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The Theatrical Laboratory: A Methodology for Educating Empathy

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THE THEATRICAL LABORATORY: A METHODOLOGY FOR EDUCATING EMPATHY

by
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DEDICATION

To Mike, my best friend, whose unwavering belief in my work is matched only by his sacrificial heart for everyone around him.

To Mom, for teaching me to read and for giving me a life-long love of learning.

To Dad, for taking me to the theatre, the ballet, the orchestra & the opera, even (and perhaps especially) when I cried.

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Finally, I would like to thank Kevin Joyce—truly one of the best and most dedicated teachers I have ever known. Without his wisdom, support and friendship, I would not be the teacher I am today.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to highlight the need for universal theatre exposure and experience in secondary education and to recommend a methodology for using theatre education to help students become engaged and empathetic adults. This task must be accomplished early in the young person's life and should not be left to college professors with no training in pedagogy. The high school teacher, regardless of content area, is most equipped for developing empathy in students. He can best reach this goal with the help of dramatic literature and exploration.

The theatre ought to be viewed as a laboratory that can serve three important functions in secondary education. It can expose and engage students in histories and cultures with which they previously had no connection. It can give them collaborative experience in problem-solving, both in a practical and theoretical ways. Finally, it empowers students to express their own individuality, unique ideas and perspectives.

In conclusion, when high school students participate in theatre, both as practitioners and audience members, they develop dialogic empathy that prepares them for adulthood.

PREFACE

This thesis is the product of much study and research, but its birthplace was in the theatres in which I have spent the most precious moments of my life. Even as a small child, I never felt more myself than when I was performing. I remember the first play I ever performed in. I was nine years old and had been cast as Susan in *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* at a local theatre. I remember that in the more intense moments of the play I cried. This was not because I was trying my best to give the most authentic performance, but rather because I felt that I was truly experiencing my character's reality. It mesmerized and thrilled me. This love continued to develop throughout my life and reached its zenith when as a third-year Spanish teacher, I took charge of a fledgling after-school drama club at the charter school where I worked. It was in that tiny theater with the one florescent bulb lighting the entire stage that I caught an incurable bug. As a director and teaching artist, I learned that the true magic of theater for me was not in performing but it spreading theatre's magic to the young.

When I am asked about my profession and I tell strangers that I am a high school teacher, they usually reply with something akin to "God bless you, dear!" The truth is, teaching high school theatre is the most fulfilling path I can imagine. It is not just the high school theatre that inspires me but the beautiful, marred and struggling souls that it draws to itself. They are eager. They are passionate. They are intelligent. They are

creative. They are inspiring. They have taught (and will continue to teach) me so much more than I could ever hope to teach them. This and all of my work is for them.

“Let me tell you how it is with me.
I do not want to work,
I want to be;
Do not want to make a rose or make a poem--
Want to lie upon the earth and know.”
(Claire, *The Verge*, Susan Glaspell)

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CHAPTER 1: THE POWER OF THEATRE EDUCATION

In his 1999 plea for public funding for the arts, famed British director and founder of the Royal Shakespeare Company Sir Peter Hall asserts that “Theatre remains any society’s sharpest way to hold a life debate with itself” (5). The phrase “a life debate” conjures an image of artists and spectators engaging in a discussion about ethics as prompted by an artistic experience. This experience challenges the individual to consider herself a part of a wider, global community, encouraging deeper empathy and self-awareness. Theatre, as a discipline, is uniquely able to facilitate deeper emotional engagement.

Deepening students’ emotional engagement with their communities and empathy for those outside their communities is an essential task of the secondary educator for which the theatre arts are uniquely capable of performing. Yet theatre education remains an untapped well to most high school students and their teachers. Frequently, theatre is considered part of extracurricular activities relegated to after school hours in competition with sports. It is the assertion of this author that the unique ability that the theatre arts have to teach caring, empathy and community engagement make them a crucial part of secondary education. Such an essential element of education ought to have a central place in the curriculum, and every student should have experience with it. This paper will explore practical ways in which theatre can be

used to educate the whole student in terms of empathy, openness, wisdom and critical thinking.

Nel Noddings is a distinguished professor of education whose career spans almost six decades, throughout which her research and writing has centered on a philosophy of education based on “caring”. In her most recent book, *A Richer Brighter Vision for American High Schools*, Noddings writes:

High schools today are not meeting the deep human needs of most of our students...We seem to have forgotten that there is more to education than preparing to get ahead financially...Educators once talked seriously about producing “better adults,” about encouraging the development of all aspects of a complete life: moral, physical, social, vocational, aesthetic, intellectual, spiritual, and civic. We once considered optimal development in these aspects of life to be the *aims of education*. (1)

According to Noddings, it is a return to these aims that is most needed in secondary education. Some might suggest that by helping students attain high test scores, we enable them to be accepted into prestigious institutes of higher education where they can narrow their area of study to fit their interests, learn to think critically, and obtain employment in a field achieving the ultimate goal of financial security. Thus, we accept the lie that social, moral, aesthetic, spiritual and civic development can afford to be left to college professors and institutes of higher learning.

There are many problems with having a secondary educational system that focuses on test scores and leaves the holistic educational development of young people

to colleges and universities. First, most professors are not equipped to meet the “deep needs” that Noddings speaks of; although they are experts in their fields, the majority of college professors have no background in pedagogy, much less in the developmental psychology needed to deal with students’ emotional and psychological needs. Additionally, these needs ought to be being met at a much earlier age—waiting until the child has become a young adult, faced with responsibilities and choices about his/her future, is waiting too long.

The emotional needs of the child are only one of the issues addressed by this proposed holistic education. It is crucial that educators (particularly in secondary schools) realize the importance of teaching ethics and empathy as a part of the curriculum of each individual subject. Noddings urges educators to “recognize a unitary purpose: the development of better adults, ‘better’ defined over the whole range of human attributes—moral, intellectual, physical, social, aesthetic, civic...*Every teacher is a moral educator*” (7). When one considers the importance of preparing children to be a part of a global community that is committed to excellence in all areas of human life (not just academic or economic), it seems foolish to leave this responsibility to a later date and other people.

Sheldon Berman is a founder of Educators for Social Responsibility and Massachusetts School Superintendent of the Year (2003). In an essay describing his experience as head of Hudson Public Schools and his goals for secondary education within this system, he writes,

We live in a complex time. There are few simple answers to the complicated issues we face. Children become aware of the trauma in the world around them at a far earlier age than we would like, and they lack the skills to deal with its complexity. In our efforts to preserve their childhood, we often allow important ethical issues to go undiscussed and attitudes of cynicism, hopelessness, and powerlessness to develop. (113)

The complexity of the world we live in can cause educators to relegate their work to teaching skills and concepts, resulting in high school graduates who do not know how to think critically about complex issues or relate to others empathetically and dialogically. This can create cynical, hopeless and powerless adults, unable to help solve the problems facing their communities.

It follows then that the question is not *whether* this type of education is lacking and needed, but rather *how* it can best be accomplished. Education in the theatre arts is a powerful tool that must be harnessed for this purpose. Jonathan Levy, recipient of the Outstanding Teacher of Theatre in Higher Education Award of 1996, argues in his article *Theatre as Moral Education*:

Since the child is father to the man, the way to educate the moral adult is to educate the moral child, theatrically. 'Theatrically' means, or should mean, using the full power of the theatre; using the theatre the way the theatre really works: not through the reasoning mind but, like music, as a stimulus to and a strengthener of the unsaid. The nameless faculty upon which we draw

instinctively in a moral dilemma can be enriched and deepened through the intense and various sympathetic experience theatre, in its fullness, can give. (72)

Through most of history, the main way that the power of theatre education has been harnessed is in propagandist service the indoctrination of young people.¹ Its goal was mainly to propagate “appropriate behavior,” producing well-behaved citizens. As Levy suggests, there is an important difference between teaching a child to be “good and obedient” and teaching a child to address the complexity of morality in a modern society. “Educating a moral child is more complicated, for it means educating him to act correctly (whatever that means) or to act morally (whatever that means) in new situations: situations that neither you nor he can foresee or imagine” (Levy, *Moral Education* 69). This is the important and difficult task of the educator: giving the child the tools he/she needs to “act morally...in situations neither you nor [he/she] can imagine.” Theatre can serve this present purpose just as it once served as a tool for propagandic, moral education.

Reflecting on his experiences teaching theatre at the university level, Levy argues that “the theatre does have the power to teach, and teach profoundly” (*Reflections* 20). Additionally, he states that theatre is an incredible educational tool that can be used for the ultimate good of the student. This begins with activating the student’s imagination,

¹ For instance, in the eighteenth century “an author of dramatic pieces for girls wrote she hoped ‘that the lessons I inculcate may be conducive toward establishing such habits of patience, meekness, and complacency, as are essentially necessary to render young ladies happy in themselves and to qualify them for the discharge of the various duties, which particularly belong to the female character’” (67).

for people “learn best when they are at play and their imaginations are at work...[because] everything that delights the imagination facilitates study” (22).

Furthermore, Levy asserts that acting “is a particularly powerful way of learning” because it causes the actor herself to be engaged with the words she is learning in a both a mental and physical way. In memorizing and physicalizing the words, the student actor deepens her emotional connection to them creating a more profound learning experience than can be created through cognitive means alone. Additionally, “the theatre can teach people the skill and habit of opening their hearts” (22). When students’ education includes participation in theatre, they begin to develop this “skill and habit” of engaging with the world around them in a meaningful and curious way.

Rhonda Blair, president of the American Society for Theatre Research from 2009 to 2012, describes neuroscientific aspects of the actor’s work and its connection to empathy-building. In her interpretation of scientific evidence, she states that imagination “happens not only consciously, but also extensively and richly below the level of consciousness”, and therefore the actors can use their work to help “the viewers’ bodies imagine themselves inside the stories [they] tell” (102). When students perform in theatrical productions in high school, they are empowered to increase the empathy of their audiences. Additionally, the actor participating in the performance is engaging in an exercise that maximizes his or her ability to use the “mirroring and imitation mechanisms that evolved as strategies... [for getting] inside the other in order to survive” (102). Cognitive science shows that mimesis is an important tool that the

brain uses to build empathy, making theatre education a powerful instrument for this purpose.

It is impossible to participate in theatre without acknowledging the vivid way in which it communicates. Theatre's power to communicate using visual imagery provides a powerful "impetus to discussion" unlike any other educational experience. In addition to discussion, theatre provides a space for young people to practice living in a kind of laboratory which simulates true-to-life experiences. In this laboratory, they are able to discover solutions to problems that they (and others) face. Furthermore, they are given the opportunity to build their empathetic imaginations, learning about and educating their own emotions, because theatre "teaches most deeply and most lastingly by reaching and forming—that is, educating—the emotions in a way that is unique to it" (23).

Theatre has a power that is not currently being harnessed in the majority of secondary classrooms in the United States, so how can this be best be remedied? Since theatre is a place of experimentation, it is useful to think of it as a kind of laboratory in which students are able to perform three important tasks. First, students can use the theatrical laboratory as a space for exploration. When the theatre teacher chooses a season for her students, she ought to consider this function. How can the works that her students perform engage them in the act of exploring perspectives, cultures, and histories that differ from their own? In addition, how can participating in these dramas assist them in exploring historical injustices, both those that lie in their own personal and cultural backgrounds, and those that are specific to others? In utilizing this function

of theatrical education, the theatre teacher builds empathetic engagement in her students. Kim Hines' play *Home on the Mornin' Train* will serve as an example of a play that can be used to this end by creative theatre teachers.

A second function of the theatrical laboratory is as a place for dialogue. The theatre is a place where students can use their bodies, voices and imaginations to work on solutions to complex issues, engaging them in a way that no other form of education can. This function of the theatrical laboratory should not be confined strictly to the theatre. It can and should be used by all teachers, regardless of discipline. A plan for how this could be done at the high school level will be proposed in this paper.

Lastly, the theatre is a place where students can be empowered to create their own works of art with the "instrument" of their own minds and bodies. This power of this function can be amplified when students are provided with the opportunity to devise their own works. This author's personal experience with using devised theatre to build a community in which self-expression is fostered will be explored in the fourth chapter.

In this vein, you are invited to consider a better world than the one we live in. You are invited to imagine a world in which theatre is used as a laboratory for discovering one's empathy at an early age. A world in which students, given real agency in their own education and art, are empowered to view themselves as arbiters of justice in the world. When engaging theatre education becomes a part of the core secondary curriculum, this world will be a reality.

CHAPTER 2: CULTURAL & HISTORICAL EXPLORATION IN THE THEATRICAL LABORATORY

One of the most important functions of the Theatrical Laboratory is to give students an opportunity to engage with ideas, cultures and histories with which they are unfamiliar. The theatre has unparalleled power to perform this task. Through imaginative play with texts that invite engagement with people who are very different than themselves, students are able to build empathetic connections with other people and communities. Ohio State University professor and career educator Brian Edmiston describes perfectly the way that he uses theatre education to engage his students in dialogic empathy:

When I work with students, I want us all to be open to difference and tolerant of diverse views whatever their source. I want us to listen for the silenced, to talk with the powerless, to see beneath the stereotype, and to hear above the rhetoric. I want us to listen for new voices, to continue to question, to argue, to rage, to laugh, and literally to make up our own minds. Drama is integral to my process of working towards these goals. (Wilhelm et al. 57)

Edmiston weds theatre education with empathetic education, demonstrating that theatre is a crucial part of building habits of empathetic, dialogic engagement in young people. He chooses works that will accomplish these goals and the results are proof positive of the power of theatrical education. After performing in a work that recounted

the story of Columbus from the point of the indigenous communities affected by his discovery and subsequent conquest of their lands, one of his middle school students reflected,

The really amazing thing is that we all saw it the same way. I mean, it never even occurred to me to look at it from the Indians' point of view. And it was hard to do, I kept saying 'No' to it and when I finally did [see it from the Taino Indian point of view] it just blew my mind. (Wilhelm et al. 55)

This is the result of theatrical education; it opens the minds and broadens the perspectives of young people. As Cummings argues, "as long as we sense some kind of harmony with an other...we can empathize with it, expanding ourselves into its borders and sensing ourselves as part of the world beyond the borders of our own minds and bodies" (Wilhelm et al. 11). Teaching this type of empathetic awareness is an essential function of secondary education. Teaching to a test in hopes that the student will be accepted at a college or university where he or she can learn empathy is incredibly ill-advised. The years of secondary school are incredibly influential and formative years in which teachers are given the weighty task of educating these students with the goal of creating "better adults" (as Nel Noddings calls it). The theatre's imaginative powers enable a formative, educational experience that stays with the child long after the lecture of "how to behave well" and the "monthly virtues" moral education curriculum have been forgotten.

In the classroom, the teacher sets the expectations for student behavior, forbidding disruption and disrespect. While this is an important boundary to set, it does

not address the underlying issues behind these behaviors. Furthermore, banning disrespect and disruption or even engaging the students in a dialogue about why these behaviors are harmful to the learning community is infinitely less compelling than engaging their imaginations through dramatic production. In the theatrical laboratory, students can engage in simulated negative behavior (as long as an “atmosphere of care” is provided) and draw ethical conclusions from these actions. “Ideally, in drama students come to understandings *together* about why human beings kill or are racist—and about how we are *all* capable of killing or being racist...Some students may make profound discoveries about their prejudices or presumptions” (Wilhelm et al. 56). In this “safe space”, it is possible for students to explore potentially hateful behaviors and the consequences of these behaviors. This allows them to have theatrical experiences that simulate real-life choices, creating the illusion of lived experiences, solidifying whatever lessons they learn in those experiences. Without having to actually experience racism, hatred, or any other kind of destructive ideology or behavior, students use their imaginations to create a scenario in which they learn as if those experiences were real.

Young people often struggle to relate to accounts of historical injustices because they are too young to have experienced them themselves. Teachers struggle to engage them in historical lessons because the students often feel that the past has no relevance to their current existence. When students engage in imaginative learning through performance in theatrical works that transport them to periods of past injustice, the experience can result in impactful, life-long lessons. Kim Hines’ play, *Home on the Mornin’ Train* is an exemplary playtext for exploring a variety of historical social

injustices with young people. The play is set in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany and one-hundred years earlier in Talledega, Alabama. It explores two periods of horrific injustice from which the modern high school student is quite removed. Through parallel and intersecting plot lines, the work can be used to perform three important tasks: highlighting the repetitive and cyclical nature of historical injustice, engaging the student-actors' emotions, and inspiring them to view themselves as a team dedicated to righting past wrongs and preventing future injustices through storytelling.

The first task is accomplished through the style of the play itself. It opens on a blackout which engages the audience's imagination and focuses their attention on the music and sounds that occur before the actors even appear. To set the stage for the two plotlines that will intersect throughout the play, a voice is heard singing a negro spiritual when the sound of dogs barking and slave-owners tracking a runaway slave erupt. We soon see the young woman hiding in the shadows, praying for rescue. The young woman runs off stage as the sounds of the dogs and voices fade into the sounds of a flute playing a Jewish folk song. A young boy enters wearing a yellow Star of David on his coat. Looking around nervously he removes it and puts it in his pocket, exiting quickly. Without explicitly stating it, the playwright links these two great injustices, demonstrating that understanding history can break cycles of injustice and create positive change for the future.

When students perform in such a work, they gain personal experience that shapes both their perspectives on historical injustice and the level of personal commitment they have to preventing future injustice. The African-American student

playing the role of Jessie (the runaway slave girl) connects to her cultural past in a deeper way, perhaps gaining new respect for her ancestors and deeper respect for herself. The young actor playing Baruch may or may not have a personal, cultural connection to German Jews escaping Nazi concentration camps, but his worldview is certainly expanded. He is better able to empathize because his imagination is engaged in playing the role. Furthermore, he is able to make connections to what his African-American classmates might feel when they are treated unjustly. It is up to the teacher what connections she wants to make to the present historical situation, but certainly in 2017 it would be beneficial for the students to read first-hand accounts of refugees fleeing Syria or other war-torn countries. In doing this, they could make connections between their characters and those modern-day individuals. This would also give them a deeper understanding of the cyclical nature of historical injustices.

The structure of the play is designed to build camaraderie amongst a diverse group of students. The plot has two main veins: that of the Jewish children hiding in a barn and that of the African-American children on the Underground Railroad. Rifka, one of the Jewish girls, is entranced by a book she brought with her into hiding: *Following the Drinking Gourd: A Negro Slave Girl's Escape to Freedom*. She reads from the book to the other children, and as she does flashes of the story are played out on the stage. In this way, the stories are woven together in an engaging, imaginative way. From the first moment Rifka reads from the book, the connection between the two diverse groups is made, when Rifka's little brother asks:

AARON. What are slaves, Rifka?

RIFKA. Slaves are people, who are owned by and made to work for other people for no pay. Many times slaves are treated very badly...

DAVID. We were once slaves...

AARON. I've never been a slave!

DAVID. I'm talking about us...Jews. (16)

Thus, from the very beginning of the play the two groups are linked in their struggle for freedom. Performing such a text would increase the students' emotional connection to these stories regardless of their personal historical backgrounds.

The creative use of historical, cultural music also serves this purpose. Hines chose songs with deep roots in the African-American and Jewish cultures. The play is rife with "negro spirituals," including "Follow the Drinking Gourd," "Wade in the Water," and "I'm Goin' Home on the Mornin' Train," all of which highlight the desperate struggle for freedom of the African-American characters in Hines's play. The Jewish folk songs that are included are "You are the Plowman and You Sow," a song drawn from Amos—a prophetic book from the Hebrew Canon, and "Shlof Mayn Kind," a Yiddish folk-song which translated means "Sleep, my Child." Hines expertly weaves them throughout the story and into one another, highlighting the similarities between the two cultural histories.

In scene three, Rifka sings "You are the Plowman and You Sow" to Ledah. Its connection to the story of the slave children running to freedom is unmistakable. She sings:

Kling klang, kling klang,

the hammer beats relentlessly.
Kling, klang, kling, klang,
Break the bonds of slavery.
Day and night you weave on the loom,
Dig out the metals in the gloom,
Reap the harvest in due time,
Flowing horn of bread and wine. (25)

The song describes the Israelites struggle for freedom from a myriad of oppressive political regimes throughout history. She sings this just after the audience has seen a flashback to Mary and Jesse singing “Follow the Drinking Gourd”:

Follow the drink-ing gourd!
Follow the drink-ing gourd.
For Jessie is a-wait-ting
For to carry you to free-dom,
If you follow the drink-ing gourd. (21)

The two anthems express a similar hunger for freedom. When performing these scenes, both white students and students of color visualize and even experience (in some small way) the intensity of the struggle for freedom that both the Jewish and African-American communities have faced.

Home on the Mornin’ Train is an excellent resource for the theatre teacher engaged in building empathy. The nature of the play inspires empathy by connecting two historical injustices, highlighting the cyclical nature of history. Students participating

in such a work will have their eyes opened to the extreme possibilities within the human experience. The Jewish and African-American communities have suffered beyond what most people can imagine, yet their incredible resilience and passion for life cannot be extinguished. Students working on this production gain simulated first-hand experience with these historical tragedies. The lessons they learn in the theatrical laboratory are particularly lasting since they are deeply rooted in an emotional experience. When students begin to see historical events as cyclical, it contributes to a heightened awareness of current events and a desire to prevent further tragedy. Students who are hyperconscious of social injustice come to view themselves as arbiters of justice.

Theatre education empowers such passion and commitment. Kathleen Gallagher argues that this should be the entire aim of theatre education. In the theater, students (and teachers) should be able to “use performance and pedagogy in imaginative collaborative work that engages the economic, historical, political, and geographic forces in their lives” (*Why Theatre Matters* 168). When working on a project like *Home on the Mornin’ Train*, the students are able to connect their personal lives to a larger, global community expanding their understanding of humanity and thus creating more empathetic, engaged adults.

Secondary educators ought to harness of the power of theatre to teach an “empathy that consists not in sharing emotions or cognitively imagining others’ experience, but in accepting the other without such connection or understanding, lingering, as it were, in the undefined space that empathy is intended to close” (Cummings 73). Additionally, theatre can be used to give students a deeper

understanding of past and present social injustice, engaging them in empathetic dialogue that empowers them to resist and rebel against those who threaten the human rights of anyone. While theatre education most often focuses on providing students with strategies for coping with the uncertain, unfair world in which they live, its more important and more powerful task is to create young adults who believe that it is their personal responsibility to find and right the world's injustices. Kershaw argues that "it is becoming increasingly important that drama and theatre practices continue to challenge and resist, and more importantly find ways to transcend, the new kinds of repression, oppression, exploitation, injustice and so on, which at this very moment are being invented in many parts of the world, even by people who think of themselves as friends of democracy" (68). Works like *Home on the Mornin' Train* give students agency and engage them in the process of resistance and social change, so that they are able to take that power and passion from the theatre out into the world.

Engaging the students in works designed to encourage empathy, theatre educators can provide students with the opportunity to view a political and social system through the eyes of the other. These opportunities provide students with new perspectives and greater understanding of systemic injustice that, while not affecting them directly, still exist. Within the theatrical laboratory, students gain a deep empathy that cannot be achieved any other way. In every other type of interaction, "we do not necessarily experience the same emotion as the one with whom we are empathizing, but we allow her emotions to impact us and...reflecting on what we are feeling and why we are feeling it...we consider the other's emotional experience" (Cummings 23). Yet in

the theatre, the student-actor experiences real emotion from playing the part of someone whose experience is very different from his experience. A non-Jewish student playing the role of Rifka or David in *Home on the Mornin' Train* would have a new level of empathy for a marginalized group of people of which he or she is not a part.

In conclusion, the power of theatre to teach empathy by expanding the world of the students is tremendous and irrefutable. Through works like Kim Hines's *Home on the Mornin' Train*, the students' connection to the injustices of the past is strengthened. As they explore these past injustices within the theatrical laboratory, students are empowered to view themselves as gate-keepers of the future—keeping history from repeating itself. As Maxine Greene argues:

Many of those who speak for imagination, possibility, the kindling of hope, and engagement with the arts are sounding chords great artists of the past have sounded repeatedly...Bach, Beethoven...Van Gogh, Cassat...Dostoyevsky, Melville... They are chords, themes that remind us of the need to acknowledge the darkness, to conjecture, to design, to protest, to imagine, to transform (120).

Engaging students in this process is crucial to their emotional, social and moral formation, and no form of education is more suited to task than theatre education.

CHAPTER 3: COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING IN THE THEATRICAL LABORATORY

Maxine Greene, an educational philosopher and social activist, argues that only through working with “the raw materials of music, dance, and drama; the medium of sound; the medium that is the body in motion; the medium of language or gesture or movement in space” are people able to have an educational experience that results in deeper empathy and social consciousness (10). When students use their bodies and voices to explore solutions to complex social problems (both seemingly small and impossibly large ones) the educational experience is a deep and lasting one. Theatre has a compelling way of creating a space “in which students can explore the moral dimensions of the situations they read about and encounter on a daily basis” (Levy 57-58). This function of the theatrical laboratory is an incredibly important one.

Jonathan Levy outlines how theatre has been used as an educational tool in the past. One of the ways that is most relevant to our discussion is the way in which theatre offers young actors the opportunity to “live in a compressed way *as if* through some telling experience, so that the play becomes a first instance of or a physical paradigm for future action” (*How Theatre Teaches* 23). Whether working on scripted or improvisational theatre, students are performing in a condensed, simulated situation in which problems such as bullying, racism, or sexism can be explored and dealt with in tangible ways without sacrificing emotional or physical safety. Such activities enable

them to handle potentially dangerous realities more effectively. While other disciplines are able to teach creative problem-solving, theatre alone works in this specific and powerful way.

Berman argues that students' sense of self as connected to their morality "and to the world at large emerges over time and through ongoing dialogue with others... direct experience with human suffering or injustice helps crystallize [its development]. Often, action comes before there are clear answers to these questions and serves as a vehicle for finding answers" (110). This illustrates the reality that students are frequently required to make choices about how they treat others before they have had the opportunity to think deeply about the potential consequences of their actions. Theatrical exploration in problem-solving can strengthen students' empathy towards others. In Edmiston and Wilhelm's classroom experience, they have found that "drama is a unique and powerful way... to educate the imagination [and] to inform our values. Drama is a fundamentally human way of engaging with and exploring the world" (xix). It follows that any teacher who wishes to engage his students in a profitable exploration of moral decision-making, ought to use drama to that end. The effective teacher can use drama as a tool to help his students navigate complex ethical concerns in every discipline. Wilhelm and Edmiston suggest that this is possible in STEM education as well. They argue that drama "provides students with a process for designing, applying, debating, evaluating and revising what they know, which contrasts with the simple reception of knowledge that is expected when information is simply transmitted to them. We already know which process results in measurable learning" (140). Since

STEM education that provides students with a way to engage higher order thinking skills and problem-solving is best practice, lessons which utilize drama to this end ought to be made a fundamental part of the curriculum.

Edmiston and Wilhelm mention educator Rand Harrington, physics professor at the University of Maine, as a sterling example of scientist and educator engages students in this way. Harrington's is a practitioner of a methodology called "Physics as Inquiry" which focuses on helping students to become "intelligent novices". Harrington argues that drama gives students practice in visualization, testing and understanding hypotheses, which is essential in learning to use the scientific method effectively. He uses drama as a tool to help students create models, test their understanding of these models and finally analyze their own conclusions in a metacognitive way. His process begins with the highlighting of students' underlying beliefs and assumptions. He then "confronts them with the appropriately challenging physical phenomena and...helps them resolve the schism into a new and more accurate model" (Wilhelm et al. 141-142).

Wilhelm describes a three-week middle school physics unit he observed Harrington teach at Orono Middle School. He began by presenting the "appropriately challenging physical phenomena", the idea of "uniform motion" (144). Harrington had the students experiment with a ball on a track and attempt to determine from observation whether uniform motion was even possible. At the end of the experimental phase, the students were required to identify their level of certainty about the existence of uniform motion. The next step in Harrington's "Physics by Inquiry" process was a radio talk show drama in which he played the host. Students pretended to call into the

show and he asked them to defend their opinion. From this he learned that the students who were sure that uniform motion existed were those that had measured results, while those who held the opposite opinion articulated a more philosophical defense: “It’s gotta be speeding up or slowing down. Things are always doing one or the other—you’re either living or dying” (Wilhelm et al. 145). After he felt the students had sufficiently debated the issue, Harrington asked them to reflect on the arguments and to think about which were the strongest in terms of science. The purpose of this activity was to help students to define their hypotheses, challenge those hypotheses with opposing opinions, and finally to help them reconsider previously held beliefs.

Being able to question one’s own beliefs is essential to empathetic growth. Harrington’s work is an example of how drama can be used across the curriculum to build empathy in students. His success with this inquiry-based, student-centered approach shows how “effective drama strategies can be as teacher interventions to unclog or stimulate students’ thinking” (Wilhelm et al. 85). Steppenwolf Theatre’s arts integration immersion programs are another example of interdisciplinary use of the performing arts. Reflecting on her experience in the program, Melinda Mcbee Orzulak describes how teachers’ passion for education and student’s untapped learning potential can be activated through arts integration in all subjects. In an arts-integrated program, students are encouraged to approach subject matter with creativity, regardless of the risks. Lessons influenced by the theatre arts inspire ensemble-style, democratic problem-solving and strengthen students’ collaborative creativity.

In her foundational textbook on creative drama and children's theatre, Nellie McCaslin writes about the power of drama to engage students in collaboration, another important step in the problem-solving process. "Although drama... is a group art, it is composed of the contributions of each individual, and every contribution is important...As the group plans together, each member is encouraged to express his or her own ideas and thereby contribute to the whole... [It] unquestionably offers a rare opportunity for sharing ideas and solving problems together" (14-15). McCaslin's focus on the individual's importance as part of the group is crucial to the problem-solving function of the theatrical laboratory. For collaboration to be truly effective, students must understand their profound significance as individual members of a team. Such collaboration increases students' appreciation of peers who are very different from them. As they interact with their classmates, students begin to understand that each person has unique strengths that they bring to collaborative effort which will enhance their final solutions. In this way, they are able to gain practical experience with the value of collaborative problem-solving.

Constructivism is an educational theory that places great importance on the need to teach collaboration, insisting that "learner inquiry and discovery, learner autonomy, and self-motivation of the learner are critical elements to the success of the learning process" (Leonard 37-38). The teacher, formerly considered the expositor of codified information, is now viewed as "a catalyst, a coach, and a program manager directing projects that center upon solving a particular problem" (Leonard 37-38). This

type of education activates students' interests and engages them in activities in which they are encouraged to work together to solve a common problem.

Creative problem-solving as a part of a team further increases students' ability to empathize with those who view the problem differently than they do. This is because "empathy holds people in relationship—connected but not conflated. Empathy exists *between*: between people; between the urge to share experience and the need to retain that experience as our own; between similarity and difference" (Cummings 191). Only through deepening interpersonal connection can empathy be developed and strengthened. The shared experience of working on a production engages students in building relationships with their collaborating peers. This is a specific byproduct of theatre education that cannot be replicated in the typical high school classroom. Although drama can be used by any creative secondary educator, there is something uniquely compelling about the impact of working on a production. Tremendous benefit can be derived from encouraging every high school student to be engaged in some type of theatrical production before graduation. The argument is not that every student should be required to perform on stage or even to build set or work as a stagehand, for theatre attendance is a part of the theatrical experience. Rather, the theatre ought to be considered a crucial part of every student's high school experience and be integrated into the culture of the school.

High school sports teams serve as a uniting force that impacts each student at the school. Their success is viewed as the school's success and students are bonded by their support of the various school teams. School assemblies are dedicated to energetic

support and excitement for these teams, bolstering “school spirit” and building a strong sense of community within the student body. Even students who do not physically participate in school sports participate by identifying with and supporting their school teams. This gives all students the feeling of a larger group identity, building their empathy for one another. However different they are from each other, in the end they are able to view themselves as a part of a larger team. In an ideal world, high school theatre would serve a similar purpose.

While school sports build a sense of community, theatre can serve this purpose at an even deeper level. Ideally, the two or three performances the theatre department produced each year would be events the students viewed as a part of their collective success. It would begin with a play selection committee, made up of a variety of faculty members and a few students. The goal of the committee would be to choose works that build empathy within the student body, either by exposing them to new perspectives (as discussed in the previous chapter) or by simply giving them a project that would present them with the opportunity to perform collaborative problem-solving. Additionally, the play selection committee would consider current events and issues, contemplating the needs of the surrounding community. Involving students in this process increases their agency and could inspire them to view the work of producing plays for the community as an important task of which they are an essential part.

In this proposed model, the theatre teacher is then responsible for involving students in all aspects of the play production process. She must be creative and aware, always on the lookout for ways in which students who traditionally have been

uninterested in the arts can use their interests and passions to assist in this process. This program would feature students as scenic and costume designers, with the supervising teacher assisting them in the building of models and creation of costume renderings. This work should utilize the talents of individual teachers as well. Not every theatre teacher is an experienced costume or set designer; other teachers' abilities might be far more useful for this type of project. An independent, graded project supervised by a mathematics teacher could produce an excellent three-dimensional model of a set design produced by the student scenic designers. The fine arts teacher could oversee a group of students collaborating in the creation of costume renderings. The next step in the creative process would be an all-school assembly, at which the student designers, dramaturgs and supporting faculty would present their process and ideas to the student body, generating even more interest in the final product.

Students' collaborative problem-solving skills could further be enhanced by engaging them in the process of production dramaturgy. Richard Pettengill's work shows dramaturgy is an important piece of any theatrical production and even more significantly, how it can be used by high school teachers to facilitate engagement with even very difficult texts. In his article "Teaching Difficult Dramatic Texts: a Collaborative Inquiry Using Dramaturgy," Pettengill highlights the power of research and inquiry to facilitate collaborative problem-solving within the classroom. In this case study, he describes a process in which two high school teachers working in a lower level English class chose a linguistically challenging text and used collaborative dramaturgical research to engage their students in very challenging work. In choosing O'Casey's *The*

Plough and the Stars, Dawn Abt-Perkins and Kathy Babcock presented their students with a text that contained dialectal nuances that even college-age students struggled to understand. The teachers “resisted the temptation to simplify the textual features by rewriting or summarizing parts of the text or by showing video productions” and instead chose to engage the students in the process of dramaturgy. The main difference between the work that is typically required of high school students in an English classroom and dramaturgy is that the dramaturg typically avoids prescriptive analysis of the work. He tends to provide the original, primary source documents that inform the “collective interpretation of the artistic team” (Pettengill 64), while the audience and the artistic team does the interpretive work.

In their classroom, Babcock and Abt-Perkins presented their students with a simulation in which they would act as consulting dramaturgs on a university production of *The Plough and the Stars*. As they prepared to attend the play, students “became more active readers of this difficult text because of the authentic context for interpretation,” examining a variety of sources (“visuals, artifacts, as well as traditional textual forms”) and fostering “fresh analysis” in the classroom (Pettengill 65). When the students performed dramaturgy on the work, they were able to gain hands-on experience with the importance and influence of research and study for a production or performance. When students work together on a project that has real-world implications, they given real agency over their own work and are able to practice collaborative problem-solving in a way that cannot be replicated anywhere else.

Babcock and Abt-Perkins's use of dramaturgy could be realized even further in the high school theatre program proposed in this paper. Students involved in the program could use their dramaturgical research to assist teachers across all disciplines in the development of lessons that could prepare students to see the school production. Lesson plans could support student engagement in the production, fostering a school community in which artistic collaboration is viewed as a mark of the success of the school. Performing dramaturgical analysis as members of an artistic team gives students a sense of purpose. Working collectively and collaboratively on this project, all students involved will find that the purpose-driven research "extends and illuminates the information provided in the text itself" (Pettengill 65). This type of learning opportunity increases the students' ability to collaborate and empathize with others in a way that is unique to theatre education.

In this proposed program, the student designers, actors, stage-managers, and dramaturgs work together with the faculty to create a truly integrated theatre arts program that touches each student in some way. The ultimate goal of this type of program is for every student to be engaged in the theatrical laboratory in some way, whether through production attendance and in-class discussion, or as an artist and practitioner. When this type of education becomes ingrained in the culture of the school community, empathy and collaboration will increase and theatre education will be being used to its full potential.

CHAPTER 4: SELF-EXPRESSION IN THE THEATRICAL LABORATORY

The final purpose of the theatrical laboratory is to allow high school students a place to explore their own identities and begin to express their own ideas about the world in which they live. Maxine Greene argues that this ought to be viewed as one of the main purposes of education. Good teachers should “invent situations in which young people are enabled to freely make of themselves who or what they are, that they ‘become creatively what they are,’ and that means, in part, an infusion of their teaching-learning situations with opportunities to engage continually (yes, and knowledgeably) with works of art” (*Thinking of Things* 118). Through theatre education, students are presented with opportunities to perform analytical and interpretive tasks which enable them to develop their own opinions and thus their own identities.

Developing a sense of self involves discovering and sharing one’s opinions. When students participate in theatre, they “explore questions of relevance to them...in ways that are educationally powerful for individuals and communities” (*Why Theatre Matters* 6). Doing so further connects them to one another and gives them a strong sense of personal identity. In a study focusing on the benefits of theatre education for young women, Kathleen Gallagher argues that one of its fundamental purposes is “personal development.” In this study, she demonstrates how participating in ensemble-style, informal theatre productions gives young people the opportunity to wrestle with such

complexities as the nature of “‘right and wrong,’ ‘truth and fiction,’ poverty and wealth,’ ‘self and other’ ... ‘freedom,’ ‘oppression,’ and ‘relationships’” (*Lives of Girls* 44-45). As the theatre educator, Gallagher frequently begins the lessons with a central story (like a myth or a legend) which already contains basic details for the students to explore and expand upon.

To the end of helping the students to develop their own personal identities, she then places the students in a position of authority, giving them autonomy over the details of the story. Reminding the reader that the “classroom...is not a neutral space in relation to positions of power,” (77) Gallagher’s work highlights the importance of giving students agency over their own work. Through this activity, students are encouraged to discover and create their own meaning behind a simple, mythological story. In the story Gallagher used as a basis for the activity, a young girl from Earth is transported to the sky where falls in love with and marries a star. Eventually, she gives birth to a son: the Moon. Despite her great love for her son, the Earthwoman does not feel at home in the sky and longs to return to earth. Desperate for a glimpse of the life she left behind, the Earthwoman digs a hole in the sky against her husbands’ wishes.

At first glance, this story is problematic for young women especially, but Gallagher shows how giving students agency can empower them to express themselves and to make their own meaning of even the most problematic texts. Using “Forum Theatre”, the students debate the Earthwoman’s reasons for wanting to leave her husband in character as members of the tribal council. After much discussion, the students agreed that the council of elders would allow the Earthwoman to leave, but

her son, the Moon, would have to stay behind since “his role in the sky [was] far too important” (*Lives of Girls* 79). The issue of child abandonment is a difficult one for many young people. Through an interactive use of theatre education, students are able to form their own opinions and debate them within the safety of the theatrical laboratory. Discussing such difficult issues within the confines of fiction, facilitates deeper engagement in a process that would otherwise be emotionally taxing and ineffective.

Gallagher illustrates this with a touching personal story about a young actor named Madeline who was involved in the “Earthwoman” drama. The day before the tribal council “meeting” was to be staged, Madeline approached Gallagher and asked if she could read an in-character letter she had written to the Earthwoman. Knowing that any personal, emotional connection Madeline had made with the Earthwoman’s story could be more safely handled within the context of the fictional, dramatic piece, Gallagher asked her to wait and read it when she was in-character as the council woman.

Madeline read her letter...to the student playing the Earthwoman...while claiming to understand her reasons for leaving, [the letter] pleaded with her never to forget her son, the Moon, to explain to him clearly that he is not to blame for her leaving, and to promise always to be in touch with him as long as she lived. (*Lives of Girls* 80)

Madeline had fully committed to the activity, but Gallagher did not realize until much later just how much this work had given Madeline the freedom to express herself and her personal opinions. Madeline eventually came to Gallagher to inform her that she

would be leaving to move to Nova Scotia to live with her mother. Her counselor told Gallagher that Madeline's mother had recently left Madeline to follow her abusive partner to Nova Scotia. Reflecting on this experience, Gallagher writes,

Madeline had left to find her mother... I was left to think that our drama was barely an abstraction, coming disturbingly close to Madeline's own struggles. This fantasy story, for no particularly reason that I might have predicted, had, in fact, ignited the concerns and passions of several students. The structures we used set up the 'once removed' space of fiction that challenged them to take ownership for the kinds of things they felt they needed to question both in our story-building and, in some cases, their lives. (*Lives of Girls* 81).

In Gallagher's class, Madeline found a safe place to express her own fears and desires. This story illustrates way that the theatrical laboratory can function as an answer to this deep-seeded need which all students have.

The personal growth of high school students is the task with which educators of that age group are tasked. Personal growth is jumpstarted when students are given opportunities to express themselves in the learning process. When they feel that they have a voice and a valuable role to play in their own education, students are energized, motivated and inquisitive in their work. Storytelling is an important part of the process of self-expression, especially storytelling "through theatre that draws on symbol and metaphor, realism and abstraction...act[ing] as a 'methodological release point' ...invit[ing] the unsaid, the unmasked, the contested, the contradictory" (*Why Theatre Matters*). Fully maximizing theatre's ability to engage and uncover these personal

stories requires teachers and administrators to be willing to acknowledge the students' powerful, inner voices.

One style of theatre that is well-suited to provide an effective vehicle for self-expression to students is known as "verbatim theatre." Verbatim theatre (or as it is sometimes called, "Documentary Theatre") uses firsthand, historical accounts to create a performance designed to present facts and personal narrative as a piece of art. Taking archived materials such as recorded interviews, primary source documents and even photographs and video, theatre practitioners working with this genre use the theatre as a means of both re-enacting and creating historical narrative (Martin 9). Kaufman's *The Laramie Project* and Jessica Blank and Eric Jensen's *The Exonerated* are both examples of dramatic literature that uses this technique.

What makes verbatim theatre so "provocative is the way in which it strategically deploys the appearance of truth, while inventing its own particular truth through elaborate aesthetic devices" (Martin 10). Using verbatim theatre, students would be able to present their own personal stories and shape them in a way that not only enabled them to express themselves but also united them as members of a specific theatrical community. Through these self-expressive, verbatim theatrical performances, students would be able to hear to their classmates' words presented with heightened theatricality. This could serve to increase their empathy of one another while also giving them agency in the telling of their own stories and the creation of their own art.

Verbatim or documentary theatre is typically used to present a firsthand account of a collective experience (i.e. Matthew Shepherd's murder in *The Laramie Project* or

the experience of exonerated death-row inmates in *The Exonerated*). Similarly, verbatim theatre can be used by high school students to create a piece that acknowledges the value of each individual student's contribution to the group high school experience. The proposed program would include a unit using this style of theatre to empower the students to tell their personal stories. This could work well with a group of upperclassmen as a class project resulting in a final performance for the student body and faculty at the end of the year. Students could decide what personal issues they wanted to present to the student body and then use their own first person writing as the body of the text. Verbatim theatre frequently uses firsthand interviews as a part of the final product. Having students interview one another could serve so many purposes in the educational experience. Students would gain analytical thinking skills as they learned to ask thoughtful questions to elicit more profound answers. Additionally, empathy would be increased if they took on each other's words as a part of the performance. It is undeniable that verbatim theatre possesses great potential as a tool in the theatrical laboratory.

Wilhelm states that engagement in theatre "helps students to own their learning; drama comes to personally involve them in that learning; it helps them to experience and express their learning as a story. White (1981) tells us that defining and using narrative takes us to the very core of culture and humanity" (139). When students begin to feel responsibility for and accomplishment in their learning, education becomes a source of pride. When lessons demonstrate to students that their personal perspective is an important piece of the learning environment, it gives students agency

and ownership over their own learning, strengthening their belief in themselves as vital parts of a larger community. In an interview with Bill Moyers, poet Adrienne Rich argues that poetry “can bring those parts of us together that are both in dread and which have the surviving sense of a possible happiness, and a possible collectivity, a possible community” (Moyers 342). Engagement with formal and informal theatre (both devised by the students themselves and that which is already written by published playwrights) can do so even more comprehensively than poetry, since theatre is by nature a collaborative exercise. Neither poetry, literature, nor fine arts compare to theatre in terms of community-building potential. Students who participate in theatre have true-to-life experiences which bond them in a way that other art forms simply cannot.

In the summer of 2016, I had the incredible opportunity to create a devised theatre unit for twenty students in fourth through seventh grade at South of Broadway Theatre Company in North Charleston, South Carolina. The unit was two weeks long and culminated in a final performance that had been completely designed by the students. My goal was to give them an opportunity to learn firsthand the value of working as an ensemble to create a work of art that expressed both their individual and group perspectives. The purpose was to help them understand the value of each other’s voices and increase their empathy for those who were different from them. To build group camaraderie, I began by playing team-building games with the students for most of the first day. After I felt the students had begun to know and trust each other a bit more, I explained the work we would be doing over the next two weeks. As soon as they learned that they were going to be working together to write and then perform a piece

of theatre, they immediately came to me with a barrage of creative ideas. Most of these revolved around a character they wanted to play, or a movie they wanted to imitate. While I was thrilled to see that they had completely accepted the premise of our work, the fact that they had never worked as a theatrical ensemble became abundantly clear. I knew that harnessing their energy and channeling it into effective teamwork needed to be my primary task.

The next day, I gathered the students and set the expectations for the group activity. I informed them that our work for the day would center around choosing a theme (or multiple) themes for our final work. I asked them to hold character and plot ideas for later and encouraged them to be completely committed to the process, trusting that I would help guide it in the right direction. I then put a giant pad of paper on an easel and wrote, “Our Favorite Movies, TV Shows and Books” at the top in bright red marker. I asked the students to each share one movie, television show or book that they loved and proceeded to list all of them on the page. The next stage of the brainstorming process involved asking students to identify the reasons why these narratives spoke to them, which led to a deeper discussion about the themes present in the stories. This process resulted in a list about forty of the students’ favorite themes from books, movies or television shows. Interested in providing them with as much autonomy as possible, I asked them to choose the themes on which our play would be based. After some lively discussion and very little guidance from me, they chose four main themes for the work: friendship and family, empowerment, survival and sacrifice. At this point, I had resisted all attempts at discussing plot or character. I now

encouraged them to go home and spend some time free-writing and brain-storming stories that could explore these themes effectively.

The next day I was met with twenty excited team-members, ready to write. Their creativity activated and their individual voices empowered, I now wanted them to view themselves as a part of a wider community that would decide on what story needed to be told. I separated them into five small groups and asked them to share with one another their own personal idea and then vote on the one they felt was the most compelling. After that, the larger group voted on which idea they thought warranted our focus for the rest of the unit. At the end of the process, the students had chosen to write a post-apocalyptic play that would focus on the empowerment of all individuals regardless of their physical or mental handicap. When I asked the students the foundational question, “what do we want our audience to learn from our play?” one fifth grader said, “I want them to know that just because someone is disabled doesn’t mean they’re not able to do things. Everyone can make a difference in their world.” This was the story they wanted to tell. This was the message they wanted to communicate. I viewed myself as a facilitator for their story, a microphone for their collective voice.

Throughout the rest of the unit the students created a plot in which children their age found themselves in hopeless situations because of their predisposition to mental or physical illness. At the end of the play, these characters survived their ordeal through communal strength and creativity. It was impossible to ignore the similarities between the students themselves and their characters. The power of theatre to increase these students’ empathy for one another by facilitating their self-expression

was undeniable. Providing them with an opportunity to create a piece of theatre over which they felt ownership and pride gave them a powerful and lasting educational experience through which their empathy for one another was heightened.

This empowering educational opportunity ought to be a feature in secondary education. Experience in the theatrical laboratory increases students' ability to express themselves, fostering a sense of their value as a part of their community and increasing their personal investment in their education. Increasing students' agency instills in them the belief that they have a specific, personal role to play in their community and that they can bring about positive change wherever it is needed. Theatre education is the ideal method for engaging students in the important task of expressing their personal place in their community, and increasing their empathy and respect for their peers.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Secondary education in the United States is in desperate need of a methodology for teaching empathy to young people. These students will quickly become adults and citizens in our global society, and their moral and emotional development should be a primary goal of secondary education. High school teachers can have tremendous impact on their lives and yet they are not empowered to use one of the most effective methods of holistic education: the theatre. This paper presents ample evidence that what high schools need is a robust and integrated theatre curriculum designed to include every student in the theatrical laboratory. In the proposed program, all students would be included in ways that would support their academic and social development. Theatre participation would be a part of the school culture in ways that empowered students according to their abilities and interests.

In an interview with Mike Seymour, Nel Noddings suggests the goals of secondary education need to be reevaluated.

[We] have to change the conversation. We have to get educators and parents talking again about the aims of education. We have to show people that the result of the kind of change we are talking about is a happier life, and then we need to show that it's possible to have schools that are really there for teachers and kids... Take it out of the realm of duty and more into the realm of pleasure. Fundamentally, there should be a joy to learning. There has to be hard work, too.

But people are willing to struggle through the hard work if there is some intrinsic reward. (95)

The intrinsic reward of an intergrated theatre program is empowered, empathetic young people. These young people are the politicians, scientists, and educators of tomorrow. Experience in the theatrical laboratory can prepare them to be engaged and empathetic leaders. If this is the future we desire for them and for ourselves, we must begin this work now. We cannot afford to wait another minute.

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