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Abstract

A lengthy reflection and interpretation of six months of a grade seven, eight, and nine drama teacher’s practice, the thesis focuses on the interpersonal relations between the teacher and her students. Using process drama as a foundation for developing knowledge of the self in the world, the pedagogy of this teacher also attempts to de-mystify the drama process for her students, and engage them in thoughtful presentational drama. In a series of ten stories interspersed with poetry and personal anecdotes, the topics of curriculum, assessment, professional development, drama pedagogy, and working and learning conditions are analyzed through a feminist, post-structuralist lens.
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Preface

The story of building, maintaining, and modifying a drama program within a new setting is an emotional one. I looked outside of the classroom for explanations of my dilemmas, and I found reawakenings in the fiction I was reading at the time, in conversations with friends, colleagues, and scholars, and in the mysticism of some of our end-of-the-millenium practices. I reawakened to the person I was beneath the structure of my daily professional life by viewing it as a passage of growth, and employed the symbolism I saw around me to represent it in a language. The feeling images of desolation, coldness, the body, desires met and thwarted, and ideals protected and destroyed hide within the art and life of our times. I have attempted to connect the languages in the form of this thesis.

I used, specifically, the works of Jeanette Winterson, Angela Carter, and Italo Calvino. More systematically, I employed two tarot readings (please refer to Appendices A and B) from a card deck based upon Greek mythology, to open up that language. Each story, then, ends with a pictorial description and a tribute to the mythological figure who represented my dilemma within that story. But I am not still and defined by them; they continue to race about and grapple with each other in a play of their own, a play which is like my own struggles with knowledge attainment, feelings, intuition, and justice.
Prologue: The Reading Process

As a teacher, I often think about balancing my curriculum among the many student needs I perceive, and the officially recommended outcomes, and my personal dreams and desires. As I consider the approaching school year, I struggle with what I consider a dilemma of balance, that between will and imagination. How am I to live? How am I to teach? Consciously and subconsciously I work through other struggles of decision, struggles of vision. How am I to see? How am I to speak?

I kept a journal focused on my professional reflections and personal musings from August until December, 1997. I say until December, but reflection upon reflection, and idle speculation and meditation throughout the Christmas holidays and well into January crept onto the last pages. In fact, I grew to appreciate that 'last days' would never come. That I would continue to remember stories and connections throughout the period of writing the thesis, and whether these words were attached to the tail end of a journal or not, they were attached to the tail end of memory. Near the end of the journal, I posed the question as being one considering intellect and intuition. How was I to think, eat, digest? Was I to devour and be devoured, and take delight in the daily plunges into emotion, or construct and maintain a model for seeing which protected my eyes, throat, heart, lungs? And was I to think in 'ors'? Was I to think at all?

In education, we usually choose a strategy or methodology and try not to nullify it by interrupting it with other potentially confusing strategies or methodologies. We value consistency in our words and methods. And we also find change difficult. Sometimes we ignore potentially liberating
avenues of thought and behaviour if they do not fit into our philosophies at the expense of emotional balance, emotional intelligence. Yes, even in the field of education, we maintain our fortresses until they are threatened with burnout.

I saw that I was bringing a foreign pedagogy into room 213 in September of 1997. I was met with some antagonistic, well-maintained philosophies of students with one happy year's experience in drama and there was a visible and impossible to ignore dilemma created by this meeting of seemingly opposing forces. Within and without, I employed my spirit level to measure, define and describe the phenomena which occurred, jiggling and wobbling two feet upon the unstable balance dishes of 'what I want to do' and 'what I think the students think they want to do'. The beauty of the scale is that it does not know what exactly is lying on each of its dishes, it merely balances weight. The difference between that and pedagogy is that, for ethics sake, we question the identity of every particle of dust which may land there if we are protective of our fortress, and especially if we, unprotected, are testing out a new one.

Many things in my life don't balance right now. My financial planning does not because balance hovers between the two poles of imaginative living and mathematical foresight. I wonder that the social and emotional currency of my drama classroom flows back and forth between students and between students and me, but is mostly unheard, unseen, and that my work is to constantly pay attention to that, to rectify it, to pour gold into one side or the other so that we can at last stand still and gaze at one another. And it is also my work to wait and watch the evaporation of excess or fluid, leaving crystals on the plate like a science experiment, weighing them, measuring what happened, keeping myself safely in reserve on the other side of the
desk. The work itself needs the balance of risk and safety.

I finally ask the question which helps to focus the reading of the journal and the writing of the thesis,

How are a drama teacher's pedagogical desires balanced with situational desires and constraints in a junior secondary drama classroom?

They are not simply met. I am a Libran and I have not met very many people who understand the delicate manoeuvres we scale-defined souls must go through to live. Nor have I worked out how figure skaters and gymnasts move flesh and bone up and out into the ether in complicated spirals, making space look like sculpture. And how, when they lose that sense of where flesh and bone is in motion, they lose balance. It looks so sensible when you have it. And I may be more concerned with the metaphor than most. I constantly rearrange furniture and other objects in my home, trying to get the perspectives right. Clarity of vision and stimulation of new perceptions is very important to me, so much so that I spend a long time playing with it. I look for clarity because it has meaning and I look for newness because I am not satisfied that I have lived perfection yet.

Of course, I know that I won't find it because I am stuck with the furniture and objects which I have purchased over the years, so everything comes from a different place. No, my joy comes from reassembling old difficulties in new, potentially enlightening ways. Maybe it is just about movement, then. Venturing a push here, a sidestep or two over there, and now look! Doesn't the eye exercise in ways it had not done before? doesn't that strike a chord of knowing which had been lurking there for all that time unheard?
These perceptions create an intriguing metaphor for describing curriculum because I am in the unique and lyrical position of having had a life at that school before my present students were walking. I continually encounter at least one familiar ghost who entertains me with her shadowy notions, her dances and rhythms, her dramas. I think that the difference between myself before, or what I remember as the 'me' who taught at the school up until four years ago and then moved away, or even what I remember of myself before I began my Master's degree, and myself now, is that I now have some language about movement, considering, balancing, and building which I didn't have before and which helps slow me down. In any case, though I speak of myself as two persons, this one is only the old one pushed over a bit, viewing familiar things from unfamiliar perspectives.

As I readied myself to proceed with processing my experience of term one, I met three major blocks. I had been concerned several times that I was not writing enough, not recording enough of the struggle to perceive, identify and balance. This concern was part of a highly personal experience which I did not yet appreciate fully, that not being able to write would be a major part of the look I was going to take at my fears and hopes. That I would try to form the words which described what happened between me and my students, as I hunched icily over the keyboard inside my office at night, and later I would stand out in the hallway, taking in room, lights, darknesses, door, window, posters, calendars, chair, and figure huddled at screen.

Also, I felt I had to put off reading the journal as a whole, from head to foot, and did not know which end was which, anyway, until I had gained some equilibrium from my chaotic ride through the first term of school. This meant waiting until I was able to sleep soundly enough to look forward to the
day, paying up my debts to myself. It was a bit like waiting, to beat the rush. This is the action many shoppers take at busy times like Christmas and Boxing Day to wait past the weekend until the low volume hours occur. Even then, within two hours the mall was elbow to jowl and my arms, pockets, shoulders, were burdened with bags and boxes and I stumbled like a jungle survivor through the crowds to home. The rush is what causes me to look at things and not see. Read paragraphs and even volumes without digesting. Gaze at fireworks, art, scenes, and sights without considering. Hear names without meeting. Eat, drink, and love without taking satisfaction or pleasure. The rush is what I must do, like a duty, and being dutiful from a very early age, I have rushed through teaching.

Finally, what was most painfully apparent on looking at the journal was the absence of my talk about gender, age, and race. Painful because I had been proceeding on the assumption that the burning questions which consumed me about those political inscriptions on my program at my last school would follow me loudly to this one. I can only explain that in the intensity of teaching fourteen-year-old boys and girls where gender and age are explicitly dealt with in the real and everyday, we all seem in the 'business' of deconstructing gender myth and age myth. Children actively and vociferously articulate their decisions, criticisms, judgements and feelings regarding the genderization and age-ism of their world as far as they can. They are encouraged to have voice; some of that voice goes uninterrogated.

What is not as explicit is their and my unwillingness to articulate racial inequity. Perhaps this is a reticence to speak of it when, as a member of the Caucasian race, it is not my experience to speak of. Fear of the unknown prevented me from asking, and my Korean, Chinese, Maylasian and Filipino students from speaking of it, too. I see Benny, Anny, Kevin, and Kyle, who
now begin to speak the words of their oppression in drama scenes when I ask them if perhaps there are stories they can tell that I cannot. Now, suddenly the words come, though I was unable to proceed with words and to reflect clearly through those months of the journal.

What was missing in my obsessions was not visible in the pattern, but there nevertheless, like those dot paintings where it refused emergence until I put together what was clearly not there with what irritated me from inside should be there. Why did I not see it has more to do with self-consciousness, on preservation of myself, on seeing 'they' as one, so I could balance them efficiently?

My initial impression of the 18-week journal was one of chaos and pain. I had the impression very quickly that this was teetering writing.

How could I re-read the journal, then, and how could I re-present it to readers? It might be a linear story of term one with grade seven, eight and nine drama students. There was 'progression through' which is the clearest way of summarizing what went on between and among us for four months. I am grateful for time progressing, dividing the year into two parts, the aforementioned chafing of seemingly opposing forces, and the present affable patience of compromising individuals.

A more complicated vision might be to regard my presence as a lens through which to view the past. I would construct metaphorical devices like theoretical decoders through which to function, see, do, work, play so that I could name what was out there, so that I could consider things anew, so that I could go on doing all this until the end. As you read, you will notice that the devices are eventually more and more abstract, more harmonically
diffused. And I am thinking about how they are more so as I also think about when and how and why I constructed them. A decorating magazine parody, some Italian and French neo-realist cinema, many poems, parts of some short stories I read, Tarot card images told as Greek myths, and stories I tell from places around the relationship between myself and my students, are all also for you, the reader, to explore my processing. Have faith they represent a synthesis of concept with sense.

Patti Lather may mean this kind of process when she describes 'Derridean vigour' in her frames of validity (1993). She believes science is a performance, and we perform in the mask of a particular research methodology. The researcher explores the frames of the methodology to 'unjam the closedness of the truths of the past' (p. 676). The language of framing is not new to drama teachers who proceed through meaning-making in the way of the developer of role drama, Dorothy Heathcote (refer to Appendix C). Goffman deconstructed the social aspects of frame analysis in his seminal work of the 1950s, and drama scholars like John O'Toole (1989) and Kate Denning (1993) explain to us further how drama pioneer Dorothy Heathcote's nine frames of experiencing are employed in drama. I use frame distancing in teaching and I use it to write this thesis. I am participant, guide, agent, authority, recorder, media, researcher, critic, and artist, in increasing distances from the experience. The reader of this thesis at times, then, views me as subject of the experience, and needs to be prepared to dive to such depths as the artist-role distance takes him or her.

The reading of my journal, then, and the re-reading of it through a 'cooked' thesis is probably best done with a most diffused eyesight and earshot. The best I can do is to get as far back as possible from that window into my classroom, if doing so can be a metaphor for this writer positioning that
drama teacher there within her social and political worlds. I say most diffused, meaning most abstract, most encompassing, maybe most inharmonic, though I perceive that deliberate attempts at musical chaos through atonality and rhythmless soundscape have only enriched modern tonality and rhythm, not destroyed it. It's like looking at one of those designs of coloured dots. You look and look and only see dots, and then perhaps you relax the need a bit, or turn away and back, and suddenly the ship or message or flower comes into view. I've never been able to do that but I am confident my perception of what was and wasn't written in the journal has and will stir resonances within me which I will consider as part of a longer look at the journal writer.

The considerations of perception go far beyond that window, and beyond the positionality of the journal writer. They go further than educational, identity and research theory and as far as spirituality and intuition can take me at this time. I allow myself to reach for what delights, attracts, intrigues, or reminds me by its connections and colours like a young child in a toy store. I am attracted to classical music, poetry, the telling of one's life by mythical image, and dreams. If you, the thesis reader, is, in turn, attracted to problem-solving, solidarity, or just unearthing people, you may only need to read enough to get a grasp on one ledge before jumping off again.

The difference between the journal writer and the thesis writer is that now I will choose what to consider as an artist chooses, but I will also acknowledge what was not chosen to be considered. Let the readers wonder as they wander but let them appreciate the validity of the explicated choosing: the thesis is best written around and roughly inside a form of some kind. What I choose to weave or pin onto a part of the form will be just enough to support the next part, and so on. From a reader's point of
The act of creativity plunges you off the ledge, without thinking. With trust, at least, in the spirit of thoughtful transgression. Even if we drive the operational model or device or lens securely from within, vision focused upon the road ahead, one leg strays outside, drags over the edge of the road, rides the bumps, dashes pebbles, splashes puddles. Like the skier daring death as she moves into the fall-line, I make a happy partnership with gravity. In the falling movement is my life. Or like a dramatic improvisation where the responsibility falls upon the first actor to establish a place, role, action, then on the second actor to accept and advance those ideas, establishing his own also, the teaching process is founded on trust and care. We cooperate; we do not block the contributions made by our partners. We listen, and we construct together. This drama improvisation metaphor is the largest organizer for reading.

Rewritten as the construction or creation of an improvised drama, I build or establish the place, the work, the intent, the image of me. Then I look at the students looking back and see it reflected, or evaluated, in their eyes. I balance what that reflection indicates they know with what I want them to know, and open a door. I include what they know/are in the next establishing/testing/evaluation cycle. They are never wrong; they are part of the next correct step. I cannot make this pedagogy until I make the first move; someone has to begin with a first line or action. Hoping it will be seen and accepted. Trusting that it will be heard and advanced upon by someone else. And so it goes toward the encountering of surprise and tension, the construction of a solution, and the acknowledgement of an
ending.

But there are improvs of different sorts. If we see improv as sport or play, then there need only be the one perfect ending. Contentless, the joy is in tying up, in the punch-line. But improv as a tool in educational or process drama has to be used as though there need be no perfect ending. The joy is in the uncovering of the content and the unravelling of the process by which it is done. NOT ending their dramas after days of exploration is what most of my students desire. The joy is in the journey because of the constant potential of life unravelling itself before our hearts. Becoming transparent, it is not-endable, at least not finally.

The content of this journey, the reason for, the subject of the writing process, has been the desire of a teacher to be alongside her students, traveling in the same general direction. The desire to breach the distance between students and myself in this new-school, new-teacher, new-environment, new-program gives this four-month long improvisation its heightened tension, its raised stakes, its objectives.

What is surprising and exciting to recognize are:

the deliberate unbalancing I have done to shake up, interrupt, mix up, the assumptions and patterns we held,

the cool objectivity with which I pursued this in the name of caring,

and the ambition for the material credit which would signify my success in attaining my professional objectives.
Advanced Drama

For her new educational facility, teacher and decorator Julie Atchison fit an ode to theatre inside a thirty-year-old Power Mechanics classroom.

The highlight of the structure is the brown metal manually raised auto-access door which opens onto the wire-enclosed 'cage' and the woods beyond. In warm weather, living extends outdoors while in colder months, refreshing nips of icy air keep both students and teacher alert. One drawback, says the resident, is the ongoing rattling of the metal everytime someone opening or closing the hallway door changes the air pressure in the room. Another thing she has had to get used to is the shuddering crash everytime a student inadvertently falls against it. "But now we incorporate the crashes into our dramas," she confides optimistically.

At the end of a long hallway in one of the school's more active areas - one that resounds with cymbal crashes and the grinding of tech ed engines - hides a rather mysterious room. From each of its two teal-painted windowed doors it looks normal enough, although the windows in each of the doors have been almost obliterated with posters of Venice and Richmond, England. This deliberate obfuscating of the view and the intent of the room makes the interior even more intriguing. Behind them
appears to be nothing more than an empty space. Does some kind of postmodern fantasy await inside?

When Atchison says, “I like to know where everything is,” you believe her.

Not on your life. What awaits the visitor at the end of this tunnel of academia is an ode to history - theatrically styled. Metal, concrete, and plywood are orchestrated with industrial proportions and zero-tolerance details into an airy serene cave that seems kilometres away from the hurly-burly of the theatre world. It is a perfect spot for quiet accumulation - just what its resident, teacher and writer Julie Atchison, redesigned it to be. “My chief motive in redesigning this room was preservation,” she explains. Atchison, who recently returned from a stay at a postmodern middle school in the New Community, turned this former Power Mechanics classroom and auto repair shop into a middle school drama facility with a useful aesthetic. When Atchison says, “I like to know where everything is,” you believe her.

Indeed, this place feels like a rather grand stage, since the sliding metal door of the automobile bay opens onto a covered, wire-mesh enclosed cage some thirty feet long and twenty feet wide. The two-story main room, surrounded on three sides by counters topping plywood-covered storage drawers, is lit by four rows of modernist fluorescent lights and a narrow row of windows at ceiling height, a la fifties. The historic layers of grease
and carbon monoxide fumes have been preserved on the ceiling and fixtures, which will one day make room for two electrical pipes of stage lighting circuitry.

Throughout the room, furnishings are minimal, eclectic, yet chosen for their meaning to the resident and her semi-permanent clients while materials and finishes are varied and durable. The concrete floors of the main room are covered in sections of once-washed secondhand wall-to-wall carpeting in two shades of grey, and the aluminum countertops and plywood storage drawer covers are repainted a semi-glossy cream. Heating fans are hung heavily from the ceiling in two opposing corners, operable manually by twist dials on the walls beneath. (Atchison and her colleagues find time between instructions to operate these fans so that she and her clients do not freeze during lessons.) Even the windows open manually, with the teacher sending agile students to the countertops to reach the vintage latches. Says Atchison with a smile, “As you can see, I’m a fresh-air freak, and the purer the air, the more I like it.”

All this perfection, however, did not come easily. As Atchison recalls, “We had to fit this very sensitive subject into a very old and filthy shell. There wasn’t a clean surface in the room.” Atchison acted as liaison between contractor and financer as she had previously served on the design panel for the district for new schools and designed, constructed, and painted
many theatrical sets and personal dwellings. Along with Mike the painter/smoker and the district maintenance staff who took the time to look in on the project from time to time throughout the fall months, Atchison enlisted the help of the ‘absolutely supportive’ administrative officers. “The whole conversion required an enormous number of phone calls, and completion of carpeting, cleaning, and painting took three months,” notes Atchison. “When we were in the midst of it, with classes being held in the Home Ec room for the time being, people would come in and say how clean and large it looked, and the painter and I would just smile. It took a lot of paint to achieve this freshness.”

Atchison’s latter-day backstage music hall outlook owes a great debt to the work of the former drama teachers, like herself a collector and culler of props, costumes, and memorabilia since their early days. But if Atchison’s backstage philosophy tends towards the exhibitionist, her onstage work does not. Her rare productions, all minimal cast, tight rehearsals, and short production runs, leap out at the audience from their pared-down backdrops. Although she had always produced both comedies and dramas, her earlier works were stylistic while her more recent work has been more naturalistic, even original. Framed cast photos and posters of the early works are mounted about twelve feet up on a bulletin board above the blackboard.

A teacher and former director, Atchison now spends much of her time writing and
travelling. Above: Her bulletin board of Shakespeare memorabilia from Stratford and London, U.K. and here in Canada dominates one wall, beneath the clock and loudspeaker. Erected with the help of her student teacher who was at the time being introduced to tricks with staplers and scissors, the display includes the sacred and the arcane, bordered in commercial bulletin board blue, and interspersed with Venice Carnival masks. Far right: On the interior of the walls, the original 1968 concrete block facade was 'restored' with clean paint, masking some of the grease and carbon monoxide smells emanating from it, while the addition of fresh paint in the small props storage room and teacher's office improved the lighting in the once yellow cells.

"As you can see, I'm a fresh air freak," Atchison says with a smile. "And the purer the air, the more I like it."

In the props room, top left, an old tool cupboard now contains household props, while power cord holders now hold special costumes on hangers. Oversize items such as suitcases, baskets, musical instruments, and tables can be stored above the top cupboards, and extra boxes of costumes tucked in below. Drawers once holding carburetors and gaskets now contain jewelry and hats, albeit in grease-proof containers. Above left: On sunny days the cage is completely open; in inclement weather a manual chain and pulley system lowers the door with eight or nine easy yanks and a safety turn or two. Above centre: Lockable doors secure the props room and office. Doors remain open to take in heat in October, November, December, January, February, and March. Above right: A long hallway leads to the drama classroom from the stage, the second teaching area. The double outside doors straight ahead lead to the garbage bins and the smoking/drug taking pit.

Above head height, a glamorous line of costumes is hung between office and props room. Costumes on their iron pipe, designed by Atchison and district staff, are meant to be concealed in the near future by black theatrical drapery hung in a semi-circle at one end of the classroom. The drapery, in eight to ten foot sections, will be movable enabling creative designing by students, and additional portable stage lighting, to be designed and ordered in the next round of remodelling, will give students even more artistic control.
The office, *above*, looks onto a poster of old growth forest rescued from the Controversy Avoiders at a former school. The windowed bookshelves now house scripts, prompt books from past productions, and many collections of original units. Atchison’s extensive collection of drama education books, available to her colleagues for class use, is also displayed at eye level. *Right:* On the same wall as the three-layer sliding blackboard is the industrial sink, safety soap and mirror, and a low set of cabinets, four sections in all. They house collections of scripts, some of them suitable for middle school students.

But even as she is more thoughtful these days, Atchison can still pick up any of her photos, file folders, props, or dresses and see a potential class or drama club production in the future. Although the hallway doors can be closed in times of noisy sawing, drilling, or band practise from neighbouring classrooms, she prefers to keep the doors open. “Drama was meant to draw people in,” she asserts, “and when you have a really exciting scene going on, it’s beautiful. I’ve even let people come in here to observe the lessons.” Moreover, the open door policy acts as a focuser for students and teacher.

Atchison realizes that having the chance to expand into a new space puts her among the fortunate few: “For a drama teacher to take over such a large space and start from scratch, to have most of my needs met, is great.” And while she seldom ventures into the remainder of the school, when she does she finds that her project has acquired a certain cachet among the staff. Three times I’ve been asked if my room is free for large activities those teachers have going on. I’ve said yes to all of them, hoping I’ll get a
favour in return. They were very appreciative and one teacher asked, “When are you going to do a play in the cage?”

Notes to the editors:-

How could I forget this? This is the weirdest story of all! In the last week of the summer, I worked at the school for three or four days. I spent anywhere from two to four hours in the room as it was then. Carpet damp and reeking from the chemical cleaners, wrinkled and looking like a hopelessly failed experiment. Walls, cupboards, doors four different colours, none matching, and streaked with several years of grease and fumes. Rough, raw plywood hastily nailed over storage drawers which were deemed too dirty for my use. Etcetera. I sat in my yellow office. Promised painting, promised the carpet cleaner smell would go away. Promised the Tech Ed teacher would remove the weird oily metal things from the bookcases and what I had begun, proudly, to call the Props Room. Wondering what those other odors were.

On the last day, Thursday, I think, nearly three o’clock and time to go home, my head began to ache. I felt as though my head had been pressed into a metal vise, much like the ones affixed to the tables stacked up outside in the cage. My lips felt dirty and metallic. I had a sore throat, my tongue was taupe, black spots danced before my eyes. My nose hurt and my teeth felt as they would pop out of my head. My forehead seemed to be within the grip of something relentless. This had begun shortly after noon, but I ignored it, thinking it was just a slight reaction to the carpet. I went home hurriedly. The symptoms persisted for two days, then finally vanished with a liberal dosing of red wine on Saturday night. I had been environmentally poisoned,
I guess. And I was to return, no, not just I, several hundred drama students, well, 180 or so would be returning too, to this cavern of disgust, on Tuesday, September 2.

Would I have to apologize? At least I would introduce myself first.

The idea of theatre in a cage blossomed before its time, and then the winter came. I had a vision of a "Stomp"-like exhibition of rhythm and movement, but the purpose of this exhilarated presentation eluded me so far. What I knew intuitively was that it was an enticing space. Would the audience stand outside the wire-mesh, or inside? Jonothan Neelands talked about the voyeurism inherent in the proscenium-enclosed space at the International Drama in Education Research Institute in Victoria, B.C. in the summer of 1997. Had I seen my new facility earlier I might have started chewing over its potential ironic symbolism.

Neelands writes of the cultural conservationist views of theatre which worry over the leveling effect of improvisational educational drama and uses the vision of theatre without walls to describe a performance theory that is post-structuralistic (1994). This vision is not merely physical, of course. Educational drama, termed 'low-art' by critics such as Hornbrook (1989) and principally American educators who perceive improvisation as ephemeral, actually has the scope and vigour to embrace and liberate multicultural models of theatre from the margins of the dominant ethnocentric, phallo-centric and heterocentric culture.

To create drama in the Power Mechanics shop is to include the stories of the mechanics, for example. To ask the audience to move from outside to inside, from standing to sitting; to move at all is to ask them to become
engaged in a dynamic act of theatre. To include the smelly oily things in the content of our inquiry into environment and history is to integrate our learning with our real context.

I was very concerned that the photos and posters of my productions from the years I had taught at the school were visible to my present students. They had to know that there had been a rich and happy life there before last year’s teacher, and that I was the stimulator of it. I wanted, even needed, them to know that I was responsible for the existence of the costumes and props and that I had a history with them. The antique theatre seats were mine. My self-worth was tied up in keeping these props and costumes and memorabilia going, so I tried to organize, display, and share them.

But it was also apparent to me that the students equated me with the move to the ‘garage’ and the smelly, dirty, barren existence we had there until the first week of October, when the painting was at last complete. Whenever I felt that the skinny thread holding them to me was about to snap, I marched down to the principal’s office and demanded room improvements. I took out that anger and dismay on the school’s budget.

At one point, the day two district maintenance workers burst in on my grade eight block C class (we were working on “The Disappearance of Alison Smith” at the time, in small groups), I had occasion to really test out my resolve in the face of budgetary threat. I had drawn a scaled plan of where the drapery track was to go and though I had explained this to my principal and he to them, these gentlemen wanted some of my time, about twenty minutes it turned out. So you want a track? With drapery? they asked. Yes, so that I can move it around, I answered. They looked knowingly up at the ceiling. Below the lights? Just where do you want it to hang? They had
difficulty seeing how the track could sail beneath the banks of fluorescent lights. Yes, just below the lights, you see? I responded. Gonna be expensive was the retort. I pursed my lips but only just. Mmm. I smiled. I folded my arms. That's what I want. I said goodbye to them, glad to get back to my students.

Resolved that I would not be cowed, bullied, worried.
Prepared to fight for equality, dignity, and educational needs.

They returned another day to measure and chat some more about how the track would work. They seemed to be in better moods and did not mention money. I assumed they would put in an estimate for the costs, and my administrators, knowing me to be at the brink of some sort of environmental madness, would approve it and find the money somewhere.

I am still waiting, but realizing almost too late that I have been waiting for something to click over in me about Room 213. It already is the best drama facility anyone could want. It is properly large and high; there is room for tossing and running and hiding in all dramatic contexts. Maybe what I have been waiting for is the forgotten theory to re-emerge about how I/we construct group drama in it. We are already in the event, and we did not wait for the drapery track to go up to start to talk about our relations in a presentational situation. Placing theatre among performance/presentational genres like the cultural forms of educational drama and the non-mimetic traditions of non-Western traditions takes it away from Aristotelian, textual limitations. Theatre and drama are evolving forms which could look for connections rather than boundaries, integrate art with life, and de-segregate artists with other people (Neelands, p. 6-7.)
The Prime of Queen Omphale

The card of the Queen of Pentacles portrays a beautiful woman with rich dark brown hair and brown eyes, wearing a sensuously draped russet robe and a golden crown. She is seated on a golden throne whose arms are engraved with the heads of bulls. In her right hand she holds a golden pentacle; in her left, a bunch of purple grapes. Around her lie ripe green and gold pastures, in which a herd of cattle can be seen grazing.

(Sharman-Burke, p. 192)

Dear Omphale,

You might think I was churlish for my earlier remarks about you. I could not admit within myself that you might possess any dignity or real power because you seemed so concerned with yourself, always selecting the best of this and that, taking such pleasure in things. In truth, I did not like to think about what pleasure you gained, dancing around in silk, grasping in your soft hands, murmuring in delight. How sensual!

What turned it for me was your lavish generosity and care for your country. One only has to gaze out to the fields to see the results of such energies. Of course I see my mistake now. Even the most noble spirituality or intellect cannot exist without this body of flesh. What strength and forethought you have to think of preserving and enriching life in these ways. In honouring your own worth and welfare, you secure and sustain it for all of us.
This school year is my return after four years to a junior high school in which I had learned to teach drama in my way to adolescents. It was and is a school with a strong and optimistic spirit among staff and students and I have almost always felt secure here. But I left twice. Once was for a teaching exchange to Britain, where my whole attitude toward teaching drama to adolescents changed and on my return I had enormous difficulty relaxing into my former mode of planning and evaluating. The second time was a personal leave; I left for a year of contemplation and travel to Europe, and I struggled, both personally and pedagogically, within another teaching position before the return here.

Two weeks before the school year 1997-1998 began, I began to dream. I dream about school before it begins when I am excited for it to do so. When I am looking forward to what I expect might be a rich, enjoyable year, strange juxtapositions of language and sensualities and architectures emerge from the chaos of my subconscious. There is no question that the three dreams I had during the nights of August 12 and 13, 1997, were dreams about teaching.

In the first I am standing in the centre of a line of much shorter people. We look like a chorus line. I am standing somewhat ahead of the line as if told to do so. Someone on the edge of the stage is coaching us to perform something, but I do not know the routine or the words. In fact, I have never seen the routine or the words. It becomes uncomfortably obvious to myself and everyone there that I am over a head taller than anyone else and I
automatically begin wondering why the directors of this burlesque would have chosen me. I complain and they ignore me, forcing the line to begin the routine. I don't know what to do and so I shout that they are unfair, cruel, placing me where I don't fit in and expecting me to perform without adequate training.

After I awoke, I analysed this dream to mean that I had performance anxiety about teaching among a new staff. Of course most of them were new, many knew each other, most were younger than me by now, and probably shorter, too. I also obsessed over whether my post-graduate courses had produced within me an overly intellectual and critical attitude toward teaching which might isolate me from the milieu. But of larger concern at the time was the fear that I had been hired as an image of my former self without knowledge of the growth I had done and was continuing to do. Would I be expected to be what I was before and what was the image of me-before, anyway? Only I had the dream. Only my-image counts here. My 'before-image' was a hard-working director of after-school productions, manifestor of classroom laughter, and traditional drama teacher of acting skills a la Stanislavsky. Life was a game; we did not work inside story content.

Three of the five so-called phenomena of adult critical reflection commonly experienced during post-graduate work is clearly analyzed by Brookfield (1994, p. 203) as impostorship (the sense that participating in critical thought is an act of bad faith), cultural suicide (the recognition that challenging conventional assumptions risks cutting people off from the cultures that have defined and sustained them up to that point in their lives), and lost innocence (the move from dualistic certainty toward dialectical and multiplistic modes of reasoning). The paper also describes the need for grounding of critical reflection process in conversation within
learning communities. The lack of voice in the dreams may reflect the desire for that critical conversation.

All that had changed, of course. My background, experience and knowledge of drama teaching had improved and was about to be tried and tested. There would be students who had never worked in the ways I wanted them to work. There would be staff who expected long rehearsals and full-length plays with large sets and several changes of costume and I had other things to do than that. And there was the added pressure of my desire, of course, to complete my thesis within the school year.

The next night I dreamed again, several images in succession in an Italian street somehow like a Rossellini or Fellini film. Black and white, disappointingly, but these dreams were in keeping with the film genre. Here is the scenario: We begin with an interior multiple head shot. There are at least eight people and the camera pans around the group, at times resting in close-up here, and then there. Sometimes a medium shot takes in two or three people on an interesting angle. Some are seated and some are standing, motionless. Every other edit includes me, close, extreme-close, medium, long, single, two-shot, multiple. These silent people are taking turns staring at me.

There is something wrong with me, I guess. I perceive myself wearing a white blouse and navy pleated skirt and my hair is surprisingly curly and bobbed, dark. But I am myself inside this costume. Though I have no notion of what, I know I am thinking properly, I seem to be myself to myself and am even dimly aware that there is a difference between what they see and what I know to be true. The camera shot does not reveal this dim awareness, rather, it intentionally obscures any interior knowledge of its
subject by its voyeuristic style. The walls are stark white.

As this would seem to be about the anxiety attached to non-relational knowing, or, in pop-speak, alienation, it is interesting to see how theorists explain the process of self-creation in its positionality with relational knowing and other kinds of knowing. Hollingsworth, et al (1993) constructs a heuristic of the location of personal practical knowledge where relational knowing, that is, ‘the social-constructivist process of learning to teach’ (p. 8), is at the intersection of ‘theories of the social construction of knowledge’, ‘theories of feminist epistemologies’ and ‘theories of self/other relationships’. If I re-define these areas of knowing in more local terms, then I look for the overlapping of the effect upon learning of the community of the drama classroom/with reflexivity in my interpretation of my students’ actions and reactions/with a perspective of the tension between my personal self and my publicly performing self.

Suddenly the pressure of their glares and the wandering camera are too much to bear. Suddenly, or carefully, I do not know, I open my mouth. They thought I could not speak, you see, and that was the spark of their curiosity. Had I been The Incredible Speechless girl, then, and the subject of their eternal scientific scrutiny? Or had I just recently stopped speaking to them and were they taking it personally?

I open my mouth. Birds rush out.

I open my mouth because I have to or because I want to and birds rush out. I am not concious of why I open my mouth. This is definitely a mystery and part of the genre you see so artistically demonstrated before you. Like Jean Seberg in ‘Breathless’ (1959), I am thought-less and will-less, though, of
course, this is only a male fancy. Apparently Godard bet someone he could take an untrained young actress and photograph her expressionless face, mind devoid of motivational thought, and edit that shot within different stories to convince viewers that she indeed was thinking something, and something different, within each story. That demonstration of montage is both a warning and an inspiration for modern times.

I open my mouth. But I am not out of breath. I have saved up breath for days, weeks, years and whether you could see it or not, whether the decision to open was long or short, what comes out of my mouth has been waiting.

Unfortunately it is Italian. Many, many sentences of perfect Italian, spoken in a rush of passion, spoken as though there is a great hurry to abide by, a deadline, an argument met, a saving grace. Nobody in the white room speaks Italian so they are ashamed and offended by the rush of words alighting in their hair, upon the door jams, inside the curtains. Most of the words fly up to the ceiling and stop. They lie in black sticky disarray. They do not come down. The hands of the crowd which have been raised to protect themselves in the absence of a translator, do come down. Everyone vanishes.

In life, I do not speak such eloquent Italian. I lurch and stumble and now after four years away from it, I gape, open-mouthed, out-of-breath, empty of thought. Nothing is easy these days, but I learned Italian and could speak quite well to my teacher and various patient Florentines then. If I went back, I am sure I could do it again. I also learned the tango in Paris in the fall of 1993. Now I am trying to learn how to teach drama one more time. I am teaching myself by putting together and trying out attitudes and devices.
I am the camera, in a way, methodically, objectively collecting shots. As I edit together those views which make a narrative, I am starting, again, to rethink drama education.

*I am horrified by the notion that the Italian is a deliberate obsfucation of my process. Knowing that I have been deliberately obscure from a very young age in my poetry and speech as a mask for real content, I turn to Madeleine Grumet (1995) for interruption of that discourse. She deconstructs the obsfucation of the positionality of the arts in public schools as the result of a confused and denied understanding of the artist in a post-modernist world. Daunted by the task of understanding arts education outside of its past modernist notion of 'the artist as an agonizing misfit' (p. 39), arts education researchers deny identification of their work with aesthetic practice. Further, the self-referential agenda of modern art and new criticism makes art appear to be truly a thing apart from the world, discouraging researchers from using it to study the world and obscuring our understanding of the aesthetic character of education and teaching. I grew up in the Modernist fifties and sixties and processed the idea of the artist from what I sensed.*

We open again in an Italian setting. I am riding a bicycle along a stone-paved street. I am fleeing something, probably that horde of starers from the white room. I have grabbed my bicycle and pedalled off down the busy street. I hear a cry and just behind me, up on the sidewalk, runs a small boy. He has dark features and is very handsome in his navy shorts and white shirt. He is about eight years old. He cries out that he will teach me. "To do what?" I call, pedalling fast past the tall stone walls, ingrown with carbon monoxide and geraniums. He smiles and waves. I have the sudden and sure knowledge that he is to teach me to cook, finally. Or to lead me out of these streets.
I am working hard, like Daedalus in his myth, to acquire the new skill of teaching a mindful drama in a caring way. My great enthusiasm and interest as a trainee at a time of life when I 'ought to be firmly established' may be a result of imagining that I am developing something freeing, both in the classroom and within these pages. Like Daedalus, this is hands-on work necessitating constant care, observation, reworking, patience, attention to details. I am enthused over the work of a potential success both aesthetically and scholastically. First, I gained some confidence through the flattering situation of being asked and welcomed back to my former school where I had had so many happy times. Then, I explained to all I could what my new approach might entail, and that met with perhaps not full comprehension, but approval of its ethical element.

Finally, I feel compelled to take this opportunity to introduce process drama, thinking drama, drama of the mind approached through the heart, because I will never have another one so good. I tried to work in process drama after my model experience in London, but it would not and could not measure up. I failed miserably; students were angry because I was angry. I did not understand how to approach through the heart. Though I had had some difficulty in establishing myself and and arts curriculum at my last teaching position, I succeeded at last in developing some of my own thinking about drama. Together, I made a history of three years of drama with students who finally trusted enough to play-through in real time, who would take on roles willingly, and who could stop and discuss how they were doing, what to do next, and what they liked so far. If not for that in-between step of working at that school, I would not have been able to develop ideas into units; I would not have been able to modify, throw out, incorporate, change, reflect upon, and take responsibility for the steps I
By way of her writing on evaluation of classroom drama, Margaret Burke (1992) also opens the topic of teacher training, both pre- and in-service, in her discussion of the explication of the drama program to the parent community. Stating that most parents send their children to school to learn something of substance, parents welcome drama to the timetable if they understand how it works. "If they are not cognizant of its role in the curriculum then it is only tolerated if it is represented by a good grade on the school report card" (p. 12). Generally unable to articulate what drama is and how it functions as a learning medium because of their method of or lack of training, the courageous and determined drama teachers who eventually do have nevertheless touched thousands of students. She puts forward that until drama teachers are sufficiently trained to thoroughly understand the learning potential of drama then true evaluation is not possible. The responsibility is theirs to understand, Burke states, and I build upon this with the question 'from where will this understanding come?' In the dream, it comes from the boy. I surely must have resolved to listen more intently to the boys and the girls who pedal by me.
Dear Daedalus,
We know you have come a long way from the splendours of life in Crete. From a bare shack, the frustrating scrambling for success as a youth, the patronage from Minos' court, the foolish leap into temptation, and, twice, disgrace and flight. Did you think you had thrown it all away? And now here you are again, starting over. Hammering at the bare metal just like a child, standing almost barefoot in the garden.

What enthusiasm allows you to face that pile of work at your feet! How do you dare, with your grey hairs and wrinkled skin, to think that there is something new for you to do? It would appear that you are dedicated and single-minded; though your surroundings are attractive and kind, they support you and do not distract you. Something had become too stale, but you were frightened by losing what you had built, and anxious to depart into these new pastures. Look at this energy! Is it perhaps partly relief that there was something left inside that old grey head?
Story 3. Attitude:

Principal's Office

I used to cry in the principal's office, but now I read novels at home.
I used to rage at grade nines, but now I ponder children.
I used to fall on the floor, but now I sweep it.
I used to shout and scream, but now I make deals.

I used to live two lives,
but
now with opportunity and desire mating like Canada geese,
I entertain, fertilize, swerve,
I see it all around,
I see.

The drama teachers escaped, one by one, year by year, into the principal's office and wept. They could not go on. They did not know how to teach those children and felt guilty and ashamed of their wild hate. They asked the principal to explicate the problem and forgive them. They asked for love. Through the years into that office came me, then the British exchangee, then the replacement, a procession of hearts.

What cruel accusations had been made by the children towards these women? That they were inept, unfeeling, unfair. That they dwelt only in the mind, a cruel testing place. How had these children gained the ability to maim like this? From other adults, often teachers, often misreadings from these same teachers. Perhaps a misreading of a mis-timed, misdirected attempt at 'alongsideness', that positionality of relationship between teacher and student which is most freeing and productive.

My students had pain at losing last year's teacher, someone they counted on, and their manner of being with her. I was revealed in an announcement on
the first day of school, September 2. I had desire to be 'alongside', but pride in my history of success, and our promise of a future together was going to lie sleeping until we knew where we were with each other. I suffered a loss of self-esteem; they saw this and maybe fed it.

We hardly talked about last year's teacher and the 'mis-reading of alongsideness'. I contain the impulse to have dialogue about that until they can confront their own ability to misread, to hurt. They, in turn, have cried in the principal's office.

It seems that I was despondent, enraged, angry, sick, fatigued, hurt, oppressed, and cruel. My senseless pride, that is, my reactive instinct for self-preservation, was a debilitating factor in my quest for mature, caring relationship with my students. My students' disappointment, surprise, self-centredness, awkwardness, ignorance and youth fed the battle between us. Of course, this was only part of the time. Most of the time everyone was polite and good. There were several instances of students and teacher employing courage, strength and self-discipline to handle the destructive emotions. But what did I do when my rage and senseless pride threatened to overload my circuits? What did my students do to assimilate or defend themselves in the face of it? I had a feeling that they were self-destructing, unconsciously and that I, too, was addicted to self-destruction. We got onto a course.

But I vowed I would present my new identity, tearless, throughout the year. On September 26, I wrote,

I do not need to cry anymore. Is there something preventing me from falling into that again? A sense of wanting to preserve or conserve something..... to find the acceptable way of
communicating what I need.

I had promised something to myself which needed the support of knowledge about relationship within the drama classroom. Need a creative teacher be so near the emotional brink? Or was there a way to get to where I wanted to be, emotionally, with my students, by the back door, so to speak? I considered that empathic work took time, perhaps the three years it had taken in my previous school, and that in the meantime I could allow myself to get on with active living. I also considered that there was something going on inside me which was beginning to understand the 'crying in the principal's office', something passing out of my life now which had been extremely important in digging out the reason why I found student-teacher relationships so difficult.

This something might be, I reflected, a result of learning, of emotional state, or of my situation. Prying open the doors shut on my creativity and honesty, those shut by the covers of magazines and novels, over-work, management, wine, television, cigarettes, and the fear of fighting, I occasionally allow myself long hours for thinking and writing.

I am mangled by my own hands. I drink and then want to hide and to cry, to sleep and forget that I am afraid of all of them. That they know how much I despise myself and are uncomfortable enough to stay away from me. Friendless, even abhorred, I am not different from...I am a miser.... hateful (Journal, September 20).

I allow myself long walks down city streets and only lately, dream of minor theatricals. I have decided that while it is emotionally intelligent to divert anger and develop tools for coping with fear, it is wise, in the end, to
confront anger and fear. Only then can you give yourself the freedom to laze about and discover things along those city streets, love, play, language, and contact.

Some intelligent defining of the problem and some self-sufficiency might make those forays into the baser realms of the psyche more enjoyable and less guilt-ridden. For months I have lazed about by myself, avoiding contact, avoiding creation. I blamed it on other things. I blamed being chained to the couch and wine bottle on being overworked at school and university. I was in fact terrified of the chaos within my head. Even if I put those screams and shouts down on paper, there seemed to be no worldly audience for them.

My panic and self-disgust held my creative power within and still. I didn't know it, but the secret to releasing the power is to accept that which is shadowy, shameful and base in me, to free myself. Do I know that now? How close can I get to putting down the most accurate words that will express what is shadowy, shameful, and base in me? How important is this for you, the reader, to process? Is writing about this issue somehow part of understanding how I changed in my relationship with my students, how I learned how to value and evaluate them? I may have to look at the language of this problem, and where it was positioned when it occurred. I was unable to imagine plays, sets, dramas, jokes, and fun. I was unable to write new letters, to plan new dramas. Two years of university study were very hard for me while teaching full-time and I gave up a lot of things that people have in their lives, like friends and fun and activity. To replace them I became somewhat compulsive about eating, smoking, drinking, and television. These things all go IN. These things are not creative.
I couldn't write when I was sad or afraid,
I couldn't smile but a wintry smile
when I had no heart for blood.

I couldn't sing with a throat closed up,
I couldn't love but a movieland love
when I had no words of blood.

The recent popular methodology of anger management and depression control, Emotional Intelligence, by Daniel Goleman (1995) discusses the debilitating effect of extremes of emotion upon creativity and productivity in the chapters, Passion's Slaves (5) and The Master Aptitude (6). In the former, balance is stressed as the healthy accompaniment to emotions. Managing our emotions, educating ourselves in recognizing and re-patterning our responses to them, is necessary so that they, particularly rage, do not surge out of control. Rage is seen to be the one most intransigent. '....the self-righteous inner monologue that propels it along fills the mind with the most convincing arguments for venting rage. ....anger is energizing, even exhilarating' (p. 59).

In the latter chapter, negative emotion as an inhibitor to productivity, for example in the classroom, is the chief motivator for facing and understanding it. 'Flow (by definition the neurobiology of excellence) is a state of self-forgetfulness, the opposite of rumination and worry; instead of being lost in nervous preoccupation, people in flow are so absorbed...moments of flow are egoless...people...exhibit a masterly control of what they are doing, their responses perfectly attuned to the changing demands of the task' (p. 91).

But more importantly to the educational role I play is the theme of Chapter 7, The Roots of Empathy, where self-awareness or openness to our own
emotions promotes attunement, the capacity for empathy. Learning to recognize, accept, and articulate one's emotions, rather than suppress or deny them, affords a deeper connection with others, and the possibility for authenticity promotes trust from others.

Creative power was released by recognizing that the uglier attributes of laziness, hate, and fear were present, not that they did not exist. That is, recognizing the pot holes in the road were there so that I did not surprise myself. Knowing I am lazy, angry and afraid is part of controlling those behaviours, or so say the behaviour management programs of our time. Recognizing. Knowing what you are doing.

This is an important part of understanding what was going on in my drama classroom last fall. Tying in my concerns that students were misguided about the nature and purpose of the relationship between themselves and their drama teacher with the need of the drama teacher to explicate for herself her patterns of actions and motivations towards creating that 'alongside' relationship, rather than leave it up to her father-figure principal, we have in front of us the objective of the drama teacher as a more cautious instigator of relational positioning. She must be more in control of the relationship, invoking standards and challenge, modeling warmth. She is clearly on the other side of the desk and is honest about that with her students.

It occurs to me that what I am attempting to access here is a background which resists explication. If I am the subject of an ethnographic search into the everyday world of a junior secondary drama teacher, there is knowledge
in my background upon which this descriptive account depends. However, as Smith (1990) explains, some of that knowledge defies containment in words; parts of the description are sensed but not concretely known and therefore not put into text. Smith expands for me ethnomethodology's rationalization of this problem by locating the researcher's working, everyday knowledge at the beginning of the inquiry (Smith, 1987). Therefore, only what I can textualize need be recognized as my background knowledge, my beginning knowledge, and the end product is a consciousness-raising based upon the publicizing of what was once 'a private experience of oppression' (p. 154).

Educationally, I have begun to sort and evaluate the many viewpoints I have gained in my post-graduate courses. If it was impossible to locate myself in the chaos of philosophies available to me in my reading and discussing during two years of study, it is possible now to try out the theories in real practice which has at its heart the relationship of myself to my students. Emotionally, I had to face the threat to my self-esteem of replacing at my former school a much-loved, younger, emotionally-committed teacher. I was alone, an outsider, and I grew more angry with every day of trials. Situationally, I assumed that the reason for my lack of acceptance by the grade nine students was their mythologizing of their former teacher. In education, emotion, and situation, I had, then, three scapegoats for my lack of success. They, in my brutish reasoning, at first prevented me from acting creatively and expressively, that is, honestly, to build experiences upon which my students and I might base a more 'alongside' relationship.

I cannot avoid the feminine-identification of the neediness of such beliefs, thoughts, and feelings. Perhaps I can understand 'crying in the principal's office' as a performance of femininity as defined by Walkerdine (1994). If
so, then I was signing the oppression inherent in the institution's hidden curriculum of that 'when girls work hard, something is wrong' (p. 60). I was doing the work yet I was not having an effect. The boys of my classes, the main reason for my presence in that state, oppressed me with the harassing notion that thoughtfulness and hard work were suspect, but play was brilliant. By going to the male principal's office, I negated my power and invalidated the work of my female students. In reading Walkerdine, Britzman, and other critical feminists, I discovered the language which created a new reality. Walkerdine's writing also uncovers for me the possible roots of the frustration. The classroom might have been the scene of contradiction between the rewarding of masculine-identified behaviours like rule-breaking and messiness and disparaging of feminine-identified behaviours like helpfulness and quietness (p. 63-64).

The factors which prevented me from facing my deeper motivations in relational positioning, whether they were educational, emotional, or situational, have faded as they were destined to do in the climate of positive thinking which I struggled to maintain around me. They are useful to know only to appreciate the kind of adjustment which has gone on more recently, in the later part of the fall term.

It is also necessary to understand that the school is run by a principal with a background in counselling and the arts. This may explain why behaviours of students (and probably teachers) are handled in a way best described as interactional. There is no resort to the power of the hierarchy of student-teacher-principal, rather, a dialogue ensues immediately within the conflicted group. Far from the intimidation inspired in a study on behaviour modification and control in a primary school by Skelton (1996), individuals in conflict who end up 'in the principal's office' tell their stories and listen
to the stories of others. The latter techniques, defined as ‘fostering maleness’ employ fear to bring about acquiescence. In my interpretation of how things go in my principal’s office, empathetic negotiation is meant to neither foster maleness nor femaleness, but to defy the dualism of such thinking.

I do not cry in the principal’s office any longer. We are clearly not on the same side of the desk and he is not my father. I have developed respect for a new relationship of professionalism, full of dialogue and wonderful language and exuberant hopes and careful negotiation. So much more is understood. This, I hope, transfers to my relationship with students. We can have better language and more dreams together if we agree to acknowledge our own and each other’s humanness.

An obsession passes through my life. I take control back by objectifying my behaviour, seeing it as a depiction, almost. My feet are planted on the ground; my vision turns outward at last.
I am still in awe, as I am still somewhat afraid, though not so much this year, of Beethoven and the harlot colours of early spring primroses. I do not, therefore, speak directly to you.

Strength is in the Crossing position and describes whatever is generating conflict or obstruction at present, or at least is stirring things up. Like Heracles, I erupt in fear in new situations and I have to face it, make myself conscious of the manifestations of it. The Nemean lion is royal and is an image of the infantile, savage, and totally ego-centric unique individuality. The battle represents the problem of containing the powerful beast within us, while still preserving those animal qualities which are creative. Thus, when Heracles tore off the dead lion's magical skin and wore it, he became invincible; when we wear the skin of what we have conquered, the opinions of others mean little. I use my unique fear-energy to fire my lust for life. I am "I".
Part II  Accepting and Advancing

Story 4.  The Curriculum:

Rearrangements: How am I to be and how am I to teach?

In August, I wrote about wondering about the place of 'will' in teaching. Considering the thought that 'I teach in order to know myself' from reading Carl Leggo's Tangled Lines: Nurturing Writers and Writing, I wondered how much of the act of my teaching is for me and how much for students. I considered that 'willing' the nature of my drama courses could disempower students and worried that there would not be room for expression, for student choice and empowerment, and the freeing of imagination. I had been reading through a lot of drama manuals.

Is a fine balance between will and imagination a murky place where nothing happens? Must we swing back and forth like this?

In their reconceptualization of the modernist paradigms of curriculum development, Hunkins and Hammill (1994) propose a model parallel to our perception of life as organic, not mechanical; dynamic, not stable; and that 'goals emerge oftentimes from the very experiences in which people engage. Curriculum gains life as it is enacted' (p. 10). My inventing of new rules for curriculum planning responds to emergent needs and accepts the chaotic. My decisions are not based upon a master-plan, but 'on the dynamics of human experiences within (my) local milieu' (p. 13).

In the first few weeks of September, I reminded myself to slow down. I pictured the teaching of a colleague in England, slowing down so that everyone watched, slowing students down to acknowledge and be
acknowledged. Serious, accountable students. I remember how she taught compared to how I taught six years ago. I believed at that time in the challenge of the dash, wit, and carving the essence into the body. I believed in working from the outside in. I brought some Westcoast irreverence to the Girls' School.

An example of the learning I did post-British-experience is the understanding of what Bolton (1984, in Verriour, 1995) meant when he said 'drama is never about oneself: it is always concerned with something outside oneself' (p. 16). My learning, too, was distinguished by a movement away from an emphasis on individual self expression and personal growth, two features of those methods that emphasize creativity and enactment or re-enactment, to one in which group expression and the group creation of meaning are integral components of "making drama" ' (Verriour, 1995).

A drama teacher I know let me in on her difficulties taking over someone else's classes mid-year. She had dreams of what drama could be, should be. Her new students had no experience of that. Someone whispered 'be gentle' in her ear and she whispered it in mine. I have never been gentle, especially with strangers. These strangers are having so much fun with each other, as they are used to doing, that they ignore my interruptions. There is a lot of talk, but I do not direct it. I try to do quieter work with them but they remodel it.

I also reminded myself about gentleness. Gentleness is an art. Empathy is recognition. It requires watching and seeing. I think I should model empathy. In this new place, my students didn't seem to want to watch me or each other unless something outrageously funny was going on. They socialized. I despaired.
I wanted my students to write in drama. They were incredulous at that and many did not bring duotangs in which to insert their writings-in-role and reflections. They did not bring pens. I tried to set up writing structures in several classes and insisted they have their own pen or borrow one of mine by giving me something in collateral. I thought this would aggravate them so much they would bring their own next time. It didn’t. They enjoyed hopping over to my office with a running shoe in one hand. It took time out of the writing. They hadn’t yet begun to appreciate how easy and liberating writing in drama is. Sometime near the end of the second unit, I gave up, and told them so. ‘Just take a pen from the basket’, I say. At this time I also gave up remarking about their gum-chewing, jacket-wearing, or lateness to class if it wasn’t too disgraceful. We were tired of my ineffective voice.

Not sure of the individual, social, and cultural experiences and backgrounds of my students, I was reluctant to proceed with an initiative of shared meaning-making in drama. Whether named collective drama, group drama, process drama, drama for a change in understanding, educational drama, role drama, or classroom drama, the development of students’ understanding about the self in relation to the other, possibly the root knowing of empathy, is explored in the context of a collectively-built drama world over an extended period of time. O’Neill, Verriour, and Heathcote all highlight the extraordinary aspect of this improvisatory negotiation as ‘working from the inside’ often with the teacher in-role with the students. As Verriour states (1995, p. 15), this places the teacher in a different relationship to the students than conventional drama methods, but ‘allows students to find their own voice and reach their own personal understandings in drama by acknowledging the other as a subject speaking from an alternate perspective’.
We made it through the introductory unit, but I became aware that the games approach was irritating to me. The students became unfocused, realizing there was not yet a connection. I tried to make connections through evaluation, but as the activities were only games and exercises, some students felt insulted at having their playing graded. I re-rationalized this short unit as a way to introduce to those students who did not take Drama 8 the basic structures we would use in process drama later on, like tableaus, mirroring, sculpture, establishing, accepting, and advancing in improvisation. I watched the students and they surreptitiously watched me but we didn't do anything together.

I wondered if we could unbox ourselves now. I looked at the work I had set with my grade nines. I had put two units from Andy Kempe's GCSE Coursebook (1997) into the first term, to follow a two week introductory unit of games and skill review. They had to do with (1) improvisation as playmaking and (2) exploring movement and sound images as metaphor.

**In this choice of a structured set of lessons (Kempe, 1991) written to balance an improvisatory, whole group, reflective approach with a small groups, distanced approach, written to assist non-drama specialists, and couched as an intellectualization of the drama process for older students who had never-before experienced improvisatory/process/collective drama structures, I felt I had found an approach which would appeal to these students.**

I chose a thematically-based unit on improvising from a textbook because I had had luck with it in England. Some of the structures worked well and the students seemed happy to at last be within a context, 'Childhood'.

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There was varied success and I got a picture of a wide range of ability in all four Drama 9 classes. Some of the activities and content, however, were too British for their taste. I decided not to prescribe as much writing and storyboarding as the unit suggested, and we skipped on ahead. I did not attempt to uncover the theme of this unit because I was using it primarily to have a common experience together, and to allow the students to begin to use improvisatory skills to build scenes. I realized, after it was over, that there had been no change in understanding, or even summary, of the content. 'Childhood' had been lost amid the new structures and evaluation standards and I felt guilty about that.

I can analyze my attempt at engagement of my students by admitting that the incongruence of the real context of new-facility/teacher/program/evaluation methods/grade, etc. with the arbitrary fictional context of their childhood memories filtered through British text and structures contributed to some estrangement. The possible congruence of our real context with the fictional context of personal remembered childhood may have been managed successfully enough to engender some trust because it reinforced their contextual values and attitudes (O'Toole, p. 53).

I was confused about what I wanted to happen. Sharing, exploring content, becoming aware of skills, assimilating new structures, adopting a new standard of evaluation? I decided that the unit as it was written did not meet our needs. It might have been useful as part of a unit on the theme of 'Childhood' but it did not work as an improvisation skill-builder because my students had many of these skills though not in this context. They wanted something new but not unfamiliar in its demands upon their social skills, so far still needing distance from me and I from them.
Looking over the text unit on Movement and Sound I decided I could not successfully interpret this 'store-bought' work to open the world of theatrical metaphor. I decided to give my students an escape and quickly put together a substitute unit of commedia dell'arte improvisations in which metaphor resided in stock characters. Performance-based, students would have to develop their own scripts after character study. I felt there was challenge and glamour in this unit and wanted to build some happy memories before Christmas, after all. They would be cloaked in their costumes as they were cloaked in their Nike, Adidas, and Klein labels and we would make safe overtures to each other, speaking our knowledge through talk of Arlecchino, Pantalone, and Dottore. What terrible thing could happen? It was classic comedy, after all!

I am absolved somewhat by reading Myhill's (1993) response to the British Arts Council's document supporting Drama in Schools after the omission of drama from the National Curriculum. In his response, he worries at the statement that 'drama has a distinct discipline and methodology'. He feels that each of the several methodologies including the performance-based one proposed by David Hornbrook in his backlash against drama for change in understanding (Hornbrook, 1989), as well as Heathcote/Bolton/ O'Neill's work in that mode, as well as Peter Slade's creative dramatics, has its place as a perspective worthy of study. My inclusion of performance-based work was timely because of the need to breach the gap between our conflicting desires. It was also valuable in opening a world of scriptless planning which had multicultural and historic bases and so served to broaden my students' awareness of drama as a universal communication of meaning. As Hornbrook points out (p. 114), recognition and interpretation of the stock characters of commedia dell'arte allow performers to reflect their social world, to interpret the actions and moral positions of those individuals who have
assumed the character in reality. ‘Characters are the masks worn by moral philosophies’ (MacIntyre, in Hornbrook, p. 115), though I do not see where, in Hornbrook’s plan, there is room for conversation, let alone activism against those social ends inherent in the morality of commedia.

I had an epiphany one weekend in October. I had written a course outline for the younger students, the grade sevens and eights. Besides myself, because of staffing demands, three colleagues who had never taken or taught drama had been given a class each. I wrote a course which reflected what I thought were non-drama specialists’ notions of drama as a performance and technical art. When my student teacher arrived for two weeks of observation, I became aware, because of her idealistic expectations, of shame at not doing process drama with these students. On Monday morning I began “Darkwood Manor”, a role drama by Cecily O’Neill, and relaxed the shame. I threw out most of that first course outline, replacing games, scriptwork, and a lengthy Readers Theatre unit with three or four extended role dramas and some playbuilding. Games, scripts and Readers Theatre technique were still used, but as they were needed within the themes of the role dramas and playbuilt plays. Because our experiences together were shared and thoughtful ones, the students seemed older and wiser to me. And the second term’s students, having had this as a complete program from the beginning, can tell me what role drama is. They talk about the joy of doing a drama altogether. They call our drama classes ‘awesome’ and ‘cool’. This term’s grade eights think that drama ‘rules’.

Happily, this term’s grade eight groups were largely able to manage their own social dynamic to successfully ‘negotiate roles and make personal choices to manage the needs and limitations as artistic constraints upon the drama’ (O’Toole, 1992). Though our work did not leap past the building of
the collective spirit, it has the potential for the next steps of 'drama for change of understanding' (Bolton, in O'Toole, p. 45) which might socialize them or give them a critical orientation. And, due to the restricted time of their encounter with drama (three hours per week for twelve weeks), they also have limited experience of meaning-making within the context through the elements of focus, tension, time, location, language, movement, mood, and symbol (p. 6 - 47).

Process drama was always available to me for these younger classes. I pulled away from it with the fear that my neophyte department would panic when asked to teach in a manner which required artistry and knowledge. A second fear which arose as I got to know the experienced grade nines better, that though they had not previously done very much reflective or focused drama work, they had developed personal opinion-making and entertaining improvisatory skills to a high social level. Might my younger students miss this empowerment if they were forever involved in the value-challenging role dramas, 'Darkwood Manor', 'Detectives', and 'Disaster'? My values quivered.

A way out of this dualistic dilemma might be found in Grumet's (1994) pondering of feminist social theory in curriculum development. She states that the felt presence of both feminine-identified and masculine-identified epistemologies 'may diminish the crippling dichotomy of internal and external, dream and reality, body and thought, poetry and science, ambiguity and certainty' in the reconception of another generation (p. 167). Grumet suggests that I can, as female educator, continue to drive the child to the marketplace through pedagogy, or I can instead decide to refuse the oppositionality by, as she quotes Kristeva (About Chinese Women, p. 37), constant alternation, or approaching synthesis. Process drama requires a
commitment to a contract of responsibility for entering the drama world which students can make depending upon their experience and social health (O'Toole, p. 39 and Chapter 6). If students subconsciously distrust the pedagogy as feminine- or feminist-identified, they resist it. Grumet says it is the work of the drama educator to synthesize and/or alternate approaches to reflect and interrogate the multiple identities of these students. Surprise builds tension.

Actually, by insisting that I write the course outline for all of us, I may have boxed in both myself and my colleagues. At first they were grateful that I had, and they welcomed the lesson-by-lesson model of process drama I presented them before the second term began. They have since evolved their own hybrid version of Drama 7/8 and I have not, nor do I wish to have, any control over that beyond a mainly theme-based philosophy. I float about, we all float about now in this age of openness and collegiality; I drift in and out of the drama room and my office while they teach. They sit in on my classes and watch me. We want things to work; we are past self-consciousness; we teach from individual desires.

The grade nines and I took our commedias to the stage. They had a lot of fun with costumes, props, and lighting. They performed dress rehearsals and I sat them down with me afterwards for notes of advice, like a director or coach. They were very successful in their final performances and there were many students with natural gifts for speech and movement who obtained A letter grades. Some of these students had not done so well in content-based work previously. I wanted them to know I could see them and I liked what I saw.

If I was a disciple of Eisner or Gardner, I would also, at this point, have
assigned a project or essay, or brought in a guest speaker, an actor, director, or theatre-historian, along with the enactment of the lazi-filled play to deepen my students' understanding. We would have spent long hours, probably at lunch time and after school, practising these lazi and going over dialogue line by line to make sure it was historically and dramatically correct. I would have crafted an appropriate measuring stick of my students' mental and physical gymnastics so that I could find out if they understood commedia and I would not have worried that I had spent so long on what is, essentially, just a historic form. There might have been understanding of this form after a much longer time spent on it than I was prepared to devote, say six to eight weeks.

Gardner defines discipline as both the knowledge, theories, concepts, and methods that constitute a domain, and 'regular practice, with feedback, in applying those habits of mind that yield understanding' (1994, p. 201). Eisner also corroborates this use of the 'discipline habit' in which students work regularly and determinedly to master knowledge and skills and to activate them in the service of understanding' (p. 217). But understanding of what? I suggest that the understanding is of something static, that it is not about process, and that content is far less important than form in these two scholars' dreams. Optimistically, Paul Hirst (p. 217 in Gardner) said that the disciplines do not train the mind; rather, they let us see what it is to have a mind.

Eisner's promotion of the arts (1992) allows much more leeway in a definition of understanding. He sees them as areas of discovery as well as expression. His 'discovery', though, may be also only that of effect and form and have nothing very much to do with relational knowing. What is this insidiousness of the cult of the individual here, and where is that mind
broached with the powerful questions and doubts of our real context if we seek only to preserve the quality of the past?

It takes time, care, and being gentle. Will it work with time, care, and gentleness? If I could have a nickel for every time I repeated Nadia's words to me, "Be gentle". Of course I didn't think anyone could be that gentle; you'd turn to mush, I thought. I resisted. I felt tainted as I allowed things to happen in class which weren't what was supposed to happen. The outcome of my thesis writing, my reflection-now, will be this. I will be closer to that thoughtful, sensitive classroom than I would have been had I not been gentle, allowed time, and cared about my students' perception of themselves.

The pen basket, the gum, jacket, pen, book rules, the quality of scenes. All these things are judged differently through the eyes of time. For example, students still have to stay in role and treat the content seriously if that is appropriate. Otherwise what? And there is consistent application of consequences for gum, lateness, poor work habits, shoddy writing, etc. That will never change and is tiring. But to leave it would be to ghettoize them! I expect more. The difference is......the difference is now I notice when they are struggling through adolescence.

Any of the cups contain the relationship. To achieve the dream of the honest pairing, one steps forward with will and begins the project. Watching carefully, modifying and even changing, valuing emotional pain as an indicator, being healthy, ready to teach, awake and bright and positive, remembering that love has sovereignty. If love is what I want, love is how I shall get it.
Strasser's concept of dialogic phenomenology (1969, in Grumet, 1994, p. 152) makes clear that what is fundamental to knowing is the interpersonal basis for human experience. In Grumet's summation, 'the very ground of knowledge is love' (p. 152). The bonding of thought and relation, consummated in the word 'concept', occurs because there is a 'you', 'you' thinks and invites me to a response, 'you' makes me think that thinking is possible and meaningful.

Gentleness, if it is kind watching, is hard work. Fatigue and fear make me ready to shut the door between them and me any time. To fight fatigue and fear, I move around the room, narrating from different corners. I move the stereo to the counter on the far side of the room. I leave two prop doors in the room and the students use them for masts, houses, banks, and symbols of ownership. I discover old posters and photos and put them up. I create a 'Shakespeare' bulletin board and tear down the Callboard of September.

I watch them watch each other smiling, grimacing, turning away, whispering, taking a secret timeout, giggling, waiting, thinking, wishing, willing. I try to remember these children have parents and suddenly, when I do, they are freshly made, tender and wise. I strike up conversations which they often don't know how to continue and I know that. I feel warm towards them and the next day they strike up conversations with me. We laugh together about ourselves. It just leaks out; you can't be serious all the time.

They expect me to lay down the plans now. A grade eight girl looked up at me from the floor recently and articulated the link between the warmup game and the theme of The Tempest which we had just begun. I let her know how happy I was and how intelligent she was that she should have
made that connection. I told the class that the games, introductory exercises, story, theme, everything, were linked. “Oh!” she cried out. “Oh” reverberated through the room because they were listening.

You...................
because of me...
I because of you;
I gave.............
You succeeded
I knew.............
You invented.....
I played a role...
I decided.........
I cried...............
that it did matter what
and how
and even then not how
but to see you seeing me.
Psyche's Castles in the Air

The card of the Seven of Cups portrays the goddess Aphrodite confronting Psyche with the tasks which she must perform in order to win Eros back. Psyche kneels on a rock before the goddess, acknowledging the divine sovereignty in all matters of love. Aphrodite, rising out of the water, points to seven golden cups which float on the clouds before her.

(Sharman-Burke, p. 100)

Dear Psyche,

You know, Psyche, that the choices are all possibilities. Any one of these cups contains the deep and honest relationship you want. But what has your betrayal, your remorse, and your dream led you to? What might you have to do which so far has been missing from your growth toward that deep and honest relationship? Maybe you should look closely at your dream again as so much of it seems to rest on Eros turning a leaf. This is probably not possible, or within your capabilities. Can we really base our dreams on the actions of others? I think not. Better to concentrate on your own behaviours and actions and just believe in your heart, though you risk humiliation and suffering, that he will come back. You have the one most important thing on your side: you are firmly committed to your love. And you have been guaranteed another chance, haven't you? Your mentor, Aphrodite, has set you up, though, don't you see? She has charged you with hope and energy toward making your choices work. This emotion will propel you into the hard, careful work you must do now. Remember to accept the limitation of each reality: Eros is too immature to fulfill every one of your wishes. It is you yourself who must learn patience, faith, and perseverance.
Story 5. Assessment and Evaluation:

Tough

...the pines have a certain intransigence. They dig their roots into dry soil full of seashells and strain backwards in the wind that blows directly from Alaska. They are absolutely exposed to the weather and yet as indifferent as the weather. The indifference of this Decembral littoral suits my forlorn mood for I am a sad woman by nature, no doubt about that; how unhappy I should be in a happy world! This country has the most rigorous romanticism in the world and they think a woman who lives by herself should accentuate her melancholy with surroundings of sentimental dilapidation....in this country you do not need to think, but only to look, and soon you think you understand everything. (Carter, 1974, p. 43-44)

Angela Carter constructed a story using the winter beach, the winter moon, the ocean, the women, the pine trees, the riders, the driftwood, the shells, the shapes of darkness and water, and the refuse. The narrator is a British woman in Japan terrified by the enormity of her emotions and the pain of her betrayal after a difficult love affair. In her story she displaces her pain beneath observation of a wintry world; it can be observed by us inside her wintry smile. In the Japanese world, a sensual, visual world, it does not should not need not penetrate consciousness. Pain is nulled when the betrayal experience is objectified. It may become a painting.

I saw wintry smiles on the faces of my students as they considered the enormity of what they must do to succeed in my evaluation of them. At times during the fall I wrestled with how I could show them, through marks, what was appropriate and what lacked appropriateness. Also, through explaining, coaching, and outlining of criteria I attempted to reach them, to reason with them, to broach common sense, but I became tired of
that; I wished to get on with drama.

I tried politely cutting short those dramas which were not dramas at all. One day, in an exercise where two people with different points of view are to talk about a photo they have viewed, played around the circle of students, I say “Thank-you” to two students and abruptly move on. Around the circle we went again, to these two girls in giggles who achieved something close to presentation on their second try. I liked them not knowing when the end of the scene might be, so that they did not prematurely evaluate the extent of the dilemma and its solution. I took control of the valuing with the “Thank-you.” Some began realizing I might be looking at something other than a neat solution, an entertainment. For my part, I did not spend much time wondering why those girls giggled. I expected self-discipline of them and the willingness to take on role, to consider the ‘otherness’ of that role, and as they had not done this, I assigned them a mark which reflected it.

Verriour (1986) states that when children have difficulty engaging in dramatic dialogue, they are unaware of the ‘other’. Improvised spoken drama makes cognitive and linguistic demands on children, he advises; in the intent of many international syllabi and arts testing propositions, it is a measuring point for student understanding, empathy, and engagement. Verriour asks for more of this presentational mode of engagement in the drama curriculum because it is the place where meaning is born, is evident. Leggo (in press) also writes about language use and language users as being symbiotically connected. The language shapes us and we shape the language.

I awaited anger at the interim reporting of C’s and C+’s among my grade nines because I felt I had revenged immature work with bad marks. On a crime-mystery role drama, students refused to play genuinely in the
dramaworld of forensics. They ventured into absurdity like three-year-olds and I penalized those more heavily who watched the audience when they laughed, as they were waiting for the effect of the disintegration of the drama. I gave less than average marks to those who doubted the drama in the first place, were not ever in it but commented upon it, or who did not support anyone else in the class entering it. I gave average marks to those who performed for effect or could not perform their role without laughing.

Overcome with shame at my anger and negativity, I decided to redefine my evaluating in a more positive way. Good marks would be given to those who support the drama and make it work, who play roles seriously, who put effort into their work, and who encourage good playing from their classmates. After the interim report cards, I promised myself I would monitor the lower-achieving students' work closely for signs of improvement so that I could acknowledge it in a raised assessment and a praising comment. It would be awful to improve one's effort and thoughtfulness and not be validated for it. And so, we began at the beginning, again.

Progressively, a section of the latest curriculum guide indicates that willingness, support, sensitivity to others, and inclusion are intended learning outcomes of the middle grades' drama course. I would not be, in O'Toole's words, 'evanescent' about the substance of my intended curriculum. As he states (1992), 'where the teacher concentrates on process forms -- improvisation and roleplay -- (their) insubstantiality is easily mistaken for triviality. (Learning) exists in the action -- not on a canvas, or a written page, or in a set of numbers and diagrams...that of course, poses problems for the evaluation of drama work, and the assessment of students' progress' (p. 18). I was serious about the substance
I indicated to students in my criteria-based assessments, and only time would erode the trivializing of it which they and perhaps others practised.

This reaction to marginalizing has been the drive behind support for arts testing in the United States, for external examiners in Britain and Australia, and for the continuance of syllabus use with external moderation of in-school assessment (classroom teachers) in Britain and Australia. Teachers I know in Britain rely upon the criteria of the syllabus to satisfy any doubts or complaints about the value and evaluation of drama. But for us locally, there are far more dangers in teaching to test criteria or syllabus requirements than there are advantages to such systems. If drama educators do not know how to articulate broad operations which might be measured sensitively, then we are not ready for common assessing procedures, let alone external moderation. Even established drama centres like Queensland, Australia (O'Toole, 1992, p. 23) and Leicester, U.K. (Britton, 1991; Myhill, 1993) continue to renegotiate assessment models as they try to answer the same questions: what is drama and how does it operate?

A conversation occurred with some students about a 'tough' teacher. He happens to be an admired colleague at the closest senior high school where our students study after their three years here. I always considered him a most human artist, and a most artistic human; his work is organic, meaningful, and empowering. I was stunned to hear him described as 'tough'. This occurred one evening while driving home my most gifted international baccalaureate-candidate stage manager. I tried to explain that tough might be in the eyes of the beholder, that tough means someone has standards and that these standards may even be attainable with effort.

With district reorganization of grade assignments, I pictured David striving
to work with his new grade tens in the way he was accustomed to with grade elevens and twelves. I pictured him still struggling somewhat after four years at a high school imbued with the slight arrogance of its middle class neighbourhood. I pictured him, in 1997, adjusting to the rapid mindless empowerment of teenagers. Was chaos far off? But none of these scenarios included reason for the characterizations coming from this girl. 'Tough', after all, doesn't really exist, at least not in David. Whatever she perceived was the thing which got things done, productions mounted, psyches opened, boys dancing, students writing, emotions articulated. I sensed a resistance of some kind.

Then I encountered another student who made the same statement. She arrived in my room, at the door of my office, a bedraggled grade ten from the high school, checking out the replacement drama teacher. She was provoking and personal in her comments and questions and stayed far too long. David was tough, she said. David is an artist who bleeds for his students, I thought. I counselled that perhaps grade ten drama demanded a bit more self-discipline than junior high school. She was unhappy with this explanation, but cheerfully informed me I would see her at David's production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' which the grade nines and I were attending soon. What role are you playing, I asked. Oh, I am working the door, she answered. I did see her and waved to my new found confidante. She was busy assimilating 'tough' into her experience of drama.

These two encounters stood out as I reread my journal, not only because they were coincidentally about the same person, but because I identified so strongly with David's position. David and I may have always been perceived as 'tough' by our students, but lovingly. My experience of being demanding, of pressing students to do better, has been one of acceptance. What was the
link between our difficulties, then? That perhaps because we were new to these students, he to his grade tens, me to the grade nines, we had confounded the educational process with our high expectations? Perhaps, by being younger, less experienced, their vision of drama that much narrower, they could only rationalize their difficulties by laying the blame upon the teacher.

It is up to drama teachers who care about the quality and value of the subject to articulate what drama is and how it operates. Maxine Greene (1980, in Kridel, 1984, p. 305) impresses upon us the depth of knowing necessary to develop any sort of argument for the importance of the artistic-aesthetic domain in our age. We can interpret her words on another level as expressing the need for explication to those who might consider it trivial, or who, when faced with a report card grade less than good, interrupt our chain-of-consumerism tokenism in granting uncontroversial arts marks with the question, 'Why?' (Burke, p. 12). The truth is that the actual benefits to a child are not readily apparent, but, if Burke is right, parents, students, and colleagues will accept and even welcome process drama if they understand how it works.

Again, I returned to rewarding and penalizing through marks, even in the last project of the fall, commedia dell'arte. I had a conversation with an admired colleague about letting students take more of the responsibility for success in the classroom. We wondered if students possibly were being allowed to be voyeurs of education, passive consumers of entertainment both from the arts teacher and others in the class who are talented and entertaining, passive when they need to be active in their learning. It was a discussion about raising expectations to the level of capability. I wrestled with a definition of student achievement on the commedia unit.
Achievement meant including the elements I had given them, incorporating them in movement and voice, and inventing upon them. They did this according to their relative abilities and dispositions. Where some students were gifted in clowning but without self-discipline, others were gifted at self-discipline and not at humour. Those who instinctively let go of self and disciplined it to achieve humourous meaning obtained an A.

**A major step in the cognitive and affective growth of grade nine drama students could be the intended learning outcome of responding to and using abstract meanings in form (B.C. Drama 8-10 IRP, 1995).** Before beginning to work within abstract forms within our dramas, I wished to create a safe place for the uncovering of literal meaning's response and use. Until the groups could create shared meanings, we could not transfer that into character-creation, movement, sound, pace, tension, focus, and all the other abstract elements which are manipulated to effect understanding. As Davis points out, the growth of human consciousness has been interdependent on the growth of sign systems, including language as its higher achievement (1988).

Assessment became a weapon to reward those who worked thoughtfully both in role or process drama as well as the performance style of commedia, the two units of term one. I found myself with eighty-three grade nine students who loved and had elected drama, but, in my mind, only seven or eight A letter grades at the end of the term. This was far below the department average and below the average in elective courses. My weakening rationalization was that I believed that compared to British curricula and assessment, drama in British Columbia was unexplicated and therefore, success was undefinable. The students were infantilized and ghettoized in the discipline, the world, and the art. I meant to challenge them to do
Even in Britain, where the integrity of Drama as a separate subject was eroded by excluding it from the National Curriculum, the local perception of drama as an artistic subject remained. Included in a description by the British version of the Ministry of Education of what drama is and how it operates (Winston, 1991) were not only the contextual and transforming nature of effective drama, but also the de-mystification of dramatic forms so that children became independent learners on a symbolic level (p. 4), in other words, so that they work within a explicated discipline.

An example of the depth and breadth of learning outcomes there is that children by the age of 11 might achieve the objectives of a number of practical goals, but also the ability to 'recognise good work in drama through a detailed and critical observation of the characters created, the issues involved and the processes employed' (Drama from 5 to 16, p. 5). In Britain, the National Curriculum notwithstanding, it is much more likely that children would work in drama forms from the age of five until sixteen as an unquestioned part of their day at school than it is in North America, where the theories on language and sign are not so readily perceived as being formative of drama theory.

After the commedia unit, I decided to reorganize my groupings of marks for communication to students. I could hear that they were confused by my three main headings of Response, Classwork, and Skills. At least their grading could be more easily comprehended, so I began grouping marks within unit titles and discussed behavioural and skill criteria as we went, lesson by lesson. If I could eliminate misunderstanding about their marks by making them more user-friendly, I might get them interested in taking
responsibility for them within the context of a unit title. At least we would have the language of the elements of the theme of the unit on which to base discourse about assessment and evaluation. This would be a step towards the kind of responsibility-taking I envisioned was true student empowerment within the confines of a classroom.

Without going into the merits or downfalls of Zerull (1990) and Eisner’s connoisseurship and criticism models of assessment, we can at least look at the vocabulary proposed for student self-assessment or any judgement of student work. They name seven modes of aesthetic interaction, labelled ends, operational, or final behaviours, though in the spiral nature of process drama, these chronologies may not matter. They are: perceiving, reacting, creating, conceptualizing, analyzing, evaluating, and valuing (p. 23). This list is, with its wide family of operations for each behaviour, an exciting array of artistic decision-making. It is a source of vocabulary which can help students to differentiate their experiences in and about drama as they move into, or try on behaviours, and to help educators explain to outsiders what goes on everyday. There are other lists, of course. The British Columbia IRP for Drama 8 - 10, for Fine Arts K - 7, and any British model including the Drama in Schools document includes the categories of perceiving, creating and responding further developed into lists of doing on up the scale of Bloom’s taxonomy. Lists can inspire and remind. They help us construct ‘drama’ for others. We just have to be sure to choose/reinvent/misspell/turn upsidedown the words to suit our purpose.

The greatest irony about this influence of cold justice is that this methodology of ‘educational drama’ is based upon principles of caring and empowerment yet defended so cruelly with my assessment sword. I dare to link caring and empowerment; in educational drama, I cannot accept self-
expression without responsibility toward others, without exploration of the caring principle. The danger in the drama classroom is that one might cancel out the other. For example, I faced, in September, many classes of children playing instinctively, expressively, almost animalistically, as if thought was an enemy to expression, as if care was an enemy to creativity. As if thought and care were enemies to empowerment. The approach to the mind through the heart is a principle that I have been attracted by, evidenced in my world by seeing children suddenly click in mentally as they think through role-playing. I was shattered and shocked by the reaction, and assessment was my instinctual response to correct misconceptions about expressivity.

Had I destroyed the warmth of personal relationship with my idealism about drama curriculum and using drama assessment as a weapon to defend it?

**On the contrary, though the adjustment took some time to pay out, there is now a more solid trust between my students and me about what we say drama is and how it operates because I articulated my position to them. If we have made agreements together about what is good work in drama then we are now free to take the risks of more presentational drama, as Verriour advises, and more genuine acts of inquiry, imaginative exploration, and development of expertise, as Burton (1994) summarizes in her treatise calling for a return to studio practice in arts education. Her 'return' is not a claim for expressivity and creativity, but substantive learning which constantly alternates back and forth between studio and outside the studio, accommodating and informing insights from cultural, critical, social, historical, and all other sources. These restructured ideas about what the educative arts are and how they operate are as complex and intelligent as a reading of our world must be.**
I changed my tack and began praising their good efforts and appreciating their ideas as those unique to them. I asked them questions about what they had seen and what they had decided which extend their thinking, and insisted upon at least some seconds of this reflection after every presentation. Over time and with patience, they began to allow these interactions and I felt more comfortable initiating them. The more mature students began realizing reward for their appropriateness and alliances formed among them and between them and me. There were looks, smiles, waitings, for the others to 'catch up'. Our relationships improved through this dialogue about drama, their role-taking improved, and their marks improved.

This modification of my assessment and evaluative methods was one major change experienced in the time of the journal. Maybe because the force to maintain impartiality and objectivity was so great, as a result of other external and internal factors, I actually felt it move from a driving force to a done thing. There was a noticeable difference in my world when I abandoned it. I wonder why I did and what I had seen and thought about which worked upon me to break my idealism into smaller, digestible bits.

The principles of impartiality remain a wise thing to employ when dealing with multitudes in schools, and when dealing with the volatility of adolescence. Idealism is what will continue to help me set and return to a guide, a standard. But these ceased to drive me by the end of the fall term. It could be that I was not worried about them so much as I have more confidence they will always be there. It could be they have been digested and the essential nutrients have been retained for the basic functions. I guess that is what I wanted anyway, just the essence, and then I would go on
to make my own piece of work. I have always been somewhat independent that way, and a quick study of well-delivered lessons, especially from goddesses.
Athene, the Ice Princess

The card of Justice portrays a severely beautiful young woman, dressed in silver helmet and battle armour, seated on a silver throne. To her right hand she holds an upright sword. In her left she holds a pair of scales. Her pale hair and white robes echo the purity of the two white columns and portico which frame her. Beneath her feet is a floor patterned of black and white marble. An owl perches on her left shoulder.

(Sharman-Burke, p. 42)

Athene,

I saw you at the beginning of the party, and then only as you waved good-bye. I am sorry that I did not know how much you had to do with things; you were mostly behind-the-scenes, I take it. Not a detail overlooked, as usual. How do you do it? You must have a mind of steel and more than twenty-four hours in the day. Truly, when you are around, I find myself able to make decisions faster, as cold as a calculator. This would appear to be beneficial as everyone I am connected with admires the fairness of my assessments of things. I feel like a civilizer, through and through.

Unfortunately, and I think I am beginning to understand why, my personal relationships have ebbed somewhat. Oh, perhaps it is because I do not spend enough time with them, forever busy. But I am starting to think now that it may be more to do with this relentless coolness. Maybe I have said a little too much at the wrong time, I don't know. I do appreciate the lessons, though. I know I'll need them from time to time.
After the Storm

I began again, for a third time, and, like Daedalus who lost it all first because of a lack of confidence in himself, a desire for too much control, and second because he betrayed his patron, I, too, left teaching situations because I could not 'go with the flow' and because I felt I did not fit in. The risk of beginning again in a new teaching position, as I did last September, would be that one's personal resources of energy, talent, and knowledge are challenged by the time and empathy required to build trust among the students in one's approach to teaching. A teacher's identity is embodied in her pedagogy.

I had a great willingness, then, fueled by desire, to take this risk of personal depletion. My desire was in the realm of earthly ambition; I would be surrounded by tangible examples of successful teaching which employed, mostly, role drama techniques, or at least, drama as process rather than drama as product. My students and I would speak and act using the language of the process of drama and the subject of our speaking and acting would be that about life which we think is explorable and questionable.

Lacey and Wooland (undated) and Jonothan Neelands (1994) describe a perspective on process drama which might silence those who still doubt that it is the art form Dorothy Heathcote always maintained it is. It is the manifestation of Brecht's 'major pedagogy', where the distinction between actor and spectator is wiped out (Lacey and Woolland, p. 84). It is also embodied in the radical pedagogy of Augusto Boal's Arena Theatre, and Paolo Freire's ALFIN project of Peru where the concept of pleasurable learning, or
education through theatre can be closely compared to educational drama. It is compared in the three ways it challenges conventional theatre practice: 1) the creation and function of character, 2) narrative, and 3) the concept of praxis and spectator-performer relationships (p. 85). In educational drama, the role is really an attitude because the dilemma is more important than the individual. The narrative is negotiable among the participants and may move in any time direction. The participants are, in Heathcote's words, 'spect-actors'. They work inside, at times stretching, dramatic art and popular culture forms which may polish up well for a performance to an outside audience. But the learning happens as the spect-actors reflect upon before, during, and after their playing.

It remains my ambition to leave a program where students work sensitively together to build moments, scenes and plays which extend their knowledge not only of themselves, but of others, and of how the world works. But my desire for this school-year was to build among my students the beginning of trust in my approach to teaching drama, and even further, to develop with them some common tools for using drama to explore what we know. The first few months of building the program have yielded enough positive experiences that this beginning of trust is evident. And because of that, my identity is intact, though of course different, from what it was in August, 1997. My dreams are preserved and my unique pedagogy is established with the only sense of permanence one can expect in a public school.

I proceeded with the words of Roger I. Simon (1987) behind me when he described empowerment pedagogy as a project of possibility through a quote of Sartre (1963, in Simon, p. 372), 'as an activity determined by both real and present conditions, and certain conditions still to come which it is trying to bring into being'. Its broad aim is the transformation of the
relation between human capacities and social forms, more particularly, the expansion of both forms to accommodate capacities, and capacities to realize new forms. In educational drama terms, I wish to stretch our imaginations to embrace more drama structures, and to develop new structures together which will express our great capacities. Throughout his argument, though, he constantly reiterates the question, 'empowerment for what?' He states that without a vision/a morality, empowerment is reduced to a method for participation with democracy as an end and not a means. It is not moral merely to give voice; it is moral to define future action based on voices heard.

The drama program at this school is mine now and mine to develop, a drama program identifiable not only by its effect upon drama teacher-student relationships, but on its outward appearance of student interest, productivity and presentation, and physical resources.

The school, unique in its place amid the reorganization of the district, is in transition from junior high (grades eight to ten) to a hybrid middle this year (grades seven to nine) to a school without designation next year (grades seven to ten), to a further category-free state the year after (grades eight to eleven), to a secondary in the year 2000-2001 (grades nine to twelve). This means that the current oldest students will continue to be the senior grade until they graduate. It is for this reason that I harboured such concern for the relationship between myself and these grade nine drama students. For the next four years I might be able, with their support, to produce some tangible evidence of the effectiveness of my drama program. Whether their numbers were reduced or not over the next years, I hoped that those students who remained with the program would understand and accept and be able to work creatively within the loose boundaries of drama the way I
saw it. I have higher hopes for my current grade seven and eight students; they have no comparisons to make.

I wanted, I want, them to be able to consider serious topics, to work cooperatively together, and to build presentable dramas which evidence that appropriateness of thought and action I feel are expected outcomes of process drama. That an A to Z representation of the outcomes of the process could be:

abstract, blythe, caring, democratic, empowering, fun, genuine, helpful, inclusive, just, knowledgeable, lyrical, mental, non-conforming, obtainable, physical, quintessential, reverent, self-disciplined, topical, understanding, valuable, well-bred, x-rayed, youthful, and zany.

Here are the first three lessons of a unit I designed based on Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* which employ role drama, or teacher and students working in role in real time. The entire unit, whether employing the techniques of questioning and role playing which constitute pure role drama, or simply using drama strategies of a more presentational or exercise nature but with the deepening and slowing down necessary for questioning and clarifying values, is what I call process drama.

The first lesson with the grade eights was introduced by reminding them they had expressed an interest in doing some Shakespeare a few days before. I had chosen *The Tempest* as the story to explore because it included a very dramatic storm and shipwreck to start off with, topical because the film, *Titanic*, had just been released, and because the subject of colonialism would arise in their Humanities 8 course at some time later this year. Many students were excited, though some expressed some trepidation
at the mention of Shakespeare.

The appropriation and politicizing of Shakespeare's texts has gone on for a long time now (Dollimore, 1985, p. 9-10), both before and after his lifetime. I revise the conservative interpretation of this play as a metaphysical jump at the New World by imagining that Shakespeare put great care into the writing of the relationship between Caliban and Prospero and the debates over the usefulness and future of the island. It is really an unraveling of the colonial discourses of his day. Viewed with post-colonialist perspective, the text and action of the play is alive with clues to the phallocentric, ethnocentric ambitions of Prospero and European colonists in general.

We were still sitting on the floor after the warmup game Blob Tag where students must maintain contact with each other in an every increasing number of tagged individuals: a “blob”. They chase down untagged members until one remains who wins the game. I asked them what they knew of Shakespeare already, and after a few comments like, “He wrote plays”, “He spoke Shakespearian”, I asked if they knew when he lived and where. I filled in some of the gaps in their knowledge, enough to spark some interest and enough to remember for now. He had been apprenticed to be a butcher but ran away to London to become an actor. He married at an early age and commuted between Stratford and London to maintain his career. He wrote thirty-seven plays between 1590 and 1616. And he died on his birthday.

I showed them a synopsis of the story of the play, knowing that the work they would do would not concern itself with discovering how things turned out, but in uncovering what the events of the story might mean to us. As they already had some skill in directing tableaus, or still images, I asked them to create five tableaus in groups of six which showed the height of the
action of five main events. They had to choose the events and then assign roles and memorize their position and expression for each image. They presented these, using the lights as blackouts between each tableau. At the end of the first lesson, and after each presentation, I asked questions about their decisions, roles played, and commented upon and praised their tableau-making. I evaluated the students this day on their cooperation within the group, their effort and imagination in placing themselves within a new story, and their technical skill.

This was the beginning of the reflective thinking which I wanted my students to access throughout the work. As Swackhammer (undated) and Edmiston (1993) note, reflective practice allows students to learn more after they experience active participating in the learning process. When the student can discern the purpose of the process, she learns more, and this requires reflective thinking by both the student and the teacher. 'Without designing opportunities for student reflection into the drama,..... drama does not accomplish all that it should' (Swackhammer, p. 26).

The second lesson began with a guided relaxation. They were asked to lie on the carpeted floor on their backs with eyes closed and arms at their sides. They had done an exercise like this before and looked forward to the peace. After some giggling and adjusting, most students seemed to be relaxed, still, and breathing deeply. The guided relaxation involves the imagery of warmth, light, and heaviness. They gradually work from toes to head relaxing muscles and concentrating on letting go of tension. I narrated the story of a group of nobles who had hired a sailing ship to take them home to Milan after a wonderful wedding they had attended far away. The nobles arrived in carriages at the dock and mariners of the ship they would be traveling on hastened down the plank to load their many trunks and
valises onboard. Finally it was time to sail and the nobles went aboard, chatting and enjoying the sunny weather. The mariners hurried about handling ropes and oars and steering a safe passage out of the harbour.

Narrative and music stimulus at this point, though not of Shakespeare's text, opens the possibility of making this drama a shared creation. I will juxtapose and integrate whatever other discipline I can to elicit what I intuit might reside as a meaning response within us. When students talk, they make their semi-conscious awareness of meaning conscious, and the consequences of their actions are made conscious, too, making acting on impulse less likely (Edmiston, p. 3). That is, creating it together makes it more likely that we will honour it together.

I asked them to sit up, with eyes closed and open their ears to the story within the music I was about to play. I told them it was about a terrible storm and the wreck of a ship in the old days of sails and wooden hulls. After playing one or two minutes of Wagner's overture to The Flying Dutchman, I asked them to open their eyes. Immediately going into role, I told them of a terrible storm which arose suddenly and inexplicably in the middle of one fine day of sailing. My description was five or six sentences long and used some language of a journal from William Strachey's account of a shipwreck in 1610, the same one Shakespeare is said to have read which inspired him to write the play. I looked around the room. The students were attentive and engaged, sitting cross-legged, scattered. I ventured to ask them if they had stories like this. What awful visions did they remember of that shipwreck? One by one they put up their hands and told their stories. Some were in role, as "The waves crashed over the deck and I felt sure we were going to go over," and, "It was a terrible roaring and crashing of water. We lost some sailors." Others answered as if they were in a class
calling for an answer, explaining how ships sink, what storms look like. Oneoy on my left, having trouble understanding my role-playing, or lacking the
conviction to go into role himself, kept putting his hand up and blurting out,
"Ms. Atchison, are we......are you.......are we supposed to....?" He looked
around. I waited a bit, finally understanding the questions as those requiring
some assurance of the dangerous structure upon which we had embarked,
and I answered him. "Vik, we're all storytellers now. You can tell about the
shipwreck you were in if you want." A boy nearby grinned and rolled over to
him. "We're in role," he whispered, laughing.

They were, in fact, active constructors of their understanding of the drama
world, as Piaget theorized children acquired knowledge, as an interaction
with the environment. Further, they are in the position of both creating the
drama text and interpreting what happens. They are both reflecting and
experiencing at the same time (Heathcote and Bolton, in Edmiston, p. 9).

"Would you like to enact the storm and the shipwreck?", I asked, knowing
the answer. They were ecstatic, but a few of the more mature girls looked at
each other doubtfully. "First we have to build the ship. Do you know what
they looked like? You can use anything in the room." Some students
wandered around a bit while others proceeded to drag furniture and set
pieces into the middle of the space. All twenty-six eventually worked on
this for fifteen minutes or so, in pairs and groups and some worked on their
own. I wandered around asking questions and making others aware of what
some were doing. Many students, after building something, explained to
those nearby what it was; others watched; all were engaged at some level.
One inventive boy employed the pile of shoes by the door, shoe by shoe, to
mark off the railings of the ship, and I offered a large white sheet to be hung
as the sail. I asked them if they were satisfied with the design and for
everyone to acquaint themselves with the areas of the ship.

We spent some time at the blackboard writing down their movement words which would describe their motions on a ship during a storm as well as the actions, behaviours, and jobs of those aboard. It was crowded, but by natural selection students found a place and work to do as either passenger or mariner. I suggested we try miming the actions of the reactions to the storm, and the music began. After two tries at this (some students had difficulty staying in role because of the cramped conditions and the violence of the actions, distracted by their classmates and still unable to play a role seriously), I was satisfied that we had some semblance of a drama.

I handed out snippets of dialogue both from Act I, scene i of the play and from the dramakit unit *The Island* which were learned and performed in pairs. I chose these texts because they shout out what I consider to be the underlying tension of the play, status. After assigning students to rehearse and memorize these four-line exchanges between noble and mariner, simply named A and B on their scripts, I chose four or five first pairs to perform their work during the miming of the storm with music. The loudness of the music and the chaos onboard created a heightening of intent so strong that voices rose, passion erupted, and drama occurred! We replayed this twice until every pair had had a turn, and some went twice. While dismantling the ship, and putting on shoes, reflection ensued about how exciting it had been, how real, and how much fun. The bell had gone. “That was so short!” cried one. “Drama rules!” was scrawled on the blackboard.

Though here the students did not function as textual playwrights, they did function as audience to their own work as they were improvising the action and performing text. I intervened as Heathcote’s model showed me to
(Wagner, 1976), pressing them with questions and challenges to make it real, because I wanted them to have a significant experience. They were unused to working together and were unaware of dramatic structures and theatrical conventions. I wanted to empower their thinking by putting them in the experience of taking on an attitude, and took the responsibility to manipulate that. But I handed over the construction of the meaning of that shipwreck to them, transferring to them when I could the power to control the scene internally.

I evaluated each student on their participation in the discussions and shipbuilding and on their engagement during the playing of the storm drama. At this point in grade eight, I expected them to choose and maintain a role with only a little bit of help from me. Almost all of the students were finally successful.

Within the third lesson I meant to address the discourse of colonialism, or rather, post-colonialism. We began with a nostalgic look back at the last class, a quick game of Shipwreck where the last person to perform a command is out ("Port", "Starboard", "Bow", "Salute the captain", "Lifejackets", and a new one, "Titanic lifeboats", where there was a maximum of three in a boat).

I began the work with an exercise in judgement. Based on their dialogue last day, were they noble or mariner? Nobles to one side of the room, mariners to the other. Who had higher status? Who had higher status during the storm? The students contributed opinions and explanations about why the nobles had 'got in the way' during the storm at sea. "They think they know everything."
I began a true guided improvisation starting from the relaxed state, lying on the back, eyes closed, warm, soft, sand beneath us, body de-tensed. They sat up, opened their eyes, and gradually stood, looking around them, up and down the beach. The walked over pebbles, through tall grasses, over boulders, and looked from one end of the beach to the other. Not a soul appeared, so in pairs they began a cautious exploration of the interior of the island. My narration cautioned them not to go too far, but to be sure to look for fresh water and a possible food source. Eventually they were guided to build a shelter and to collect food, start a fire, and to meet back on the beach.

I asked them what they had discovered. Some discoveries were eerie, some were beautiful, some were dangerous. Although a few students took the opportunity to inject some possibilities for dramas which were not within my plan of action, all comments were accepted for the time being. The image of a paradisical state emerged from their talk so I asked them if, as powerful nobles, they wished to claim this island as their own. All they had to do was plant their family shield and bring home the island’s map coordinates. Every person spoke in turn and various viewpoints were clarified. They would keep the island and make sure no one else ruined it. They would go home and forget they ever saw it so that it would remain pristine. They would go home and forget they ever saw it because it did not interest them. They would claim it for their family and convert it into a posh adventure resort or theme park. I ended the reflection by telling them that Shakespeare considered all these options, too, when he wrote the play. And told them about Divil’s Island (the Bermoothes) and the tragic tale of the sailors who discovered what a true paradise it was.

I brought out copies of Carl Sandburg’s poem, Get Off This Estate. In it, the
ownership of land is challenged by someone who is prepared to fight for it as had the ancestors of the present owners. The exercise is done in pairs. I ask the students to focus on the meaning of each line, as though it was a single intent, and express it in a single gesture and finally, to express the whole poem through gesture alone. I then asked them to abstract the concepts of ownership and status through the employment of a prop like a piece of furniture or set in their acting space, making one move per line. While they worked through these acting skills, they also deepened their understanding of the implication of colonialization of the new world, and of the status of ownership. "What if someone had been on the island from the very beginning," I asked them, "and you just hadn't seen them yet. Would you still take it?"

**Here is the central dilemma of the role drama. If the students are committed to keeping the island for themselves, whether in pristine state or not, they must face the idea of previous ownership.** Dollimore (p. 29) reminds us of when Caliban, Prospero's 'savage and deformed slave' enters cursing the expropriation of his island and exits declaring that he will 'be wise hereafter,/And seek for grace'. This is another example of Shakespeare's theme of containment of subversion and disorder, of containment of a mutinous force by the authority that created the force in the first place: 'This thing of darkness,' Prospero says of Caliban at the end of the play, 'I acknowledge mine.'

The next few lessons involved improvisations and textual work of mariners or nobles meeting Caliban, the native of the island, and debate and role-playing using the differing attitudes and beliefs of the New World colonialists. In original monologues and improvisations, students find Caliban's voice, the 'other', in their own voices. And they also find
Prospero's and the drunken sailors'. The safety of the role allows them the exploration of attitude, and reflection during and after the playing allows them modification of meaning.

What I have passed on to them is surely the social experience and memory of having built together the start of a great drama in three hours. But specifically, they were involved in a great spectrum of drama forms and skills. They were expected to direct themselves and each other in tableau, gesture, and movement. Their voices were employed in a heightened way during the script and poem exercises. The idea of focus and metaphor were begun in both the building of the ship and in the performance of the poem. They built roles based on attitudes and belief in the exploration and takeover of the island, and the shipboard pairwork. They worked in mime with music as a stimulant, and with and without my narration. They told improvised stories. We reflected on how speech and movement within these structures/forms were so successful and why. At the beginning and end of these three lessons, I defined what we were doing as mostly role drama, meaning we would all be in role. They know it is different from rehearsing and acting out already-written plays, and different from games and exercises which are mainly comedic. They have a sense it is about wider considerations than theatre skills or even improvisation skills; that the essence of our work was the making of our meanings of nature, status, ownership, fear, work, and history.

These highly symbolic and creative improvisations have aesthetic and social/philosophical functions. As Neelands warns (p. 4), critics of improvisational drama in education are apprehensive about the foreseen diminishment and impoverishment of the literature of theatre. I cannot see where any of this work has diminished or impoverished my students'
interest and knowledge of the literature of theatre. I do not protest because I used Shakespeare's work as a starting point, or even because I used scraps of actual script, but because I know my students made clearer understanding of the attitudes of post-colonial discourse than a conventional treatment of that play would have allowed them to make.

I gave them some things which have taken me a long time to build. The unit itself was begun in part in an essay I wrote on politicizing Shakespeare in EDCI 565B, Global Education, in March, 1996. I rewrote the work as a role drama where students, in role as United Nations Human Rights investigators, do covert evidence-gathering on a colony run by a man named Prospero. Though I had begun this unit with the shipwreck as well, midway through it, my grade eight students were asked to switch to present day roles of covert U.N. Human Rights Investigators, consider the Charter of Human Rights, and proceed with evidence gathering involving looking more closely at the script of The Tempest. While this role drama was highly successful, it took five weeks to play out, with the trial of the miserable Caliban, and the rape of the island by developers. I shortened and enriched the unit later with the intent of eventually including the end of the story, the attempt upon Prospero's life by Caliban, and a critical-feminist interruption of the inhumane treatment of Ariel and Miranda by Prospero. With time constraints, I felt this year's work was an injustice to the potential of the piece, but a stimulating introduction to the dilemmas of the play.

As I have taken a long time to refine a unit of work with the best balance of student interest and engagement in the process, and richness of content, so will my students take a long time to become aware of the potentially dynamic and educational nature of process drama. But they show awareness when they willingly accept my direction into the next structure of the day.
looking forward to the next thoughtful passion. They express awareness when they link game to playing to enacting to poem to Shakespeare to Humanities to life. They exhibit skillfulness when they direct and talk about how something should look, sound, and mean.

I am most happy when the meanings reflect my values of democracy and reverence for life. I am most happy when I feel assured that students value what they have done.
The Legacy of Daedalus

The card of the Ten of Pentacles portrays Daedalus as an old man, his brown hair now liberally streaked with grey. He is comfortably seated with his children and grandchildren around him, the patriarch and founder of a line. On either side of him, mounted on vine-draped columns, hang ten golden pentacles, five to his left and five to his right. In his lap nestles an infant playing with a golden rattle. To his left stands a woman of around thirty, clothed in green and wearing a beautiful golden necklace. At his feet, a boy of ten plays with a toy golden horse. In the distance can be seen a landscape of rich green mountains and calm blue sea.

(Sharman-Burke, p. 185).

My dear Athenian,
You lived your life fully, willingly taking on its challenges regardless of the consequences. You began again, over and over, and can now acknowledge the good and evil which precipitated and coloured your decisions to take risks, to abandon, and to grasp success. You should sense some kind of fulfillment of destiny here. Knowing your driving ambition was to build something to pass on by which you would be remembered after your passage through, you can define your destiny through the objects which your children and grandchildren now play with and wear.

How much do they attribute their possession of these toys and tools to your work? And how conscious are these people of their worth? You yourself did not pursue this dream in the worlds of imagination or the mind or love, but only in the world of what is real. Maybe they will know and attribute as much as they themselves value worldly ambition.
Part III  Heightening the Tension

Story 7.  Identity:

Who's Doing My Job?

Janis and I are standing on the stage. It is mid-morning and we are about to begin a technical run-through of the drama club production. We have been working all day, and the night before, Janis and Meagan and I, the three 'techies'. Janis is the assistant director and Meagan is the stage manager and they are both fourteen years old. The cast waits unconcernedly for us to finish.

Last night, after we ate pizza and drank Cokes, we ran through the technical cues. There are many blackouts and sound effects in the play and lacking a crew, it falls to the two girls to operate everything backstage. We decided to leave most of the scene-changing to the cast as there are twelve of them and any more bodies in the tight space behind the curtains would likely cause bedlam. Meagan was surrounded by tape recorder, lighting console, and door chimes. Janis had told her she must run through it once by herself as she, Janis, would be seated in the audience for all performances, as assistant director. Meagan giggled and said okay. We began. There were a few glitches. From the dark we heard, "I'm okay". "Just a minute." "There!" and "Hurray!" This is the sequence of learning a show. I have high hopes that the game Meagan will come through in the end and if she does make a mistake, will persevere until she can make the cue happen. When she informs us she will not be able to run one of the performances because of a commitment, I turn to Janis. "You will have to learn the board, too, then." "Okay, no problem," is the response. We are the greatest team. Janis takes
a turn running through the cues, but not without some consternation. I think to myself that she doesn’t like to be wrong, somewhat like me.

Driving each of us in these challenging moments is the myth of the unitary person. At this point in Janis’s and my cases, the masculine-identified trait of technical know-how is appropriated for the purpose of constructing an oppositional identity which resists penetration by the feminine-identified trait of asking for help. But, as Britzman (1993) points out, if we simply accept such role-modeling because we look like we are producing stability, completeness, clarity, and rightness, then we neglect insight into the mobile and shifting conditions that make identity such a contradictory place to live. In not liking being wrong, we resist the dialogue which might unravel how our gendered selves are tied to specific histories and social meanings of subordinating masculinity.

She and I are standing at the bottom of the ladder. I have hung ten lights and focused them. Twenty times up and down the sixteen-foot ladder. I like technical work, but I am tired and also wonder if Janis would like to begin a new career. Assistant directors should know what every job feels like. Janis grasps the Strand ellipsoidal and I plug the twist-lock adaptor into its cable end. A safety cable sprouts from around its handle. Janis is ready. She has watched me do this many times. She looks up first. This is something I do. Light in the left hand, pliers in back jeans pocket, right hand for the ladder. I hold the ladder, though it does not need the support.

Janis climbs high. She stops six or seven rungs from the top. She is not a tall person and begins to state that she cannot reach the lighting pipe but realizes the absurdity of her thought before she can utter it and going one rung higher will certainly elevate her to the level of work and then she is
standing on the floor beside me. “I’ll do it,” I offer. The lights are heavy and height can disorient the soul. She is already reclimbing the ladder. She spends an eternity at the top. Hangs the light, fastens the safety cable, tightens the C-clamp, and pushes the strange twist-lock plug into its socket in the dark. The stage at that height is a museum of dust. The plug flummoxes Janis. Twice I offer to complete the plugging. Though I have shown her, on the ground, how the plug goes in, I suspect that things seem different up there. I wait as she insists. She arrives down and we try the light. It does not work. “Well, it must be the bulb,” I surmise. This is a common enough occurrence. Or it was the adaptor cord. We’ll never know, at least not at this hour.

During the second run-through with the cast, I climb the ladder and twist the plug in. It works.

I re-tell this story from my journal because I know there was something I missed, something which happened between Janis and me that I needed to feel again to see if I could name it. It lay somewhere around watching the way Janis climbed the ladder. A first time. How does she summon her courage? It may lie in the same place as mine, but she has a different climb.

I was having difficulty maintaining focus in a lesson with grade eights one day. I asked Cal, who is a beginning drama teacher and observes my lesson during his prep block in order to teach it later, if he would mind leaving the room so that I could deal with the problem. It was early September and I wasn’t sure how I was going to do that. I found him later, in his room, and explained how uncomfortable I had felt about asking him to leave. He wasn’t at all offended and said he thought it was quite appropriate that he leave. I indicated how frustrated I was with the situation in the class. “Oh, I think
they were nervous. About acting," he said. "It's pretty new to them." I had not considered that the students might be 'acting out' because they were afraid.

Later in the week, I attended a district drama specialist meeting. It was arranged that I would conduct a role drama workshop later in the term and that beginning drama teachers would attend it. Along with them, the secondary teachers would send senior drama students to 'help' me conduct the workshop and later to help these beginning teachers with the drama in their own schools. It sounded like a good plan, but I rankled at the offer of 'help'. These senior secondary students probably had never experienced true role drama in school as I was one of two or three in the district who did it. In fact, their performance-arts backgrounds might unintentionally skew the experience for others.

I confessed my chagrin at these two perceptions to the district Fine Arts Coordinator, who is a friend. She was supportive and said, "And you can take that; you can handle it." And I guess I could, but it took a lot of shoulder shrugging.

In another story of interrupted presentation of self, I talked over my new teaching experiences to a colleague who had taken a position in a similar situation. She had also experienced difficulty adjusting her desire to run a process drama based classroom with senior students who had never experienced the sort of beliefs and attitudes necessary for that kind of work. Inheriting a student teacher along with this discouraging history proved to be a surprise to her, for the student teacher passed on some wise perceptions on how best to accept and work within the context as it was.
I consider the struggle and resistance of girls like Janis, and me, to create the possibility of oppositional space in our outer and inner situations. Writers on gender identification like Jackson and Salisbury (1996), Merten (1996), Brown (1996), Britzman (1993), and Davies (1989) identify the discursive practices through which males and females are created as opposites and through which people become identifiably one or the other. Davies gives particular attention to the way individuals learn discursive practices through which to locate themselves as part of a social world. This is a process which locks in, or limits, the individual's perception of self-identity into masculine and feminine subject positions. Further, playing out the role of these limited identities, whether ours were 'girlie' or as in Janis's and my case, 'macho', unsuccessfully attempts to confuse or shut down the contradictory selves within us.

Two weeks later, I ask Meagan if she will turn on the lighting system for her drama class's presentations of commedia projects. I have, since the drama club production, shown anyone who wanted to know how to operate it. There are now several people within each of my four grade nine classes who love to 'turn on the board'. Meagan confesses that she does not know how, but tries a few switches. Did Janis do this for her every time during the drama club production? Janis arrives a few seconds later and marches over to us with, "Who's doing my job?" She takes over and light cascades.

Did she imagine that it was her job to the exclusion of anybody else learning it? Could she predict how Nathan, Geoff, and Mike had learned this in a minute in the preceding class? I wonder to myself what would happen between us if I addressed this pride. I decide Janis is bright enough to assimilate the idea of 'letting go' in her own time. It is more important to construct identity at this point so I say nothing. Janis looks down, looks
away, and digs a trench between us in the ensuing weeks. I am somehow linked to a painful learning experience for her and she is angry in her humility.

I resist the impulse to identify this story as one of pluralism. Janis has to find the words to tell her own story as many ways as she can, but in feminist theory, she was also participating in a larger story of gender as a relation of unequal and oppressive power in which those who possess masculine-identified traits can control, inscribe, describe, and predict all that is not masculine (Britzman, p. 29 - 30).

When Canadian Olympic speed skater, Susan Auch, said in television promotions run during the Nagano Games, “Keep your dreams alive, keep an open mind to new ideas, and you’ll be amazed at what you can do,” I was reminded of how minds can easily close to ideas which are new or come from a new source.

In the spirit of this quote, the procedural outcome of my analysis of my own problems of identity in regards to teaching drama, and of Janis’s struggle with identity in regards to peer relations, ought to be an interruption of our stories to understand our feelings. Any interruption by something outside (read, viewed, discussed, experienced) potentially breaks up the assumed safety and security of our own actually insecure constructions of the unitary identity. In Krogness’s work on integrating drama into an English class (1991), students of contradictory and shaky identity at first mistrusted the move to abstract and figurative thinking because they had learned to become satisfied with intellectual drudgery. Here, I add Gilmour’s reason for locating expression within discourse, to avoid the separation of imagination and the senses from conceptual activity (p. 517). For Janis, the operation of
the lighting control board as an expression of identity needs to be located within the discourse of, for the moment, peer relations. For me, the teaching of process drama as an expression of identity needs to be located within the discourse of empathy. Otherwise, without these examples of relational knowing, we inhabit increasingly narrowed and fragile worlds; we are the impoverished, misunderstood, and possibly annoying 'artistes'.

Early in the school year I introduced a tableau activity to some students. It was a social, one-off, non-contextual kind of lesson where I wished to assess their tableau skills. As they worked on this in groups, I wandered around. Breanne asked me if we would do much tableau. Guessing right away that she might be bored I asked her if she had done a lot of it last year. The answer was yes, so I hurriedly let her know that it would be quite tiring to have to do it over and over, but that just for now I was making sure that the students who hadn't taken Drama could operate easily in it. And that any tableau we did would be part of bigger productions, stories, or projects.

Later on, within a written self-evaluation, I asked students to describe how they had accepted, not blocked, the work of their acting partner in improvisatory work. In the question, I defined 'accepted' as 'listened to, incorporated, advanced upon', to cue a better response. One student answered, "I know what it means and I do that." She did not describe an example as asked for, but responded to what she read as a judgement, a criticism, an instruction. Allowing that she was probably inexperienced at written self-evaluation and recall, she still had a greater need to aim her personal defense at me as a criticism of my perceived insensitivity to her accomplishment. It was early November already. I was worried that I would never open the door to new ideas and techniques if my students could not talk about what they were doing without being defensive. I put reflection on
a back-burner, until I could find another way to open it.

In John C. Gilmour's arguments against discipline-specific training, he discusses the educational goal of developing skills in symbolic thinking that include exploring personal and cultural memory. He cites Anselm Kiefer's artistic practice as 'suggesting that the traditional emphasis on self-expression in arts education has to be supplemented with a richer model of how to promote self-understanding' (p. 514). Judith Burton's thought that, 'if the growth of children's responses to materials keeps pace with their expanding view of self and world, then materials can be used to stretch out to the world, used to integrate inner sensibilities with the outer experiences that occasioned them' (in Gilmour, p. 511). If the review of structures and skills was disempowering to these students, it was because they only associated them with the visceral effects of performing them, not with content, and surely not with meaningful personal or cultural content.

I am like Janis and Breanne and the miffed self-evaluator. I, too, like to succeed immediately at a myriad of skills so that I am always assured of some sort of expression of my identity. I feel that offers of assistance made to me uncover my neediness. My soul, too, is written on my body.

Another beginning drama teacher at my school utters, "Fine arts has ruined my life!" over and over at the staff retreat. I do not know what she means, but I guess she is having a difficult time teaching Drama 7. I am disappointed because I thought the course planning I did was failure-proof. I pass by her room on the top floor one afternoon and hear another teacher advising her that kids just love Theatresports, that they eat it up. I imagine she has been unhappy with the course plan and he has been giving her some new ideas. But I am opposed to teaching Theatresports because it is
contentless and I have the philosophical readings to back me up. Of course, I later hear that other admired process drama teachers, like me, let kids play Theatresports occasionally as a break from the intensity of role drama.

How do I know which advice and criticism to embrace, which to ignore, and which to defend against? This attitude of holding too tightly to the things which are bound up with my sense of self-worth might contribute to a stagnation of creative energy and self-expression. I won't give up on my commitment to process drama, but I might let go of the control on students and others. I might gain something while I lose something.

I am playing the piano, accompanying the school choir at the concert on the last day of school before the Christmas break. We are performing together a beautiful carol which sounds simple but has enough challenge for my out-of-practise fingers. I play and listen intently. We are making music. Near the end of this touching piece, a teacher looms up on my right and flashes a camera in my face as I tinkle the last dying bell sounds in the treble end of the keyboard. My face is intent upon the effect of the sounds. The audience applauds and I playfully grab his arm and swing him away. “Ah, did you have to do that?” I ask, jokingly. I am shaken and incensed that he had not the sensitivity to understand what I was doing, up there in the treble end of the keyboard. “Now that’s a better face!” he cries as I pretend to laugh, and snaps another photograph. I go and sit down on the bench on the side of the gym, knowing I have fulfilled his expectations by ‘cheering up’. Performers ought to have happy faces and never frown.
Dear Daedalus,

Oh dear! You fell in love with your own first awkward words, applauded your own first brave attempts, believing the flattery, and found at last some identity to call your own. Founded upon such shaky ground, no wonder you clutch it to your heart so. If you only knew how much more there was to learn and do. You aren't even at the hard part yet.

Advice-givers would say to you, "Embrace the boy! Make a partnership. Open your heart and give some praise and encouragement where it is due and can do some good." Knowing that staying so locked in position the way you are is dangerous in fast moving times. But you cannot see the future, alas, and have no room to give.

You'll learn the hard way, by losing it all, the world around you, and your pride. You will discover the pain of believing that you are what you do and make; you are really only part of what happens between you and others! As soon as you start enjoying the slippery ride of giving it away, relaxing the knees a bit, you'll pick up speed, gain confidence in the turns, absorb the bumps.
I have a student teacher, and when she arrived in my classroom in October, she brought into it fresh eyes, fresh airs, and fresh spirit.

At first, used to observation of my teaching by learning colleagues, teaching aides, and visitors from far-off lands, I felt comfortable with the purpose of her two week visit. She was to observe my teaching style, the learning styles of my students, and the everyday world of a teacher. She shadowed me for half of the day, and spent the other half shadowing the English teacher who shared her sponsorship.

As the days progressed, aware of her fine training at the university in process and role drama, I became uncomfortable with the dearth of certain practises I regard as integral to a good drama classroom routine. For example, I had been holding off doing role drama with the younger grades until my colleagues could attend a role drama workshop I was giving later in the month. And, though I had been trying to get to some serious work with my grade nines, they did not yet allow that definition of drama to interrupt their definition. Their work was shallow and usually comedic and I, rather than meet their resistance with patience, set them off on tasks which invariably frustrated me in their outcome, and disappointed them by my evaluation.

When she arrived, I saw this work for what it was reflected in her eyes. I saw my impatient, denying self, and I was surprised. My expectation of the observation process was that she would admire. Instead, her face was
serious, her brow was furrowed, and she seemed silent. I asked her a few times what she thought of the level of thought in their work. Not very good, was her reply. She had been used to a higher level of thought, deeper consideration, more mature attitudes in the training she had received and in the limited observation she had done with a respected drama teacher in a high school in another city. Whatever the reason for her contemplation, I took it to be disappointment. Though she spoke positively and excitedly about the school, the administration, and the teaching of her two sponsor teachers, I embraced the challenge of improving the work of my students before she returned in January. Were the furrows a consideration of how she was to teach and who she was to be?

Were the furrows in my brow a consideration of how I was to teach and who I was to be? Faced with student resistance and the usual constraints of teaching like time, health, and working environment, had I not taken three steps back? Mezirow (1981 and 1991 in Brookfield, 1994, p. 211) stresses how incremental fluctuations in perspective transformation are much more likely than dramatic paradigm shifts. It is a rhythm of learning which is distinguished by increased ability to take alternative perspectives, challenge assumptions, and tolerate ambiguity, but is characterized by moments of falling back. This is when I am convinced that I will never understand process drama enough to project a model of it and I return to the security of the known. Trying to make some sense of the chaotic reflections upon my fearful decisions, I invoked the invisible community of practitioners like Bolton, Heathcote, O'Neill, and many others I have met and read to reinvigorate my quest for critical success in drama teaching. Most importantly, I made some real contacts to at least find audience for the discomfort and dissonance I felt (Brookfield, p. 213). Putting my regression into words helped re-articulate the belief I had in the pedagogy.
I telephoned my principal that weekend and he listened to this articulation for two hours as we drank coffee. The first thing I did after this epiphany was to completely rewrite the program for the grade sevens and eights. It became role drama centred, the content became more important than the performance, and I began training my students in explicit knowledge of the drama process. I left the considerations for the neophyte staff drama colleagues behind me, quickly explaining that they could do what they wanted in the meantime, but that I had to abandon the work I had set out in August as unsatisfying.

I kicked up my heels and sped on ahead when you discover flying in a dream, the strongest sensation is that of freedom in all directions, the wind is your servant, stopping means falling:

even that, only a breath away a sudden upsurge flips you over onto your back and you rise, arms out, a thought controls the ailerons, and the countryside lies beneath you in a dish;

my mind is an ocean.

Brooke Comfort returned in January to teach one or two lessons a week until her practicum officially began in February. I watched her make her first steps and, besides her bouncing good nature and positive view of the possibilities and pleasure of drama, found myself praising her seemingly
natural talent at eliciting reflection. She questioned, she listened, she waited, she humoured, and she praised. This brought about a second look at myself. I found myself gazing at my students more benignly and acknowledging the groups' individuals more warmly. I stopped for reflection more often and used those times for description rather than evaluation.

Possibly, with the students, I became the 'guide' of Heathcote's frame distancing as I was Brooke's guide during those reflection sessions after observing her work in the classroom. This distance from experience to frame is the space for which I titled this story. There is a place created now where we, my students and I, and Brooke and I, know how to proceed and from which we can push off.

It does not matter that she is, as yet, not familiar with the whys and hows which govern unit and lesson planning. The effect she made upon me came from the reflection I perceived of me in her eyes. I made a spurt of growth in my regard of the students. My repressed sense of fun re-emerged in unit and lesson plans which gave more room for students to experience success and pride in their efforts. Serious and thoughtful consideration, along with self-disciplined work, were couched in a renewed delight in portraying people flying about in a chaotic world.

In *drama for understanding*, empathy is the link between the heart and the mind (Miller and Saxton, undated). *Drama for understanding*, to differentiate it from drama exercises, dramatic playing, and theatre arts, is dependent on "internal action" (Bolton, 1979). It grows out of that kind of child play Piaget terms 'symbolic', or representational. Also, according to Vygotsky (in Bolton 1979, p. 22), it is not only 'being' in representation, it is
'exploring being', directed toward abstraction. In theatrical terms it is 'action at a distance', and further, in Brechtian terms, it is the means by which we can constantly reflect upon what we have seen and felt. The audience is moved to action, or to put it in classroom terms, the performer-as-audience is moved to action. Verriour's (1985) three modes of drama, dramatic playing, presentation, and performance as private communication, illustrativeness, and public communication help explain how the child (in spiral, not linear time frames) is aware of itself, the social group, and the audience.

The quality of the subjective meaning in the students determines the direction and nature of the drama. For example, the presence of personal feeling irrelevant to the objective meaning of the drama may hamper the drama proceeding directly toward a perspective shift. The presence of personal feeling relevant to the objective meaning of the drama may mean, also, that the result will just be 'playing'. A class with a collective attitude congruent with objective meaning, however, is certainly in a drama orientation (Bolton, 1979, p. 36-37).

Although shifts in perspective only occur during engagement when there is congruent community attitude, the task of the drama teacher is to first ascertain the degree and nature of feeling among students, and choose to start from there. It is necessary to go towards those individual personal relevant and irrelevant feelings as the 'way in' for individual students, and work on a transformation not yet related to the object of the drama.

The teacher uses knowledge of drama to frame the work so that there is reflection (Verriour, 1989); therefore the greatest element of the drama of which the teacher must be aware is the moral dilemma within the dramatic
situation. According to theoreticians like Richard Courtney (1980), Gavin Bolton (1979), Maxine Greene (1989, 1994), and Madeleine Grumet (1978), the way in which teachers can use the special nature of drama to transform children, themselves, and the ecology in which they operate is dependent on informed discourse and reflection with their students. Their consolidated point of view is that curriculum is what happens between the teacher and the student, and good curriculum needs teachers who are themselves changing, attuning, and always moving toward possibilities.

I was surprised many times in the fall term:

that students could criticize so cruelly the teaching and evaluating I so idealistically felt would engage them.
that I would have success with certain individuals and not with others and that I could not predict this with these strangers.
that playing the piano for the choir and singing in a Karaoke contest would elevate me in their eyes.
that the P.E. staff and other staff colleagues could be so vocally supportive of my class and drama club presentations.

*that I would find myself in the middle of a sentence so honest and tangled that I had to finish it.*

My two classes worked through some scenes from Romeo and Juliet by planning and rehearsing their own staging. I broke down the task by insisting upon lines memorized, swordfights choreographed, sets and props cleaned up and stored. I coached groups intimately while other groups rehearsed around us and then I ran through their program of scenes several times before the final performance to ensure their confidence in a successful end. My students seemed confident and happy with their work,
and I was proud of their demeanor and achievements with the script and roles.

Brooke had trouble with commitment and engagement, with group support, and responsible behaviour backstage. She faltered in her self-confidence as I attained confidence and joy in my teaching. I stood, grasping my head, running my hands through my hair, as I attempted to finish, "I really think that kids will own their work if you.........". "I'm sorry, I don't mean to burden you with this right now," she uttered. She had had the worst day. She was sorry for the chaos. I had been sailing on alone, proud of myself and my students, only slightly wary of what was going on in her two classes. "But I've never done this before," she continued.

She hadn't, and I continued with my advice. Break down the tasks, give them room for success, give them something to make and do themselves, let them own it, I thought. The excitement builds, the fun builds, they feel safe. Beliefs about this kind of work found shape as I unclutched my hair and finished the sentence. "......don't take it all on yourself." Even when I direct a play, I am the sole voice like you were, I think, but often I assign a short scene to two or three actors to develop on their own, explaining two or three elements they must include in their staging, celebrating their creativity when they show it to me. In this way everyone becomes busily focused; commitment and engagement occur naturally. Not all of these words; they would have been too many.

If the needs of the individual, personal autonomy, inclusion and diversity, and the idea of knowledge unfolding from within and connecting without are characteristics of transformative education, then drama for understanding, the work of Dorothy Heathcote, Gavin Bolton, and others, fits well into the
theories of the transformational position. Some interesting questions come up, though, about the nature of the transformation itself.

Advocates like Eisner (1990), Darby and Catterall (1994), Renyi (1994), and Gardner (1994) are focused for one reason or another on the intellectual concept-building of arts education. They see transformation not as that of attitude or feeling, and maybe not even that accessed through relation at all, but as related to cognitive development. Mastery brings feelings of self-worth.

Popular books like Emotional Intelligence (1995) and Generation on Hold (1994) warn us of the need to disrupt within our children those passively received discourses of the media and consumerism. Another way of looking at transformation is in the work of those pedagogues concerned with changes in values, like Nel Noddings (1994), Martin (1995), and drama theorists like Bolton, who describe transformation as attitudinal. This is closer to the popular notion of what schools should do: they should promote racial and gender harmony, cultural diversity, in short, become what home could not effectively be in the late twentieth century. Critics ask 'whose home?', which leads me to an inquiry into the ambivalence between feminist-styled empowerment and critical theory. Madeleine Grumet (1988, 1994) most honestly analyzes this ambivalence through her theories of schooling as reproduction. Teachers strive to reproduce themselves in the classroom; curriculum seeks to reproduce its writers.

Yet another look at transformation is the broadening of the forms themselves to embrace multiple realities. While this is a good liberal goal, as Mohanty (1994) points out, a more difficult conceptualization is the kind of plurality that is acknowledged and engaged. She wants a strategic critique
to question the contemporary language of difference, diversity, and power, not an apolitical view of benign variation. It is clear that the nature of difference as it relates to power is not addressed so suspiciously in Bedard's work on multicultural theatre programs (1992), as it is in Neelands' request for a horizontalizing of theatre forms, but that both studies would be enriched by Mohanty's and other feminist post-structuralist critiques of their democratic ends.

I charged on home, planning to spray paint the black set pieces before school the next day, wondering where I left the bundle of safety pins for the costumes, planning the next unit at the end of which there will now have to be a wonderful performance where we will invite more classes to view. I am energized by my students' self-discipline and attunement as they perform in costume with lighting and props. In the next unit they will write their own plays and I will press them to question their assumptions and to continue to develop autonomy. We will begin to build a tradition of that and Drama will be visible.

At this point, I do not attempt to control this mindful air energy with doubt and guilt. I sense that I am on a turbulent path bound to ignore some agendas and honour others, but undeniably energetic. The positive impact of energy at this time of the year illuminates my power and authority, cushions my falls, pulls others along in its wake.
Dear Castor and Polydeuces,

It's a good thing you two don't have a conscience between you! Do you ever look behind to see what damage has occurred? Houses twisted up and chicken coops blown down the river, you set those delicate hooves down only for a second. What fun it must be to explore, experiment, and learn new things. You are prancing, it seems with joy, at the edge of chaos. I welcome these gusts of wind as they swirl the leaves, trees, grasses so that the street looks so different from the yesterdays. I go with you.

I turn and walk backwards for a few seconds and my hair blows across my eyes. We can barely talk, my partner and I, our words are blown away. Our brains are evacuated except for the experience of pleasure at being carried down the sidewalk and we laugh, warmth at our backs. The town is in an uproar; the sky paints a new battle between Sparta and Athens, giants loom and reach, phalanxes mass and attack. I do not care where my feet step or where anybody has gone as I am ten years old again and they will all come home sometime.
Transparency and Perpetual Digesting

Italo Calvino wrote, in his novel Mr. Palomar, about the possible transparency of the world. Mr. Palomar sits in his living room one night and gazes at a gecko pressed to the glass of the window looking out onto his terrace. The gecko is illuminated by the lighting of the living room lamp and Mr. Palomar can observe him darting out his tongue to trap dragonflies. The dragonflies, one by one, are swallowed and travel down the upper digestive track of the gecko. Mr. Palomar watches the lumps of the partially digested insects as they are pushed with peristaltic action to the gullet. They squirm and fold and finally enlarge the stomach. He contemplates the ease with which the gecko traps them; it makes no other movement of feet, claws, or neck. If he was a little further off, or there was a little less light emanating from his house, these digestive operations would go unnoticed.

Finally, Mr. Palomar wonders, as he becomes aware of himself warmly contained within the living room, the gecko and the dragonflies pressing upon his 'cell', the terrace garden stretching further out into the dusk, the city of Rome beginning at the curb of this terrace and rambling even further into the countryside, into the cold earth, to countries unimaginable, earth and cities and trees unseen, whether, if we could imagine the earth as transparent as this gecko, would we see that the world is perpetually digesting?

It needs more than imagining or wishing. To begin with, we see through the world in dreams, but we do not trust that we have seen. We hear and read words and experience metaphors, but we do not always get past that
sensation. We see representations and objectifications, but we do not allow their meanings to pierce our hearts. How can they then make the journey to our minds?

My thesis is that by letting go of and rebuilding many of the structures which we have built around us to maintain identity, we may regain the buoyancy and creativity of vision. It is in allowing ourselves to transgress, to follow our compulsions and desires, to break down the old rules shored up by cynicism, thoughtlessness and dishonesty. Where did I find the emotional willingness to teach in the situations I find myself? Whatever it was which compelled me happily through other kinds of obsessive work in the past, as a girl, as a young teacher, and in the last few years. For example, the fatigue and obsession of late hours in the editing suite completing a drama club video project is not easily understood by others. They cannot understand how I do it or why. I dreamed I wanted to be there, and there I was. But we are only semi-conscious of our doing. We grant ourselves permission to be, not considering that we are transgressing, and then have difficulty explaining it to others.

At night I crawl through gothic tunnels in Europe only to realize the next day that the dream message was not about the dark wedge I was in, but the crawling. The dream is in colour, I think, and I am grateful, this in the middle of October sometime, that I am at last back to the rich travelogues which signify a healthy busy-ness in my subconscious. What else goes on unnoticed except by our deliberate turning on of the living room light, our direct observation of life, and our honest meditation and explication?

Sometimes it is the silences between words and the hidden pictures which are unnoticed but have the loudest message. Cancer is difficult to write
about, but I heard something funny, one school day in October. Someone was discussing the disease and said, "It was malignant, thank God!" Of course, she meant benign, but she was tired and said malignant. Oh, she could have said, "It was benign, thank Duck", because of the fatigue, but the word of her fear was the word in peril. She was not concerned about her deity, but about the outcome of the test.

A boy in one of my grade nine classes went for a mole removal and biopsy one day. He came to me afterschool the next day especially to explain why he had not been in class. "My aunt had it done, too," he said, giving me an indication with his thumb and forefinger of the size of his worry. "Was it removed for appearance or for...?" I asked in just that way. He answered, "No, it was for...", and smiled a little as he looked at the floor. "And was it?" "No, it wasn't," he replied, smiling. We each had trouble with the use of those words. Or I did, and he mirrored it.

I think that I am teaching my grade nines about how text is more than words. Conversations like that one are more than medical reports or absence excuses. They are significations between us of the unspeakability of malignant birth marks, creeping, leering melanomas, erupting, useless prostates, rotting breasts, heaving lungs, and aching spines of those cancers.

I had two dear friends in England, both of whom died of cancer in the years after I returned home. Each of them had told me in gaping sentences of their upcoming tests and I did not hear that they might die, that I would hold the hand of one in the Pain Hospital in London and sleep in her bed as I awaited my flight to France. That I would hear mystifying news of the other from a friend of a friend of a friend and before I knew the truth of her illness would imagine terrible reasons for it.
We get tired and operate like marionettes, cloaking wonder with woodenness. The layers of wool, nylon, skin and organs are not revealed because the heart is conveniently and fearfully overlooked as the conduit to the mind. I teeter, then, with no link between heart and mind until I begin meditating upon and discussing my failure to link the theories which I cherish of the social construction of knowledge with my desired control of a moral curriculum within my classroom. When the dialogue begins with one or two, with a colleague, a student teacher and her university supervisor who knows nothing of drama but listens, asks, and hears, then my listening, asking, and hearing improve.

When I used the *Tempest* role drama with my two grade eight classes, I have already described how we began with a wonderful shipwreck. Music played, waves rolled, nobles and mariners tangled together in passionate grappling for status; several sailors threw themselves overboard in despair. Everyone had something to do and all agreed it had been the most fun of the whole term. Shakespeare meant shipwreck!

However, each of the two groups had a different collective spirit, and each experienced the role drama in different ways because of that, and because of subtle differences in the way I guided them through it. With one group, the second session washed them ashore on a desert island very quickly. When I asked them if they wished to take the island for themselves, as no one else seemed to own it, hands flew up immediately and different points of view were expressed. I asked them what they would do if someone threatened to fight them for it and some laughed uncomfortably. As described in *Process Drama*, page 71 - 81 of this manuscript, an accompanying structure using gesture and symbol and based upon Carl Sandburg's poem, "Get Off
This Estate" helped me, by way of irony, focus the students' attention on ownership.

Get off this estate.
What for?
Because it's mine.
Where did you get it?
From my father.
Where did he get it?
From his father.
And where did he get it?
He fought for it.
Well, I'll fight you for it.

(Sandburg, in Booth, p. 68, 1983).

At this point in the role drama, with this group, I was thankful I had it on hand. There existed within the group a tension about the dilemma of colonialism which needed to be broached and articulated before we went any further.

But with the other class, I proceeded to the poem before the island exploration, more as an introductory exercise to the whole lesson. I might have been wary of the tenuousness of the first group's grasp on the implications of the dilemma and wanted to prepare the ground better with this second group. The links were indeed better, as evidenced by the remarks of individual students at that end of that session. Not only had the dubiousness of the colonialisit point of view registered with the group, but they had made connections between the drama structures.

Not only had this student and others been closely watching their own performance as they participated and reflected upon the drama's possible meaning or meanings (Heathcote, 1978; Bolton, 1979 and 1984; Neelands,
1984; O'Neill, 1982 in Robert D. Taylor), but they sensed the purpose behind my structuring of the lesson. The de-mystification of the drama process is most important to the developing autonomy of secondary drama students. If we seek to make our purposes transparent, filling the silences with talk about it, we start moving in the same direction.

I tell this story because I am proud of the vision in the planning of the lesson. But I am equally alarmed at the difference in perceptions of the two classes because of the order of the drama structures within the lesson. I think that order makes a difference, and that careful planning of experiences can elicit meaning-making.

But, as Taylor (1995) concludes, logical sequence of structures do not have their own intuitive logic system. They are 'socially determined and constructed based on the needs, interests, and skills of the people who experience the structure'. This unit's logic depended upon my knowledge of the energy and physicality of many of the boys in one group. It was smarter to focus their sensibilities upon the idea of 'fight' before intriguing them with the possibility of it in a gentler consideration of their island paradise. With the first group, however, I felt more secure that consideration of aggression and defense was part of their discourse. The poem simply gave them a way of seeing beyond the immediate circumstances of The Tempest. At this point in the drama each of the two groups might have decided differently about how to proceed. What could have been a silence between them and me about the narrative and about their learning was instead a planning session.

I queried my student teacher about the structures in a lesson we planned together on Romeo and Juliet. She has had students construct family
tableaus where they spoke, in role, their feelings of loyalty and gratitude to their respective families. Then she introduced the idea that Romeo and Juliet might decide to run away together and that each would write a note to their parents explaining their actions. After they finished, she asked the boys to sit in a line facing the girls to present their writing. Each boy read his note, many with deep emotion and meaning. The girls took their turn and there was a discussion afterwards about the perceived difference between the girls' and the boys' notes. She lead the students in a guided mime of leaving the family gathering, returning to their rooms, packing their belongings, re-reading their notes, and placing them where their parents might find them.

After the lesson, during the discussion with her supervisor, it occured to me that the Romeos and Juliets might have written their notes during the mime and read them, too. Or the note-writing could have occured before the family gathering, giving each actor the subtext of knowing s/he was about to be disloyal to the family while uttering words of gratitude to it. I praised my student teacher for highlighting the writing-in-role task as she did as it was relatively new to these students, and I felt that it was most appropriate to simplify the experience for now.

What I questioned of myself as Brooke fluidly moved through these structures was whether she/I had awareness that the reflective opportunities had to be judiciously placed so that the affective pull of engagement on the participants was not compromised (Robert D. Taylor, 1992). Further to this, could the structure of mime be expanded, and, for these older students, made more sophisticated, to include what might have been an evocative monologue in the reading of a letter? Also, I wondered how much of my guided mime narration on *The Tempest* and hers here had
to be verbalized. Were we reducing an opportunity for student ownership by, as Edmiston (1993) reflects on his own practice, ‘telling them what to imagine’? I would say that in these cases, we were indeed blocking student ownership, imagination, and collective meaning-making by doing it all ourselves.

The discussion of planning and evaluating our lessons is delicious and creates even more appetite for it. I must be careful not to let buoyancy blind me to the pot-holes in the road, but I enjoy, at this end of the tunnel, the clarity which allows me to see ahead for the time being.
Oh, Apollo,
Thank you for killing that snake! Knowing that that creature's jealous grasp has been disturbed leaves me engulfed with joy and confidence. The trust which I thought I had lost is renewed and I look forward to action, to planning, to my goal. I see some of the patterns. I watched as desire became mutual and I deconstruct the desires coloured by culture and shared knowledge building within and without that culture.

It is because 'they' also see, is it not? I made my urgent plans known and suddenly we/they/I were inside our minds, chained no longer to eternal helplessness, babes no longer.

But the vision itself lasts only a while, until the next period of darkness engulfs what has been built. I cannot predict the end of what is just beginning. I only know from the past what might destroy it.
Part IV  Finding an Ending

Story 10.  Reflexivity and Drama Education Research:

Antiques

I am not like other girls.

Norma and I drank a cough medicine bottle of rye one Saturday afternoon in 1968 and dared each other to cross the trestle track, one hundred feet of daredevilry; like a pair of roadrunners, we did. We fell into pools of effluvium behind the giant sawdust piles at the mill and later basked in the sunshine on the Picasso roofs of the St. Mungo net drying plant, above the river, both of us at the ends of our ropes. We were not like other girls.

Later we returned to the dull thuds of my neighbour's day after day hockey puck against his garage door, and bowed to his inevitable recognition and unending trickery. Someone told us to get some control, to not go so far, like the day when we were twelve and travelled to the rainbow, the farthest end of the power line, and wrung out our socks on the rocks above our waterfall.

Or when we were thirteen and spent every afterschool
secretly playing at dance and music all made in a minute, 
taking turns on the polished hardwood floor and the old upright 
until the parents came home, until the potatoes had to be boiled.

Once we disagreed;  
I was addicted to new car ads and the looks of my lips in the mirror, 
so we didn’t speak for one and a half years, 
but suddenly thought the same thought in an instant and 
become underground newspaper publishers together. 
It was titled “Good Karma” and little did I know then 
how good it is to see that in writing.

Once everyone held their breath, waiting for the next thing we would do, 
expecting, judging, mocking, replaying, modeling ourselves back to us, 
describing us, inscribing us, doubting, wondering, and defining us. 
They are still holding their breath, 
but I have to say that

I am still not like other girls.

I resist deconstructing this poem probably because, like Isadora Duncan and 
the girl in the poem, “If I could say it in words, I would not dance.” Part of 
me does not want to fulfill your assumed needs as a reader to have things 
explicated. Rather, it wishes to let the poem speak for itself, especially if 
the poem seems autobiographical yet is full of sensual images which refer to 
theoretical writing I have already made. Part of this resistance is also the 
playfulness with which I talk, dance, write ‘pretend’ letters to gods and 
goddesses, and write my story of teaching as though it is a novel or 
screenplay. But the writing of the poem was a way of letting you in on my
intractability in matters of self-preservation. I am self-protective because I have learned to be, and that is what you need to know.

I rediscover myself daily by opening boxes the former drama teacher packed up prior to my return. Old theatre programs, certificates and awards, and posters of by-gone productions. Director’s production books with cast lists, and rehearsal notes of long forgotten afternoons. In my new drama room, I have improvised a silent altar to theatre. In it hang strange photos, newspaper articles, and the memorabilia. A framed poster about what drama is and is not perches on a countertop like a warning.

In the middle of the counter I have hoisted two theatre seats from my former life in the community, which I rediscovered in a corner of the school. I put them up there because I considered them my personal property and I couldn’t bear for my students to launch their bodies into them when they didn’t feel like sitting in the circle, or using ‘real’ chairs, or being with anyone else, or being with me. I asked them often not to jump up onto the counter to perch in those theatre seats but of course they did. For a few days I held restrained anger within me because of the joy with which they defied me.

It is very interesting to sit in them, in the first place.

It is very interesting to sit up so high, in the second place, when only two can do it,

It is very interesting to be The Two in the chairs, conversing.

And it is very interesting to do so, in the third place, when your teacher has told you, albeit jokingly, that the wall is an altar.

Interesting is not the word they would use.
I have stopped asking them not to sit there. I have become thoughtful about what it was I wanted to control about those theatre seats. The sanctification of my former life, perhaps? The preciousness with which I held who I had really been, all the tragedies and explosions of my life since I myself stole those seats home from Vagabond Playhouse in 1981? I recognize in their actions the awful glimmer of myself. I was there, too, when I decided to drag the seats into the new drama room, our new drama room. My desires, unspoken, clashed with my students’ desires to play, to test, to assert, and to relate.

And I have remembered, with startlingly sharp irony, that the altar is in fact part of an unwitting reconstruction of the set of a one-act play I once directed, The Real Inspector Hound, in which two theatre critics face into the stage from UpCentre as though they are in the front row, an imaginary play’s audience painted on the backdrop behind them. As I recall, much of the dialogue of the two theatre critics, as they watch the play unfolding before them downstage, concerns the nature of God, of existence, and of the confusions of our spoken and unspoken desires.

We must have been greatly confused in those first days of September. The symbol of the two linked chairs raised above the floor must have indicated that someone used to and still might sit in them to talk, to look. Yet the something altogether different that they symbolized to me lay in the vast silence between us. It was the momentary unspeakability of that symbolized desire which lay at the root of our problem. As Carl Leggo points out (1996), always I am aware of my difference, my separateness from all other human be/com/ings. And yet always there is the overwhelming desire to be connected with others, to bask in community, to know
completion in interdependence with others, to
word my wholeness in conjunction with the Other,
even in the knowledge that the desire will never
be satisfied because there is no wholeness, no oneness
(p. 237).

The 'you' towards which I move with my words can never be incorporated,
only approached. This concept of the valuing of the space between for
dialogic embodiment (Pelias, 1991), the third space (Verriour, 1995), and
relational empathy through shared meaning-making (Broome, 1991), help
me to appreciate with humour the antique conflict and to refer to it with my
students. Relational knowing (of me, each of them, symbols, altars, Tom
Stoppard, history, and desire?), then, begins in domestic moments such as
this where 'understanding is not viewed as a product but as a tensional event
occurring between the communicators' (Broome, p. 240).

In 1990, as chairperson of the provincial drama teachers' annual
conference, I received in thanks a large framed poster. The message of the
poster was "Drama is not what I do or what you do; it's what happens
between us" and I proudly hung it on the wall of my drama room. In
between the events of my life, I struggled with the notion of how to convey
that message to my students, interpreting it as a message for students in
their relations with each other and through the dramas we pursued in class.
But the growth of my consciousness of the 'otherness' of students, of our
differences in desires, of the ocean of difference between post-graduate
ethnographer and the subjects of her ethnography, has opened to me a new
interpretation of that poster. Drama is not only the pedagogy and content I
choose, however moral, or the positions of my students, however influenced
by gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity, class, history, or ability, but what
happens between us as the days go by.
It is important to me to explore with curiosity and thoughtfulness that between-ness which daily is jumped-over, ignored, turned-from, dived, inched, and waded-into as I attempt to come alongside my students in the curricular game. This between-space is an anxious space, a baffling space, a constrained space, a distant space, a........well, so the game goes. But it is my intuitively dextrous manoeuvring to be alongside others in my classroom which makes me proud of my teaching at the end of the day. And it is the blundering, estranging, and inertia which make me most miserable at the end of those other days.

Exploring the difficult spaces, the noisy and demanding places between them and me produces unexpected and useful knowledge with which I deepen my pedagogical understandings. My pedagogy is embodied in me, and I must face me everyday, as my students do. I learn to recognize myself in their eyes.

What didn't I see that you see?

I often catch a glimpse of what you see of me that I cannot perceive though I stare directly into the mirror. I can ask you what you see of me, but usually you employ silence. No one ever tells the truth in these matters, afraid of falling over the edge. People don't seem to be in very well lit places and everything is tinged with shadow, including what we take for truth. You and I have never met, after all, and we have little opportunity for dialogic encounter.

But rather than tell you a tale of something you already knew, I have played language games with you, as Lather (1993, p. 677 - 683) mentions in her
Frame 2, paralogy/neopragmatic validity, and I take responsibility for playing by their rules and the effects of them on you. You will note that there is little closure in doing this, though I claim to have reconstructed some sort of vision and peace which allows me to plan for the future of my program. The non-closure is not about me, it is about what you make of the temporary immersion in my world. As you can see, no consensus is forced, and even if that was done, it would be temporary. Symbols are fluid.

As you read my summary of what I thought happened and what I wondered about during those four months and now, you will make assumptions about me. You will begin to form a picture of me in your mind’s eye. Maybe you even imagine what I look like. What you will begin to formulate is a sense of my strengths and shortcomings, and you will know what my obsessions are because you will read my pursuit of them. You will know what my fears are because I will make jokes about them, or dream them, and you will wonder why I didn’t tell this part or that part of the story. There will be parts of you missing in my story because you have a different set of obsessions and fears than I do. If I tell you that I know I am not complete and that the part of me I know about is here, but the rest remains a mystery, then I am being as truthful as I can be. If I write about the glimpses and shadows too but as question, as a hunt, as a probe, maybe you can fill me in at some later date. Or someone can.

My interpretations have been temporary, partial, and invested and I invoke Lather’s concept of rhizomatic validity (Frame 3) to allow them to remain so, as contradictions in tension, unsettled from within, and multi-centred. The several centres inside the writing include the logical ordering of structures, the quality of reflection, and the location of drama as a learning medium. Any of the tendrils of this writing tangles with the others in an anarchic way;
there is no trunk though you may think you have found one (you may mistake circuitry for a single root). And you may note the vague and mostly unstated tension between feminist and poststructuralist readings of what goes on in the classroom. This is because I do not yet know how to process what goes on in either terms adequately enough to even know that I need not pay attention to that dualism.

Most days, I try to simplify what I know. A subjectivity explained in images and narrative may not make clear exactly what happened but will evoke the feelings of possibilities and memories of what might have happened. I am in a period of growing toward the intuitive and the figurative, perhaps due to a desire to honour the girl who tried to communicate that way but had few dialogic encounters in which she could construct herself as an effective figurative communicator.

By 'going too far' in being consciously self-revelatory I probe the subconscious of the researcher, as though she has 'a right to lay claim to a place in the discursive spotlight' (Fraser, 1991 in Lather, p. 682). Not only that, but I open an uncertain space for discourse by writing description as poetry. This creates the experience for the reader for experiencing me as a knower/constructor - not just talking about it, but doing it. I am a poetic creator, and I want that to be a sign of how I know and construct. This is a risky practice, but I create a questioning text by it, and I make clearer my situatedness, my position. Lather's Voluptuous Validity (Frame 4) re-explained in her study on women with AIDS (1995), makes a 'space for returns, silence, interruptions, and self-criticism and points towards its own incapacity' (p. 62). Likewise, my writing of a thesis as a traditional requirement of graduate work 'exposes from within what that tradition has ignored or forgotten'.

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So far we have considered the stories of a working and learning environment, professional development, professionalism, curriculum planning, assessment and evaluation, drama methodology, political, social, and cultural constructions, mentoring, and relationships with students as they intertwine and lace with the intellect, feelings, intuitions, and creativity of myself and my students. We have come across situations of breaking apart previously held beliefs and assumptions, building new models through which to perceive and operate, and maintaining the balance necessary to preserve those models. This is a huge field of personal and professional considerations within and without which everyone, not only I, operate in today's schools. There is much room for talk and theorizing, but much of what happens occurs so quickly and with such dizzying complication that not-talking or theorizing in words must be relied upon for many of important decisions and actions.

Lincoln (1995) proposed five new criteria for validity which took as their epistemological basis the claims, concerns, and issues of the naturalistic paradigm based upon trustworthiness. They are: 1) ethical criteria, 2) fairness, 3) educative authenticity, 4) catalytic authenticity, and 5) tactical authenticity, and are all reliant on an internal ethical system. Any discussion of research validity standards has to take into consideration the shifting vision of what research is, what it is for, and who will read it. It can never be what Lincoln (p. 277) terms ‘second-rate conventional scientific inquiry’....it is inquiry which embraces new and emergent relations with respondents (you, me, and our students), a professional, personal, and political stance toward the use of inquiry and its ability to foster action (the fluidity of curriculum interpretation), and to a vision of research that enables and promotes social justice, community, discourse, and caring (the
Therefore, through those frames of scientific performance (Lather, 1993), I look at the purpose of the thesis. To engage at least myself in dialogue about my practice which would enable knowing reconstruction of it, I wrote about those things which were problematic to me as if they were problematic to other drama teachers. I described events as though they were recognizable to other drama teachers, and I expect and welcome the expectation that the recognitions and questions a reader makes will be arbitrary and out of my control.

Those experiences of which you have already read and were so heart-felt and painful, somehow gave shape to the elusive image of a thesis about relational knowing from reflections upon a fall term in the drama classroom. Disconnected, chaotic, stuck and blocked, suddenly a cohesion occurs and my life patterns make sense for a moment, observed as an image in swirling water. My writing of a thesis is for this reason more like a work of art or a piece of cuisine than a report and a hypothesis. It is clear only to the extent that I can be true to myself and that includes reward for positive achievement as well as confrontation of my own evasions and self-betrayals. Some will be apparent to me and those that are not might be apparent to you. I allow that will happen, and then I will carry on mostly by myself anyway. This creative summing up merely allows me to stand still for a moment, to take in a rich breath, and then to crusade on in the most intelligent way I can given my resources.

As Cochran-Smith (1990) points out in her article on the issues that divide teacher research from academic research, regarding teacher research as a junior edition of university research is condescending and not useful. She
would like to define teacher research as a distinct genre (and, I interpret, ultimately more valid) because (quoting Guba, 1980), 'it is virtually impossible to imagine any human behavior which is not mediated by the context in which it occurs', making the case that rather than discover what works generically, we need insight into how and why something works and for whom, within the context of particular classrooms (p. 6). But only teachers can ask the questions and pursue the inquiry which will make sense to them, she continues, adding that teachers' complex set of educational theories grounded in practice make them both users and generators of theory. I am the spect-actor of Brecht and Dorothy Heathcote, and the frame jumper of Patti Lather.

I am well-situated for standing still for a moment, taking in a short, rich breath. The timeliness of this thesis writing after such a period is a wonder. It is because at this moment it is most important to me to begin the best, most exciting secondary drama program that I am capable of inventing. It is, after all, to support the success of myself, my students, the program, and the fine arts focus of the school through the next years of transition to a full grade nine-to-twelve secondary school. I am in the challenging yet enviable position of building a particular drama understanding with grade sevens and eights who will remain here until they graduate, and of convincing grade nines to open themselves to new ideas.

I spend some time planning drama units for students I have not yet met. We are together for four months, persevering in some ways and letting go in other ways. Somehow the space and time we occupy together contributes to writing a shared history upon our bodies. They begin to read drama through mine; I begin to read myself through theirs.
Hermes' Honours

The card of Judgement portrays a young man with curling black hair, dressed in a white tunic and a blood-red travelling cloak. On his head is a winged helmet, and his feet are shod in winged sandals. In his right hand he holds the caduceus, the staff of magic entwined with two snakes. On either side of him, dimly visible, are two columns, one black and one white. The stairs on which he stands ascend to a doorway through which can be glimpsed a rich green landscape over which the sun is just rising. Before him, several carved coffins lie, and from these sarcophagi the dead are rising, reaching out to him as they shrug off their burial shrouds.

(Sharman-Burke, p. 78)

Dear Hermes,

At first I was repulsed at the thought of touching all that decrepitude. The hand of a mummy. As aged dark furniture depresses my mother who remembers only the thin cold moments in the front parlour in the 1930s, I was reluctant to read those old words. Why not let them lie, I thought.

Then I realized your power. You were not only the magician, you were the accountant. Grateful for the opportunity to gather together all that I had done, to look for the patterns, and to understand the consequences of what I had done, intelligently, I watch myself calling the dead to arise. Those words yield a harvest, then. Or rather, they combine uniquely their flavours and textures in the casserole of the day.

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Epilogue: The Writing Process

The layer of post-structuralist discourse

Advised to begin in the middle, and simply write a reflection on the first reading of the journal, I found myself creating what I considered to be a rudimentary structure for the thesis. I was intrigued with the process of learning how to learn, and wanted to look at how I built, collapsed, rebuilt, and maintained the building, or maintained the balance, of concepts and principles of drama teaching.

In this rudimentary framework, I only considered the process of balancing. The notion of un-balancing shifted uneasily in my subconscious as words I had read in a novel persisted in shoving themselves onto my page and screen. In Calvino's story, Mr. Palomar wrestles with the shiftingness of personal vision until his death. But in a final meditation, the writer acknowledges that when the pendulum (Mr. Palomar's life of adjustment, modification, change, and resistance to it) is allowed to come into balance, Mr. Palomar's heart stops! Parts of the intial considerations of static balance and dynamic un-balance remain in the introduction, as they remain in the energy, or movement, of the piece. As he writes, 'the fear isn't faced until the model disintegrates'. As you have read, I did not face my commitment to process drama until my imperviousness was disrupted by the arrival of my student teacher.

These themes emerged as a spiral pattern, appearing and disappearing and reappearing as references to and reflections upon three main layers of perception and operation. They were 1) the cycle of identity, pride, fear
and anger; 2) the balance of expressivity and empowerment, with caring; and 3) the relation between connection or relation, and silence.

Through each of these perceptions I, 1) established, or took the action required to reveal practice, 2) looked at and evaluated myself as practitioner, and 3) compared, analyzed and modified my vision and practice. Roughly equivalent to Schon's stages of reflection, I am, however, most concerned with what modification meant to me. What constraints prevented change, how did it feel to make change, what considerations did I make, what rationalizations, what balancing did I do as I changed?

I began to look for the stories which expressed the perception-obsessions and the change-action taken most clearly. Even organizable on a different level, that of the process by which anything is constructed, construction, testing, deconstruction, and re-construction. The testing, or evaluating based upon how well it balances or holds up, at least in principle. In most cases, one side would be mine and the other the students', but sometimes it would be the school, colleagues, or the community. Creation of a model through which we can safely and sanely perceive and operate for a while, stimulated by post-modernist writers like Calvino.

The layer of feminist researcher discourse

But the journal also revealed the repeated words, worries, and concerns becoming obsessions, and the obsessions breaking apart with analysis. The essential stories were there, I sensed, but before I began telling them, I needed to see and maybe re-experience the broadest vision of what was there. I scanned the eighty or more pages of journal writing and collected
phrases and cryptic titles of events and reflections within general categories which revealed themselves as I proceeded. These general categories included 'surprises', 'caring', 'toughness', 'cooking', 'identities', 'sensory awareness', 'movement', 'objectification', 'feeling and absence of feeling', 'lying', 'deliberateness', 'focus', 'perspectives', 'silence', 'fathers and mothers', 'difference' and many more. Some stories refused categorizing and some categories collapsed into others, as 'epiphanies' into 'surprises', and 'silence' into 'lying'.

Most importantly, this process of sorting the experiences showed me the tangled interconnectedness of all of the experiences, and the fruitfulness and fruitlessness of trying to describe any of them in a single way. They almost refused to be sorted. I laid them out, finally, on a sheet of paper, typed as titles ('Gay Comedy and Scott Hamilton', 'The Chorus Line Dream', 'The Fainting Couch of the Staffroom') so that I could remember their essence. The titles took on complex personalities, too.

I decided that because the structure had become so tangled that not only were notions of how I learn and how students learn in drama grappling for priority with the elements of intellect, intuition, feelings, and ambition, but the stories themselves existed both in time and out of time. They were part of a cause and effect chain, if only that could be uncovered successfully in an autobiography.

I understand better now that it was impossible for me to lay out the stories in satisfying order until I realized they came from different depths of consciousness, different frames. They had sprouted like the rhyzomes they were and could not be compared or democratically classified. If I had known, I would have looked at Goffman, Heathcote, O'Toole, and Bolton for
the drama technique of re-presenting meaning through frame distancing, or at least have been happy with Lather's murky tubers and nodules of her rhyzomatic validity (1993). The key to understanding my research methodology lay in drama methodology; drama re-presents as research re-presents. Without employing all nine dramatic frames in an appreciable and structured but probably boring order as a device for looking at my experiences, I have probably used them serendipitously well enough to interest the reader.

The tormenting layer of artistic discourse

This image of the building of a tower and the destruction or eventual collapse of it reminded me of Tarot. Could the images and the myths behind them be glimpsed in a post-modernist deconstruction of my drama teaching experiences? I was excited by the connections as I looked back at two Tarot readings I had done as part of everyday life in August and in December, not deliberately part of the thesis-writing process. My difficulties with empathy and assessment seemed reflected in the large number of Swords and related Upper Arcana cards, the signs of idealistic objectivity. Also, many Pentacles faced me, immediately interpretable as my ambition to realize the credit for building a successful drama program which was unique and identifiable as mine. As these two main undercurrents persisted in the journal stories, I decided it would be enriching to analyze them. This swung the focus of the whole thesis onto my identity and allowed me to define the autobiography as my processing of what I and others did.

It occurred to me that the stories, as they were now sorted in colourful
titles, might easily match with any of the cards, or at least match generally with the undercurrent of one of the four suits. On the surface, they easily did, and it appealed to me that the stories began to lead me to a deeper understanding of the Greek myths as the myths helped me read the stories with more focus. I intended to retain this symbiotic relationship in my treatment of the Tarot cards, because they were not my construction in the first place, and they arrived arbitrarily, no matter how you define pulling cards from a deck. They simply were another interesting way of looking at experience.

At first I connected and labeled stories in an order which shouted ‘metanarrative’ as single progression toward vision. This meant taking them out of chronological and Tarot order and putting them into a spiral, really. I simplified the writing task by choosing five stories of Building, five of Breaking, and five of Balancing.

Unhappy with the dishonesty of considering a story about curriculum and assessment one of confidence, for example, (the titles ‘The Chorus Line Dream’, ‘The First Epiphany’ and ‘Rearranging the Furniture’ all appealed to me as stories about curriculum interpretation, but they were all also too much about doubt and uncertainty to be simply used as examples of confident establishment of a program), I re-labeled and reordered them as they occurred in my experience and as though each story contained elements of that building, breaking, and balancing process of insight attainment. This was easier to live with, as it meant I did not have to ignore salient aspects of a story. For example, the story about identity, Who's Doing My Job?, existed in that form under that title from the very beginning, but instead of remaining about identity construction and the rigidity of the unitary myth, it resonates with deconstruction, too.
I was still dissatisfied with what the order of the stories meant. The stories took apart a life of reason and action. The structure through which I wished to look at that life, and the structure through which I wished to be viewed ought to be as creative and dynamic as the life. The process must honour and reflect the purpose in bringing the content to light. The most dynamic playing is improvisation; I am in Verriour's 'presentation mode' as I struggle with the language to become. Without going into her theory on reproduction, I borrow as inspiration for that struggle Madeleine Grumet's theory that,

because the art of teaching addresses the virtual reality of reproduction, of making people and bringing them to the world, the art of teaching is an improvisation on our experiences of domestic culture and family life. It is the virtual domain where we extend, transform, and recapitulate what we learned at home (1993, p. 206).

I find in that writing the understanding of why I bring my poems, my childhood, the bare glimpse of my mother and father, my habits of eating and drinking and walking and laughing to you so that you can understand how I reproduce myself in my classroom. Beyond that, and to drive home the belief I have in the validity of transgression, the oppositionality of feminist research practices to conventional 'scientific' practice, I reveal to the reader a simulacra of my improvisation through teaching.

There were, eventually, ten stories and they sorted well into the elemental skills of dramatic improvisation - of establishing, accepting and advancing, and heightening the tension, and, for the purpose of this thesis, finding an ending. It might be interesting to some that the first story, placed there...
because I thought it was funny, and quite necessary for the reader to locate me in that classroom, was the Significator (me) card of the first spread. And that the last story, of looking back, of reflexivity beyond self-evaluation even, was the Significator card of the second spread. I begin and end with an image of me, shouting and splashing in the moment, in the process.
Sasquatch

You wouldn’t know them unless you looked closely; the purple blooms suddenly appear at your feet. You look back and they are gone in the late afternoon light dancing around Harrison Lake.

So this will be it then, to be unquestionably breathless and quiet in the wavelaps and unerringly mindful to look up there, coincidentally, and see sudden appearances and disappearances.

That a play, a poem, a song would congeal inside me just there as I took a step down onto the beach stones, within the surprised world of children swinging their dangling feet at once altogether, hands sides pressed close touch joke play faces straining, and “I’m out! Let’s start again!”

I want to be like the Sasquatch who stays out of sight, and does not hand in her plans and explanations, senses the location of berries, licorice root, and water, waits out the rain and clouds, the developers, the passing motorboats, and the visitors, and unexpectedly comes upon purple blooms at her feet.

Green Point, Harrison Lake
October, 1995
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Appendix A

August 14, 1997 Tarot Spread

Past Influences
Devil

Crowning
7 of Cups

Significator
Queen of Pentacles

Base of the Matter
Justice

Further Outcome
8 of Pentacles

4 of Pentacles

Outcome
Appendix B

December 26, 1997 Tarot Spread

Past Influences
Justice

Significator
Judgment

Forthcoming Influences
Knight of Swords

Crowning
10 of Pentacles

Hopes and Fears
King of Pentacles

Crossing
Strength

Views of Others
Star

Base of the Matter
Sun

Outcome
Page of Pentacles

Further Outcome
7 of Cups

Present Situation
9 of Pentacles
Appendix C

*Heathcote's Dramatic Frames*

General role function in relation to frame distance: each frame distance provides students with a different, specific responsibility, interest, attitude, and behaviour in relation to an event.

Participant: I am in the event.

Guide: I show you how the event was. I was there.

Agent: I must re-enact the event so that it will be understood.

Authority: I must reconstruct the meaning of the event because it has occurred.

Recorder: I clarify for those in the future so they may know the truth of the event.

Press (Media): I was not there but I provide a commentary as to why I think the event happened.

Researcher: I research the event for those who live now.

Critic: I critique/interpret the event as an event.

Artist: I transform the event.