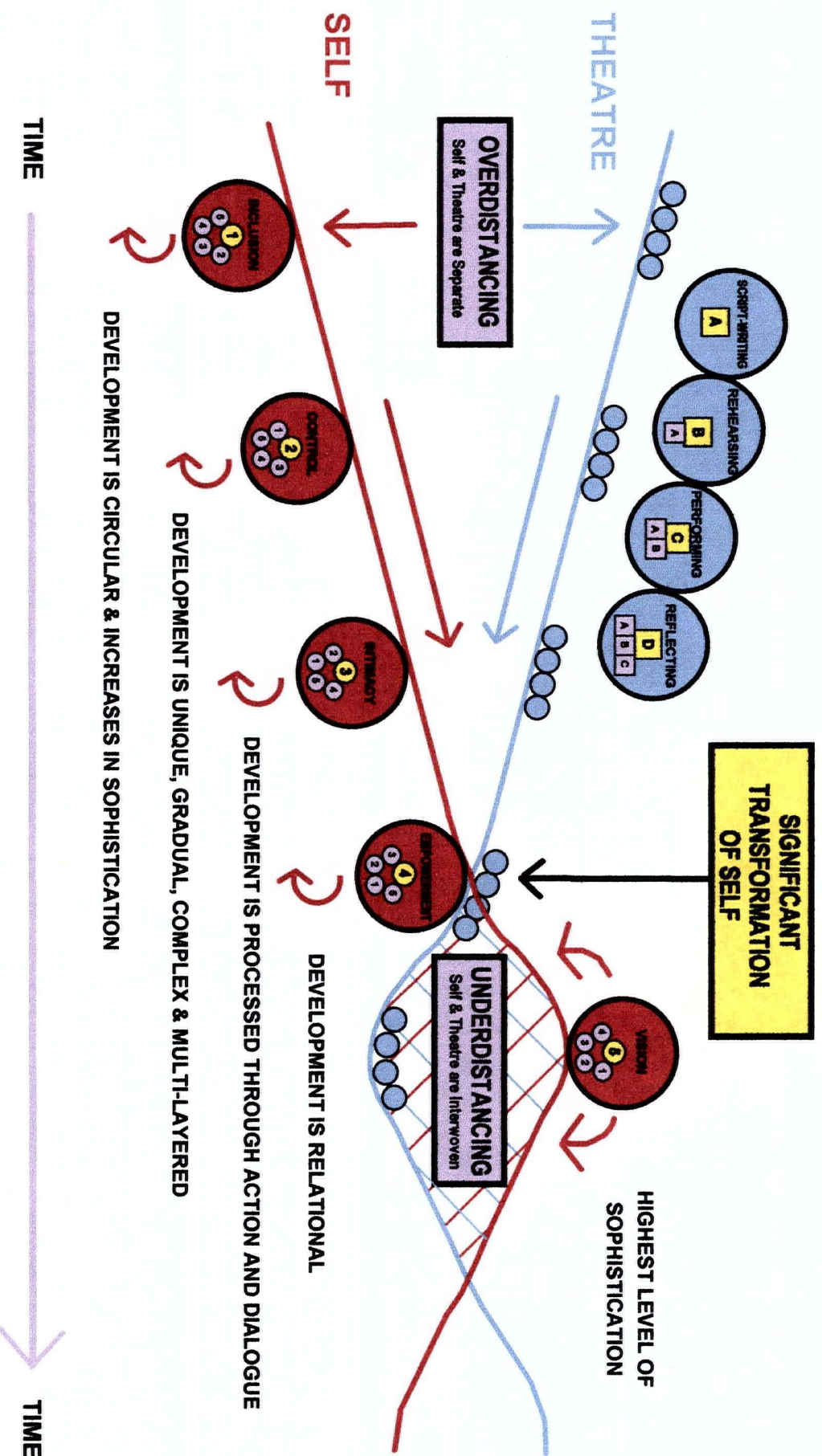


FIGURE 8: A theoretical conceptualization that illustrates distancing, a core concept of drama therapy, in relationship with my nine themes. A significant transformation of self for performing arts youth occurs when self and theatre are interwoven.

(Continued by D. Beane)

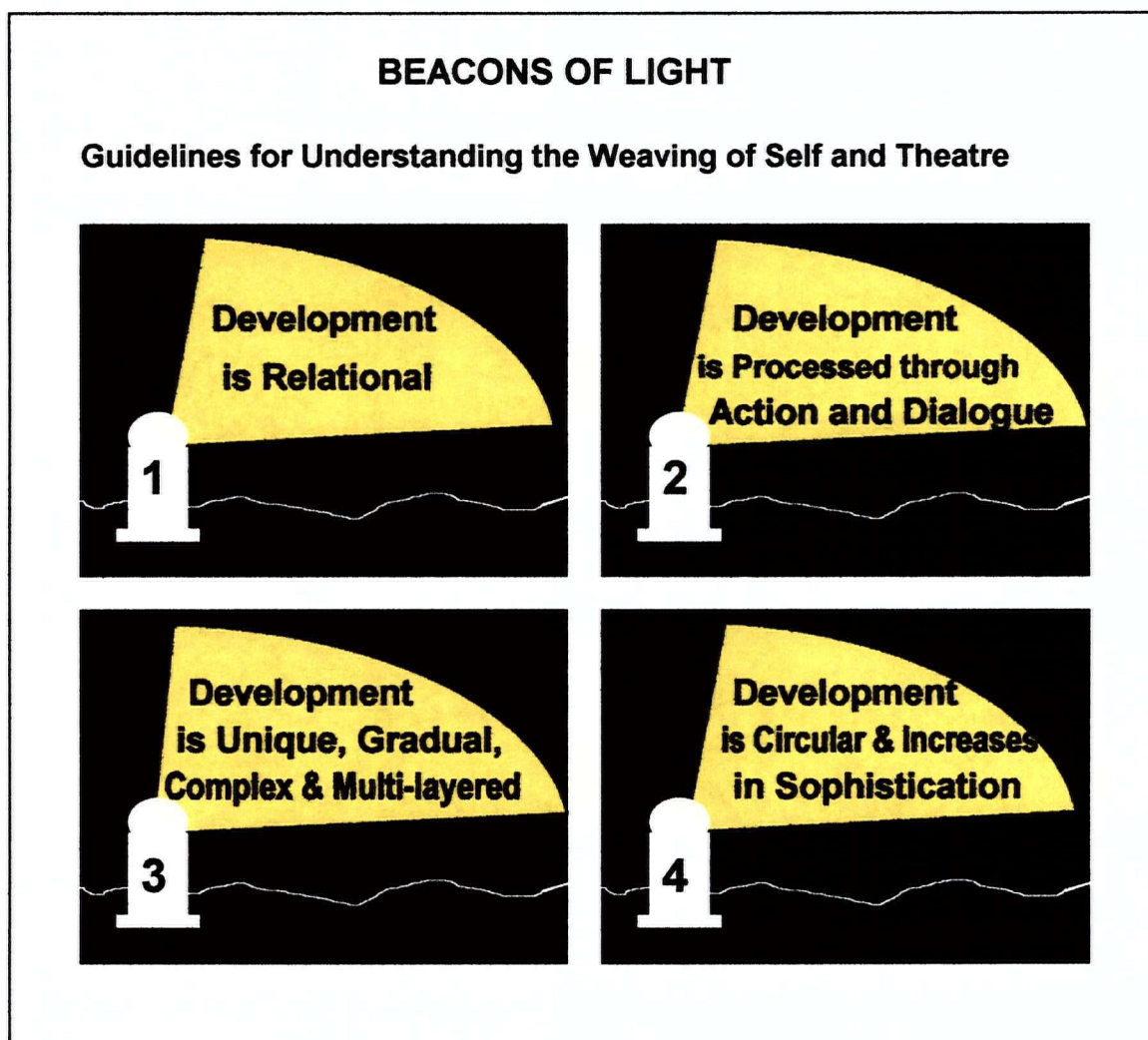


Figure 9: Four guidelines of the theoretical framework of therapeutic theatre are provided.

(constructed by D. Beare)

CHANGE PROCESS IN THERAPEUTIC THEATRE

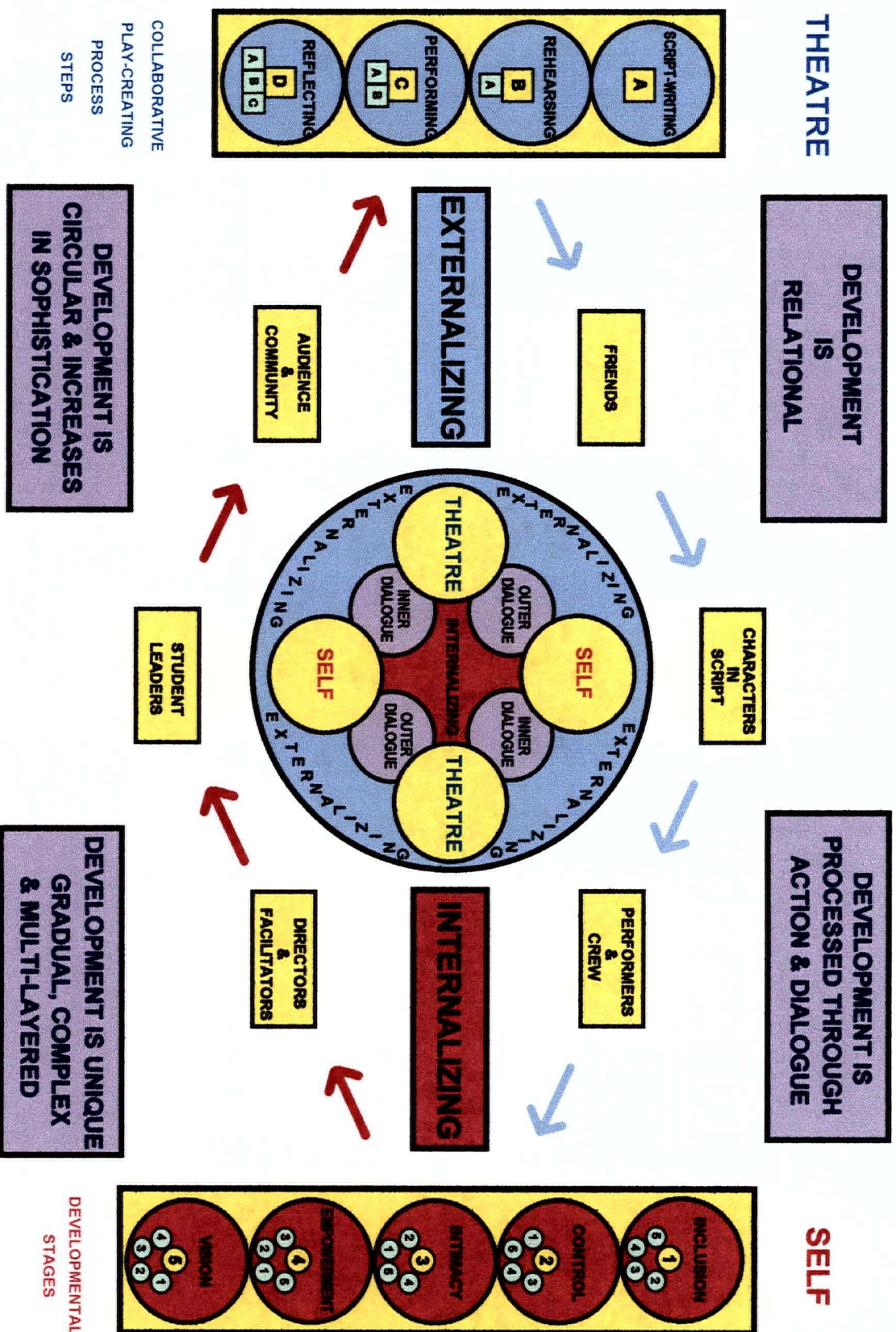


Figure 10: A visual construction of the change process in therapeutic theatre.

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: SAMPLE OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS APPENDIX C

The interviews were not bounded by the ordering of the questions stated below nor were they limited to the scope of questions. The interviews were informal and open-ended about their experience about the collaborative play-creating process. I only asked the below questions if the participants did not explore the questions listed below.

Questions for the Performing Arts Students

- How did you experience the collaborative play-creating process?
- How was your sense of self as an artist drawn out during this process?
- How did you find the collaborative play-creating process helpful?
- How do you find the collaborative play-creating process a hindrance?
- What meaning have you taken from what you have created?
- How do you see yourself as an artist-in-development?

Questions for the Facilitators

- How do you, as a facilitator, experience the collaborative play-creating process?
- How do you, as a facilitator, view the performing arts youth experience the collaborative play-creating process?
- What are the relationships and boundaries between the collaborative play-creating process and drama in theatre, drama in education and drama in therapy?
- What are the relationships and boundaries between the collaborative play-creating process and the development of self as artist?
- What can high school theatre teachers and counsellors learn from this performative inquiry?
- Can the collaborative play-creating process, as an extra-curricular high school program, be considered therapeutic theatre. If so, how? If not, how else can high school theatre teachers shift their view of theatre from being a development of product to a development of people?
- How did the collaborative play-creating process, develop your sense of self as artist?

54 POSSIBLE CATEGORIES

(Appendix D)

ACCEPTING DIFFERENCE/ABILITY LEVELS
 ART AS A NEW PERSONAL JOURNEY
 ART AS A FORM OF COMMUNICATION
 ARTISTIC VISION/COMPETENCE
 BALANCE
 BEING A STUDENT LEADER/STRENGTH AFFECTS OTHERS
 CARE
 CONNECTION/GAP/ISOLATION/COMMUNITY
 COMPETENCE/TALENT/PERFORMING/STRENGTH/EXCELLENCE
 COMPETITION/POLITICS
 CONTROL/PROBLEM-SOLVING/EXPRESSION/MASTERY
 CONSTRUCTIVISM
 CPCP
 CPCP IS FRUSTRATING/HELL/TIME, NEGATIVE
 CPCP IS REWARDING/FUN/LEARN PROCESS/COPE WITH STRESS/FLOW STATE POSITIVE
 CPCP AS A BUFFER FROM STRESS & BLACK PERIODS/SUPPORT
 CPCP ADDS STRESS
 CREATIVE PROCESS/TRUST IN CPCP/ART AS AN ART
 DOUBT IN PROCESS
 ECLIPSED WEAKNESSES/OBSTACLES
 EMULATING TEACHER/CHARACTER/OTHERS
 EGO
 FACILITATOR AS EDITOR/DIRECTOR/ROLE-MODEL
 FICTION AS TRUTH
 FORCE/ENERGY/DRIVE TO CREATE
 FIT (as form of competence)
 FRUSTRATION/STRUGGLE AS GROWTH
 GOING INTO THE UNKNOWN/COURAGE/SURRENDERING
 GROUP CONSENSUS
 IDENTITY
 IMPACT ON OTHERS/MAKING A DIFFERENCE
 INCLUSION/FEELING BELONGINGNESS
 INTERNALIZATION PROCESS
 LEVELS OF DRAMA
 LOVE & HATE RELATIONSHIP WITH CPCP/LEADERSHIP/WAVERING
 METACOGNITION/SELF-AWARENESS
 OPENS UP SELF/CHANGE PROCESS
 ORGANIZATION/TIME-MANAGEMENT SKILL
 PARALLEL PROCESS BETWEEN CPCP & OUTSIDE PERSONAL LIFE
 PROCESS VS PRODUCT/LIFE IS A JOURNEY/DEVELOPMENT/ EVOLUTION
 PROGRESS IS RELATIONAL
 REFLECTING
 REJUVENATING
 RELATIONSHIP INCREASED/FRIENDSHIPS/CARE/SHARING
 REPRODUCTION VS ORIGINALITY
 SELF AS AN ARTIST
 SELF-AWARENESS
 SELF-CONFIDENCE/TRUE TO THYSELF
 SHUT ME DOWN/THRESHOLD
 SIGNIFICANT MOMENT
 SOPHISTICATION/COMPLEXITY
 VALIDATION
 VOICE/STRUGGLING BEING A LEADER
 WRITING/METAPHORS/EDITING/BRAINSTORMING/STORYBOARDING

THE WEAVING OF SELF & THEATRE EVALUATION FORM

Appendix E

Do **NOT** write your name on this form, yet please circle one of the categories below:

UBC Faculty
of Education
Student

Current
High School
Theatre Student

Past
High School
Theatre Student

Other: _____

Thank you for attending my thesis presentation. Your feedback during the discussion period will provide me with valuable information, which, ideally, will lead to more well-informed and sophisticated interpretations of my study. In order to obtain additional feedback about my study, I would ask that you take some time to rate the video. Answer the 6 questions below by rating 1 as being the lowest agreement to 5 as being the highest agreement. Circle N/A (Not Applicable) for those questions that are not applicable to you or you do not want to answer. You do not have all questions and you can stop at any time.

			LOW			HIGH		
1. Are the nine themes comprehensive?		N/A	1	2	3	4	5	
2. Did the script show enough viewpoints?		N/A	1	2	3	4	5	
3. Did the researcher show reflectivity?		N/A	1	2	3	4	5	
4. Did the video resonate a ring of truth?		N/A	1	2	3	4	5	
5. Are the characters genuine?		N/A	1	2	3	4	5	
6. Omitting the acting	a)	STEVEN	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
skills of the actors,	b)	DANIEL	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
how would you rate	c)	KRISTY	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
the honesty of the	d)	SHELLY	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
dialogue of the	e)	PAM	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
eight characters?	f)	PAUL	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	g)	KAREN	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	h)	MIKE	N/A	1	2	3	4	5

GENERAL COMMENTS: _____

Evaluation Results

Current High School Students (Out of 5)

1	2	3	4	5	6a	6b	6c	6d	6e	6f	6g	6h
4	2.5	3	4	3	5	4	4	4	5	n/a	4	4
5	4	4	5	4	n/a	5	n/a	3	5	n/a	4	n/a
4	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
4	5	5	4	4.5	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	5
5	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	5
5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	3.5	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	4
5	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	3.5	4	3.5	n/a	4
3	4	4	3	3	5	5	4	3.5	4	4	4	5
4	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	5
4	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	3	n/a	3	4	5
3.5	3	4	4	3.5	3	2	3.5	4	4	4	4	5
4	4	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	3	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5
3	4	4	3	n/a	5	4	3	4	4	3	3	4
4	4	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	4	4
4	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	3	4	4	5	4
3	5	4	4	3	2	3	4	3.5	3	3	2.5	3
5	3	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	2	5	4
4	5	n/a	n/a	4.5	4	3.5	4.5	3	5	4	5	5
3	3	4	3	3	4	2	3	4	5	3	3.5	4.5
5	4	5	4	3	3	4	5	4	5	5	3.5	4
5	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	3	5	n/a	5	4

Past Students who have recently graduated within the past four years (Out of 5)

1	2	3	4	5	6a	6b	6c	6d	6e	6f	6g	6h
5	3	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	3.5	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	4	5	4
5	3	5	5	4	3	3	5	5	4.5	5	5	4
5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
4	5	5	4	3	5	2	3	4	5	4	5	5
5	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
4	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	3
5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4

TABLE 1: Continued on Next Page

Evaluation Results: Continued from Previous Page

UBC Faculty of Education Theatre Arts Student-Teachers (Out of 5)

1	2	3	4	5	6a	6b	6c	6d	6e	6f	6g	6h
3	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	5
4	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	3	4	5	5	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	3.5	5	5	5	5	5	4
5	4	n/a	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	5
5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	3	5	5	5	5
n/a	4	n/a	n/a	4	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	4	n/a
4.5	4	4.5	4	3.5	3	4	3	2.5	5	3.5	4	5
5	4	n/a	5	4	n/a	4	5	4	4	4	5	5
5	4	4	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	4
4	n/a	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	5
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
5	n/a	3	4	3	5	2	3	5	5	4	3	5

AVERAGE RESULTS OF ALL EVALUATIONS (Out of 5)

1	2	3	4	5	6a	6b	6c	6d	6e	6f	6g	6h
4.5	3.9	4.4	4.5	4.0	4.3	4.0	4.3	3.9	4.5	4.1	4.3	4.4

Table 1: A total of 44 people watched the video and my presentation--23 current high school performing arts students, 8 past performing arts students who have graduated within the past four years, and 13 UBC faculty of education theatre arts student-teachers. Afterwards they were asked to evaluate the video and my overall presentation of this study. See Evaluation Form (Appendix D) for the list of questions and the 1 to 5 rating system with 1 being low and 5 being high. The top row of each table indicates the number of the six question as shown on the evaluation form.

REFERENCES

- Andersen-Warren, M. (1996). Therapeutic theatre. In S. Mitchell (Ed.), Dramatherapy. London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Barker, S. B. (1996). School counselling for the twenty-first century, second edition. Englewood, Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1997). Social learning theory. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Banks, A. & Banks, S. (1998). Fiction and social research: By fire or ice. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
- Biddy, E. W. & Posterski, D. C. (2000). Teen trends: A nation in motion. Toronto: Stoddart.
- Blatner, A. (1973). Acting in: practical applications of psychodramatic methods. New York: Springer Publishing Company, Inc..
- Blewitt, P. & Broderick, P. (1999). Adolescent identity: Peers, parents, culture and the counselor. Counseling and human development, Vol. 31, No. 8, April, 1-14.
- Booth, D. W. (1985). Improvisation: learning through drama. Don Mills, ON: Academic Press Canada.
- Bramwell, R. (1996). Developing appropriate research design to examine drama/theatre in education. In J. Somers (Ed.), Drama and Theatre in Education. North York, Ontario: Captus Press Inc..
- Brown, C. (1999). A nice way to make a living: Reflections on the career of an experienced theatre teacher. Youth Theatre Journal, Vol. 13, 26-45.
- Casson, J. (1996). Archetypal splitting: Drama therapy and psychodrama. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 23, 307-309.
- Carson, R. (1966). Roleplaying in psychotherapy: a manual. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.
- Catterall, J. S. & Darby, J. T. (1996). Cognition, community, and assessment: Toward integrated inquiry on drama in education. In J. Somers (Ed.), Drama and Theatre in Education. North York, Ontario: Captus Press Inc..
- Childress, H. (1998). Kinder ethnographic writing. Quarterly Inquiry, Vol. 4, No. 2, 249-264.

- Cockett, S. (1996). Aims and values in the practice of drama specialists in secondary school. In J. Somers (Ed.), Drama and Theatre in Education. North York, Ontario: Captus Press Inc..
- Cossa, M. (1992). Brief report. Acting out: A pilot project in drama therapy with adolescents. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 19, 53-55.
- Courtney, R. (1989). Play, drama, & thought, fourth edition, revised. Toronto, Canada: Simon & Pierre Publishing Company Limited.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Becoming adult: How teenagers prepare for the world of work. New York: Basic Books.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996). Creativity: Flow and the psychology of discovery and invention. New York : HarperCollins, c1996.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). Flow: The psychology of optimal experience. New York: Harper & Row.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. & Larson, R. (1984). Being adolescent: Conflict and growth in the teenage years. New York, NY: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.
- Davies, M. H. (1987). Dramatherapy and psychodrama. In S. Jennings (Ed.), Dramatherapy. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Brookline Books.
- Davis, L. & Tolan, P. H. (1993). Alternative and preventive interventions. In P. H. Tolan & B. J. Cohler (Eds.), Handbook of cultural research and practice with adolescents, Toronto, Canada: John Wiley & Sons, Inc..
- Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Introduction: Entering the field of qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), Handbook of qualitative research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Dimock, H. (1993). Factors in growth: Individual growth and organizational effectiveness. Unpublished paper, Sir George Williams University, Montreal.
- Doyle, C. (1998). A self psychology theory of role in drama therapy. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 25(4), 223-235.
- du Rand, L. (1997). The play of play within the play. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 24, 17-21.
- Eccles, J. S. & Barber, B. L. (1999). Student council, volunteering, basketball, or marching band: What kind of extracurricular involvement matter? Journal of Adolescent Research, Vol. 14, No. 1, January, 10-43.

- Ellis, C. & Bochner, A. (Eds.). (1996). Composing ethnography: Alternative forms of qualitative writings. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
- Elmen, J. & Offer, D. (1993). Normality, Turmoil, and Adolescence. In P. H. Tolan & B. J. Cohler (Eds.), Handbook of cultural research and practice with adolescents, Toronto, Canada: John Wiley & Sons, Inc..
- Emunah, R. (1994). Acting for real: Drama therapy process, technique and performance. New York: Brunner/Mazel Publishers.
- Errington, E. P. (1999). Teachers as researchers: Pursuing qualitative enquiry in drama classrooms. Youth Theatre Journal, Vol. 13, No. 4, 31-36.
- Feldhendler, D. (1994). Augusto boal and jacob l. moreno: Theatre and therapy. In M. Schutzman & J. Cohen-Cruz (Eds), Playing boal (pp 87-109). New York: Routledge.
- Fels, L. (1999). in the wind clothes dance on a line: performative inquiry--a (re)search methodology possibilities and absences within a space-moment of imagining a universe. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia, Canada.
- Fink, S. O. (1990). Approaches to emotions in psychotherapy and theatre: Implications for drama therapy. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 17, 5-18.
- Furman, L. (1988). Theatre as therapy: The distancing effect applied to audience. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 15, 245-249.
- Gergen, M. M. (2001). Feminist reconstructions in psychology: Narrative, gender and performance. Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage, Publications.
- Gergen, M. M. & Gergen, K. J. (2000). Qualitative inquiry: Tensions and Transformation. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), Handbook of qualitative research, second edition. Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Gergen, M. M., Chrisler, J. & LoCicero, A. (1999). Innovative methods: Resources for research, publishing, and teaching. Psychology of Woman's Quarterly, 23, 431-457.
- Goldstein, T. (2001). Hong kong, canada: Playwriting as critical ethnography. Qualitative Inquiry, Vol. 7, No. 3, 279-303.
- Gonzalez, J. B. (1999). Directing high school theatre: The impact of student-empowerment, strategies and unconventional staging, techniques on actors, directors, and audience. Youth Theatre Journal, Vol. 13, 4-22.

- Guba, E. G. & Lincoln, Y. (2000). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), The handbook of qualitative research, second edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- HBO (Producer), Kaufman, M. (Director). (2002). The laramie project [Film]. (Available from HBO Home Video, 1100 Avenue of the America, New York, NY 10036)
- Heathcote, D. (1984). Dorothy heathcote: collected writings on education and drama. London: Hutchinson.
- Holland, A. & Andre, T. (1987). Participation in extracurricular activities in secondary school: What is known, what needs to be known? Review of Educational Review, Vol. 57, No. 4, Winter, 437-466.
- Holman Jones, S. (1999). Torch. Qualitative Inquiry, Vol. 5, No. 2, 280-304.
- Impara, J. C., Enders, C. & Beecham, B. (1996). Impact on instructional time of student participation in school sponsored activities: A nebraska survey. High School Journal, 79, 305-314.
- Jackson, A. (1996). Anecdotes are no longer enough--academic research and the evaluation of theatre in education. In J. Somers (Ed.), Drama and theatre in education: Contemporary Research. North York, Ontario: Captus University Publications.
- Jennings, S. (1987). Dramatherapy and groups. In Jennings, S. (Ed), Dramatherapy: theory and practice for teachers and clinicians (pp. 1-18). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Brookline Books.
- Jennings, S., & Minde, A. (1993). Art Therapy and Dramatherapy: Masks of the Soul. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Johnson, D. (1982). Principles and techniques of drama therapy. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 9, 83-90.
- Johnson, D. (1991). The theory and technique of transformations in drama therapy. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 18, 285-300.
- Kaczmarek, P. G. & Riva, M. T. (1996). Facilitating adolescent optimal development: training considerations for counselling psychologists. The Counseling Psychologist, Vol. 24, No. 3, July, 400-432.
- Kedem-Tahar, E., & Felix-Kellermann, P. (1996). Psychodrama and drama therapy: A comparison. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 23, 27-36.

- Knickerbocker, N. (1999). Dramatizing reena's death teaches students to lead, not follow. Teacher: Newsmagazine of the B.C. Teacher's Federation [On-line], No. 9. Available: www.bctf.bc.ca/publications.
- Knittel, M. (1990). Strategies for directing psychodrama with the adolescent. Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama and Sociometry, Vol. 43, No. 3 116-120.
- Kotarba, J. A. (1998). Black men, black voices: The role of the producer in synthetic performance ethnography. Qualitative Inquiry, Vol. 4, No. 3, 389-404.
- Landy, R.J. (1983). The use of distancing in drama therapy. Arts in Psychotherapy, 10, 175-185.
- Landy, R.J. (1984). Conceptual and methodological issues of research in drama therapy. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 11, 89-100.
- Landy, R.J. (1986). Drama therapy concepts and practices. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.
- Landy, R.J. (1990). The concept of role in drama therapy. Arts in Psychotherapy, 17, 223-230.
- Landy, R.J. (1993). Persona & performance: The use of role in drama therapy. New York: Guilford Press.
- Landy, R.J. (1994). Three scenarios for the future of drama therapy. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 21, 179-184.
- Landy, R.J. (1995). Isolation and Collaboration in the creative arts therapies--the implications of crossing borders. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 22, 83-86.
- Landy, R.J. (1997a). Drama therapy and distancing: Reflections on theory and clinical application. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 23, 367-373.
- Landy, R.J. (1997b). Drama therapy--The state of the art. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 24, 5-15.
- Larson, R. & Kleiber, D. (1993). Daily experience of adolescents. In P. H. Tolan & B. J. Cohler (Eds.), Handbook of cultural research and practice with adolescents, Toronto, Canada: John Wiley & Sons, Inc..
- Manheim, A.R. (1998). The relationship between the artistic process and self-actualization. Art Therapy: Journal of the American Association, 15(2), 99-106.

- Marsh, H. W. (1992). Extracurricular activities: Beneficial extension of the traditional curriculum or subversion of academic goals? Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 84, No. 4, 553-562.
- Mayer, R. E. (1999). Fifty years of creativity research. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), Handbook of creativity, New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- McCall, M. M. (2000). Performance ethnography: A brief history and some advice. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), The handbook of qualitative research, second edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- McNeal, R. B. Jr. (1998). High school extracurricular activities: Closed structures and stratifying patterns of participation. The Journal of Educational Research, Vol. 91, No. 3, Jan/Feb, 183-191.
- Meldrum, B. (1984a). Historical background and overview of dramatherapy. In S. Jennings et al (Eds.), The handbook of dramatherapy (pp.12-27). New York: Routledge.
- Meldrum, B. (1984b). A role model of dramatherapy and its application with individuals and groups. In S. Jennings et al (Eds.), The handbook of dramatherapy (pp.75-92). New York: Routledge.
- Mieniczakowski, J. (1996). An ethnographic act: The construction of consensual theatre. In C. Ellis & A. Bochner (Eds.), Composing ethnography: Alternative forms of qualitative writings. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
- Miller, M. (1998). (Re)presenting voices in dramatically scripted research. In A. Banks & S. P. Banks (eds.), Fiction and social research (pp.67-78). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Moore, P. (1997). Acting out. Cambridge, Great Britain: The University Press.
- Newman, B. & Newman, Ph. (1986). Adolescent development. Columbus: Merrill Publishing Company.
- Offer, D. & Schonert-Reichl, K. A. (1992). Debunking the myths of adolescence: Findings from recent research. Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 31:6, November, 1003-1014.
- Ozbay et el. (1993). Therapeutic factors in adolescent psychodrama group. Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama and Sociometry, 3-11.
- Passons, W. R. (1975). Gestalt approaches in counselling. Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

- Pearson-Davis, S. (1989). Drama in the curriculum for troubled young people: Is it worth the fight? Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama and Sociometry, Vol. 41, No. 4 161-174.
- Petitti, G. J. (1989). Video as an externalizing object in drama therapy. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 16, 121-125.
- Rambo Ronai, C. (1999). The next night *sous rature*: Wrestling with derrida's mimesis. Qualitative Inquiry, Vol. 5, No. 1, 114-129.
- Rauner, D. M. (2000). "They still pick me up when I fall": The role of caring in youth development and community life. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Richardson, L. (1994). Writing: A method of Inquiry. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), Handbook of qualitative research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Saint-Exupery, A. d. (1943). The Little Prince. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.
- Saldana, J. (1999). Playwriting with data: Ethnographic performance text. Youth Theatre Journal, Vol. 13, 60-71.
- Santrock, J. W. (1996). Adolescence: An introduction, 6th edition. Toronto: Brown & Benchmark.
- Sasson, F. (1990). Psychodrama with adolescents: Management techniques that work. Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama and Sociometry, Vol. 43, No. 3 121-127.
- Schutz, W.C. (1958). A three dimensional theory of interpersonal behavior. New York: Rinehart.
- Schwandt, T. A. (2000). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: Interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social constructionism. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), The handbook of qualitative research, second edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Silliker, A. & Quirk, J. T. (1997). The effect of extracurricular activity: Participation on the academic performance of male and female high school students. The School Counselor, Vol. 44, March, 288-293.
- Snow, S. (1996). Fruit of the same tree: A response to kedem-tahar and kellermann's comparison of psychodrama and drama therapy. The Arts in Psychotherapy, 23, 199-205.

- Spolin, V. (1963). Improvisation for the theatre. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Stubbs, S. (1999). The arts: What's in it for them? Teacher: Newsmagazine of the B.C. Teacher's Federation [On-line], No. 5. Available: www.bctf.bc.ca/publications.
- Talerico, C. J. (1986). The expressive arts and creativity as a form of therapeutic experience in the field of mental health. The Journal of Creative Behavior, 20(4), 229-247.
- Way, B. (1967). Education today: development through drama. London: Longman.
- Williamson, M. (1992). A return to love. New York: Harper Collins.
- Yablonsky, L. (1976). Psychodrama: resolving emotional problems through role-playing. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.