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# The Theatre Missionary: Exploring the Early Career Teaching Experiences of Theatre Educators through Artistic Inquiry

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THE THEATRE MISSIONARY:  
EXPLORING THE EARLY CAREER TEACHING EXPERIENCES  
OF THEATRE EDUCATORS THROUGH ARTISTIC INQUIRY

A DISSERTATION

Submitted by

R. Andrew Strickland

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

School of Education

LESLEY UNIVERSITY

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### **Abstract**

For educators entering a fine arts classroom for the first time the transition can be quite difficult. Fine arts teachers are often the only specialists in their subject area at a school, placing them in a new situation without a mentor to guide them through the process. The difficulties can be exacerbated by the ideological, financial, and social marginalization of the arts in many schools. Despite the challenges faced by new fine arts educators, little research has focused specifically on their transitions into K-12 classrooms. To explore these transitional experiences this study was guided by the research question: How do K-12 theatre educators interpret their early-career teaching experiences through artistic inquiry? The study utilized Metaphor-Scenario (MetaScen), an arts-based qualitative methodology developed by the researcher, to gather and analyze data from the participants, seven American theatre teachers from K-12 schools. MetaScen allowed participants to reflect on their early career teaching experiences, represent them with a metaphor, and finally adapt the metaphor into a short performance piece. Data collection was then completed with semi-structured interviews of the participants. A multiple cycle coding method was utilized both to analyze data as it specifically referred to the question of teachers' transitions to the K-12 theatre classroom as well as to explore the efficacy of MetaScen as part of the ongoing work to refine and improve its methodology. The study found that new theatre teachers felt a strong sense of isolation while undergoing a first year marked by extreme emotional swings. The teachers felt a close connection with their students but often lacked the support they needed to succeed and experienced challenges when their programs intersected with other facets of the school. These findings were linked by the primary discovery that new theatre teachers need to be strong advocates for theatre in order to successfully navigate the transition process. Recommendations were made to theatre education stakeholders for preparing new theatre educators both for the specific challenges of teaching as well as becoming

strong advocates for theatre. Possible future directions and improvements for the MetaScen research methodology were also suggested.

### Acknowledgements

In my way of thinking, this dissertation actually began in 1989 when a college freshman cheekily told the head of the theatre department at the University of Alabama that he wanted to make directing his emphasis when that was not even an option for undergraduates. Instead of kicking me out of his office, Dr. Ed Williams heard me out and helped me accomplish my goal by making me work harder than I ever had before in my life. In a college career that has carried me to four universities over 27 years, I have been blessed with so many teachers who have encouraged my artistic eccentricities while not letting me shirk the requisite rigors of academia. In addition to Dr. Williams at the University of Alabama, this list of powerful influences on my career includes John Ross and Bill Teague. At the University of Mississippi, Dr. James Shollenberger, Dr. K. Scott McCoy, and René Pulliam honed my skills as a director and introduced me to scholarly research. Dr. James Thomas at Wayne State University made me realize that I could be a researcher at the doctoral level, while Pat Ansuini gave me my first taste of being treated as a collegial colleague. Lesley University's Integrated Teaching through the Arts program fused my love of teaching, my interest in research, and my lifetime devotion to the arts into scholarly success through the efforts of Dr. Mike McCarthy, Dr. Lisa Donovan, and Dr. Brigit McCallum.

I returned to Lesley University for my doctoral work and had the great fortune to be assigned Dr. Terry Keeney as my advisor. I have never had a more supportive presence in my academic life. While I laughingly christened him "Dreamkiller" as he relentlessly encouraged me to focus my research scope, I could not have accomplished this dream without him. He has been my guide through the pitfalls of academia, a push in the back when needed, a tireless advocate for my work, and a true embodiment of what a mentor should be. I also acknowledge the many other wonderful professors and staff at Lesley University who have had a hand in my

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Dedicated to:

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My wife, Janet Strickland, for being my dream come true.

My sons, Luke and Caedmon Strickland, for being my dream of the future.



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## Chapter 1: Introduction

For educators entering a fine arts classroom for the first time, the transition can be quite difficult. Fine arts teachers are often the only specialists in their subject area at a school, placing them in a new situation without a mentor to guide them through the process. Administrators may have little knowledge of the needs of arts teachers and their programs. The difficulties can be exacerbated by the ideological, financial, and social marginalization of the arts in many schools.

Despite the challenges faced by new fine arts educators, little research has focused specifically on their transitions into K-12 classrooms. Conspicuously missing are the authentic voices of the teachers themselves. To fill this gap in the literature, the researcher proposed to study the transition to the classroom by soliciting the early career stories of theatre educators. As an earlier study by the researcher (Strickland, 2011) suggested that teachers in each arts modality may deal with the transition differently, this study focused on educators in only one area of the fine arts: theatre.

The researcher began the study with an examination of the existing literature in the field with a particular focus on adult learning and adult development theory. The work of several theorists provided the foundation for the study. David Kolb's (1984; 2000) experiential learning theory proved especially important from both learning and developmental standpoints. Also instrumental to the study were Albert Bandura's (1977, 1993, 1997) social learning theory and self-efficacy studies, Robert Kegan (1982) and Daniel Levinson's (1996; 1978) separate theories of adult development, and the mentoring theories of Laurent Daloz (1999).

The researcher proceeded to utilize a sample of theatre educators that was limited neither by age nor experience. Some of the educators had taught for many years and looked back at their first moments in the classroom over a gulf of experiences and gained knowledge. Other participants were still relatively new to the profession and communicated experiences that were

much more recent. The hope of the researcher was that the combined experiences of this sample of educators could suggest ways administrators, peer teachers, and other mentors could help ease the transition to the classroom for theatre teachers entering the field in the future.

The researcher utilized a qualitative methodology to gather and analyze data from participants. The research method itself was tailored to the specific skills of theatre practitioners. Metaphor-Scenario (MetaScen), an arts-based method of data collection, analysis, and presentation developed by the researcher, was utilized for this study to tap into the artistic training of the participants and provide a metaphor-based window into their experiences. This step was followed by a more traditional interview process. The participants consisted of eight purposefully-chosen theatre educators from the United States.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the transition of early educators to the fine arts classroom which sets the context for the study. This is followed by the problem statement, statement of purpose, and a series of research questions that guided the study. The chapter continues with a discussion of the research approach, including more in-depth description of the arts-based research method developed for the study. The researcher's perspectives and assumptions are then explored before the chapter concludes with a statement concerning the rationale and significance of this study as well as definitions of key terminology utilized throughout the work.

## **Background and Context**

As shocking as it may be for their students to learn, every teacher had a life before they came to the classroom. For some educators it involved specific training in pedagogy, learning the finer points of curriculum and teaching strategies. For others, their time before entering the

classroom involved professional training in their chosen subject area and a career outside of education. Yet for all educators the time eventually came when they had to take the first tentative steps into their own classrooms. These steps led to a major transition: an adaptation to not only a new role, but also a different environment and social structure.

Many teachers struggle with this transition to the classroom. According to the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project, new teachers often travel through distinct stages during their induction to the classroom (Moir, 2011). These stages include disillusionment with teaching and a day-to-day struggle for survival. Indeed, many teachers are not able to survive. According to Graziano's (2005) research 22,000 out of the 200,000 new teachers hired yearly will leave the field permanently.

For teachers of the fine and performing arts, simply finding a job can be challenging. The arts exist in a tenuous position in the K-12 schools of the United States. Government initiatives such as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 have forced schools to focus resources on mathematics and reading (Jennings & Rentner, 2006; Spohn, 2008). This trend has continued with the push for adoption of the Common Core Standards ("Understanding the Common Core Standards," 2014) and an increased emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) courses. This shift has caused a devaluation of arts in many schools and, in extreme cases, the elimination of arts programs altogether (West, 2012). It should be stated that neither No Child Left Behind nor the Common Core intended for the arts to be dismissed from schools. On the contrary, No Child Left Behind listed the arts as a core need for students (Elpus, 2007). However, the benchmarks set for quantifying school improvement did not include the arts. With limited funds and time, the focus of struggling schools naturally turned to the areas chosen for the strictest testing: mathematics and reading (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012;



West, 2012). As schools began to de-emphasize the arts, fewer fine arts positions were made available.

Teachers who manage to find jobs teaching the arts in K-12 schools often face unsupportive environments. The increased importance of standardized testing diverts money, time, and attention away from the arts. The culture of schools often tends to favor athletic programs over artistic offerings. When the researcher was hired as a theatre teacher in a K-12 school, an administrator welcomed him by saying, “We’re so glad that you’re here. We really need arts for the *other* kids. You know, the ones who don’t play sports.”

Fine arts educators therefore find themselves on an island within the school. Even fine arts departments themselves differ greatly from other academic departments. While a mathematics or science department organizes educators together who teach different levels and variations of the same subject, fine arts departments contain teachers of greatly different subjects with divergent pedagogies, curricula, and equipment needs (Strickland, 2008). These teachers are linked by their shared love of the arts and their isolation from the rest of the school. Yet a theatre teacher in this environment can expect to find no other teacher with any experience teaching their subject as part of the faculty. The teachers who are not driven away from teaching theatre in K-12 schools by this isolation tend to become fiercely independent advocates for the arts, often with a small but extremely loyal group of students, family, and community members supporting their efforts (Strickland, 2008).

The challenge then is to find a way to bridge the gap between the first moments in the theatre classroom and the self-sufficiency of an experienced theatre educator. The problem is made more difficult when considering the many training paths theatre teachers take to the classroom. While the majority of teachers in the traditional academic subjects generally come

from college teacher-training programs, many fine arts educators are pulled from the professional arts world, especially in areas such as theatre and dance which have fewer dedicated teacher-training programs (Anderson & Risner, 2012). These artists bring valuable real-world experience to their classrooms, but may be unfamiliar with the daily operations of a K-12 school. Some school systems have programs in place to allow arts teachers to gain these teaching skills while teaching in their own classrooms (Brewer, 2003); others grandfather them into certification without additional training because of their advanced work in the arts (Ball & Ferzani, 2010). This now creates three paths into the theatre classroom: through a traditional teacher-preparation program, through a transition program made to assist fine arts professionals entering the classroom, and through a direct jump from the professional world to the classroom. These multiple paths make it challenging to install specific training that would ease all educators through the transition to the classroom.

Even when teachers are trained in a college program specifically designed to groom theatre educators for the classroom they may not be fully prepared to make the transition. This is partly due to the wide variety of skills necessary to teach theatre. Waack (1987) refers to the field of theatre as being “so broad that it is sometimes defined as a “synthesis” of the arts” (p. 35). With potential theatre teachers needing to learn about acting, directing, stagecraft, theatre history, and numerous other facets of the field there are few college hours available for specific study in pedagogy (Waack, 1987; Wheatley, 1987). Favoring education courses can likewise weaken a new theatre teacher in specific subject preparation. Adding to the challenge are the additional tasks that theatre teachers may be asked to fulfill in the school environment, such as leading forensics teams or having to teach in a related subject area (Waack, 1987).

There is a definite need in theatre education (and arts education as a whole) to aid beginning teachers as they transition into their new roles. Teacher induction has become a very active area for research (Wang, Odell, & Clift, 2010b) but little of this work focuses specifically on the needs of theatre educators. The logical first step of this process would be to determine what the average theatre teacher faces during the first few years in the classroom. The best source of this knowledge would be theatre teachers themselves.

### **Problem Statement**

Theatre teachers enter the K-12 classroom through a variety of educational and professional paths but often struggle to make the transition to full-time arts educator. While new theatre teachers face the same challenges of teachers in more traditional academic areas, they face specific difficulties that are often not supported through standard teacher induction programs. While teacher induction itself has become an active field of inquiry, little specific research has been directed at studying the transition of theatre teachers to the K-12 classroom.

### **Statement of Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this arts-based study was to explore the early career teaching experiences of 8 theatre educators from K-12 schools in search of answers to the following general questions:

1. What did these participants experience as new theatre teachers?
2. How did they perceive their transitions?
3. What factors assisted or hindered them as they assumed their new places in the classroom?

4. What suggestions would they make to new theatre educators beginning the transition to the classroom?

It was hoped that a better understanding of the challenges and successes experienced by early career theatre teachers could provide the initial groundwork for the development of teacher induction programs specifically geared for theatre teachers.

To explore these transitional experiences, the study utilized the following unifying research question: How do K-12 theatre educators interpret their early-career teaching experiences through artistic inquiry?

### **Research Approach**

The researcher studied the experiences of seven theatre educators utilizing an arts-based research method approved by Lesley University's institutional review board. These research participants had all completed their early years of teaching but had greatly varying years of experience. They were chosen through purposeful sampling utilizing professional contacts of the researcher and the memberships of several professional theatre education associations.

The primary method of data collection was through Metaphor-Scenario (MetaScen) an arts-based research method. MetaScen was developed by the researcher through numerous studies from 2006-2012 as part of his Education Specialist and Doctor of Philosophy programs at Lesley University. It was vetted for use by research participants in a pilot study prior to this inquiry (Strickland, 2012).

The MetaScen process asked participants to reflect on their early teaching experiences (guided by written prompts in the directions) and then categorize the experiences into major themes. The participants then selected a metaphor that abstractly represented the themes and

developed it into a scenario (a performance outline), and ultimately a realized performance. These performances were video recorded. When geographically possible, the researcher watched the performances live and took field notes in addition to the video recording.

All research participants were also interviewed using a semi-structured process. These interviews were carried out in person, via video conferencing, or via telephone and focused on both the participants' early teaching experiences and their process in utilizing the artistic inquiry method. Audio recordings were made of the interviews which were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. The researcher utilized member checking, sending each participant's transcript to him or her for correction and augmentation. Both the original and member-reviewed transcripts were used as data in the study.

The interview transcripts, video recordings of the completed MetaScen performances, and the researcher's field notes provided the raw data for analysis. A multiple pass coding method was utilized, guided by Saldaña's (2009) coding manual. The initial coding pass looked to organize the data into descriptive categories. Subsequent coding passes developed dominant themes from the categorized data. The entire coding process was run twice. The first coding process analyzed data as it specifically referred to the question of transition to the K-12 theatre classroom. The second coding process focused on the use of the MetaScen research method as part of the ongoing work to refine and improve its methodology.

The final step of the analysis involved the researcher using the MetaScen method himself to further examine the data from the study.

## **The Researcher**

The researcher has a long history of work in all of the performing arts with a specific focus on theatre. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in theatre from the University of Alabama, a Master of Fine Arts degree in theatre directing from the University of Mississippi, and an Education Specialist degree from Lesley University in curriculum and instruction with a focus on integrated teaching through the arts. The researcher has also taken doctoral level courses in theatre at Wayne State University in addition to his current doctoral work in adult learning at Lesley University. He has been involved in more than 200 theatre productions in educational and professional environments as a director, actor, choreographer, music director, designer, dramaturge, and playwright. He also has more than 20 years of teaching experience in K-12, college, and theatre-based programs. Currently the researcher is the Director of Theatre and Chair of Fine Arts at First Presbyterian Day School in Macon, Georgia.

Through this experience and education, the researcher brought considerable practical expertise in the area of educational theatre to the inquiry. However, the researcher acknowledged that with this experience also came the danger of researcher bias. Through his own transition to the classroom, the researcher had a personal story that may or may not be the same as the participants. He also developed the research method and had obvious hopes for MetaScen to be successful. In order not to allow any of his biases to influence the study, the researcher designed regular self-reflection into the methodology, primarily through the utilization of the MetaScen method to represent and bracket his own attitudes towards the inquiry through metaphor and performance. This method is similar to the personal journaling utilized by other researchers for this same purpose. He also regularly discussed his work with academic advisors to further check for bias.

### **Assumptions**

Based on his experiences as a theatre educator and practitioner, the researcher made several assumptions in reference to this study:

1. The variety of paths theatre teachers take to the classroom do not fully prepare them for the realities of teaching. Those coming from a professional theatre background may lack training in the day-to-day operation of the school environment or have little idea of how to develop a functional classroom. Those who studied in college specifically to be teachers may lack depth in their arts experience or feel unprepared for taking on the multiple school and extracurricular demands of the job. Neither group of teachers is prepared for the socialization part of their transition to the school environment.
2. Theatre teachers have more difficulty making the transition to the K-12 classroom than those who teach more traditional academic subjects like language arts or mathematics. This assumption is based on the lack of mentors and exemplars in the theatre teachers' chosen field at their school setting as well as a shortage of administrative strategies to assist these teachers.
3. Theatre teachers have numerous extracurricular requirements that keep them at the school outside of normal school hours. These requirements may include after-school rehearsals, work sessions to handle technical elements (sets, costumes, lighting, etc.), performances, and competitions. This extracurricular element of theatre teaching contributes to the difficulty of the transition to the classroom.
4. Theatre teachers will be able to share their personal experiences more easily by utilizing an arts-based research method. Because theatre teachers regularly use performance in their work, it would provide a more accessible method for data collection.

### **Rationale and Significance**

The rationale for this study is based on the need for improved teacher induction programs to assist theatre teachers in making the transition to the classroom. These induction programs need to be developed to address the multiple paths theatre educators take to teaching as well as the particular requirements – both classroom-based and extracurricular – that are at the heart of teaching theatre.

In order to develop a useful induction program for theatre teachers, administrators and program designers need to understand the challenges of making the transition to the classroom and the specific experiences of theatre educators. The findings of this study could provide the groundwork for programs that not only ease the transition experience for theatre educators but also improve teacher effectiveness and retention.

### **Definitions of Key Terminology Used in this Study**

**Theatre** (as a subject or course) – the study of the performed play

**Drama** (as a subject or course) – the study of the written play.

It should be noted that in some schools the terms theatre and drama are interchangeable, both meaning the study of the performed and written play. This study will utilize the literal meanings as defined above.

**Technical theatre** (as a subject or course) – the study of the “behind the scenes” disciplines necessary to present a fully realized production of a play. Technical theatre courses generally include instruction in the design and execution of scenery, lighting, sound, costumes, properties (props), and/or make-up.

**Theatre teacher** – an educator who teaches the skills necessary to stage and perform a play. This may include teaching coursework in acting, directing, technical theatre, and playwriting.

**K-12 school** – a public or private school with instruction in any of the grade levels from Kindergarten through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.



**Fine arts department** – a subject-level organizational structure in a K-12 school. Sometimes called arts or extracurricular departments, these groupings generally include teachers of visual art, instrumental music, vocal music, dance, and theatre.

**Teacher induction** – a program designed to assist new teachers during their first year or years in the classroom.

**Artistic inquiry** or **arts-based research** – a research methodology that either studies the arts or utilizes the arts as a data collection, analysis, or presentation technique.

**Metaphor-Scenario** or **MetaScen** – an arts-based research method that asks participants to reflect on their previous experiences, symbolize those experiences through the use of a metaphor, and present the metaphor using performance techniques.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

In order to properly ground the study in existing theory and research, a critical review of the literature surrounding theatre teachers and their transition to the K-12 classroom was performed. This literature review was ongoing throughout the study, beginning two years before data collection and continuing throughout all phases of the project.

The goal of the literature review was to place theatre educators in the proper theoretical contexts. This task was accomplished by beginning with the most general classification of theatre educators: that of being adults. Since the transition to the classroom is both a period of learning and stage in the development of theatre teachers, the literature in both adult learning and adult development was reviewed with a particular eye towards finding connections with artists and arts educators. The literature in learning styles was then reviewed as a method of focusing the study more specifically on theatre educators in the context of practitioners of the arts.

With theatre teachers established as both adults and artists, the next part of the literature review looked at the transition to the K-12 classroom. The review began with a general review of teacher induction literature, focusing on theatre teachers in the context of new teachers entering the classroom. Teacher induction literature was studied in three distinct facets: induction as a phase in learning how to teach, induction as a socialization process, and induction as formalized programs intended to aid teachers in making the transition to the classroom. Following the general review of teacher induction, the limited research on the specific transition of fine arts teachers to the classroom was explored.

The final section of the literature review focuses on mentoring and mentoring in a fine arts context. This area was suggested by the numerous references in the teacher induction literature to mentoring as a vital technique for aiding teachers in making the transition to the classroom. Since a previous study by the researcher (Strickland, 2011) suggested that mentoring

relationships in the arts might differ greatly from those in other areas, the literature review concludes with a specific study of arts-based mentoring.

No cut-off date or other arbitrary limit was used to eliminate possible literature from the study. This was important both to allow the historical perspectives on adult learning and development to inform the study as well as to gather as much information as possible in the more scarcely researched topics of fine arts educators transitioning into the classroom and arts-based mentoring.

### **Arts Educators as Adults: Adult Learning Theory and Adult Development**

The first step of analyzing how theatre teachers make the transition into the classroom should be exploring their broadest categorization, that of being adults. While the thought that adults learn differently from children is certainly not new, the modern study of adult learning is often linked to the work of Malcolm Knowles. Knowles suggested adoption of the term andragogy to encompass adult learning, distinguishing it from pedagogy, which literally means the study of teaching children (1968). Andragogy was not an original term created by Knowles, but he standardized its use in his seminal work *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species* (1973). In this book, and augmented by subsequent articles and editions, Knowles laid out characteristics of adult learners.

Adult learners, according to Knowles, prefer to be self-directed in their learning. They draw on their own experiences as part of the learning process. As adults these experiences form a larger, and subsequently more useful, pool of information on which to base learning than children possess. Learning for adults is more directly connected with the needs of the learner's social roles. Adults are also more likely to learn if the knowledge gained will aid them in solving an immediate problem. It is vital for adults to know why they are learning something

and how the knowledge will practically serve them in their lives. Their learning is also driven more from internal than external sources. The internal “need to know” is far more effective, according to Knowles, in encouraging adults to learn than any external requirement placed upon them (1973).

The major criticism given to andragogy is its lack of a coherent theory of adult learning (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). Knowles (1980) responded to this criticism by suggesting that andragogy was more a detailed observation of characteristics of adult learners than an attempt to explain the learning process. Still, andragogy provides a strong context to an adult learner’s journey.

But when does a person come to view learning through the observed characteristics of andragogy? Daloz (1999) suggests that the developmental maps of Levinson and Kegan can provide a structure for understanding the changing focus of adults.

Levinson and his fellow researchers conducted two major studies (Levinson, 1996; Levinson & others, 1978) that divided the lives of adults into four major stages. These stages may be represented as a staircase with the individual platforms being periods of relative stability and the steps being the periods of disruption in a person’s life that leads to a different period of stability (Daloz, 1999; Levinson & others, 1978) The period most connected with the adaptation of artists into educators is the transition from Early Adulthood into Middle Adulthood. This period, roughly stretching from the 20s to the mid-40s, is the time when adults make the adjustments in their lives that define their commitments and careers. They have been prepared for these decisions through the education and experiences that ushered them into the adult world. Now the choices have to be made that will in effect lock them into a course of action that will dictate the largest portion of their working lives.

Robert Kegan (1982) took a similar approach to studying development, breaking down the lifelong journey of people into a series of balances. Kegan's focus is particularly relevant to studying the transition of artists into educators since his theory is centered on the transitions between the balances more than the balances themselves. The balances are focused on a person's relationship with their own self and with others. Kegan theorizes that a person swings from stages that alternatively favor independence to those that favor inclusion. Adult learners most commonly fit into the transition between Kegan's third and fourth balances: the Interpersonal and the Institutional. The Interpersonal balance is in the inclusive swing, characterized by defining oneself largely through relationships with others. The focus is on becoming one of the tribe, fitting into a functional group. As adults move through this balance they begin to define themselves more on internal standards, confident in their place in the world. They ultimately evolve into the Institutional balance where they are at the far point of the independence swing. In the context of the transition into teaching, artists come into a new environment (the classroom) and are reliant on the people already confident in that domain. As they gain confidence in themselves and their new place in life they are more likely to define themselves again by personal standards. They do not need others to assure them of their place at a school, they have the proof of their previous work and their belief in higher concepts to ground them to their work.

The characteristics of adult learners defined by Knowles fit neatly into the transition between Kegan's Interpersonal and Institutional balances (Daloz, 1999). Knowles described the transition in different terms, labeling the process as dimensions of maturation (M. S. Knowles, 1973). These moves include "dependence to autonomy, passivity to activity, subjectivity to objectivity, and selfishness to altruism" (Daloz, 1999, p. 67; M. S. Knowles, 1973).

Knowing the full developmental path that adult learners travel can be helpful to those looking to aid them through a transition to a new environment. Daloz employs the journey motif regularly in his work and suggests that developmental theory can serve a mentor as a map might serve a tour guide. The mentor only serves a protégé for a short amount of time, only one portion of the journey. Daloz argues that to chart the small part of the journey the mentor is leading he must know both from where the protégé has come as well as where she is probably going. Adult developmental theory provides this guide.

Daloz (1999) considers the adult learner's journey to be transformative, resulting in a definitive change in the learner at the end of the process. This is certainly consistent with both Kegan's swing from Interpersonal to Institutional as well as the transition from artist into educator. Yet what processes in adult learning result in a transformation?

Most closely aligned with Daloz's viewpoint seems to be the transformative learning theories developed by Jack Mezirow and numerous other scholars. Mezirow (2000) suggests the learning process begins with the learner's experience. This first step will often take the form of a "disorienting dilemma", an experience that affects the learner in a way that their usual methods of problem solving cannot address. The learner then is forced into a period of self-examination and then critical assessment of the learner's previously held assumptions. The adult learner then looks outside of himself, finding that others have endured similar situations. Now the learner is prepared to start looking for a new course of action, establishing the new knowledge, actions, or relationships that provide a solution to the dilemma. Once the learner develops self-confidence in the solution, the new knowledge is integrated into his life. He is transformed, ready to begin the process again at the next dilemma (Merriam et al., 2007; Mezirow, 2000) .

Yet, can adults only learn through actually experiencing something new? In certain arts fields, entry-level artists are often required to learn their craft through constant observation of a master practitioner. This practice is especially prevalent in the fields of theatre and dance. In theatre, young actors do learn through an experiential process. Theatre artists wishing to become directors, however, face a different path. While college training programs for directors do exist, a large percentage of aspiring directors learn the craft of directing while working as actors and observing the numerous directors they encounter. Their first actual experience at directing may be in their first job as a director. The same process can also be seen with the training of new choreographers. Much of what is learned comes from observation of choreographers while actually experiencing the craft as a dancer.

A theoretical explanation for this type of learning can be found in the work of Albert Bandura. Bandura is best known to many through his legendary “Bobo Doll” experiments of the early 1960s (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961). These experiments had adults model violent behavior in front of children by repeatedly hitting a blow-up clown punching doll. When left with the Bobo doll and other appealing toys, many of the children repeated the violent actions they had witnessed earlier. These experiments were extremely controversial due both to ethical concerns about the treatment of the children and for the assertion that watching violence engendered violent behavior in children. Bandura’s observations in these and later experiments led to the development of social learning theory (1977).

Social learning theory suggests that people can learn by observing the actions around them, but only if certain factors are in place. Bandura (1977) defines social learning as a progression through four stages of processes. In the attentional processes stage, people observe a behavior modeled by another person. The amount of attention they give to the behavior depends

on many factors including relationship to the model, previously established attitudes towards the modeled behavior, whether they have witnessed the behavior previously, and the interpersonal attraction they have for the model. Bandura argues that the attentional process is even more powerful if people enjoy the observation itself. This makes the modeling provided through media and the arts even more influential.

The next stage of social learning is the retention process. For a person to learn from observing a modeled behavior, they must remember it. This step prevents people from learning everything they see. Once the observed behavior is stored in memory through imagery or verbal cues, a person moves to the motor reproduction process. In this phase the subject attempts to perform the observed behavior him or herself. Bandura stresses here that learning is not the same as mastery. A person may learn how to swing a golf club by observing an instructor's demonstration. Performing the swing well themselves, however, takes physical experimentation and repetition.

The final phase of social learning involves the motivational processes. Even if a person learns a behavior through the first three processes, he or she must be motivated to actually perform the behavior. There is a conscious choice, therefore, in the social learning process. People learn consequences and rewards of behaviors through the same observational method through which they learned the behavior itself. Behaviors seen to be effective are more likely to be performed. Behaviors that meet with disapproval are rejected.

While fine arts educators may certainly learn their craft through social learning, making the transition to the classroom may be partially outside of that theory's purvey. New arts educators may be able to learn much of the broad workings of a school environment (e.g. school policies, student discipline, and accepted practices of the faculty community) through Bandura's



steps by watching other teachers, but without a model in their own arts area social learning is improbable. However, according to Lortie (1975), some of these teachers may have undergone an apprenticeship by observation when they were still students in the K-12 grades. If a new teacher took theatre classes in school from a competent teacher, he could have learned some basic teaching behaviors and skills from watching the teacher (Flores, 2010; Lortie, 1975). While this apprenticeship of observation might set a general groundwork for a new teacher's practice, the lack of an active model during the formative time of the first years of teaching would make field-specific social learning dubious at best.

Experiential learning theory may provide an explanation of how fine arts teachers adapt to the classroom without a specific social learning model. David Kolb suggests that adult learners gain knowledge through an endless cycle of experience. Kolb's theory, presented in his book *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (1984), traces adult learning through four stages: Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation. According to Kolb, adults learn by actually doing or experiencing something then reflecting on the experience. The reflection leads an adult to hypothesize new ways of doing things based on the original experience. The adult would then actively try out this new idea, having a new experience and beginning the cycle once again (Kolb, 1984; Kolb et al., 2000). Kolb (1984) also stresses that the cycle can be entered at any point. While not featuring anything as bold as Mezirow's disorienting dilemma, Kolb's theory does share a similar path of reconsideration of a new idea through sequential steps.

The previous sections have put emerging arts educators into the proper context in their stage of human development. Characteristics common to many adult learners have been explored. The transition itself has been examined through transformative, social, and

experiential lenses. Yet this information is generalized to cover most adults. How can theory be focused specifically on the artist looking to become an educator?

### **Arts Educators as Artists: Learning Styles**

The arts comprise a varied group of subjects centered on the creative process. The professionals who work daily in the fine and performing arts have trained and developed their craft often for most of their lives. During this long relationship with their chosen modality, artists employ approaches to learning that are specifically connected with their craft. Some of these approaches are natural inclinations or preferences in learning styles, while others seem to be developed specifically to deal with the rigors and eccentricities of arts training. Exploring the learning styles connected with artists could further differentiate the artist-educator from the generalized adult learner.

Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence theory (Gardner, 1993) has many obvious connections with artists. Gardner breaks down learners into nine basic learning styles (after later additions to his original theory): spatial, linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, and existential. Artists, being diverse by definition, fall most naturally into four intelligences: spatial (visual artists), linguistic (playwrights, actors), bodily-kinesthetic (dancers, actors), and musical (musicians, dancers, singers) (Fowler, 1990). Yet the research suggests a certain "chicken and the egg" paradox. Do artists fit into these intelligences naturally from birth or do they merely reflect the qualities of these intelligences because of their careers in areas that specifically use the elements of the intelligences daily?

This conundrum is at the heart of the debate within the learning styles community (Hall & Moseley, 2005). On one side of the discussion are cognitivists like Gardner who see learning

styles as static, birth-given traits. This category of theorists include those that subscribe to the four basic modalities of learning (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile) like Gregore and Dunn and Dunn (Hall & Moseley, 2005). On the other end of the argument are theorists who believe that learning styles are fluid, that learners change their inherent learning style based on the need of their jobs or social roles. This group includes theorists like Herrman and Kolb (Hall & Moseley, 2005; Kolb et al., 2000). Some theorists like Sternberg and Entwistle go even further, preferring not to use the term learning styles at all. These theorists prefer to think of them as learning approaches to suggest their fully-adaptable nature (Hall & Moseley, 2005; Sternberg, 1985).

But where do arts educators fall in the learning styles debate? Research suggests that artists adapt their learning style to fit the structure of their chosen field. Annalee Lamoreaux and Kathleen Taylor (2008) observed that professional dancers adapt their learning styles completely to the teaching methods of their craft. In the professional dance world this means learning from a teacher who is all-powerful (the choreographer) in a behaviorist system where exact duplication of the demonstrated steps is required. Lamoreaux and Taylor discovered that dancers had so fully adapted their learning styles to this environment that they had difficulty adjusting to other teaching methods. There is evidence of similar adaptations of learning styles in other arts modalities as well (Bowles, 2010; Buffer, 1982; Dobson, 2005).

The theorist that seems to most closely describe the adaptation of learning styles evident in the arts is David Kolb. Kolb developed the Learning Styles Inventory (LSI) to examine how learners prefer to obtain new information. This system is linked with Kolb's experiential learning theory, analyzing which of the four steps of the learning cycle are favored by the learner and using this information to label their learning style. Kolb uses the terms diverging,

converging, assimilating, and accommodating to distinguish these styles. Artists, according to Kolb, often fall into the diverging category. Diverging learners prefer to use their own concrete experience combined with reflective observation to gain new information (Kolb et al., 2000). This definition of the diverging category is reminiscent of the arts educator's common transition to the classroom: lacking a precise social model to imitate, the arts educator is forced to use their past experiences to experiment in the classroom. Reflection on these experiments leads to new experiments and a slow, self-driven adaptation to the teaching environment.

Yet what connects Kolb most closely with the observations on artists and learning styles is his acknowledgement that learners do not always remain in one category. Indeed, Kolb theorizes that learners are constantly shifting learning styles, especially to deal with the requirements of a job. The first learning style encountered by learners is that dictated by their own personality. In this, Kolb connects with Gardner and the rest. Yet Kolb's model continues, suggesting the people encounter learning styles changes at numerous other points in their lives. Educational specialization, especially in high school and undergraduate work, forces students to adapt to teaching methods unique to various fields. Learners often find another change in learning style awaits them when they enter a professional career. Even within the same career other changes in learning style can occur as people adapt to new roles within their job and again as they strive to complete specific tasks (Kolb et al., 2000). While artists, for example, may share many of the same learning styles based on the similarity of their fields, these learning styles are neither all-encompassing nor permanent.

For this reason and others, many researchers suggest that learning styles should not be the basis of education. These scholars argue that teaching to a student's personality-chosen learning style (to use Kolb's model) might actually be doing the student a disservice (Hall & Moseley,

2005; Kaplan & Kies, 1995; Pashler, McDaniel, Rohrer, & Bjork, 2008). At some time that student will have to adjust their learning style to fit the needs of a new situation. To only teach to a single chosen learning style would deny the student the opportunity to experience different methods of learning. A better strategy for teaching, these researchers suggest, would be to teach to multiple styles, simultaneously connecting with the preferred learning styles of students while preparing them for what may be their next preferred approach to learning (Hall & Moseley, 2005; Kaplan & Kies, 1995).

Based on this research, knowing the learning styles of arts educators may not directly support efforts to aid them through the transition to the classroom. However, it does serve to provide a more specific context on where the arts educator fits in the more general research of the adult learner.

### **Arts Educators as New Teachers: Induction**

Having placed arts educators into the proper context as adults and artists the next logical step would be to examine the realities of their experiences as new educators as they enter “a time of survival and discovery when the learning curve is steep and emotions run high” (Feiman-Nemser, 2010, p. 17; Huberman, 1989). These teachers are expected to be fully-competent colleagues of the veteran teachers on staff, but find themselves trying to operate in an environment that is largely unfamiliar (Feiman-Nemser, 2010). In short, the first years of teaching are a unique time, different from the preparatory years before and the years as an experienced teacher that follow (Feiman-Nemser, 2010).

The noted challenges that new educators face adjusting to the classroom spawned the academic study of teacher induction. Teacher induction is defined several ways in the literature

(Wang, Odell, & Clift, 2010a). In its most general form teacher induction is any process a new teacher goes through over the first year of their teaching career. This process can be a formal program or a day-by-day struggle carried on without guidance. More specifically, induction is broken down by the literature into three distinct categories: a phase in learning to teach, a socialization process, or a formal program (Feiman-Nemser, 2010).

### **Induction: A Phase in Learning to Teach**

Induction as a phase in learning to teach views the first year of teaching as a connective stage between pre-service preparation (either from a traditional teacher education program or professional training) and the continuing in-service training expected of most classroom teachers. Through this lens, the first year of teaching is part of a series of steps to master the craft of teaching. Feiman-Nemser (2010) posits that this view of induction makes it less about providing emergency aid to a new teacher and more about perpetuating a continuum of teacher learning and improvement. This opinion reflects an earlier study by Buchmann (1993) who argued that while the immediate concerns and needs of beginning teachers are usually the focus of induction, teachers should also be reaching the requirements of effective teaching and learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

During this phase of learning in their first year of teaching, new educators can expect to go through a cycle of five basic attitudes (Moir, 2011). The built-up anticipation of starting the new role in August is quickly replaced by a struggle for survival as teachers discover they are not fully prepared for the realities of the classroom. By the time November rolls around, new teachers may be suffering disillusionment with their new profession. With proper support and

assistance, the beginning educators can be rejuvenated in the spring of the school year leading to a period of reflection as the year ends and the summer break begins (Moir, 2011).

Even the most well-prepared novice educator can expect to face daily challenges that push the focus of induction towards survival assistance and away from the continuing education endorsed by Feiman-Nemser (2001, 2010) and Buchmann (1993). These challenges are particularly articulated by an email received by researcher Debbie Silver (2014) from a first-year teacher:

Teaching is crazy! How do you divide the time? And there is never enough of it. They say the most effective teachers go everyday into their classrooms with a well-rehearsed plan and execute. They [effective teachers] have a plan aligned to the standards using backward design and built-in differentiation based on data collection. The best of the best can call audibles, adjust, check for understanding on the fly, and change without losing focus. Yet my time is consumed with so many [basic survival tasks] that planning, serious data analysis, intervention, and rehearsal seem like a pot of gold at the end of the rarest of rainbows. (p. 48)

Based on the terminology used in the message, this new educator has had a solid grounding in the theoretical underpinnings of teaching in the classroom. Yet he too suffered from the overwhelming need for survival. How then can the first year of teaching be made into something more than a glorified fight to stay professionally viable?

Silver (2014) suggests that the solution could be found in Bandura's (1993, 1997) concept of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a person's belief that they can complete tasks and achieve desired goals. Bandura (1993) asserted that while a person may be lacking the proper preparation to be successful, even the proper preparation would be useless if the person lacked

the confidence to use those skills well (Reiman, Corbell, Horne, & Walker-DeVose, 2010). To this end, Silver (2014) advocates that new teachers be encouraged to only be concerned about what they can actively control and focus on smaller specific areas in which they can improve (Bandura, 1997; Dweck, 2006). If the new teacher has control over choosing the areas of focus, they will develop more of a sense of collaboration with other teachers and administrators while taking personal ownership over the small victories along the way (Silver, 2014).

Théberge (2007) promotes a similar concept of induction by linking new teacher preparation with Mucchielli's (1986) concept of identity. Teachers who develop a strong sense of identity during their formative early years improve (among other traits) their "sense of worth, of autonomy, of confidence" (Mucchielli, 1986, p. 14; Théberge, 2007, p. 146). To Théberge, the teacher with a strong sense of identity is more likely to find elements of familiarity in largely unfamiliar situations - a regular occurrence for new teachers. Finding these connections allows new teachers to develop confidence in their work and accept the autonomy needed to succeed as an educator.

### **Induction: A Socialization Process**

Considering induction a socialization process accepts the concept that a teacher's transition to the classroom is largely about being absorbed (or, in the best cases, integrated) into a different sociological construct (Feiman-Nemser, 2010). Research in this area looks at how early-service teachers learn to "fit in" to their new environment by developing awareness of the professional and cultural norms of the school. This can be especially challenging in a school culture that often reflects what Little sardonically refers to as "individual classrooms linked by a common parking lot" (Feiman-Nemser, 2010, p. 21; Little, 1999, p. 256)



Day (1999) depicts the first few years of teaching as a battle between new teachers' attempts to make their new environment match their personal expectations and beliefs while the established social structure of the school likewise works to make them fit the environment. The early-service educators' struggles are intensified by communication deficiencies with their new colleagues. While the new teachers may desperately need advice and guidance from their peer teachers, it can be difficult to ask for help without seeming incompetent (Flores, 2010). The social reality of the school expects new teachers to execute the same tasks as veteran teachers without the benefit of years of experience. Thus first year teachers find themselves without the assistance of the teachers around them, sociologically restrained from asking for help, and often not receiving the professional development from administrators that might bridge the inherent social gaps (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Pultorak & Lange, 2010).

Induction strategies for overcoming the inherent difficulties of socialization focus on harnessing the existing social structures to support new teachers (Stobaugh & Houchens, 2014). These processes can include encouraging veteran teachers to actively take a part in guiding new teachers thus removing the social stigma of a new teacher feeling they need to betray their own ignorance to get assistance from a colleague (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002) or working at the district level to actively encourage and support new teachers, often with formal mentoring programs (Algozzine, Gretes, Queen, & Cowan-Hathcock, 2007). This particular view shows an overlap between induction as a socialization process and induction as a formalized program.

### **Induction: A Formal Program**

The bulk of the literature on teacher induction focuses on the development and evaluation of what Huling-Austin (1990) defines as any "planned program intended to provide some

systematic and sustained assistance to beginning teachers for at least one school year” (p. 536). With the struggles of first-year teachers well-documented and schools struggling to retain young teachers (Graziano, 2005) formal teacher induction programs have seen tremendous growth. In 2000 83% of new teachers participated in a formal induction program, up from 51% in 1990 (Feiman-Nemser, 2010; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The literature in the field of induction has followed this trend, focusing on examining best practices and valuable strategies for aiding new educators.

In 2004 the Commission on Teacher Induction and Mentoring was formed by the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) to examine the existing research in the field and determine the current state of teacher induction. The commission worked for five years, ultimately publishing its findings in 2010 as *Past, Present, and Future Research on Teacher Induction* (Wang et al.). Particularly interesting is the introduction to the findings which provides a synthesis of the best practices for developing and maintaining induction programs.

Members of the commission recommended increased teacher and administrator involvement in the development of induction programs. According to Pearl Mack, teacher mentor and commission member, the voices of the teachers themselves were often conspicuously missing from induction studies (Wang et al., 2010a). Teachers were generally not in attendance at conferences where induction was discussed and were not included in the local level planning stage. Connecting teachers to the program development would provide an insider’s view of the needs and functionality of programs. Mack also encouraged administrators, especially at the district level, to be more actively involved in induction programs.

The commission also stressed the importance of utilizing existing data in the development of programs and assessment to determine their effectiveness. This could be

obtained by better partnerships between the various stakeholders in induction: new teachers, veteran teachers, administration, government, foundations, and university researchers. Also important is considering the context of each induction program (Wang et al., 2010a). Different environments may need different programs. A generalized program may not be effective in every school or every subject area. Included in these contexts is the increased capability of technology to aid with teacher induction. As technology advances, it may not always be necessary to have a mentor physically present in the novice teacher's classroom (Bierema & Merriam, 2002; Klecka, Cheng, & Clift, 2004). Technological advancement in distance teacher mentoring could be especially useful for areas like theatre where another teacher in the field may not be at the school or even within the same district.

### **Arts Educators as New Arts Teachers: Teacher Induction in a Fine Arts Context**

While the teacher induction literature contains numerous studies evaluating the effectiveness of various programs, the most applicable information to this study are those studies that specifically looked at assisting theatre teachers make the transition to the K-12 classroom. While this is a largely under-researched area of the induction field, there are several studies that can provide a context for how arts teachers adjust to the classroom and what specific programs are currently in place to help them.

Specific programs to assist theatre educators (and other teachers in the fine arts) are vital due to the many required tasks inherent in teaching the arts. Kim Alan Wheatley (1987), a theatre specialist in the area of curriculum development, described the many required jobs of the K-12 theatre teacher:

Every theatre teacher must be able to function as educator and inquirer, observer and analyst, psychologist and counselor, philosopher and visionary. In addition, an elementary school teacher must be an effective storyteller and creative drama leader. A secondary school teacher must also be a producer, director, acting instructor, vocal coach, movement specialist, historian, designer, carpenter, painter, electrician, sound technician, costumer, makeup artist, publicist, business manager, and critic. (p. 36)

Teacher education researchers have argued that such broad requirements should compel pre-service preparation programs to look at different general education courses for future theatre educators that connect “psychology, human development, and learning theory to theatre educators *specifically*” (Waack, 1987, p. 34).

Adding to the difficulty of preparing teachers for so many challenging roles is the conflict between college pre-professional theatre programs and pre-service theatre educator programs (Oaks, 1989; Waack, 1987). In many cases, theatre practitioners are taught in a college theatre department while theatre educators are housed within an education department. Theatre education students are often snubbed by theatre departments as being less dedicated to the craft due to their focus on teaching instead of a professional career in the theatre (Oaks, 1989). Likewise, many education classes that could help pre-professional theatre students prepare for a future role in the classroom are blocked from them since they do not have status as education majors. The lack of consistent pre-service preparation puts even more of an impetus on having an effective induction program for new theatre teachers.

Another major challenge that differentiates the transition of arts educators from teachers in other subject areas is the large number of arts educators who come to schools from the

professional world with little or no training in classroom teaching. Numerous states have programs that allow arts professionals to teach while they complete the specific requirements of certification. These new teachers face a very different world from that of the professional theatre and, despite being experts in their fields, are often woefully unprepared to begin teaching. Brewer (2003), for example, examined the programs that the state of Florida has in place to aid teachers in this situation. These programs often required new teachers to take numerous college courses while still largely managing the day-to-day operations of their classrooms without help. In some cases school districts developed survival courses for educators to take: short classroom management seminars to ostensibly prepare new teachers to be able to handle the basic requirements of the classroom. Brewer suggests that these programs, while certainly aiding the teachers in their transition to some degree, are largely inadequate. To a large extent the program failed the teachers. Yet to many administrators the teachers themselves were the failures (Brewer, 2003). Because of the struggles faced by the teachers who took this non-traditional route to licensure the viability of this sort of certification has been called into question.

Ironically, while teachers coming from professional arts careers into education may be coping with personal feelings of inadequacy, the schools employing them may view them quite differently. Ball and Ferzani (2010) examined non-traditional entries into education careers. People with impressive knowledge in a content area are automatically assumed to have the ability to transfer that information to others. They may receive only the briefest introduction to the craft of teaching (Brewer, 2003) or be expected to learn on the job at the expense of the students (Ball & Ferzani, 2010). Taken in connection with Szekely's (1978) and Oaks' (1989) findings, an arts teacher may be treated as inadequate by professional practitioners of their craft

(or simply feel inadequate based on prior experiences) at the same time they are being hailed as experts (and expert teachers, at that) by their new schools.

Multiple reviews of the literature in the field have revealed very little specific study on this transition. What specific studies have been done largely focus on the transitions of dancers to careers outside of performance (Lamoreaux & Taylor, 2008; Monaghan, 2002; Staplin, 2007). This specific transition has been studied more rigorously because of the nature of dance as a career. Most professional dancers find their careers coming to an end in their mid-30s. Much like professional athletes, the erosion of dancers' physical skills forces a change in career on these artists. And, also like professional athletes, many have been ill-prepared for the transition.

As discussed earlier in the learning styles portion of this literature review, Annalee Lamoreaux and Kathleen Taylor (2008) observed that professional dancers adapt their learning styles completely to the teaching methods of their craft – most commonly a behaviorist system controlled by the strong influence of the choreographer. Lamoreaux and Taylor discovered that dancers had so fully adapted their learning styles to this environment that they had difficulty adjusting to other teaching methods. A transition to becoming a teacher, in an unfamiliar environment and without a behaviorist model to emulate, could be equally challenging.

One way of easing the professional artist's transition into the world of the classroom may be to emphasize the natural connections between the two areas. Darrell Dobson (2005) traced the journey of a professional actor from a career in major tours of Broadway musicals, through college studying education, and into the classroom. While looking primarily at the aesthetic epistemology of "Ella", the actress in the study, Dobson's narrative revealed connections Ella made between her professional work and the classroom. Ella left professional theatre tiring of the rigors and politics of touring life while feeling that she was facing her last chance to make a

start at a new career. This feeling is consistent with both of the developmental models suggested by Levinson and Kegan (Kegan, 1982; Levinson & others, 1978). Yet as Ella became a more competent teacher, she found connections with her work as an actress: the power of storytelling in both environments, the idea that good acting and teaching required full emotional commitment and sincerity, and the use of nuance in creating a character and communicating with students. There was an emergent theme in Ella's narrative of, as Dobson (2005) labeled it, "discovering the familiar in the new" (p. 336). Encouraging the discovery of links between the artistic and educational worlds may add to the comfort level of new teachers and allow them to more easily draw on their previous expertise.

As suggested by the studies on dancers, theatre artists may also be affected by specific characteristics, teaching styles, or professional requirements of their craft. As early as 1975, Rosenberg and Fennelly were looking at the development of an actor/teacher, a practitioner who could cross the lines between professional and educational theatre, especially since "traditionally teachers have had difficulty implementing drama programs, and professional people have found it difficult to function within the rigid confines of a school system" (Rosenberg & Fennelly, 1975, p. 50). More recently, Anne Rhodes (McCaslin, Rhodes, & Lind, 2004) traced the ways professional theatre companies assist professional actors in learning how to function in a classroom by examining the best practices of several companies. Rhodes continually returned to respect as the central theme of this transition: respect for the artists, respect for the students, and respect for the craft of acting. It should be stressed that Rhodes was not looking at the permanent transition to the classroom, merely examining professional theatres that had added an educational component.

Mary Elizabeth Anderson and Doug Risner (2012), researchers at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, performed a similar study to Rhodes. Their research looked at teaching artists in both dance and theatre. Teaching artists, according to Anderson and Risner's definition, "are normally not certified but are trained in one or more arts disciplines [and] play a visiting or part-time adjunct role that is important in many school settings" (Anderson & Risner, 2012, p. 2). While not full-time teachers, these teaching artists face many of the same difficulties of adapting to the school environment. Of the 133 participants in Anderson and Risner's mixed-method study, 43% said they felt unprepared to enter the classroom while only 15% felt very prepared. In the narrative responses, participants discussed struggles with connecting the arts that they loved with their students and dealing with the inherent bureaucracy of the school system. One participant felt that she was so unprepared that it created a dangerous situation for both her and the high-risk youth she was trying to serve. When asked how they ultimately became effective at teaching arts in a school environment 74% credited the trial and error of on-the-job training, 67% received help from other teaching artists, and 63% were guided by mentors or other role models. Pointedly, the least chosen response (at only 14%) was getting assistance from a formal induction program (Anderson & Risner, 2012, p. 6). These results indicate the importance of a mentor or some type of social model for new arts educators.

The most obvious conclusion to be drawn out of the available literature is how little the actual transition into the K-12 arts classroom has been specifically studied. However, with both the general and arts-specific induction literature suggesting that some type of mentoring or guidance is needed to assist new educators, it would be prudent to review the literature in the area of mentoring – especially mentoring based in an arts-education environment.



### **Arts Educators as Protégés: Mentoring in a Fine Arts Context**

The idea of mentoring can be traced back to the Ancient Greeks (Bell, 2006). In Homer's *The Odyssey* (1996), Odysseus was preparing to leave home to fight in the Trojan War. He realized that his son Telemachus needed someone to help him make the transition into becoming an adult and the future king. Odysseus turned to a trusted friend, the wise Mentor, to guide Telemachus through this transition. Now two millennia later, Mentor's name has come to represent this special learning relationship.

Mentoring has become an important area of study over the last twenty years as the business community and higher education seek to improve the mentoring relationships already inherent in both areas. But what about areas such as the arts? Informal mentoring relationships are certainly present in the standard apprenticeship model of the performing arts (Bell, 2006). Young artists train in their chosen modality often by working on the job watching the work of the more experienced artists of the company, studio, or orchestra. In some cases a connection forms between artist and protégé and a mentoring relationship begins. Yet this style of mentoring rarely seems to be established formally.

There are obvious connections between the formal mentoring in higher education and the less formal process in the fine and performing arts. In *Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners*, Laurent A. Daloz (1999) addresses the fundamental need people have for a knowledgeable guide to lead them through a difficult transition:

Whether as close as the classroom or as distant as myth, mentors are creations of our imagination, designed to fill a psychic space between lover and parent. Not surprisingly, they are suffused with magic and play a key part in our transformation, reminding us that we can indeed survive the terror of the coming

journey and undergo the transformation by moving through, not around, our fear.

Mentors give us the magic that allows us to enter the darkness: a talisman to protect us from evil spells, a gem of wise advice, a map, and sometimes simply courage. But always the mentor appears near the outset of the journey as a helper, equipping us in some way for what is to come, a midwife to our dreams, a “keeper of the promise”. (p. 18)

Daloz centers his study of mentoring on adults entering higher education at a non-traditional time - not directly from high school and often after a prolonged time away from formal education.

The stories he uses as the basis of *Mentor* study the relationships between adults who had established identities outside of higher education before entering school. While these are not specifically oriented on artists and while the development of young artists does not always require additional college study, the similarities between the two situations are striking. Both involve adults entering a difficult transition into established professional positions. The transformation is often difficult, facilitating the need for the mentoring process.

Daloz completes *Mentor* (1999) with numerous practical suggestions for mentoring adult learners. He offers eighteen directives for mentors looking to aid adults entering their new world. Each of these, while not directly connected with the arts, could be applicable to mentoring artists. Daloz encourages mentors to actively support protégés, providing not only a safe place in a constantly-changing world, but also listening closely to protégés to connect with their inner world. A mentor should provide a sense of structure, to establish borders to encourage both safety and direction. Expectations for protégés should be expressed positively, balancing the need for strongly pushing protégés to succeed with care that harsh criticisms do not derail the protégés’ progress. The mentor should be willing to be an advocate for the protégé.

This can be an especially important support as protégés navigate the sometimes treacherous environment of the school (Strickland, 2008).

Daloz (1999) also places great weight on the personal commitment of mentors to students, suggesting they should share themselves, to forge a special bond. This level of connection makes it easier for a mentor to challenge the student through setting difficult tasks, drawing them out in conversation, and making them address challenges and conflicts in their professional lives. Perhaps the most important tasks Daloz assigns to mentors are modeling the proper behaviors for their students while also being a mirror to them. In this way the student sees what needs to be done while having honest feedback as to what they have actually accomplished. Honesty is therefore at the heart of this entire process.

While Daloz's guidelines can generally be applied to mentoring in any area, it would seem important to study the literature specifically directed at mentoring in the arts. Unfortunately, it is at this point that a major gap in the research is revealed. Very little research has specifically been aimed at arts mentoring. The majority of what is present in the literature is focused on high-profile mentoring relationships. (Amini, 2008; "New Rolex arts initiative," 2002; Perron & Ulrich, 2004; Ramirez, 2008; Serle & Rolnick, 2011; "Wysing mentors," 2010) Most prevalent in this category are discussions of the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. During each grant cycle the Rolex program provides grants to a young artist in each of six modalities: dance, film, literature, music, theatre, and visual art (Amini, 2008). These protégés are paired with a prominent artist in their field for a year-long formal mentorship.

The literature on the Rolex Initiative is largely focused on the high-profile pairings and the art created by the protégé within the time period. This focus is influenced by the funding design of the program which provides additional grant money at the end of mentoring

relationship to aid the protégé in creating a major piece of work (Amini, 2008). More useful to the study of mentoring in the arts are the limited number of articles that focus specifically on the experiences of the protégés in the Rolex Initiative. Junaid Jemal Sendi, an Ethiopian dancer chosen for the program, discussed the challenges of finding a mentor in his field and revealed the opportunity to learn different techniques and compositional approaches to dance from his Japanese mentor (Amini, 2008). Lee Serle (Serle & Rolnick, 2011), an Australian dancer and choreographer, detailed his time spent working with famed New York choreographer Trisha Brown. Yet in both of these articles the mentoring relationships seem no different than the standard experience an apprentice dancer may have had with the respective dance companies.

Another major theme in the limited literature on mentoring focuses on the biographical review of important luminaries in the arts (Barr, 2008; Ramirez, 2008). Much like the research centered on various mentoring initiatives this area of study focuses on well-known individuals and their life's work. Mentoring is often a side note in these articles, a salute to passing the torch to the next generation. While mentoring by stars is certainly important for the continued strength of the arts, the situations described involve relationships and resources that are unique and largely not reproducible by most arts mentors and protégés.

The difficulty in defining what constitutes a mentoring relationship in the arts is prevalent throughout the literature. Chip R. Bell (2006), a mentoring specialist from the business field, moderated and published a panel discussion with five well-known leaders from the professional theatre community. In this discussion he encouraged the theatre leaders to discuss how mentoring works in their companies. The answers were quite varied. In some cases, the mentors seemed to view their protégés as assistants. The goal of these relationships was for the mentor to receive assistance from the young artists in return for the artist being able to absorb knowledge

by working for the mentor. This again fits into the more traditional artistic apprenticeship model. Some of the other leaders approached mentoring more along the lines of Daloz, urging mentors to focus on developing the careers of their protégés. All of the leaders stressed that protégés should be put in the situation of seeing their mentors in very human situations. In this way the young artists would see their mentors as human beings dealing with their own problems. This practice, the panel participants believed, would strengthen the relationship between mentor and protégé and better prepare the emerging artist for real-life situations in the theatre profession.

Also in contrast with Daloz were the statements made by some of the panelists of the difficulties of controlling the future of their protégés. For some, the relationship seemed to be about placing their charges into positions that seemed beneficial to the mentor – sometimes in conflict with the wants of the protégés. Daloz himself struggled with this issue in “The story of Gladys who refused to grow: A morality tale for mentors” (1988) and later in *Mentor* (1999). He shared the story of “Gladys”, an older woman who returned to school to complete her bachelor’s degree. Daloz wanted her to aim for more in her life and tried to direct her to loftier goals. Gladys wanted only to complete her degree and return to life as she had known it before. Daloz ultimately decided his only moral solution was to allow Gladys to follow her plan. Daloz wondered if he had done the correct thing or if his real moral purpose was to encourage her to reach her full potential. Either way, the story would seem to suggest that the answer lies in the needs of the protégé over the wants of the mentor.

There are some hopeful signs for the future of arts mentoring research. An online survey, the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP), was established in 2008 (M., 2008). This project is administered by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and Vanderbilt University's Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy. The goal of SNAAP

is to track information about graduates of college arts programs. One of the stated goals is to gather information on how arts alumni adapt to their professional environments. Mentoring is one of the areas specifically targeted by this online survey. SNAAP was administered on a pilot basis in 2008 and 2009 with the first full survey administered in 2010. A recent report issued by SNAAP (Frenette, Dumford, Miller, & Tepper, 2015) examined the importance of internships to the professional success of arts graduates. While not specifically referencing mentoring, this report does suggest that experience working with practitioners of the arts outside of the classroom environment is perceived by arts graduates to be extremely beneficial to their professional development.

Some individual researchers have taken a different approach to studying mentoring in the arts. Robert Brinkerhoff (1999) used a personal narrative to trace his relationship with a college mentor. While Brinkerhoff did not attempt to extrapolate any overriding ideas about mentoring from the article, his work serves as a detailed look at a successful college arts relationship.

More exciting is Celeste Snowber's (2005) musings on mentoring and its inherent connections with the arts. Snowber is an advocate of artistic inquiry (Bagley & Cancienne, 2002) and arts-based research. She sees numerous parallels with the artistic process and mentoring (Snowber, 2005):

As we are mindfully attentive to our students as they search out their questions for research, we are invited into deep listening, a process not much different than how the artist must listen to the specific words, colors, textures and movements which express content, form, or lived experience. The artist and mentor work in the landscape of both the internal and external world, forging connections that bring passions to life. Both undergo a gestation process of attending to new life...

Listening and mentoring are partners in a dance. It is not surprising that the etymology of the word ‘mentor’ is taken from the noun *mentos*, which literally means: intent, purpose, spirit, or passion. I believe it is the task of the mentor to listen for the passion and purpose, perhaps not yet revealed, in the one being mentored. This is not unlike the artist listening and attending to how a piece of literature, visual art, or performance will take shape and form. As humans who have been given the birthright of the imagination, we are in the process of creating and re-creating our lives. (pp. 345-6)

Perhaps this is a new direction for the future of arts-based mentoring. If the process of mentoring is similar to the process of creating art this suggests that mentors in the arts might be more naturally inclined to the process – with or without formal mentoring structures. However this, like the rest of the literature of mentoring in the arts, is in need of deeper exploration through empirical research.

### **Summary**

This literature review placed new theatre educators into their proper context beginning with the most general categorization and then working step-by-step towards the most specific. In the review of adult learning and adult development literature, theatre teachers were found to be in transition developmentally as well as occupationally, moving between definable stages in Levinson and Kegan’s theories. Adult learning theory was compared to the experiences of new theatre teachers, with Knowles’ andragogy providing common characteristics of adult learners and Kolb’s experiential learning theory suggesting the most complete conceptual basis for the new teachers’ journeys. The theories of Bandura (social learning) and Mezirow

(transformational learning) were also seen to be applicable to the study, with certain gaps in each theory in reference to the transition of theatre educators to the classroom discussed.

New theatre educators were then examined through the lens of the learning styles literature in an attempt to further delineate them from other adults. Gardner's work in multiple intelligences was used much like Knowles' work in adult learning to establish the basic learning inclinations of artists. The debate in the learning styles field over whether learning styles are a born inclination or a learned behavior based on environmental conditioning was discussed. Again Kolb's work in this area, the learning styles inventory, was found to be a useful guide due both to its connection with experiential learning theory and its flexibility to allow for changes in learning styles based on environment. This flexibility appears to be vital in order to apply learning styles to the arts as suggested by an examination of the inherent teaching and learning norms in the various arts modalities.

The literature of teacher induction was then examined to understand new theatre educators in their role as beginning teachers. Because the term teacher induction is used to represent several different aspects of the field (a phase in learning to teach, a socialization process, and formalized programs created to aid teachers in adapting to the classroom environment), each facet was reviewed independently with connections between the different areas acknowledged. The next portion of the review looked at the induction literature as it specifically connected to arts teachers. While this area was found to be largely under-researched, the existing literature discussed several important factors in the transition of arts educators to the classroom: the divergent paths artists take to become teachers, the conflict in college programs in the preparation of educators versus that of professional artists, and the unique challenges arts educators face in making the transition to the classroom. Possible solutions to easing the



induction process for arts teachers were suggested, including trying to use the natural similarities between the arts and teaching to guide the transition to the classroom.

Throughout the literature review, consistent connections were made to the importance of having a strong model within the field for new teachers to emulate. In the induction literature, this model was in the form of a mentor, perhaps one provided from a distance through advancements in technology to overcome the difficulty of finding an appropriate local mentor. Because of the recurring emphasis on strong models and mentors, the final portion of the literature review focused specifically on mentoring. This section was built on the work of Daloz which, while not specifically focused on arts-based mentoring, provided a strong general theory of mentoring with attention given to ethical considerations. The review of research specifically on arts-based mentoring was less fruitful, revealing literature focused often on high-profile, unreproducible mentoring relationships. In some cases mentoring relationships were hard to define or were influenced by the needs of the mentor over those of the protégé. However, the creation of a national arts alumni database in part to study mentoring relationships and Snowber's discussion of the natural connection between the arts and mentoring give hope for new research to fill this gap in the literature.

## **Chapter 3: Methods**

### **Introduction**

This chapter describes the methodology used by the researcher to explore the early teaching experiences of theatre educators. The exploration of the methods begins with a rationale for utilizing a qualitative research approach for this study followed by a discussion of the more specific use of artistic inquiry. Information about the research participants is presented next including recruitment techniques and basic demographic data. After a statement of the information needed to successfully complete the study, the majority of the chapter outlines the steps taken to gather and analyze the data. The presentation of the methods concludes with a discussion of the strategies the researcher employed to ensure both the ethical treatment of the research participants and the trustworthiness of the findings.

### **Rationale for Qualitative Research**

While the researcher is proficient in research methodologies of both the quantitative and qualitative schools, he chose qualitative research as the most appropriate choice for this study. The rationale for this choice begins with Denzin and Lincoln's (2000) familiar general description of qualitative research:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings,

attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people brings to them.

Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials ... that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. (p. 3)

This description of qualitative research speaks directly to the researcher's reasons for undertaking this study: to study the natural settings of K-12 theatre classrooms through the meanings that theatre teachers apply to them specifically to explore a "routine and problematic moment": the transition to said classrooms.

Qualitative research intends to explore experiences in a holistic manner in contrast to quantitative approaches which generally focus on examining the validity of a given hypothesis through primarily numeric data (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2007, 2008; Mertens, 2010). Since the review of the literature of teacher induction revealed that teachers' transitions to K-12 theatre classrooms have rarely been researched, a hypothesis has not been developed that could be explored effectively through quantitative means. Qualitative methods, on the other hand, would allow the researcher to establish context for study of this transition through the shared experiences of research participants.

Creswell (2008) lists three general characteristics of qualitative research that further connect it with the purposes of this research study:

- A recognition that as researchers we need to listen to the views of participants in our studies
- A recognition that we need to ask general, open questions and collect data in places where people live and work

- A recognition that research has a role in advocating for change and bettering the lives of individuals. (p. 43)

These characteristics serve not only as a rationale for the use of qualitative methods for this study, but also as the guiding principles of the methodology.

### **Rationale for Artistic Inquiry**

In order to more fully connect the research study to the participants and their environment the researcher chose to utilize artistic inquiry, a newer form of qualitative research. Also known as art-based research, artistic inquiry “is an effort to extend beyond the limiting constraints of discursive communication in order to express meanings that otherwise would be ineffable” (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 1). Artistic inquiry accomplishes this by utilizing the arts in some or all phases of research from the collection of data through the final public presentation of the findings (Leavy, 2009, p. ix).

Arts-based research was first formally coined by Elliot Eisner in 1993 through an institute held at Stanford University through the American Educational Research Association (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. ix). This is not to say that artistic practices did not exist in research before 1993. Eisner himself, with co-author Tom Barone, argues that the arts were an equal partner in research with science for hundreds of years until the dominance of quantitative methods emerged during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, with the growing acceptance of qualitative methods, artistic inquiry has become increasingly accepted as a research form (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. xi; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). While there is still opposition to arts-based research methods such as Sava and Nuutinen (2003) finding them a “troubling model of qualitative inquiry into self, art, and method” (p. 517), numerous major works have been published since

2008 that support the use of arts-based research and establish guidelines for using the method effectively (Ackroyd & O'Toole, 2010; Barone & Eisner, 2012; Butler-Kisber, 2010; J. G. Knowles & Cole, 2008; Leavy, 2009; McNiff, 2013; Saldaña, 2011).

But why choose artistic inquiry over other qualitative research methods that are also directed at exploring the human experience? Barone and Eisner (2012) posit that “Arts based research is an approach to research that exploits the capacities of expressive form to capture qualities of life that impact what we know and how we live” (p. 5). In short, artistic inquiry can be a powerful means to gathering data where other methods may not be effective (Leavy, 2009). This is especially true for artists themselves, where the method of inquiry connects the practitioner to the research in a visceral way. Philip W. Jackson (1998), in an exploration of John Dewey’s views on arts, discussed how artistic creations act not only on those experiencing it, but also on the artists themselves:

What adds to their importance are the enduring changes that they produce. They leave in their wake a changed world. The contents of the world have been increased by one more painting or poem or piece of music, and, more important, both the experiencer, whether artist or art appreciator, and the object experienced have changed. The experiencer changes by undergoing a transformation of the self, gaining a broadened perspective, a shift of attitude, an increase of knowledge, or any of a host of other enduring alterations of a psychological nature. (p. 5)

The goal of artistic inquiry is to harness this powerful facet of art to both allow participants to connect more strongly with their experiences and share them more powerfully with others thereby connecting researchers, research participants, and consumers of research as art experiencers.

Patricia Leavy (2009) examined the published studies in arts-based research and discovered that:

The turn to the creative arts in social research results from a confluence of many historically specific phenomena. Concurrently, these practices open up a new space that, as the negative space that defines a positive object in visual art, creates new ways of thinking about traditional research practices. What is clear when compiling recent arts-based research, and researchers' reflections on it, is that the pioneers in this area seek to sculpt engaged, holistic, passionate research practices that bridge and not divide both the artist self and researcher-self with the researcher and audience and researcher and teacher. Researchers working with these new tools are merging their interests while creating knowledge based on resonance and understanding. (p. 2)

This is a compelling argument for utilizing artistic inquiry for the base methodology of the study as the researcher and participants are all artists, connected by a shared interest in theatre. The chance therefore to use the shared language of theatre to create knowledge within the theatre education field makes artistic inquiry a logical choice.

### **The Research Participants**

Participants in the study were seven theatre/drama educators who were currently teaching or had taught previously in any of the K-12 grades in schools in the United States of America. They were selected through professional contacts of the researcher, referrals by university theatre education professors, and recruitment at national theatre conferences. Snowball sampling, the process of asking participants to suggest other people who may also be qualified to participate in

the study, was also utilized. The participants represented a varied sample of geographical locations, years of teaching experience, grade levels taught, and other demographics:

Table 3.1: Participant Demographics

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>Number of Participants</b>	5	2

<b>LEVELS TAUGHT</b>	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Middle/Junior High</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Number of Participants</b>	3	3	7

Some participants taught at more than one school level.

<b>YEARS TEACHING</b>	<b>Less than 10</b>	<b>10-20</b>	<b>More than 20</b>
<b>Number of Participants</b>	2	3	2

<b>GEOGRAPHIC AREA (USA)</b>	<b>Southeast</b>	<b>Northeast</b>	<b>Midwest</b>	<b>West</b>
<b>Number of Participants</b>	2	1	3	1

Forty-six participants agreed to be part of the study but many were unable to complete the process due to scheduling conflicts or the rigor of the method. Despite having a smaller number of participants than originally intended, the study still had an adequate sample for the

methodology chosen. Barone and Eisner posit that even an *n* of 1 can produce useful, transferable data through arts-based research processes (2012, p. 170).

### **Information Needed to Conduct the Study**

The researcher sought to explore the early teaching experiences of the theatre educators to better understand how to assist future teachers in making the transition to the K-12 classroom.

This study was guided by the four research questions presented in Chapter 1:

1. What did these participants experience as new theatre teachers?
2. How did they perceive their transitions?
3. What factors assisted or hindered them as they assumed their new places in the classroom?
4. What suggestions would they make to new theatre educators beginning the transition to the classroom?

In order to answer these questions, the researcher determined that he needed to gather the following information:

- Basic demographic information about the research participants.
- The perceptions of theatre teachers about their early career teaching experiences.

### **Overview of Research Design**

The researcher utilized the following steps to implement this study:

1. Participant Recruitment
2. Data Collection Phase 1: Metaphor-Scenario Process
3. Data Collection Phase 2: Interviews



The following sections explore each of these steps in detail.

**Participant Recruitment.** The researcher began recruitment of study participants through his presentation at a conference session and various other networking opportunities at the American Alliance for Theatre in Education (AATE) National Conference in 2012. As the difficulties of recruiting participants became evident he expanded the recruitment to theatre education communities on social media outlets and worked with theatre education professors to identify alumni who might be interested in participating in the study. Additional recruitments were held at the 2013 AATE National Conference and the 2013 Georgia Theatre Conference. The recruitment effort was restarted several times until seven participants completed the process.

When a teacher expressed interest in the study, he or she was directed to the study's website (see Appendix B) which gave basic information about the study and connected the individual to a survey (see Appendix C) hosted online by SurveyMonkey. The survey utilized a combination of multiple choice and short free-response questions to determine demographic and contact information. This demographic data was gathered both for use in the study to provide a contextual basis for the data collected through the artistic inquiries and interviews and for the possible basis of purposeful sampling if more participants committed to the study than were needed. As the participant recruitment never exceeded the needs of the study purposeful sampling was never utilized. Forty-six participants committed to being part of the study with 7 participants ultimately completing the full process for a completion rate of 15%.

**Data Collection Phase 1: Metaphor-Scenario Process.** Multiple means of data collection were used by the researcher to increase the depth of the data and ensure that the participants' experiences were properly communicated (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Denzin &

Lincoln, 2000; Mertens, 2010). The first phase asked the participants to explore their early teaching experiences using the Metaphor-Scenario (MetaScen) research method.

As discussed in Chapter 1, MetaScen was developed by the researcher from his own learning process. The researcher's undergraduate and Master's work focused on preparation to be a professional practitioner of theatre. When he entered post graduate work in an Education Specialist program he discovered that he could convey data to his classes and professors more strongly through performance than standard presentations. This discovery led to him integrating performance techniques into other parts of the research process including data collection. This coalesced into a research method during his subsequent work in Lesley University's Educational Studies Ph.D. program with a specialization in Adult Learning and Development. The researcher used the method with his own work for several small projects before vetting it for use by research participants in a pilot study prior to this inquiry (Strickland, 2012). He has since presented the method in sessions at national and state conferences.

Each participant was introduced to the MetaScen artistic inquiry method through written instructions, written examples, and communication with the researcher. The MetaScen process asked the participants to reflect on their early teaching experiences (guided by written prompts in the directions) and then categorize the experiences into major themes. Each participant then selected a metaphor that abstractly represented the themes and developed it into a scenario (a performance outline), and ultimately a realized performance. The metaphor and scenario steps are at the heart of the methodology hence the Metaphor-Scenario name. The metaphor allows for experiences to be represented in a way that is more generalized. This representation allows participants to be protected and feel safe in the process while allowing them to view their experiences through a different lens. The scenario prepares the participant to perform their data

without fully scripting every moment. The improvised moments of the performance then allow for the participant-performer to gain new insights on their experiences while sharing them with the researcher. The creation of the performance encourages the participants to be co-researchers in the process while the generalized nature of the final performed data can allow it to be more transferable to other situations.

While MetaScen has the potential to allow participants to explore and communicate their experience in new ways, it is not without its drawbacks (Strickland, 2012). Unlike more standard research methods like surveys or interviews MetaScen requires a considerable time commitment from the participants. The scenario and performance steps can be quite difficult and increase the possibility of participants dropping from a study before completion. Also, the more abstract, generalized final form of MetaScen data can be perceived as less precise and concrete than that produced through other research means. A detailed exploration and evaluation of how the MetaScen method worked within this study is the basis of Chapter 7.

Since MetaScen is a very new qualitative research method, an abbreviated form of the instructions given to the participants is included below to make the process as transparent as possible. The full instructions (with the originally included examples) can be found in Appendix D.

***Step 1: Reflection.*** Think deeply about your early experiences as an educator. Following are a series of questions to help guide your reflection. Do not feel the need to address every question and do not feel limited to only reflecting within these prompts. You do not need to write down any answers, however feel free to take notes or do whatever helps you to think more deeply and clearly.

Reflection Prompts:

- How did you adjust to the role?
- Did you feel prepared for the classroom?
- What knowledge gained in your arts training served you well in the classroom?
- Did you notice areas where you had gaps in your knowledge?
- Did situations arise that were difficult or different than you expected?
- How did you relate with other teachers and administrators?
- How did you relate with the students?
- What were your dominant feelings during this time?
- What stands out from your first year of teaching?

**Step 2: Themes.** After reflecting on your early teaching experiences, try to organize your thoughts into dominant themes. How do your experiences relate with each other? What do they say about each other? Again, do not feel compelled to write any of this down unless it helps you organize your thinking.

**Step 3: Metaphor.** Selecting a metaphor is the heart of this research process. Consider your experiences and the themes you identified from the earlier steps. Try to select a metaphor that could strongly communicate your experiences to another person, especially someone who may come from a different background.

**Step 4: Scenario.** If you have been trained in *commedia dell'arte* or other improvisation-based performance techniques, the concept of scenario will be quite

familiar to you. In simple terms, a scenario is an outline of a performance. At this stage in the research process, you should turn your attention to how you could present your metaphor as a performance. How could you, alone or with other performers, perform the metaphor in such a way that an audience can share in your experiences? Any style of performance is open to you: monologue or dialogue, pantomime, dance, song, puppetry...whatever best conveys your metaphor in a style that is effective and comfortable for you. For the purpose of this project, I encourage you to create a scenario instead of a word-for-word script. The more generalized scenario allows your instincts and subconscious to inform the performance. That being said, if for your work you need to work off of a script you are welcome to do so.

**Step 5: Performance.** After you have a scenario in place, rehearse and perform the piece. You may have others perform with you, if you choose. You are welcome to perform in front of an audience or not – whatever makes you the most comfortable. ... The specifics of the performance are up to you. This could be performed alone, in street clothes in a classroom or wearing a costume with theatrical lighting on stage. It does not have to be a huge production, just a communication of your experiences.

When possible, the researcher viewed the performances of the inquiries in person and took field notes. The final performances were video recorded either by the researcher or the participants and represented the data from this part of the study. This data was augmented with the researcher's field notes and any reflection notes or other artifacts given to the researcher by the participants.

**Data Collection Phase 2: Interviews.** After the MetaScen process was completed the participants were interviewed by the researcher. The interview section of the study was used to triangulate the data and provided a well-established, more concrete method of data collection to augment the performed experiences of MetaScen. Besides helping to provide literal descriptions of the participants' perceptions of their experiences (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000), the interviews allowed the participants to explain their performance inquiries, reducing the chance of interpretive bias or ambiguity by the researcher.

The participants were interviewed using a semi-structured process. The researcher used an interview protocol to guide the interviews (Appendix E) to maintain consistency between interviews and minimize researcher error in conducting the interviews. This was important since the success or failure of interviews is connected strongly with the ability of researchers to properly lead them (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Fontana & Frey, 2003). While the researcher understood that interviewing is never a neutral data collection method due to the direct involvement of the interviewer, the interview protocol served as a tool to minimize the researcher guiding the interviews inappropriately. The researcher also conducted all interviews himself to help maintain consistency in the process.

The interview protocol was designed to reflect a semi-structured format. It reflected this by having structural questions that would be asked of every participant followed by suggested follow-up questions that could be used to clarify or augment answers to those questions as needed. In format the interview protocol followed the same organization structure as the MetaScen process. The researcher asked questions about each step of the participants' progression through the MetaScen method focusing both on the participants' experiences and how they utilized the method to explore and communicate those experiences. The interview

questions then asked the participants to analyze their experiences and make suggestions to new educators entering the field. The interviews concluded with questions specifically asking participants to reflect on the data collection process and offer critiques and recommendations for future use of MetaScen.

These interviews were conducted largely via telephone with one participant being interviewed in person and one fulfilling the interview portion of the study through a written format. Audio recordings were made of each interview with the knowledge and permission of the participants. Only the researcher had access to the audio recordings of the interviews.

### **Methods for Data Analysis and Synthesis**

The first step of data analysis involved the researcher transcribing the audio recordings of the interviews and developing transcripts of the MetaScen artistic inquiry performances. The researcher chose to do these transcriptions himself as part of immersing himself fully in the data before beginning the coding process. He utilized Express Scribe software with a dictation pedal to aid the transcription process and focused on representing both the verbatim spoken words of the participants along with the non-verbal communication inherent in the recordings such as emotional emphasis or laughter. In developing the performance transcripts the researcher augmented any verbatim spoken dialogue with detailed explanations of visual and musical details. All materials, both recorded and transcribed, were reviewed by the researcher numerous times over the course of several months before beginning the coding process.

In final preparation for coding, all data was imported into NVivo 10 qualitative data analysis software including both recorded and transcribed versions of the interviews and performances as well as written reflections and other artifacts submitted to the researcher by

some of the participants. NVivo was chosen for the project due to its robust capabilities for handling written, audio, and video data (Gibbs, 2002).

Johnny Saldaña (2009), a noted expert on qualitative research coding and practitioner of arts-based research, connects the coding process with theatre:

In theatre production, a folk saying goes, “Plays are not written – they’re *rewritten*.” A comparable saying for qualitative researchers is, “Data are not coded – they’re *recoded*.” Some methodologists label the progressive refinement of codes in a study as “stages” or “levels.” But to me, the reverberative nature of coding – comparing data to data, data to code, code to code, code to category, category to category, category back to data, etc. – suggests that the qualitative analytic process is cyclical rather than linear.

The data analysis of this study is well represented by Saldaña’s description. The first cycle of coding used four different coding methods – attribute coding, simultaneous coding, structural coding, and descriptive coding – to break the individual sources of data into component pieces. The second cycle then utilized the pattern coding method to reassemble the pieces into themes that holistically represented the data. There were two meta-goals of the data analysis: to examine the actual early-career experiences of the research participants and to explore the participants’ efforts in utilizing MetaScen to remember and communicate those experiences.

**First Coding Cycle.** The researcher began the coding process by committing to the use of simultaneous coding which allows the same section of data to be coded into more than one category (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Saldaña, 2009). This type of coding allows for the exploration of multiple meanings that may be inherent in the data. The first coding cycle then began with the researcher coding all data generated by each participant into a node (NVivo’s term for a code) named after the participant’s selected pseudonym. Each of these pseudonym



nodes were then linked with information detailing the basic demographic information of each participant. This process, termed attribute coding, is a regular part of computer-assisted qualitative analysis (Bazeley, 2003; DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002; Gibbs, 2002; Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006; Saldaña, 2009). As the data was further coded through later cycles, the new codes could be traced back to demographics to look for possible connections.

The researcher then created five nodes named after the steps of the MetaScen process. This is an example of structural coding in which arbitrary codes are created to address specific research questions (MacQueen, McLellan-Lemal, Bartholow, & Milstein, 2008; Namey, Guest, Thairu, & Johnson, 2008; Saldaña, 2009). The MetaScen nodes were created to organize data related to the steps of the research process for use in evaluating the effectiveness of MetaScen.

At this point the researcher began to work through all of the imported data, coding into the pre-created structural MetaScen categories while also developing new codes as suggested by individual passages. This process, known as descriptive coding, uses a word or short phrase to describe the basic topic of a selected portion of data (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Saldaña, 2003, 2009; Wolcott, 1994). This style of coding allows for the data to naturally suggest codes to the researcher encouraging a more open-minded approach to data analysis. The researcher concluded the first coding cycle with 104 separate codes created through the descriptive process.

**Second Coding Cycle.** The researcher prepared for the second coding cycle with a careful review of the newly created descriptive codes. He then began an iterative pattern coding process in which similar codes were grouped into new nodes that were then renamed to reflect the combined contents (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Saldaña, 2009). The first pattern coding cycle organized the descriptive codes into new categories based on which of the study's research questions they directly addressed. The second coding process then went through each of the

research question categories to discover emergent themes within each group. New codes were created to represent these themes. This process was repeated several times until each research question had a connected series of clearly defined themes.

A similar pattern coding process was then performed within the structural MetaScen categories to search for themes addressing the use of the MetaScen method in the study. These themes were used directly in the evaluation of MetaScen contained in Chapter 3.5.

**Final Analysis and Synthesis.** After the two coding processes were completed, the researcher compared the developed themes with the descriptive statistics to look for possible connections between demographics and both the participants' early career teaching experiences and utilization of the MetaScen process. However, because of the small number of participants, it was determined that no useful conclusions could be drawn from this information.

The researcher then used a three phase process to complete the analysis of the data. The first phase, recognizing the place of the participants as co-researchers in the study, utilized the themes coded under the following research questions:

- How did the participants perceive their transitions?
- What factors assisted or hindered them as they assumed their new places in the classroom?
- What suggestions would they make to new theatre educators beginning the transition to the classroom?

This information allowed the participants themselves to analyze their individual experiences and make recommendations for the induction of future theatre educators into the classroom.

The second phase of analysis was predicated on the six dominant themes that emerged under the heading of the remaining research question:

- What did these participants experience as new theatre teachers?

The researcher used the MetaScen process himself to explore these themes through the creation of a metaphor, development of a scenario, and production of an artistic inquiry performance.

The performance was recorded, transcribed, and analyzed in a similar manner to that used with the participant artistic inquiries.

The final phase of analysis combined all previous analyses to determine what steps might be taken to assist new theatre teachers with their transition into K-12 education. Based on this synthesis of multiple themes, the researcher was able to formulate some general conclusions and make recommendations for future induction practices.

### **Ethical Considerations**

With any study that uses human research participants the utmost care must be taken to protect the rights and wellbeing of those volunteers (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). The researcher made sure the process of the study was explained to each participant through a detailed informed consent form (see Appendix F) and additional communication with the researcher. Because the personal experiences of the participants were deeply explored, it was possible that difficult emotional reactions might occur. All participants needed to feel safe within the process. This was partially aided by making sure each participant knew they could withdraw from the study at any time and that their confidentiality will be maintained.

To partially aid confidentiality each participant chose a pseudonym with which to be represented in the study. All mentions of names and places in the interviews and inquiries were also replaced with pseudonyms. However, the study's reliance on making video recordings of the participants' performances made confidentiality more difficult to ensure. Extra protections

were put in place to assure participants that video recordings would only be used in ways that were acceptable to them. The original informed consent form only granted permission for the researcher to see the performance recording. A second consent form addressing possible uses of the video recording and any still photographs captured from the video was sent to the participant to allow them to precisely choose how their video would be used (see Appendix G). No pressure in any way was placed on participants to allow public display of their performances. In the case of one participant who was uncomfortable with the filming process the researcher adapted the method to allow her to complete the study without the video element.

The researcher also considered that participants might want to use other people, including students and other minors, in their artistic inquiry performances. Those performers would not have necessarily been aware of the information contained in the informed consent form. To protect these performers the researcher created video consent forms for them as well, including a special form for minors (which was not used.) These forms can be found in Appendices H and I.

All consent forms and plans for the ethical treatment of the study's research participants were vetted by Lesley University's Institutional Review Board. The IRB approved the study with the notation that they believed the study presented no more than minimal risk for the participants.

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

While qualitative research does not focus on the issues of validity and reliability that are the hallmarks of quantitative studies, it is vital for the researcher to address issues that may detract from the trustworthiness of the findings (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Miles & Huberman,

1994). In order to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings of this study the researcher utilized numerous methods to reveal and account for his personal biases as well as limiting their effect on the study. He also took steps to ensure that the views of the participants were being properly represented and that the transferability of the findings could be assessed by readers of the study. The researcher addressed additional issues of credibility through the use of numerous data collection methods and information sources to triangulate the findings.

The researcher acknowledged several biases before starting this study. He is a theatre educator himself and has a natural bias because of his membership in the target population. He also had a very difficult transition into his own teaching career which had the potential to influence him, perhaps causing him to look only for data and themes that reflected his own experience. He is also an advocate for the use of the MetaScen artistic inquiry method he himself developed. As this study sought to explore the usefulness of that method, the researcher needed to be aware of his own desire for the method to succeed and not allow that bias to overwhelm the study.

In order to isolate these biases and keep them from affecting the trustworthiness of the study, the researcher engaged in critical reflective practice to maintain his constant awareness of the situation (Schön, 1983; Thornton, 2005). To support this practice, the researcher engaged in periodic artistic inquiries using the MetaScen process to monitor his own practices and attitudes during the data gathering and analysis phases. These inquiries were digitally recorded and shared with the researcher's dissertation committee, colleagues, and students for review and feedback. The researcher also discussed his research process regularly with colleagues and his committee to help identify any infringement of bias. During the interview phase of the research

study, the participants were told about the researcher's connections with both the topic of the study and the MetaScen research method as another method of keeping bias in check.

To ensure that the participants' experiences were communicated properly, member checking was utilized to check the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations of the MetaScen performances (Mertens, 2010). Efforts were also made to protect the authentic voices of the participants throughout the study by the inclusion of long quotations taken verbatim from the interviews and artistic inquiry performances. This rich detail also provides readers of this study with the opportunity to assess the transferability of the findings to other environments and situations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mertens, 2010).

The researcher addressed issues of credibility by utilizing different types of data including artistic inquiry video recordings, researcher field notes, written reflection artifacts, interview transcripts, and descriptive statistics in an effort to triangulate the findings (Creswell, 2008). He also looked to further triangulate the analysis by using numerous established theories of adult learning and development, learning styles, teacher induction, and mentoring to contextualize the findings.

## **Summary**

This chapter detailed the qualitative methodology used by the researcher to explore the experiences of theatre teachers in making the transition to the K-12 classroom. The researcher provided a rationale for utilizing qualitative methods for this study and then increased the specificity of the rationale with an explanation and discussion of artistic inquiry research techniques. The seven theatre educators who participated in the study were discussed in terms of their recruitment and demographics. The research method was then explored in great detail with

information on the review of relevant literature, data collection through both the MetaScen artistic inquiry method and traditional interviews, and the iterative, multiple-technique data analysis. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the steps taken by the researcher to ensure the ethical treatment of the study participants and increase the trustworthiness of the study's findings.

## Chapter 4: Presentation of Findings

### What did the participants experience during their transition to the classroom?

This chapter will present the findings of the research study, combining data from the artistic inquiries, semi-structured interviews, and additional artifacts submitted by the seven participants. The researcher utilized open sampling to select the participants; therefore the chapter will begin with a short introduction of each participant to place individual responses into the proper context. These introductions will be presented pseudonymously with generalized information about locations and teaching assignments to protect the participants. Following the introduction of each participant will be a discussion of the metaphor they selected (or chose not to select) as part of the research process and a summary of the artistic inquiry the participant created. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the six major findings about the participants' shared experiences. This discussion, in keeping with the spirit of the MetaScen process, will be organized by a unifying central metaphor.

### The Research Participants

**Participant 1: Erin.** Erin is a female teacher from the Midwestern United States with more than 13 years of teaching experience primarily in high school environments with some middle school service. She taught a combination of English and theatre classes until being removed from teaching theatre eight years before she participated in the study. She currently teaches English in a different school in the same district having been unable to secure another theatre-teaching position in her district due to seniority issues.

**Metaphor.** Erin chose not to use a metaphor in her process feeling more comfortable with a literal yet generalized presentation of her experience.



***Inquiry Performance.*** Erin wrote what she termed “a two-voice poem.” This poem was titled “Are you serious?” and alternated between statements by a young teacher (listed in the poem as “ME”) and the responses of various people in the school community with whom she interacted (referred to as “THEM”). The inquiry was presented to the researcher in written form as well as a filmed performance. The filmed performance was a reading of the poem with Erin taking the role of the young teacher and her husband reading the various other characters. The piece is decidedly negative in tone with ME asking for assistance or making suggestions only to be rebuffed repeatedly by THEM. In the middle of the poem the pattern changes with THEM taking the lead in each exchange, criticizing and mocking ME with ME trying to defend herself or explain her actions. The poem ends: “THEM: HaHa. They fired you. What are you going to do about it - cry! ME: Yes.”

**Participant 2: Brook.** Brook is a female teacher from the Northeastern United States with more than 10 years of teaching experience. Her initial theatre teaching experience was in an elementary school however she currently teaches at the high school level. She did not intentionally seek out the field of education and says that becoming a teacher “happened accidentally.” While still teaching theatre, she is currently hoping to transition out of education into a job in the professional theatre field.

***Metaphor.*** Brook chose the metaphor of the welcome mat, suggesting something that while pleasant and welcoming is also habitually walked upon and damaged.

***Inquiry Performance.*** Brook wrote a poem for her inquiry but chose to submit it only in written form due to personal challenges with filming a performance. The poem, titled “WELCOME MAT”, utilizes a multiple-voice structure similar to Erin’s inquiry. However, Brook’s piece does not function as a dialogue between two parties. Instead, the character

speaking is indicated parenthetically before each stanza (and in the middle of one stanza in which the character changes.) The characters represented are SELF, TEACHERS, COP, and SECRETARY. “WELCOME MAT” suggests a difficult transition to the classroom with the eponymous mat (indicated by SELF in the poem) trying to welcome students and help them learn and thrive only to be mocked as unimportant and ineffective by the TEACHERS. SELF struggles with the rigidity of the school’s discipline, a prison-like environment, and endless paperwork as she asks, “Who am I - and how did I end up here?”

**Participant 3: Bard.** Bard is a retired male educator from the Southeastern United States. He taught English and theatre in junior high and high schools for more than 25 years. The majority of his classroom teaching duties were in English with the occasional theatre class and regular supervision of extracurricular theatre productions. He currently works for a community theatre organization.

**Metaphor.** Bard did not choose to utilize a metaphor. A long veteran of performing on stage and a natural storyteller his mind immediately turned to telling his early teaching experiences in a very literal manner with composite characters and events serving to protect the identities of his former students and co-workers.

**Inquiry Performance.** Bard performed a 20-minute monologue live with the researcher present. The monologue was largely improvised and told the story of Bard’s excitement of being allowed to teach a formal theatre class and his subsequent struggles to connect with his students and find adequate facilities and support to bring theatre performances to fruition. Largely positive and enthusiastic in tone, Bard’s monologue was a story of resourcefulness: a teacher overcoming endless obstacles to ultimately forge a bond with his students and present quality performances to his school and the surrounding community.

**Participant 4: Lulu.** Lulu is a female teacher from the Midwestern United States with 21 years of teaching experience in grades 7-12. She has taught a combination of English, speech, and theatre classes with regular responsibilities for extracurricular performances and theatre competitions. Lulu's initial teaching experience was in a very small school.

***Metaphor.*** Lulu chose the metaphor of building with Lego bricks to suggest creating something challenging with the help of someone else.

***Inquiry Performance.*** Lulu's performance was presented as a short film. In the piece only two sets of hands can be seen working at a table. The hands have a certain anthropomorphic quality to them as they 'walk' across the table and talk with each other. The first set of hands attempts to build something out of brightly colored Lego bricks. Voiced and performed by Lulu, the first set of hands struggles to understand the instruction book and wonders if all the correct pieces are present. The second pair of hands enters and offers assistance. This set of hands, performed and voiced by Lulu's husband, has more experience in working with the bricks and volunteers to assist. Soon their combined efforts have resulted in a completed project: a performance stage. The first set of hands completes the project by putting a female "mini-doll" figure on the stage behind the miniature microphone.

**Participant 5: Jack.** Jack is a male teacher from the Mid-Southern United States with seven years of teaching experience. His initial years of teaching were in a variety of subjects including computer science, broadcasting, journalism, and personal finance. Coming from a theatre background Jack was eager to teach theatre at his school and finally got the chance over the last year. He continues to teach a mixture of subjects including theatre at the same school.

**Metaphor.** Jack chose the metaphor of a man at work to represent his experience, “a guy who is getting through his day, just trying to make it through to the end of the day. ...just a guy doing his job and things weren’t going right.”

**Inquiry Performance.** Jack’s performance piece consisted of a filmed pantomime. The pantomime, performed by Jack, presented him working at a computer. The film alternated shots showing Jack work and more straight-on views of his face. As the film progressed, Jack encountered various problems and solved them through guidance he received over the phone. While there were no spoken words in this performance piece, the music that played in the background was specifically chosen by Jack to provide commentary on the action. It included such music as “Under Pressure” by Queen and David Bowie (1981), “Happy” by Pharrell Williams (2013), and “Complicated” by Avril Lavigne (Lavigne, Christy, Spock, & Edwards, 2002) to suggest the emotional swings of the worker’s daily journey.

**Participant 6: Marie.** Marie is a female educator from the West Coast of the United States. After a long career in the K-12 classroom, Marie earned her Ph.D. and now teaches in higher education.

**Metaphor.** Marie chose a dam as her central metaphor. The metaphor was intended to represent the cycle she had observed in her teaching experience of long periods of teaching and advocacy (water building up behind the dam) leading to the eventual success of her program and accomplishment of teaching goals (releasing water through the dam) only to have to wait for water to build up once again before accomplishing the next step.

**Inquiry Performance.** Due to time constraints Marie was unable to complete an inquiry performance. However, while being interviewed by the researcher, she suggested that she saw

the metaphor being performed by a group of performers giving a strong visual representation of the dam in operation.

**Participant 7: Josephine.** Josephine is a female educator from the Midwestern United States with almost 17 years of teaching experience at the time of her work on this project. She has taught in the standard classroom environment as well as after-school programs. While her initial teaching experience was as a horseback riding instructor at a teaching farm, her classroom experience included teaching forensics and theatre to students of a wide variety of age ranges. She is currently working on a doctorate in education while serving as a graduate teaching assistant at a major American university.

**Metaphor.** Josephine chose the combined metaphor of cat-sitting and house-sitting to represent her experiences of trying to adjust to locations and students with whom she was not familiar.

**Inquiry Performance.** Josephine's performance piece was a film presented in three sections. Josephine herself is the only performer. The film showed Josephine entering an unfamiliar apartment to assume the responsibilities of looking after the facility and its resident cat for a departed client. Josephine struggled to use the unfamiliar kitchen appliances and had a series of mishaps with accidentally damaging or knocking over items in the house. The cat finally came out of hiding (unseen on the film), and Josephine tried, without apparent success, to interact with the pet. The film ended with Josephine knocking over yet another stack of books and cursing quietly to herself.

### **The Findings and Their Organizing Central Metaphor**

After the iterative coding process detailed in Chapter 3 the following six major findings emerged about the early theatre teaching experiences of the seven participants. These findings group naturally into two categories: Emotional, exploring the feelings the participants had during their early theatre-teaching experiences, and Sociological, exploring the interactions the participants had with other people and groups. The final finding is not categorized as emotional or sociological but is instead presented separately from the others as the primary finding of the study. While it may be considered unusual to present a primary finding at the end of such a discussion, the intent is to utilize the exploration of the other categories to properly ground the primary finding in the complete experiences of the participants.

### *Emotional Findings*

1. **Isolation.** Six out of seven participants experienced various forms of isolation during their early years of teaching.
2. **Emotional Journey.** All of the participants experienced similar emotional journeys beginning with excitement about teaching theatre, moving through feelings of incompetence and frustration, and finishing the year with a sense of accomplishment in their teaching efforts.

### *Sociological Findings*

3. **Intersections with Other Areas and Schools.** All of the participants were challenged by the intersections of their programs with other facets of their school community including academics, athletics, and similar programs at other schools.
4. **A Question of Support.** Six out of seven participants experienced challenges with receiving sufficient support from their schools. While six of the participants felt that

they were not supported sufficiently by school administrators, four found support from their fellow teachers.

5. **Student-Centered.** The participants all described positive experiences working with their students, often using these interactions as a definition of personal success.

*Primary Finding*

6. **Advocate for Theatre.** Every participant needed to be an advocate for theatre at their schools both within their classrooms and to the greater school community.

The researcher, building on the metaphor work utilized by the study participants, chose to represent these six findings with a central metaphor. The metaphor represents each finding as a different iconic religious role:

1. The Monk (Isolation)
2. The Initiate (Emotional Journey)
3. The Heretic (Intersections with Other Areas and Schools)
4. The Beggar (A Question of Support)
5. The Teacher (Student-Centered)
6. The Missionary (Advocate for Theatre)

The use of metaphor in this case allows each finding to be represented in a simple, visceral manner to better convey the experiences of the teachers involved in the study. The metaphor was not chosen haphazardly but was initially suggested through the participants suggesting they were missionaries at their schools trying to spread the word of theatre to the entire community. This metaphor inspired the central metaphor of religious iconic figures which was utilized by the researcher in his final coding pass through the raw data.

## **Discussion of the Findings**

In this section each of the six findings will be discussed through a narrative structure supported by numerous quotations taken directly from the interviews, artistic inquiries, and written reflection documents and other artifacts from the participants. The goal of utilizing such a large number of quotations was to preserve the authentic voices of the teachers participating in the study. The exact words of the participants are used except where indicated by brackets. These sections indicate areas where details were obscured to protect the identity of the participant or, in a few cases, where a verb form was changed to match the tense of the narrative.

### **The Emotional Findings**

*1. The Monk (Isolation).* Six out of seven participants experienced various forms of isolation during their early years of teaching. One participant, Lulu, summed up this finding succinctly when reflecting back over the research process, discovering that she “had a lot of good feelings at the expense of isolation.” This was not an unexpected finding as previous studies by the researcher (Strickland, 2008, 2012) had also explored this same issue. What was particularly striking about the isolation prevalent in the experiences of the participants in this study however was the pervasiveness of the isolation: its touch on so many facets of the teachers’ lives in and out of the classroom.

The universal sense of isolation was connected to the nature of teaching theatre in a school environment. There is certainly a sense of isolation in all teaching as Josephine reveals:



I think sometimes just as teachers in general we become very isolated because we can close our door or we can, you know, and even if there's 12 math teachers in your building, you still during the day are by yourself.

This natural sense of isolation in teaching is exacerbated by the limited number of theatre classes taught at most schools. Unless the school is particularly large or has a focus on the arts (as with a school of the arts or fine arts magnet school) the theatre educator will most likely be the only person teaching theatre in the school and, in some cases, the school district. There is often no mentor available to assist with theatre curriculum or even the most basic logistical information of preparing and presenting a theatrical performance. As Lulu revealed, even in the fortunate circumstance of having someone who has limited theatre experience on the school faculty the theatre teacher is often still very much alone:

But I was at a very small school, so it was just me. It was really... There was nobody else. I had another person in the English department who had done some speech contests and had done some theatre, but even at that it was very – you know, I couldn't go down the hall and say, "Hey, how do you do that? How do you do this?"

In some cases, even if a theatre teacher can find someone with whom to discuss the challenges of teaching, approaching them to ask questions or share concerns can be extremely challenging.

Josephine encountered this difficulty in her teaching experience:

And it's not a sign of weakness if you ask the question. If you can, you know, look around and see who can help you. But that's not always easy to do that... I put on a brave face and kept teaching with a positive attitude, and even though I'm quite a talker, I have no memory of discussing the challenge of teaching these courses with anyone – I think pride had something to do with it.

Even when participants like Bard and Erin found the courage to ask for help the ignorance towards the needs of theatre, lack of support, or outright animosity they encountered served to isolate them further from the school body. In his monologue, Bard discussed his reaction to this type of isolation, "...I couldn't get their enthusiasm to the same level as mine, but oh well. I could do it without them." Erin's difficulties were reflected in her performance piece as an endlessly negative and often combative dialogue between herself and the administrators and others in the school body who could not understand her needs:

THEM: Why can't you get the nice kids to be in the plays?

ME: Because I'm not racist and homophobic.

THEM: Ms. [Erin] - you people are so emotional!

ME: And what do you mean by "you people"?

THEM: I don't trust your judgment, that's why I'm moving you to English only.

ME: I want my union rep.

THEM: I think you are very talented. One day you'll be a great drama director. When one door closes another one opens.

ME: Are you serious?

THEM: HaHa. They fired you. What are you going to do about it - cry!

ME: Yes.

This type of isolation is addressed further in this chapter as part of the discussion of the support participants did not feel they received during their early teaching experiences.

While the isolation of the school day was certainly a challenge for the participants, the added requirement of preparing theatrical performances outside of the classroom added new reminders of being alone. Perhaps the largest of these was participants having to be an entire

production company, completing the multiple theatrical task of directing and technical production with limited assistance. Brook addressed this challenge:

I can't know enough about lights, sound, costumes, publicity, box office, directing, acting, stage management, properties, set design, set construction, production management, etc. to prepare my students for college theater, as I am "the theater department" (as my assistant principal refers to me).

The time required to put on these productions was also a cause of isolation, forcing separation between the participants and their families. Bard remarked on how his wife's own challenging job gave him the isolation that was needed to accomplish the tasks of putting on a play:

I was married, but we didn't have any children, and my wife was an accountant and sometime you worked hard, so I was able to put in a lot of hours at home and build little sets in my backyard. And set pieces.

Families were not the only people from which the long hours of theatre production separated the study participants. Ironically, by committing to teach and produce student productions, many participants found they had separated themselves from the theatre community they loved and cherished.

I have been teaching for a while now. I have not been part of a serious production outside of my school teaching for about seven years now. I miss it. In fact, I never meant to become a teacher. It happened accidentally. I truly, truly hope to transition into a "real" job in the theater in the near future. ... In order for me to keep up with everything that's going on in the world theatrically, I need to be a part of it. How can I teach my students if I am so disconnected? It is certainly not possible with the hours I keep at school. (Brook)

And I think especially theatre takes so much time that you, that those chances to perform are starting to dwindle. We just went to see a colleague who's a band director play with a combo that he has, and they play a lot of different places in the summer, but to put together music and musicians can seem to be able to jump in and to be able to perform and a little easier – it doesn't take six weeks to prepare for an evening of performing because he's been doing it so long. But I'm always envious that he has that or my friends in the vocal area that sing in their choir or whatever it comes a little bit, those opportunities are a little more natural for them. (Lulu)

Participation in theatre competitions, often requiring a play to be prepared and taken to a location away from the school, also contributed to the isolation of participants during their teaching experiences. However, as Lulu explains, the chance to see and talk with other theatre teachers served as both a break from isolation and a reminder of it:

... I remember going to a speech contest in the winter and seeing some other coaches and kind of finding...okay, so there are, you know, these are some of the other people. But again, it was very different as far as being connected with colleagues or with other people in the field at that time period. It could be kind of lonely. I also thought that nobody knew who I was.

*2. The Initiate (Emotional Journey). All of the participants experienced similar emotional journeys beginning with excitement about teaching theatre, moving through feelings of incompetence and frustration, and finishing the year with a sense of accomplishment in their*

*teaching efforts.* To put this emotional progression into more detail, it can be broken down into four approximate sections:

1. Elation and excitement at being able to teach theatre.
2. Feeling lost or confused while discovering that perhaps they were not as prepared to teach theatre as formerly supposed.
3. Sinking lower emotionally, losing confidence in being able to teach, and sometimes dreading coming in to work or fearing being fired.
4. Making it through the school year with a sense of accomplishment and an eye turned towards the future.

While every participant experienced this emotional journey in some manner, Bard gave a clear description of the steps as he discussed how the reflection portion of the research led to his performance piece:

So I was able to put a lot of work into it, but I remember the elation, the enthusiasm turning into frustration, and sometimes anger, and sometimes wanting to shake my fist, and to this rewarding feeling that this is why I did that.

Jack's entire inquiry performance traced the emotional journey. The piece begins with pleasant music segueing into lyrics about dealing with pressure. Jack overcomes this task and celebrates to the tune of "Happy" by Pharrell Williams (2013). Soon the happiness fades into song lyrics about things getting complicated and difficult (Lavigne et al., 2002). This is followed by a section with no music at all. The silence itself feels like a statement as Jack struggles with his most difficult problem. The piece finishes with the following lyrics: "I can't complain but sometimes I still do. Life's been good to me so far." (Walsh, 1978) The continuing discussion of the emotional journey will individually examine each of the four identified stages.

*Elation and excitement at being able to teach theatre.* The participants showed an obvious love for theatre, a love eloquently described by Brook in a written reflection about her participation in the research process:

I love theater. I have been involved in the theater since I was six years old. I love the creation, the "alive-ness", the deep trust and relationships that must be built between everyone involved - whether or not you actually like who you are working with...As much as I love movies and television, I am not as interested. For me, theater is more challenging. There is more to think about, and for each performance, that's it. No retakes, no outtakes. Theater forces you to be aware, present, and ready.

With the participants having such a strong attachment to theatre, having the opportunity to teach it brought them predictable reactions of intense eagerness, happiness, and optimism:

I had been wanting to teach theatre the whole time. I'd wanted to get to that, and finally getting to that, and finally getting to be able to teach theatre was just like this elation experience. It was just like finally, yes, wonderful. (Jack)

But I think that the dominant thing was just an excitement and an energy from that time period and from getting in and teaching and doing a fall production right away off the bat and having all of that jumping right into the fire, I guess. (Lulu)

The natural optimism the participants experienced led some of them to make big plans for the year or be willing to accept extra-curricular assignments:

Oh, I got so excited when I thought how excited the parents would be when they got to come up to the school and see their kids perform, and see what they've learned in this

drama class that I was so excited about and could not wait to get off the ground. Why I even imagined toward the end of the year I can get a trip to New York together, and I can take these drama students who will be so excited about going to New York to see a play on stage. I was pumped; I was ready for the year. (Bard)

It's easy to jump in as a new teacher and say, "Oh, yeah. I can do that. I can do that, you know. And you want me to coach cheerleading? Sure, you know." (Lulu)

*Feeling lost or confused while discovering that perhaps they were not as prepared to teach theatre as formerly supposed.* The participant's early feelings of excitement and optimism began to fade a short time into the school year. Lulu represented this transition from excitement to confusion in her inquiry performance by showing a pair of hands starting to build with Lego bricks only to immediately have difficulty when facing the actual task of assembling the model:

Oh, I'm excited to try to do this! This is gonna be great. I used to love putting things together when I was younger. This is going to be so much fun. (Opens a manual and turns pages.) Okay, the manual. Oooooooh. Oh, my. This might be a little more complicated than it used to seem. I don't know. Well, I can do it. I know I can do it.

Okay. Well, here we go. (HANDS walk off with the manuals then return to start building with the bricks.) Wait a minute. I don't even know if these are the right parts. What am I going to do? What am I going to do?

For Bard, who hoped to realize his untapped performance potential through his students, the first sign of trouble came from his fellow teachers:

This was going to be, you know, 'cause I'm a frustrated performer myself, I felt like, you know, I had potential I had never exploited. So, therefore, I was going to do it through these drama classes, and I remember I started off at the high level of enthusiasm, which actually I think turned some of the teachers off. I think that was part of my problem. I came in all...and then I went to frustrations.

For other participants the fall from elation and optimism was marked by being bewildered or confused leading to a sense of being lost. In Jack's case this was prompted by having to teach a course out of his field:

So, I ended up being a glorified babysitter in a computer operating system class and had no clue what I was doing for the first six months of the school year. I was lost. So, I did that, and that was kind of the first thing was like confusion, not being sure what was going on, just under the pressure to keep these kids and to figure things out but unable to do what you actually want to do with it.

Josephine also experienced "bewildering kinds of feelings, the sense of confidence that was somewhat shattered but I still kept hoping would come back." Yet that confidence did not come back as she struggled with the new environment of the classroom. Instead, Josephine found herself

Feeling lost because I thought I knew what I was doing and changed subject areas and environments and totally different ballgame even though I could have very easily taken that group of students, put them in horseback, and probably have been fine. So, for me that was a huge component of it.

For Josephine the feeling of being lost quickly regressed to an overwhelming sense of incompetence:



I knew I was a good teacher in other contexts, but I didn't know how to be one there.

Each class brought with it different discomforts and different confusions about classroom management in a non-classroom space – gyms that had built-in stages in them, mostly. I found I could still appreciate the kids and get the groups working together in spurts, but that overall, I dreaded classes and couldn't wait for them to finish, so I could stop feeling so lost and incompetent.

The sense of being incompetent in an unfamiliar environment was so strong for Josephine that it dominated her inquiry performance. In her film she is shown struggling to adapt to the physical environment of an unfamiliar apartment while trying to interact with an uncooperative cat. At one point her feelings of incompetence are vocalized to the cat as she asks it, “You want to exercise? No, you don't, do you? You're just going to judge me, aren't you? Yes, you are.”

*Sinking lower emotionally, losing confidence in being able to teach, and sometimes dreading coming in to work or fearing being fired.* Brook communicated this emotional low through her metaphor of the welcome mat, “Who am I - I'm your brand new welcome mat; Stomped on and muddied becoming threadbare and flat.” For Josephine, this phase of the emotional journey was indicated by the

...fear of being found out. You know, parents would come and pick up their kid, and I remember just being terrified that, you know, that they would walk in and see how crazy I felt like everything was in my head. Even though I'm sure, you know, all my were safe, they were fine, you know. But that was a major theme.

For Bard this phase was not marked by incompetence but by the realization that he did not have the power or respect in the school to accomplish his goals. He discussed this lack of power as he recreated through performance his attempt to get a student scheduled back into his class: “I was

not able to get him back in the class, because I don't have that kind of pull when you go against the coaches." He also felt powerless when dealing with his students, unable to make them follow his attendance rules for play rehearsals: "And I just wasn't in a position to do that. I could not take that stand, and I needed to. I needed to set an example and say here's what happens if you don't come to rehearsal." Erin also dealt with having no power, reflecting, "...I was a new teacher, you know, when all this started and that principals intimidated me. And, you know, I felt like very at the time weak, like I couldn't do anything about it."

This phase of the emotional journey was marked for some of the participants with conflict either real or imagined. For Erin the feeling was real indeed as she found herself locked into battle with school administrators.

I always think like I didn't do anything wrong. I did everything I'm supposed to do. I doubled the sign-ups for the classes, we won awards left and right, we won scholarships. You know, I did everything I was supposed to do. I don't know what more they wanted from me, you know. ... Probably the worst would be when my principal called me into her office and told me she was putting me English-only, she didn't trust me, my judgment for the job. Moved my room down the hall and destroyed my program. And she told me...that I had to go back to class and teach 6th hour.

Bard, while not directly threatened or demoted by his administrators, mentioned a fear of being fired in multiple contexts. "I'm gonna get fired. I'm gonna get fired. I can't be, I can't be dealing with these things in class," was in response to the fear that students revealing personal traumas to him might lead to his dismissal. Yet he also felt a more generalized feeling of concern about his continuing employment remarking, "I didn't do it by the book all the time and by the standards, so I'm lucky to have gotten out with a pension."

Getting out was exactly what Josephine wanted at this point, “What stands out from this experience? The desire to escape and the astonishing fact that I still love working with kids.” The lyrics from Jack’s inquiry performance also highlight this theme: “It’s the terror of knowing what this world is about. Watching some good friends screaming, ‘Let me out!’” (Queen & Bowie, 1981)

Yet even in these darkest moments, the participants continued to teach and strive to accomplish more. Bard, for example, conceded that he faced many challenges, “...but I kept pushing, and I kept pushing. And then there would always be a reward after I went through, you know, some of the toughest stuff to get it done.”

*Making it through the school year with a sense of accomplishment and an eye turned towards the future.* Despite their many challenges and set-backs, all of the participants either continued teaching theatre or endeavored to get rehired into a theatre-teaching position. Their continuation in theatre is partly due to the optimism and rebirth many teachers in all subject areas experience over the summer. That being said, there was a great deal of soul-searching:

And I’m going to be honest. I was a little depressed. In fact, I had to decide do I want to do this again next year. Do I want to go through this again? I had some high points, but it just makes me tired. (Bard)

My first year was exhausting but I felt that I had made great strides in the classroom as an effective teacher and had garnered much interest for the study by years end. (Marie)

Well...it looks a lot better now than it did then. If that makes sense. Looking back on my teaching experience actually looks better than at the time I was doing it. I don't know if hindsight is 20/20 or if hindsight is putting rose-colored glasses on me, one of the two, but looking back at it things seem a lot better than they did then. I was a lot more stressed out about things then I really should have been. (Jack)

For many of the participants this soul-searching led to a renewed belief in their future as theatre educators. This renewed optimism was dramatized by both Lulu and Bard in their performances:

(The scene fades seamlessly showing the hands working on a now nearly constructed Lego model of a stage complete with lights, speakers, and microphone.)

FIRST HANDS: ...and now this goes here.

SECOND HANDS: Yeah, I think that it might have it here. Now, that really worked out pretty good.

FIRST HANDS: That's great! And the finishing touch... (Puts a Lego girl mini-figure into the completed model standing behind the microphone.) And we're ready. (Lulu)

Next year's going to be different. Next year is going to be great. Here's what I'm going to do. I'm gonna go ahead and plan a trip to New York, and I'll find some people that will help me raise money, and I'm gonna take those kids to New York and let them see some Broadway plays, and we're gonna move that senior play maybe to one of the local theatres. Maybe they'll let us use the stage at one of the local theatres, that's right. And we can raise money. We can raise money by selling things after school. And car washes

on the weekend, of course! Who doesn't love a car wash on the weekend? Okay, this is great, this is gonna be wonderful. Maybe, maybe I can get them to let me have four drama classes if I'm lucky, and we'll fill them up, and we'll have a great year. Okay, I gotta go now because I gotta get some lesson plans done, and I gotta look ahead to the future. It's gonna be great! (Bard)

### **The Sociological Findings**

*3. The Heretic (Intersections with Other Areas and Schools).* The participants were challenged by the intersections of their programs with other facets of their school community including academics, athletics, and similar programs at other schools. As established earlier in this study, a school's theatre program is often very different from the other programs and functions of the school. This difference can lead to uncomfortable intersections with other programs and groups in the community. To Marie, these intersections are caused by schools' priorities being in other places than with arts education creating the need for arts teachers to defend their programs: "Budgets, sports minded administration, academically focused peers just a few of the HUGE obstacles that arts educators face. Without our passion that fuels our drive, programs would be shut down, in disarray and eventually cease to exist."

For some of the participants these clashes began with the other arts programs at the school. While generally similar in nature, the various arts modalities can have extremely different needs and agendas. Bard discovered this in his dealings with his school's band director:

I wanted to do a musical. You know, you're lofty when you're first thinking what you're gonna do. And I couldn't wait to go down and talk to the band director about us collaborating on a musical, and he thought I was crazy. He says, you know this is a

marching band. I have to look good at the football games; I don't have time to do anything with drama.

For Jack, his theatre class was begun by the school as an emergency replacement for a chorus program stymied by a certification problem which set up an uncomfortable situation between the two groups:

And they had had the chorus there for a long time, and the chorus had done well, but they were having some problems with that, and the teacher couldn't get her certification, and couldn't get it to go through correctly. What ended up happening was they still wanted to have chorus and wanted to have theatre so they figured out a way to have us co-teach it. So I got my, I passed the Praxis for theatre and when I did they said, "Good, now you can teach theatre." So, I'm teaching the theatre class, but in order to keep the chorus class rolling we just took all the kids who were chorus and started theatre. So I had a little bit of a head-butt there at the beginning, because you had all these kids who were already dedicated, they were already in this one group, and here I show up trying to make them do something else. So there was some resistance from the kids, but administration was behind me the whole way. And I had to, you know, prove myself some: prove that I wasn't trying to take over, I wasn't trying to make 'em do something they didn't want to do, and in the end I won over every one of them.

For Erin, the challenges of sharing facilities often put her in conflict with the other fine arts programs:

ME: Can I please have the use of the dressing rooms?

THEM: No, the band needs it to store their uniforms.

ME: Can I please have the use of the backstage area?

THEM: No, we need to store the choir risers there.

ME: Can I please have the use of the storage room back stage?

THEM: No, we need to store band instruments there.

ME: What is this big wooden box taking up half of the stage? Can we please move it?

THEM: No, that is where we store the grand piano so it doesn't get ruined.

Erin also found herself in conflict with the theatre program at the other district high school through the misperceptions of her administrators:

And, why aren't you doing it like [Rival] High School? And they were doing horrible theatre. They would do stuff like...um like if they were doing a musical they wouldn't get the rights for it, they would play just like the Broadway recording and have the kids block to it. Ridiculous stuff! And so, I would have these arguments with my assistant principal going, "Well, I can't do that because I don't have an orchestra to play." "Well, you can just play the tape like [Rival] does." "No, you can't!" And there was nothing I could do to convince her you can't. You know? Well, [Rival] does it.

Intersections such as these led Marie to value the importance of "being able to understand how each viewed the arts, understood the arts, had preconceived notions of the arts, etc.... Also being able to change those views that were negative without them feeling forced to change was key."

Participants found even more challenges in dealing with the academic communities of their schools. For some of the teachers, the conflicts could begin with the simplest things – like the perceived noisiness of their classes:

THEM: Your kids are too loud.

ME: They are just practicing. (Erin)

...no place to rehearse – you know, if you stand in the hallway after school and you kind of do it longway there’s plenty of room to rehearse in the hallway after school. That is when the teachers aren’t walking though and saying you know, “What are y’all doing in the hall. You’re making a lot of noise out here.” But that’s just because they didn’t understand...I particularly wanted Mr. Murphy across the hall to come see it, because all he had to say about my drama class is, “Y’all sure do make a lot of noise in there.” He says, “Do y’all do anything other than play?” I wanted him to see what our play resulted in, but you know I don’t think I was ever looking for him. He seemed to resent the fact that kids enjoyed coming to my class and actually felt like they got something out of it.

(Bard)

In some cases, the conflict with other teachers was based on the increased focus on standardized tests and the pressure put on classroom teachers to raise student scores. To these teachers a theatre class seemed like mere babysitting at best or, at worst, an impediment to helping students improve their test scores:

(TEACHERS): We all agree your class is such a worthless joke;

That’s why we put it at the bottom of our vote.

‘Cause this is an elementary school;

We want our science back

It’s too hard to do on our own

And the kids must pass the test.

...

(TEACHERS): Who are you - and you teach what if we may know?

Drama? Are you kidding? Oh, please don’t let it be so.



When you babysit my class

You don't do it right.

Boys and girls in separate lines

In order of their height. (Brook)

In Bard's case, the challenge of improving student grades in English ultimately led to the end of theatre classes:

And so gradually drama classes would be taken away. Next year you only can have two. And it got down to one because what was happening, ninth grade students were failing just all of a sudden ninth graders were...a lot of ninth graders were failing...I had to teach more and more ninth grade [English] classes, and I would incorporate drama sometimes in those, but it was nothing like the other. And then finally one year when I started off the year with a drama class, we'd gone one week into it, and I was told that it had to be cancelled.

Perhaps the most well-known conflict for theatre programs is with the athletic faculty and teams at their schools. This conflict has been popularized in plays such as *Our Miss Brooks* and films like the more recent *High School Musical* series. While Marie mentioned this intersection as a major issue, Bard gave a striking example from his own experiences:

And then I realized we had access to the stage. Yes, we had a stage. It was in the gymnasium, but it was still a stage and it had a curtain that opened and closed. So I thought this is great. So, I went into the gymnasium to look at the stage and get some plans. And there were the coaches. And the coach says, "Yes, can I help you?" Surely he knew who I was, I had been teaching there for five years. And I said, "Yes, Coach, I'm Mr. [Bard] the drama teacher and we want to talk about using the stage." He said,

“Well, we’ll be using the stage during the football.” I thought, you practice football on the stage? I didn’t see how that was possible. He said, “Well, we put the players’ equipment up there so they can get it when we’re handing out equipment.” I said, “Oh, but you’ll be outside soon. So, we’ll be able to use the stage then.” He says, “Well, you’ll have to talk to the wrestling coach. You know, he has the stage then.” “The wrestling coach uses the stage?” “Yeah, that’s where they like to work out.” I said, “How about the gym floor? We could work out a deal where I could use the stage and they could be on the floor.” “Nah, he likes to do it up on the stage because it makes the boys sweat more. That way they lose weight.” “Okay, okay, well I’m not going to worry about this right now, but I’ll get back in touch with you because there will be times when I would like to work out a deal with you where I can use the stage.” “Well, the stage is pretty much in the gymnasium, and I’m pretty much in charge of the gymnasium, so yeah, we’ll see about that.”

**4. *The Beggar (A Question of Support).*** *Six out of seven participants experienced challenges with receiving sufficient support from their schools.* In fact, the discussion of support was the most densely coded node of the entire study. To the participants the question of support was at the heart of their perceived success or failure as a new teacher.

For Erin and other teachers involved in this study the problems with support could be traced directly to one group of people: “Oh, yeah. It was all administration. I mean it was great – the kids were great. That wasn’t the problem.” For some the lack of support manifested itself in smaller things, like Brook not being able to “deal with the overwhelming amount of

paperwork I have to fill out for every single production we want to mount,” and Josephine’s comical suggestion in her performance about dealing with added duties as a teacher:

JOSEPHINE: Greaaaaaat. Woo, fancy kitchen! Why’re there dishes in the sink? I’m not your maid, lady. Gym note of excuse. (She runs her hand on the counter finding it dirty.) Oh, God! Slob. Whatever.

(JOSEPHINE looks around, seeing something on a counter out of the shot.)

JOSEPHINE: Ah! (Grabbing a note and perusing it while leaning back against the counter.) Dear, dear. Thank you. You’re welcome. (with obvious sarcasm) Yes, I love your cat so much! He hasn’t even come out yet. Yes. (Impersonating the writer of the note with a snobby, affected voice.) Sorry, dahling, about the dishes. Ran away in a hurry. (back to normal voice and normal sarcasm) Of course, dearest, for what you’re paying me I’m happy to do them. Love being maid. Hmm.

Yet larger issues of administrative support challenged other participants, the most tangible of these concerning acquiring the needed supplies and facilities. Some of the participants, like Marie, received only the most basic material support to begin her teaching career:

I would say I don’t really think I got support. I mean it was sort of at that point in time, it was sort of a secondary program that was in the private schools ‘cause some of the parents wanted it and the public school was because it was required at that time. You know, they gave me the necessities: the room, that kind of stuff, but other than that that was kind of it and I was on my own.

For Erin even the bare necessities seemed frustratingly out of reach:

ME: Well, where are the textbooks?

THEM: There aren't any.

...

ME: Where are all the costumes?

THEM: I had the custodians clean out the theater storage room over the summer.

ME: But there is nothing in there.

THEM: Exactly, they cleaned it up.

ME: Where is all the stage make-up?

THEM: The custodians cleaned it up.

ME: Where are all the tools?

THEM: Aren't they backstage?

ME: No.

THEM: The custodians must have put them someplace safe.

ME: Where are all the flats?

THEM: What are those?

ME: Do we at least have wood?

THEM: The custodians cleaned it up.

If supplies were hard to come by, financial support seemed almost impossible. While Erin was only offered \$500 as a budget to do a full theatrical production, Bard faced a larger problem:

So then I went to the principal, and I told her my plans. And she said, "Are you going to need any money?" And I said, "Yes, I probably will because I'll have to pay for royalties and maybe we can take some trips together and visit other theatres." She said, "Well, how are you gonna raise it?" And I was thinking, well maybe I thought it was available in the school budget. She said, "No, we don't have any money available for drama.

You'll have to raise it on your own." So I asked her some ideas about fundraising. She says, "That all has to be approved by the board. So, you figure out what you are going to do and detail it and submit it to the board for their approval." Okay, okay. Maybe not the start I intended.

Resourcefully, Bard attempted to raise the money only to take a personal financial loss:

...I was busy trying to raise money, and we had fundraisers. Uh, we actually sold posters because I saw it in the back of the Weekly Reader that you could order these neat posters that teens would buy. Well, I wound up with two or three dozen posters on my hands that...well, I eventually paid for most of them, because, you know, I could give them out as gifts, and I could maybe give them to the students as incentives to learn. But the fundraising didn't go too well.

Neither did Erin's attempts to fill in the financial vacuum she faced:

ME: Can we at least have weekend performances?

THEM: No, we don't want to pay the custodians overtime.

ME: Can we do a fund-raiser?

THEM: No.

ME: Can we sell refreshments at the play?

THEM: No, the lobby has carpet.

ME: Can we raise the ticket price?

THEM: No.

ME: How are we supposed to make money?

THEM: I'm writing you up for running out of money.

Facilities were another point of contention for the study participants. Since “the gym and the stage were still off-limits to the drama department” for Bard, he was forced to perform all of his shows in various local museums and theatres. Even his efforts to get a simple stage built inside his classroom faltered:

Oh, I had requested after I got my three drama classes that the principal see if we could build a small, I don't know, eight inch platform in the front of the classroom...to make a small stage area. And I was told that shouldn't be a problem. And during the summer when they were doing some renovations it never happened. I'm sure that wherever that purchase order or that request went it was like, “Do what?” You know?

Erin, meanwhile, saw her continual conflict with administration become increasing hostile over theatre facilities that were shared by the entire district:

ME: Can I have the use of the theatre the week of the play?

THEM: No, it is a District Theatre and there is a band and choir concert that week.

ME: Well, could I at least have it the day before the performance for a dress rehearsal?

THEM: Do you want me to tell the band director from [Rival] High School to move the date of his concert because you're being a bitch?

While the lack of material support was challenging to some of the participants, they also dealt with not being given the leadership support they needed to succeed as teachers. Erin began her teaching career by noticing an interesting dichotomy in her treatment by her administrators. They did not give her support with curriculum since she was a qualified teacher and presumably did not need help, yet also treated her in a manner that made her feel that they considered her to be ignorant:

ME: Where is the curriculum?

THEM: Check the course description.

ME: But that is only one paragraph long. How am I supposed to know what to do for each class?

THEM: You're the one with the theatre degree...

ME: I have an idea for the English department.

THEM: But you don't know anything.

ME: I could take an English 9 to help out the department.

THEM: But you don't know anything.

Brook also felt unwelcome by her administration, sensing that the students and teachers were trapped in a culture of fear:

Welcome!

(COP): Who are you - just sign in here with your ID.

Each day you're here you must pass by security.

(SELF): But this is an elementary school;

Somehow that can't be right.

Why do we have a cop in here,

To lock these kids down tight?

...

Welcome!

(SELF): Who am I- and how did I end up here?

An institution run by antiquated fear?

This is an elementary school A place to learn and grow.

I see perfect little soldiers;

Where did the children go?

Bard also struggled to find support from his administration. He had trouble getting students scheduled properly into his classes and felt unsupported in administrative decisions. When he did manage to get support in an area, like getting permission from his principal to perform a play with some curse words in it, that support could be yanked away at the most vital moment:

...we did something called *Inside Al*... This is decent stuff. *Inside Al* was about a boy who had cerebral palsy so physically was handicapped, but mentally was as sharp as anybody else... And it was a story about how other teenagers related to him. It was a very nice little play... Well, *Inside Al* had some profanity in it. It had the word shit, it had the word bitch, and damn. And I discussed it with my principal, and she was against it. But I said they have to be done. It's meaningful, it tells the story... So I explained. She said, "Bard, you're the drama teacher, you know more about this than me. If you say it's okay, it's okay." And she signed off on it.

However, Bard's new-found support proved to be short-lived after his students performed the play at a theatre competition. His students performed well and advanced to state competition, but some of the schools that did not advance filed a complaint about the language in *Inside Al* with the head of the association:

So he called my principal and grilled her. He said, "So you approved that vulgar play?" She folded. "No, I would never approve a vulgar play. Don't suggest I would." "Aha! So you didn't sign off and approve that play? I've got him on a technicality." And they disqualified us. ... You know, that was the atmosphere I worked under back then.

Lacking support from administrators, the study participants looked to their fellow teachers for assistance. In this area the results were more encouraging. While participants



sometimes had to convince faculty members of the value of a theatre program, most were able to find some support from their peers.

Some of the issues facing the teachers who struggled with faculty support were mentioned earlier in the discussion of *The Heretic (Intersections with Other Areas and Schools)* such as Brook fighting disdain for theatre due to concern over standardized test scores and Bard's attempt to gain assistance from a band director only to be rebuffed because of the other teacher's agenda and needs. However, Bard looked to other members of the faculty to support his efforts, often finding the need to educate them about theatre in the process:

I tried to sell it to the other teachers and told them how excited I was and what I was planning on doing, and how they could become involved, and how I could bring my class to their class to perform. They could give me some ideas on the type of things that needed to be performed. Well, I was a little bit put-back at their lack of enthusiasm to say the least. In fact, a couple of teachers looked at me and said, "So, what are y'all going to do in that class?" I said, "We're going to learn about acting, about theatre, about drama, about self-expression. They said, "So, y'all are not gonna really do any real work, huh? Oh, the kids oughta have fun in there."

Despite this type of reaction, Bard fostered relationships with other teachers and finally had "one or two teachers that helped that were really supportive, but for the most part it was...actually there was jealousy." Despite any perceived jealousy towards Bard from the faculty, he started seeing support at his students' theatre productions when

...several of the teachers came up to me and told me that it was really good and that they enjoyed it. That was of the five that came. Out of 32 faculty members only five were able to come support me, but I'm sure that others had things to do and were very busy.

For Josephine, the problem was not in developing relationships with the faculty or legitimizing her subject:

I had little trouble convincing the head drama instructor... to hire me, given my teaching experience at the farm and advanced theatre training at [the university]. However, I saw her fewer than 3 times over the course of the classes I taught. Our interactions were always upbeat and positive, and she even hired me to house/dog-sit for her. [The other theatre instructor] was great, but he didn't give me much in the way of advice or guidance. He just kind of did his thing and trusted my training and experience for the rest of it.

Josephine's experience is reminiscent of Erin's more negative experience of having administration assume she was capable of creating a full curriculum because she had a degree in theatre.

Participants Lulu and Jack experienced strong support from their school faculties. Lulu, who entered the classroom after a strong student-teaching experience with a master teacher, found an equally supportive environment in her first teaching assignment. This support from her peers became the dominant theme of her inquiry performance:

SECOND HANDS: Hi!

FIRST HANDS: Hey! Hey, can you help me with this?

SECOND HANDS: Well, you are a first-year. Maybe I can.

FIRST HANDS: Come on, here, let's see, (Goes off and returns with more bricks.) and I've got some other pieces here. Let's see if we can try them.

SECOND HANDS: Oh, I've done this stuff before you know, and not as easy as it looks sometimes.

FIRST HANDS: Yeah, I know.

SECOND HANDS: Yeah, that looks okay. Did you kinda plan this out ahead?

FIRST HANDS: Well, I have some ideas, and I looked at the book...

Lulu explained the faculty members and community supporters who inspired the inquiry performance during her interview:

And then part of what I wanted to show was having somebody else come in and help, and I was able to have that. I had an art teacher who jumped in and helped with that, so we had a great family consumer science person who helped me with some simple costume things that I needed. I was able to borrow costumes from, a few pieces from the local theatre because the school didn't have anything. So, it was a great, it was a chance to kind of connect with some other people, and I was lucky to have that, not everybody has that.

Support from others was also a dominant theme in Jack's inquiry performance:

JACK picks up a landline telephone. He listens for a moment then, in pantomime, carries on a very animated conversation with whoever is on the other end of the line. By the end of the conversation he is smiling and nodding happily.

Like Lulu, Jack also explained the support behind his performance:

I actually did have a pretty good support group. I actually did have some people who were really wanting to make it work, because there'd been a theatre group there years before, and they wanted to have it again, and it was something they were wanting to do.

*5. The Teacher (Student-Centered). The participants all described positive experiences working with their students, often using these interactions as a definition of personal success. It*

was a very telling part of the research process that there was not a single negative statement from a participant concerning their students. While some of the teachers faced challenges in gaining the trust of the students or sharing with them the love of theatre, the students were uniformly the positive highlight of their early teaching experiences. As Josephine reflected on the totality of her early theatre teaching experience, “What stands out from this experience? The desire to escape and the astonishing fact that I still love working with kids.”

Connecting with their students proved to be an initial difficulty for the study participants. Josephine struggled to adjust to the requirements of elementary students:

As a college-level student of theatre in a pre-professional program, I had to remember that I was working with young kids for whom the themes of the work I was doing at [the university] were often highly inappropriate. I couldn't use the same language of instruction that my professors used, and I didn't know how deep to go into "kid-appropriate" themes. ... And it was really bewildering actually to come across that because I thought theatre: interactive, engaging, fun, no problems. And, you know, eight-year-olds are gonna be eight-year-olds. And so it was, that was a big challenge for me...

Josephine explored the feeling of adjusting to a different age group of students in her inquiry performance through utilization of her metaphor of cat-sitting. In this part of her film she tried to find ways to connect with the cat hindered by the fact that her previous experience was with dogs:

Hi, kitty cat. Hi, kitty. Can you come here? (She bends over and makes beckoning noises.) Kitty? Good kitty! Come on, make everything better. That's your job. Yeah. (She bends over as if to pick up the cat.) Here, here. Can I? (The cat runs off.) Kitty!

(She beckons to the cat again now bouncing a stick with a string on the end of end against the shelf.) What's that? What's that? Come on! Come on! (She picks up the stick and playfully tosses the toy dangling on the end of the attached string towards the cat.)

What's that? What's that? What's that? Come on, cat. You wanna...you want to play? Come on!

For the teachers more used to teaching their respective age groups, the challenge came from trying to develop a connection with their classes. This difficulty was exacerbated in some cases by the conflicting reasons students had for taking a theatre class. Marie discovered that she had “students who wanted to study theater and those who were required to take it as an elective and did not necessarily want to be in the class.” Bard also dealt with this challenge, sometimes having interesting conversations while trying to inspire the reluctant theatre scholars:

“How would you respond if that happened to you in real life?” “Uh, it probably wouldn't happen to me in real life.” “But what if it did?” “But I don't think it will.” “But don't you understand we're going into our heads? We're going to our imaginations.” “Man, are you high?” Why, I thought that was a clever retort. Anybody who thought of something that clever would surely be good in drama. ... And so they came into the class with an attitude, with a chip on their shoulder. Everything was dumb. Why do we have to do this? And I think the phrase “This is so gay” was used once. But, in a matter of time, since they were really pretty smart fellas they started enjoying it, they started getting into it, and I'd say four weeks into it were good students.

While Jack faced a similar situation as he tried to teach theatre to a class of disenfranchised chorus students, Erin struggled to prove to her students that her theatre training qualified her to make demands of them:

ME: You will never make it in the real theatre world if you don't go to rehearsal.

THEM: Ms. [Erin], I think you did some interesting things in college, but it's not like you were on Broadway or anything.

Yet the teachers responded to the challenge positively, feeling that they were the ones that needed to make adjustments to gain the trust and interest of their students:

The high school program pushed me to create and develop ways to get the disinterested students on board, involved and learning while not holding back those students eager and willing to work and learn. I had to push myself to find different ways to keep students from being bored and to giving a part of themselves to the process. ... Making sure each student felt heard, validated, and being able to empathize with adolescents helped me gain trust and therefore willingness on their part to participate. (Marie)

It didn't go so well at first. Some of them had a hard time staying awake, but you know that was probably my fault. ... Okay, so I lowered my standards a little bit, and I thought, "Okay, maybe I can just keep them focused on what we are doing and at some point they would all be inspired. Because that's what theatre does. It inspires. (Bard)

And I had to, you know, prove myself some: prove that I wasn't trying to take over, I wasn't trying to make 'em do something they didn't want to do, and in the end I won over every one of them. (Jack)

I did manage to get all of my students to a place where they had something that they seemed to be proud of, where they seemed to be enjoying themselves, where they seemed to [be] quite engaged. (Josephine)

Wonderful things continued to happen as the teachers grew closer to their students. The participants became advocates for their students, pushing them to do activities that other teachers and administrators had believed impossible. They worked with their students to compete and excel at theatre competitions. Together teachers and students completed that most difficult of high school endeavors: presenting a full-scale theatrical production. And, as Marie opined, the participants served as role models for their students, “so they [could] begin to understand the drive it takes is important. Actions many times speak louder than words. Therefore, by your drive to create a successful classroom and program you are teaching them that it is possible.”

No participant spoke more about their students than did Bard. He shared many stories of students solving difficult personal issues through his classes, students discovering their performing gifts and going on to have careers in the arts, and students only making it to school because of the allure of his theatre class. However, the story that concludes his inquiry performance is a powerful conclusion to a discussion of how important the participants and their students were to each other:

And I was putting away some of the few scripts we did have and packing them away at the end of the semester and there came Marie at the door. She was very shy. She was in the class. She had a small role in the play. She was the first to learn her lines. She didn't have much stage time, but she really came alive on the stage. “Hi, Marie. Can I help you? Sure, come on in. I'm not busy. Sure, you can tell me anything you want to. Well,

good! I'm glad you enjoyed it. Well, you were very good; you know that don't you? You were one of the best ones up there; I think you were the first to learn all your lines. But we thought you did fine. Well, thank you. I'm glad you enjoyed it. Well, your mother came? Well good, I'm glad she came. Oh. So, you don't live with her? And you haven't seen her in a few years, and she came to your play? Well, that's nice! She what? Of course she was proud of you! Why wouldn't she tell you she was proud of you? Oh, she never said that before. Well, I'm sure she...she just...you know, didn't think you needed to hear it, but I'm glad that your mother came and told you that she was proud of you." I said, "I was proud of you too...Well, thank you. I'm sure, I'm sure that other good things have happened. This can't be the best thing that has ever happened to you. Well, good. Just remember how you were on that stage. Just remember how you felt. And just remember the joy that you brought to others. You have it in you. It was just a matter of doing it...Sure, I think it would be all right if you gave me a hug. Sure. Come here. You're welcome. I'm looking for you next year, you know? We have a second level of drama, and you're certainly welcome to take that. Thank you. Thank you very much."

### **The Primary Finding**

*6. The Missionary (Advocate for Theatre). Every participant needed to be an advocate for theatre at their schools both within their classrooms and to the greater school community.*

The need to justify the existence of theatre in the school, to prove to others that it is worthy to be offered as a course, supported as a valuable program, and appreciated by the entire community is the through-line of the entire study. Every other finding hinges on the success of the participant



in developing acceptance of theatre on their campus. If theatre was not accepted on the campus, the participants could expect their sense of **isolation** to grow, their **emotional journey** to be more difficult, their **interactions** with other facets of the school community to be strained, their quest for **support** to be an endless struggle, and their relationship with their **students** to be impaired. Marie discussed this need for advocacy specifically in her reflection, “Your drive pushes you to find ways to connect with the faculty as a whole and the administration so that they can begin to understand what effect the arts have in ALL areas of education.”

Theatre advocacy took many forms for the study participants. Bard took his advocacy outside of his school, petitioning his district to create a fine arts school or shareable fine arts facility:

I at that time tried to talk up have a school that would be fine arts, that would have a location or build at least one small fine arts building that all the schools could use, and that never happened while I was teaching.

For the majority of the study participants advocacy was an immediate necessity on their own campus as a means of justifying theatre to the administration as a legitimate subject with intrinsic worth:

Many times sports, academics, and other areas are what the schools, boards, etc. are all about. (Marie)

I remember the year as a high school English teacher when I was told that would be allowed to teach three drama classes. This was a big deal to me. Maybe not so much for the school – I think they just needed some more electives to give the students. ... And I remember just constantly banging my head against the wall thinking don't they see, don't

they get it, don't they understand how this is just as important as that math class. (Bard)

Since this is an elementary school,

I'm the doormat of the world;

A bridge to help kids step inside

Another person's door. (Brook)

ME: Her daughter was absent 10 days this card marking and didn't make up the work.

THEM: But it's drama - it doesn't matter. Give her an "A." (Erin)

Their efforts at advocacy continued daily in the classroom as they advocated theatre to their students:

Well, guys, stick with me. This will be fun. I promise. And you'll learn things about yourself." "What do you mean about myself? I thought this was a drama class." "Just trust me. It'll be fun." ... Well, this probably won't help you rap, but it'll help you be in front of people and express yourself, so yeah, sure that'll all be a part of it. (Bard)

Many of the public school children had never even been to a production, participated in any type of performance... (Marie)

Theater is storytelling of the other. It encourages empathy, understanding, research, and imagination. I play others and help my students play others to better understand the human condition and the state of our world. (Brook)

Many of the participants found that one of the greatest challenges of their early teaching experience, directing theatre productions, also provided their largest single tool for advocacy or as Brook phrased it, “Every comedy, tragedy, one-minute play, and full-length operetta serve to reveal something about the world to the audience – whether or not the audience (or participants) agree.” However, for early-career educators to put their personal feelings and professional credibility on stage for all to see can be extremely difficult. Lulu discussed the daunting nature of having her work with students witnessed and judged by the entire school community:

...then in the beginning of November we did *Once Upon a Mattress* and it brought back the memory of “Hey, wait a minute. The math teacher doesn’t have to put their, doesn’t put their work up onstage or out there for people to see.” The band director does, that first football game they’ve got to put their band on the field and that’s even earlier, you know, so that’s a huge challenge.

Yet the work is indeed “out there for people to see.” Bard seized on performance as a chance to advocate his work in the classroom to skeptical faculty members, “We could go into other teachers’ classes. We can give demonstrations. We can show what we’ve learned in drama.” Then, the entire school body could be brought into the fold as well with a full-scale production, “But that’s okay, I knew as soon as we put on a play they’d get it, and they’d get it. ... As soon as they saw all these kids in action they’d get it.”

And get it they did. Bard’s advocacy reached the school community through his students’ performances, first at a middle school where he led small-scale class productions for the Parent-Teacher Association meetings:

...so we did three anti-drug plays. But we performed those three plays at PTA, and they were all student-written. And the props were made out of cardboard that we painted and

designed. I became a hero. I did. Once that was over, Mr. [Bard] became The Man because the students were shown in a positive light in front of their parents at PTA, so they found out after a while I wasn't so bad after all. And I did gain a lot of trust.

Later Bard practiced a similar type of performance-based advocacy at the local high school:

The play progressed. The students became more and more amazing. I could not believe, could not believe what happened. Those that had known their lines in rehearsals pretty much knew their lines. Those that didn't want to do this suddenly came alive with energy and action that I had never seen before. Maybe this was going to work out. The play finally ended to a rousing success. The audience applauded. The parents stood very proudly as if they knew it was going to be great all along, and look what they did for their children, and look what their children did. That's fine. The next day at school it was a success for most of the kids. People came up and told them how good they were. They heard, "I didn't know you could do that." Several kids came and asked me how do you get in drama class? I said, "Well, we'll talk about that, and we'll be sure to sign you up next semester if you're interested. Several of them said, well I heard it's a lot of fun. I'll buy that. That's good enough.

In her written reflection piece, Marie revealed that the need to advocate theatre (and the arts in general) to administrators and other teachers

...pushed me to go back and get my M.Ed., my MS in Psychology and my PhD in Psychology. Being able to understand how each viewed the arts, understood the arts, had preconceived notions of the arts, etc. was big. Also being able to change those views that were negative without them feeling forced to change was key.

Later, in organizing her reflections into themes, Marie endorsed energy and drive as necessary requirements for theatre teachers to not only succeed in their classrooms, but to become strong advocates for theatre. Her comments serve as a fitting conclusion to this discussion of advocacy:

Your drive pushes you to find ways to connect with the faculty as a whole and the administration so that they can begin to understand what affect the arts have in ALL areas of education. Passion only plays into your success if you have it. As a performer, educator and artist, the passion is what fuels the drive. How many brick walls [do] performers hit in their lifetime? Yet they continue on, because it is their love... it fulfills them on many levels. How many brick walls do educators face, not to mention arts educators?

### **Summary**

This chapter began with an introduction of the seven study participants then proceeded to a presentation of the six major findings of this research study. The unifying central metaphor of iconic religious archetypes was utilized to suggest the content of each finding in an abstract, visceral manner. Lengthy quotations were then used to explore the study findings through the authentic voices of the theatre teachers participating in the study.

The emotional findings traced both the many forms of isolation the participants experienced as well as a shared emotional journey that had the participants boldly setting out with excitement at being able to teach theatre, realizing they were unprepared for the journey and experiencing the sensation of being lost, descending into darker feelings of incompetence, fear, and dread, and concluding with a sense of accomplishment and optimism for the future. The sociological findings explored the challenges the participants had interacting with administrators,

teachers, and other groups of people in their schools while sharing the positive experiences surrounding their growing relationships with their students.

The primary finding suggested that the participants needed to become active advocates for theatre and the arts during their early teaching experiences. This advocacy was required for a variety of reasons including justification of theatre as a subject, preservation and expansion of their theatre programs, and connecting with the other people in the school community. The need for advocacy connected and informed every other finding of the study.

## Chapter 5: Analysis of Findings

### What do theatre teachers need to ease the transition into the classroom?

#### Introduction

Whereas the previous chapter organized the early teaching experiences of the participants into dominant findings and explored them through a narrative structure, the aim of this chapter is to analyze the findings with the express purpose of determining what is needed to best assist early-career theatre teachers in making the transition to the classroom. This analysis was carried out through three separate steps:

1. **Analysis of the teaching experiences by the participants themselves.** The researcher considered the participants to be fellow researchers in this study, therefore it was important that they have the opportunity to provide their own analyses of their early teaching careers. This step of the analysis process was begun through the participants' application of the MetaScen research method to their remembered experiences and then continued through specific questioning during the interviews.
2. **Analysis of the findings by the researcher through direct application of the Metaphor-Scenario research method.** The researcher also went through the MetaScen process. However, instead of reflecting and exploring his own early teaching experiences, the researcher utilized the findings and metaphor discussed in Chapter 4 to further explore the data.
3. **A meta-analysis by the researcher connecting the findings, previous analyses, other research in the field, and adult learning and development theory.** This final stage of the analysis process was intentionally pragmatic, looking to connect the various analyses

into specific ideas about assisting future theatre educators in making the transition to the classroom.

### **Analysis Step 1: Participant Analysis**

Through the research process the participants analyzed their experiences on three distinctive levels. These levels of analysis were guided by three of the research questions discussed in Chapter 1 of this study:

1. How did the participants perceive their transitions?
2. What factors assisted or hindered them as they assumed their new places in the classroom?
3. What suggestions would they make to new theatre educators beginning the transition to the classroom?

These questions intentionally work from generalized to specific, asking the participants to look at the experience holistically, extract specific factors that affected their transition to the classroom, and then extrapolate suggestions that could aid new educators. This funnel technique parallels the structure of the entire study itself.

The levels of analysis are discussed in the next section. The participants are grouped together based on their overall perception of their experiences. These perception-based groups are then explored with reference to the shared factors that assisted and/or hindered the teachers in making their transition to the classroom. These factors are discussed through a narrative structure that once again utilizes extensive quotations from the participants to ensure the preservation of their authentic voices in this study and reaffirm their position as co-researchers in the process. A separate section follows the perception-based groups that looks at the



recommendations the participants had for new theatre teachers entering the profession based on their analysis of their own experiences.

**How did the participants perceive their transitions? What factors assisted or hindered them as they assumed their new places in the classroom?** Through their artistic inquiry performances and interviews the participants communicated a general overall perception of their transitions. Two of the participants (Lulu and Jack) had an overall positive experience, one participant (Marie) was more neutral in her reaction, while four participants (Bard, Brook, Erin, and Josephine) had a decidedly negative perception of their transition to the classroom. In order to establish why the groups of participants perceived their transitions differently each overall perception will be explored individually.

*Positive overall perception.* In the positive experiences of Lulu and Jack, both were united in finding a supportive school culture. These two teachers found other faculty members that were willing to provide support and hands-on assistance for their theatre programs. Lulu was aided in her transition through an extensive pre-service program in which she taught for a semester with a master theatre teacher:

Moving to the classroom was fairly smooth. I felt I'd had a fantastic student-teaching experience with an award-winning teacher. I was very lucky to have that experience which prepared me for a lot, and I was able to work with her through a production and through speech contest. So I had a pretty good view of where things were going.

Jack did not have a similar opportunity but instead emulated the theatre teachers and directors he had encountered as a student.

While Lulu and Jack believed they had positive overall experiences, both also discussed challenges adapting to the school culture. Jack realized that he might not have been as well prepared as he had originally believed:

There was a lot more to it than I was expecting. It's a lot more difficult than just going out and directing the show. I mean, I got a minor in theatre in college. I've been in shows, been doing theatre for, you know, over a decade. And it was like, I can do this. And then I started teaching, and I said, "There's a lot more to this than I thought there was."

For Lulu, more specifically prepared for the theatre classroom, the research process reminded her of the overall adaptation that new teachers must accomplish in transitioning into a school setting:

Fortunately for me that was a good transition, but it really made me think about how it's so much more than the teaching, it's your life situation and the people around you that all make a difference in that first year.

At the core of both of these positive transitions was a successful period of experiential training. For Lulu this experience came in the form of her excellent student-teaching and substitute teaching experience. Jack also strongly credited experiential learning for his success; however his development was more shaped by on-the-job experience and informal social learning:

They put me in a room with kids and said, "You're teaching now." And honestly, I think I learned more about teaching that way than I did sitting in any of the classes. Observing good teachers, being involved in the process of teaching, to me is a lot more worthwhile than a lot more...real-world experience that I learned more from than sitting in an education class. The things that I learned and the things that have helped me become a

better teacher I've seen through observation of good teachers and through learning what works and what doesn't as I go. The first couple classes of kids it may not be the best thing in the world for them, but I feel like I learn more out of it that way than just sitting in education classes.

Despite his criticism of education courses in preparing theatre teachers for the classroom, Jack saw benefits in a pre-service program similar to Lulu's:

So I think that as we look at educators and as we look at how to train the next generation of educators, I think more real world experience is need. I know we have the student teaching, but it's kind of a culmination thing instead of an as-the-process-goes. I think it would be amazing to get education students in the classroom with quality teachers as much as possible while they're learning to help them see what it's like in the real world.

*Neutral overall perception.* Marie's perception of her early teaching experiences was unusual when compared to the other six participants. While the other teachers clearly communicated a positive or negative overall feeling about their transition, Marie showed neither perception dominantly. She was in an unusual position, teaching half-days for two schools: one public, the other private. She taught elementary at one school and high school at the other. In general, Marie had two distinctive early teaching experiences.

Perhaps because of not being connected completely to one location, Marie's perceptions of her experiences were focused strongly on her own self-reliance. She spoke of challenges she faced such as the difficulty of teaching the elementary children of migrant farming families or establishing rapport with disinterested high school students through the lens of what she did to overcome the challenge. When asked if she had support from her school she dismissed it simply

and returned to a focus on her own efforts to connect with her students and grow as an educator. For Marie these efforts were largely based on understanding the people with which she had to interact and finding ways to communicate the importance of arts to them. This led to her pursuing several graduate degrees, finishing with a Ph.D. in psychology. In later years of teaching, Marie's graduate work allowed her to "to help in Professional Development by creating role plays for teachers and admin to work in areas that were deemed difficult or uncomfortable, whether it was subject, gender, etc."

Outside of fostering communication and advocating for the arts, Marie also focused on the transition from professional artist to professional educator and the challenge of learning the tools and skills needed for teaching:

Having the knowledge is only one component of being able to teach. Having the skill to teach is a completely different one. They go hand in hand, of course, and support each other through the process. A person who is known to be an "incredible actor" may or may not be an "incredible teacher." Also, just because one teaches does not mean one cannot "act" or "perform." Understanding how to teach acting is a big responsibility of an educator, but understanding how to create and implement a successful classroom, curriculum and thus performance is just as important to the success of theatre educators. Marie learned the skills of being a teacher in her own classroom with little guidance from administrators or colleagues but was able to build on the strong base of her professional theatre experience and her previously developed organizational skills.

*Negative overall perception.* While Bard, Brook, Erin, and Josephine had encouraging and enjoyable moments in their early years of teaching, the tenor of their overall perceptions was primarily negative. The perceptions of these participants, discussed in detail in Chapter 4, were

most strongly influenced by the theme of lack of administrative and faculty support. Ranging from the trusting indifference Josephine experienced to the more hostile interactions marring the early careers of Bard, Brook, and Erin, the lack of support each teacher received trumped any pre-service preparation or school induction training they had received. The lack of professional support for their efforts as theatre teachers was exacerbated by the accompanying absence of financial support.

While issues of support dominated this group's perceptions of their experiences, there was also a general sense of not being fully prepared to enter the classroom. All four of these teachers came into the classroom with advanced theatre knowledge but struggled to translate those skills into the classroom. This is similar to the phenomenon Marie described in the neutral perception section about not necessarily being both a great actor and a great teacher, but in the cases of the negative perception participants there was a sense that they came into the classroom with a pronounced ignorance that was reinforced by their confidence in the knowledge brought into teaching:

I think I was kind of naïve thinking, you know, like ooh I have this background in theatre and I'm going to do the best theatre that I can, and they're just going to recognize, you know... (Erin)

You know, I couldn't do everything like I thought I was gonna do it. I was gonna be the ultimate theatre/drama teacher because I knew about Stanislavski. ... And you've got to not let your ego and your sense of what you know and want to impart to the world be more important. (Bard)

And another [theme] was a false sense of appropriate pedagogical, social, and artistic knowledge. (Josephine)

In fact, this sense of having knowledge that frustratingly does not translate into the classroom was explored in Josephine's inquiry as her character tried, with much difficulty, to open the dishwasher after having successfully opened the oven:

[JOSEPHINE tries to open the dishwasher without success. She runs her hands over various parts of it. She finds no opening lever but does find more grime on the dishwasher door and reacts with disgust. She backs up to get a better view of the door mechanics.]

JOSEPHINE: Um. (Tries again to open the dishwasher, then changes tactics.) Is it turned off? Yeah. Yeah. (Tries again to open it then smacks the front of the dishwasher several times.) Oh, come on! Really?

[JOSEPHINE backs away and tries to calm down and think her way through the problem.]

JOSEPHINE: Just... (going to the built-in oven) I can open this. (She does.) So I should be able to open this. (She goes back to the dishwasher. It does not open and she once again takes a step back regarding it. She briefly touches the toaster oven then returns to the dishwasher yet again, getting down to stare straight at the controls and mechanisms on the front of the appliance. After a moment she laughs.) Oh, I've gotta get more sleep. (Sighs and unlatches the dishwasher.) There we go. (Success! The dishwasher opens. She leans her head against it ruefully.) I'm so awesome it hurts!

The other dominant theme from the teachers with an overall negative perception of their experiences was difficulty in adapting to the culture of the school. While this adaptation was obviously affected by the lack of administrative support, it stemmed from other causes as well. For Josephine, her “biggest problem was lack of training in classroom management and lack of exposure to theatre pedagogies.” While she felt she knew theatre and knew children she was not prepared to make use of the knowledge within the confines of a school. Erin also mentioned difficulties with figuring out what and how to teach, but further discussed the challenge of just becoming part of the school community:

I guess I should have, you know, I just realize much more the importance of the school culture that you are going into and really taking the time to learn, you know, that culture before you get all, you know, gangbusters.

The disconnect the teachers felt with the school culture were manifested in many other ways especially in relation to the school community’s lack of understanding about the purposes, strengths, and needs of theatre as a school subject.

It should be noted that the career arcs of the teachers were directly connected to how they perceived their early teaching experiences. The positive perception teachers, Lulu and Jack, are both still teaching theatre in their schools. Marie with her more neutral outlook continued teaching but transitioned eventually into higher education. Of the negative perception teachers, both Bard and Erin were removed from teaching theatre, Josephine left the classroom (although she is currently working in teacher preparation as she works on her doctorate degree), and Brook is desperately trying to get out of education and transition back into the professional theatre world. Whether the participants’ career paths were directly influenced by their early teaching

experiences or, in reverse, their perceptions were influenced by their ultimate teaching fate is an interesting debate, but cannot be determined by this study.

**What suggestions would the participants make to new theatre educators beginning the transition to the classroom?** Each interview concluded with the researcher asking the participant to finish the research process by determining how the examination of their experiences could pragmatically assist new teachers beginning the same type of transition. The suggestions made specifically to this request and additional ideas communicated during other parts of the research process divide naturally into recommendations for before and after entering the classroom:

1. Before Entering the Classroom: Experiential Preparation Needed for Teaching Theatre
2. After Entering the Classroom: Adaptability

Each of these categories will be explored separately to lay the groundwork for the development of practical approaches to improving the induction of theatre teachers into the K-12 environment.

***Before entering the classroom: Experiential preparation needed for teaching theatre.***

Despite their varying backgrounds, training, and induction experiences into the theatre classroom, the study participants shared a unified view of how new theatre educators should be prepared for teaching. The first step of such a process is to learn as much as possible about the crafts of acting and directing:

Number one, you know, be knowledgeable. Know your craft. You know, know some things. Don't just go in there because you're the only teacher that, you know, volunteered to do it. But, you know, study your craft, have a little experience 'cause you gotta have something to draw on, and you've gotta teach them things that will hold up.  
(Bard)



This skill base is important not only for teaching but because of the large variety of tasks school-based theatre directors have to accomplish as part of preparing theatrical productions. Brook felt that she could not “know enough about lights, sound, costumes, publicity, box office, directing, acting, stage management, properties, set design, set construction, production management, etc.”

But where should potential theatre teachers acquire these skills? Several participants encouraged new educators to seek out experiences in theatre before they begin student teaching beyond that of simply being a student in a theatre program:

Well, I think that it is very important to have as many experiences as you can before you enter the education field. So, working, you know...and the idea I did this when I was in high school, well it's a lot different because when you are looking at the director, your point of view is so different. As a high school student you don't have any idea what the amount of work that goes into it. So having accrued the college experiences and internships or any type of experiencing shadowing actually before student-teaching is a great opportunity to do that and to make sure you put on that director's hat or that you just kind of think about how am I seeing this from that point of view is really important.

(Lulu)

So I think that as we look at educators and as we look at how to train the next generation of educators, I think more real world experience is needed. I know we have the student teaching, but it's kind of a culmination thing instead of an as-the-process-goes. (Jack)

I, you know, one of the classes I did have I was an assistant teacher with someone who, you know, was like a local actor who taught children's acting classes. And in that class I

did have a little bit more, I was a lot more relaxed because I was mostly facilitating whatever he wanted to do. And I do think that if I had had more of an apprenticeship period, kind of like a student-teaching thing where I could dip my toes in and step back and talk about the water, I think that would have been helpful. So, I think that kind of experiential training probably would have been the most valuable addition for me. I, you know, I can read a lot about something but until I actually live it it's difficult for me to feel like I have a sense, like a really deep sense of what's going on. (Josephine)

According to the participants, the next challenge in the process of preparing new theatre teachers is taking the valuable theatre experiences and melding them with proper pedagogical preparation. As Marie advocated earlier in the study, "Having the knowledge is only one component of being able to teach. Having the skill to teach is a completely different one." Yet developing that vital skill of teaching can be quite challenging. The participants expressed doubts that the current system of teacher preparation is successfully accomplishing the task. Josephine, who currently serves as a graduate teaching assistant in a teacher preparation program, sees a disconnect between the preparation new teachers receive and the reality of the classroom:

I'm pretty confident in saying that students in the program that I'm in get this sense of vocational preparation that is undermined when they go into the field. Like there's this illusion that because you studied really hard and worked really hard and learned everything you could learn about something doesn't mean that the doing of it is inevitable and it's easy, you know. So the process of self-knowledge that happens of learning about

who you are as a teacher can be very experiential and I don't think that's highlighted a lot as students are learning what that means.

This experiential process can be improved, participants like Jack would argue, by increased access to student teaching programs like the one that benefited Lulu: a formal semester-long internship with a master teacher with hands-on experience during theatre productions that was followed by another semester of substitute teaching work at the same school with continued contact with her mentor:

I think there's lessons to be learned in everything we go through, and I think a lot of times we try to do our best to prepare new educators for every single possibility that could happen. We try to give them every in-service we can think of. We try to give them all these different trainings, and we try to give them all these different lessons. ... I think it would be amazing to get education students in the classroom with quality teachers as much as possible while they're learning to help them see what it's like in the real world.

*After entering the classroom: Adaptability.* The study participants cautioned that being prepared to enter the theatre classroom is only the first step of the process. New educators need to be able to make instant changes as they go – both in their pedagogical tactics and in their own mental approach to their careers.

The first step of acquiring this adaptability requires neophyte educators to make some internal adjustments: altering their mindsets in a way that better supports them in the school environment. Theatre can be very empowering for young performers, making them the center of attention and building up their self-image. Marie cautions that new theatre teachers need to quickly temper this sense of “star-quality”:

...you really have to go in with a humbleness about you versus the star-quality that, you know, so many theatre people go into it with. You know, I'm the star, I've been this, I've done that. ... I'm coming to teach great things and do great things and I think you really have to be very humble and aware.

Bard agrees with this thought suggesting "...you've got to not let your ego and your sense of what you know and want to impart to the world be more important."

Along with a new sense of humility, new theatre teachers should temper their expectations with a healthy dose of realism:

And I think to be realistic also. It's easy to jump in as a new teacher and say, "Oh, yeah. I can do that. I can do that, you know. ... You have to be realistic about what you can and can't do, and then working in the classroom, and working co-curricularly, and start with things that you can handle and then work your way from there. (Lulu)

I think that they need to be realistic in terms of not everybody is on board for the arts, and many whether it's sports or whether it's the educators that are just in the academic side of things... (Marie)

Part of the new reality of the classroom is accepting that change is both constant and unavoidable. Therefore, to participants like Bard, embracing adaptability is a vital tool for new educators:

So you've got to be very adaptable. ... Because sometimes I would think, "Oh, [Bard], if you knew then what you know now, and, you know, you weren't as knowledgeable." I was more of an instinctual teacher. And that you...you know, since then I have directed

here and on a higher level and learned some things. I discovered that it was okay what I was doing. I was adapting to my environment, you know. . . . But don't let [your previous learning] be dogma, because I didn't and I couldn't. You know, I couldn't do everything like I thought I was gonna do it. I was gonna be the ultimate theatre/drama teacher because I knew about Stanislavski. And I knew all this stuff, but as I've told you stories I sort of adapted to their needs.

Jack also felt that his willingness and ability to change was a vital part of his transition, one that was brought about by his own lack of specific preparation:

One of the things that I think it's really done for me is it's made me kind of accepting of change, and a lot of teachers that I've met aren't like that. They, if you change something in their schedule, if you mess something up that they've always – they're very rigid and they get very upset when, you know, something happens different in the day or when something has to change they just don't like that. But me going into my first year and not knowing what was going on, just trying to feel my way through, has made me a lot more adaptable I think. And I think that that experience early really helped me when I was teaching theatre because when I started teaching this theatre class it was change for everybody. And I was able to kind of ease into it instead of trying to hit full bore with the kids and acclimate them to me, get them used to me as I got used to them and build a rapport rather than just trying the 'my way or the highway'. And I think that's really made me more adaptable and allowed me to fluctuate in different situations better than a lot of other people that I work with.

The importance of adapting not only to the school environment, but to one's specific students is a theme suggested by other participants as well. As Bard expressed it, "I knew all this stuff, but

as I've told you stories, I sort of adapted to [my students'] needs." Josephine discovered that "everything was different from what I expected – I had no idea that teaching context was SO crucial to effective pedagogy – I assumed more of the farm camp instructor skills I had were directly transferrable than they were." Josephine explained this type of adaptation in more detail in a discussion of her metaphor:

I grew up with dogs and I'm very, like I speak fluent dog. It's a very, like, it's just...it's intuitive for me. I was an only child and that was my buddy. So, when I...I just recently became a cat owner actually, and I was one of those little kids who would play with cats like they were a dog and then have tons of scratches all over me. ... So [my cat] and I, like, I would approach him, and then try to temper my approach. And so he's been teaching me as much about how to interact with as I have been learning from...as I have been training him to be like 'okay, don't scratch that, you know, scratch this' and stuff like that. So, I find that cats and I have a language that I assume we know better than we actually do.

While the participants certainly spent the largest amount of time with their students, they also stressed to new teachers the importance of becoming a part of the school environment as a whole. For Marie this type of adaptation "requires, you know, understanding all the different personalities and psychologies of everybody you have to work with and get on your team and that sort of thing." After a difficult struggle with her new school environment, Erin also encouraged new educators to observe their new surroundings to discover the accepted norms:

And now I look, you know, back and I'm like I probably really should have investigated more on what kind of plays the other high school was doing, what plays had been done

before, how they liked to have things done so I could have fit in to the community more and what they wanted. You know, and what they were expecting.

Lulu suggested that this part of adjusting to the school environment could be aided by breaking the natural inclination of isolation and being willing to “reach out to other people. ... it’s not a sign of weakness if you ask the question. If you can, you know, look around and see who can help you. But that’s not always easy to do that.” While it may not be easy to search out for this type of mentor, Lulu intimated that it might be easier with the current level of technology available to new teachers:

I couldn’t go down the hall and say, “Hey, how do you do that? How do you do this?” And it was 12, 15, no it was 21 years ago actually. I’ve been in my current position 15 years. So, I wasn’t able to pull up the blog and say, you know, here’s a question or search something online. So it was a lot different, a little different world.

In this different world, finding the assistance needed to make the adjustment to the classroom might be only as far away as one’s computer.

### **Analysis Step 2: The Researcher’s Metaphor-Scenario Analysis**

The next step of the analysis process was the researcher using the MetaScen research method on the findings discussed in Chapter 4. The purpose of this arts-based analysis was threefold: to immerse the researcher fully in the findings, to allow the researcher to discover deeper insights and important connections in the findings, and to allow the researcher the opportunity to address his own personal beliefs and biases through the artistic process. The five steps of MetaScen – Reflection, Theming, Metaphor, Scenario, and Performance – were followed in a manner similar to the research process of the study participants.

**Reflection.** The researcher began the reflection phase as he transcribed the participants' artistic inquiry performances and interviews into written form. This phase continued as he worked through the process of coding the data.

**Theming.** For the purposes of the analytical artistic inquiry the researcher utilized the six dominant themes that emerged from the iterative coding process described in Chapter 3 and were discussed at length in Chapter 4: Isolation, Emotional Journey, Intersections with Other Areas and Schools, A Question of Support, Student-Centered, and Advocate for Theatre.

**Metaphor.** While the researcher considered numerous metaphors to analyze the dominant themes, he ultimately chose to utilize the same metaphor that organized Chapter 4: religious icon roles. This choice was made to foment a natural connection between the analysis and the discussion of the findings as well as to support the use of the metaphor in Chapter 4. Along with the use of the overall metaphor, the researcher also based the artistic inquiry on the specific iconic figures assigned to each finding: The Monk, The Initiate, The Heretic, The Beggar, The Teacher, and The Missionary.

**Scenario.** In order to allow the best possible conditions for discovery, the researcher developed a scenario instead of a script. Working from the idea that emerged from the discussion of the findings that having or lacking the ability to advocate for theatre was at the core of the participants' experiences, the researcher planned for his inquiry performance to have the "missionary" work of the theatre teacher as its primarily story-line. He made the decision at this point to present the piece as a live performance instead of as a film, once again to allow for more immediate, visceral connections with the material. A rough scenario in graph form emerged that included a short description of each scene and a location. This scenario was later augmented to include the findings that were explored in each part of the story.



Table 5.1: Scenario for Analysis Artistic Inquiry

<b>SCENE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>FINDINGS EXPLORED*</b>
<b>1. Abbot sends Novus, a young monk, on his journey.</b>	Monastery	<b>The Monk (Isolation)</b> The Initiate (Emotional Journey)
<b>2. Novus prepares to go.</b>	Monastery	<b>The Monk (Isolation)</b> The Initiate (Emotional Journey) The Missionary (Advocate for Theatre)
<b>3. Novus begins the journey.</b>	The woods	<b>The Initiate (Emotional Journey)</b> The Missionary (Advocate for Theatre)
<b>4. Novus finds a village.</b>	A village.	The Initiate (Emotional Journey) <b>The Heretic (Intersections)</b> The Beggar (A Question of Support) The Missionary (Advocate for Theatre)
<b>5. Novus gets burned at the stake.</b>	Still the village.	<b>The Heretic (Intersections)</b> The Beggar (A Question of Support) The Initiate (Emotional Journey) The Monk (Isolation)
<b>6. Novus escapes and runs to the town.</b>	Outdoors again.	The Heretic (Intersections) The Beggar (A Question of Support) <b>The Initiate (Emotional Journey)</b> The Monk (Isolation)
<b>7. Novus staggers into town.</b>	Town	The Heretic (Intersections) The Missionary (Advocate for Theatre) The Initiate (Emotional Journey) <b>The Beggar (A Question of Support)</b>
<b>8. Novus gains support.</b>	An inn	The Heretic (Intersections) The Missionary (Advocate for Theatre) The Initiate (Emotional Journey) <b>The Beggar (A Question of Support)</b>
<b>9. Novus journeys on.</b>	Roads	The Monk (Isolation) The Missionary (Advocate for Theatre) <b>The Initiate (Emotional Journey)</b>
<b>10. Novus arrives, begins the mission.</b>	Another monastery? A school?	<b>The Teacher (Student-Centered)</b> The Initiate (Emotional Journey) The Heretic (Intersections) The Missionary (Advocate for Theatre)
<b>11. Twenty-five years later, Novus sends forth another monk.</b>	Monastery	The Monk (Isolation) The Initiate (Emotional Journey) <b>The Missionary (Advocate for Theatre)</b> The Teacher (Student-Centered)

\* The dominant finding within each scene is indicated in bold print.

**Performance:** The researcher decided the performance modality that would best allow him to present the scenario was a combination of pantomime and dance. To assist the storytelling, the researcher prepared a series of images and short film clips to be projected on a screen that would be behind him during the performance. The screen was designed in sections separated by wooden supports to give the background images the sense of being viewed through a window, visually similar to the leaded sections between stained glass panels. Appropriate music to the action of each scene was chosen, and the video selections and music were mixed together into a digital film. The intention was for this film to run without interruption during the researcher's performance, allowing him to improvise the majority of the action based only on the scenario and very limited rehearsal.

The inquiry was performed twice on the stage at the researcher's school and digitally recorded. The second recording was chosen as the cleanest representation of the scenario. This performance was then transcribed in a manner consistent with that utilized with the participant artistic inquiries.

**Performance Transcript:**

*Stained Glass: The Missionary*

[Lights come up on a two projection screens, one an eight foot by eight foot square, the other a four foot by eight foot rectangle. The two screens are hinged together and standing with their shared edge closest to the audience and with the far ends angled slightly upstage. Each screen is constructed of square and rectangular panels of white fabric. The panels are separated by darkly stained wood which suggests the leading of stained glass windows. Three simple white benches sit several inches in front of this

unit, paralleling the edges of the screens. Other than the set, the stage is empty. A Gregorian chant begins to play.]

CHANT: *O Sapientia, quæ ex ore Altissimi prodiisti, attingens a fine usque ad finem, fortiter suaviterque disponens omnia: veni ad docendum nos viam prudentiæ.* ("Antiphon: O sapientia," 2009) (Translation: Wisdom that comest out of the mouth of the Most High, that reachest from one end to another, and orderest all things mightily and sweetly, come to teach us the way of prudence!)

[While the chant continues the image of a stained glass window containing the central figure of a monk is projected on the screen from behind. Words in a Gothic font appear in the center of the large screen: "Stained Glass: The Missionary". After a moment the projection fades out leaving the screens white once again. NOVUS, a young medieval monk in traditional robes, enters and sits on the right bench facing the screen as the image of a beautiful monastery interior appears on it. After a moment the image changes to show a scriptorium with large writing desks for use by monk scribes for hand-copying manuscripts. One such scribe can be seen in the image asleep at his desk. NOVUS begins to move, pantomiming writing on the desk before him. An unseen voice speaks.]

ABBOT: (unseen) Brother Novus? Brother Novus!

[NOVUS, startled, turns his head then slowly stands and takes a few inquisitive steps towards the still unseen ABBOT.]

ABBOT: It is time, Brother. It is time for you to leave us and go into the world to start your own mission.

[NOVUS looks around nervously, shakes his head, and takes a step back.]

ABBOT: (kindly, but with finality) It is time.

[The projected image changes to the sun-lit archways of another room in the monastery. NOVUS moves to the left, obviously unsure. He moves to the center bench and begins, in pantomime, to gather a stack of books. The chant ends and the music changes to “The Journey is the Destination” by Soar (Ebberman, Howse, & Scott, 2011d), an instrumental trio of guitar, cello, and violin. The music has a mellow folk feel, but the beat brings a sense of energy to the scene.

NOVUS leaves the books on the bench and walks to the left. He looks back at the screen as it changes to the courtyard of the monastery. His hand comes to his mouth as he stares into the courtyard. As if having just made a decision, NOVUS tilts back his head and gestures down as if encouraging himself. He walks with forced confidence to the other side of the stage. As NOVUS walks past the screen it changes to a view of the outside of the monastery fronted by a bed of purple flowers. NOVUS raises his left hand in a solemn gesture of farewell.

As NOVUS turns away from the monastery, he smiles for the first time. There is a sense of excitement in his face as he looks up and raises his hands high. The pace of the music increases with a joyous crescendo that sweeps NOVUS into a dance. He continues to dance with a series of turns and low kicks as the background now shows the slowly moving image of a field of wildflowers with a forest at its edge. NOVUS continues to dance with joy as the moving image suggests his journey through fields and forests. As the sun begins to set behind the forest, NOVUS dances to face it and raises his hands in adoration. The movement of the trees on the projection suggest that NOVUS is moving

forward, and he accentuates this illusion by walking in place in a stylized manner. He looks around him as he walks, occasionally raising a hand before him as if he sees something in the distance. He is smiling, excited about his journey.

NOVUS stops walking and slowly looks around as the image changes to show several dwellings of rough-hewn logs with thatched roofs. The music changes to “The Fugitive” by Soar (Ebberman, Howse, & Scott, 2011c), with the calm notes of an acoustic guitar suggesting the peace of the pastoral scene. NOVUS has arrived at a small village. He raises his hand in greeting and moves to the right side of the stage. He reaches out to an unseen villager, beginning his work as a missionary with passion. NOVUS gestures strongly above him, trying hard to explain his beliefs to the villager. The villager apparently is not reacting well to the proselytizing forcing NOVUS to politely retreat a step and disengage from the conversation. He folds his hands together and gives a respectful bow of the head to the villager as he moves off to talk with someone else. The process is repeated with similar results. As NOVUS attempts to placate this unhappy villager the music increases in tempo and takes on an agitated feel. Voices of a mob of villagers can now be heard shouting at NOVUS. He is on the defensive now, backing away from the unseen mob with his hands held up before him. NOVUS tries repeatedly to calm the crowd but finally realizes that this action is futile. He makes an obvious attempt to say goodbye and leave the village.

As NOVUS crosses to the right side of the stage his hand suddenly is jerked into the air as the mob drags him back into the village. NOVUS struggles only to have his other

hand seized. With an effort he manages to break free and now with desperation attempts to reason with the crowd. His efforts are obviously in vain as his head snaps violently to one side, the target of a powerfully thrown punch. NOVUS staggers towards the screens, catching his balance on the center bench. He turns to face his aggressors, holding his wounded jaw. Now he is imploring the mob to listen to him, to calm down, and to just let him leave. Another escape attempt is thwarted as NOVUS is held strongly by each wrist, his arms stretched out to either side. He looks exhausted, unable to fight more. As he is led toward the center bench the projection changes to show a view of the hills outside of the village at sunset with a lone tree silhouetted before them. NOVUS is guided to the center and forced to stand on the bench. One hand at a time snaps sharply behind his back. His hands are being tied together. NOVUS looks around in confusion at the mob, desperate but not truly understanding what is going on.

The background changes to show video of an enormous fire blazing up around NOVUS. As the crackling of the flames is heard, NOVUS realizes he is being burned at the stake. The cries of the mob grow more ferocious as they jeer at their prisoner. NOVUS is in pain now, seeming to forget the crowd as the flames begin to overtake him. The agony is apparent in his face as the flames continue to burn. Suddenly his right hand comes free. NOVUS stares at it and doubles over in pain. As he straightens up he looks back at his hand with dawning realization. Quickly he begins to work to free his other hand. This task accomplished, he frees himself completely from the stake and makes his escape from the village.

The screens now show a misty forest at night. The trees scroll by from left to right, giving the impression that NOVUS is running away. He runs in place before this moving background occasionally looking back to see if he is being pursued. His exhaustion is becoming more and more apparent as he stumbles and bends over as he doggedly keeps running.

Finally NOVUS collapses onto the stage. He has reached a small medieval town, made apparent by the change in the projection behind him. Several half-timbered daub and wattle buildings alternate with smaller dwellings of rough stone. A distant tower looks down on the scene. While it is at night, the road through the town is lighted by the glow of torches. The music changes once again, now to “Creeping Under Darkness” by Soar (Ebberman, Howse, & Scott, 2011a). The tune is slow and melancholy. Still on his knees, NOVUS reaches out to the people passing by him. There is no attempt to proselytize now as he merely begs for something to eat. One person after another passes him by without offering aid. His efforts weakening with every refusal, NOVUS bows down low in the street with only his tonsure showing. He has given up.

Abruptly the music changes to Soar, once again performed by the acoustic trio of the same name (Ebberman, Howse, & Scott, 2011b). The sound is more hopeful, a definite rhythm beginning to develop. Hope has arrived for NOVUS as well as he looks up in surprise. He reaches to take something from the unseen towns person. Apparently it is food as he gratefully takes a bite. His hand is taken again, reminiscent of what happened to him in the village. This time however NOVUS is led kindly into an inn. The

projection changes to show the rustic stone and wood interior as NOVUS walks to stand in front of the center bench. He turns to look at his rescuer with his hands clasping in front of him to communicate deepest gratitude. NOVUS sinks down on the center bench stretching his feet to the left bench to fully lie down on his side. He drifts off to sleep as the image behind him fades out leaving the screens white.

The music continues to play as NOVUS sleeps, becoming more energized and driving. NOVUS wakes up as the interior of the inn fades back into view. He sits up and stands looking up at his host. He quickly walks to the right as if following someone outside. He looks inquisitively at the unseen townsman as the background changes to show the street now during the morning with an ox cart waiting by a nearby building. The sound of a horse is heard as NOVUS quickly turns the center bench perpendicular to the screens and stacks the left bench carefully on top of it. The horse sounds continue as NOVUS mounts the stacked benches. Apparently his benefactor has given him a horse.

The background changes to a video of a dense forest rushing away from the audience. This effect makes NOVUS appear to be riding quickly forward. He holds invisible reins as the sounds of his steed's galloping hooves grow louder. As he bounces along his way, NOVUS smiles. He waves at a person passing to his side then quickly ducks to avoid a low-hanging branch. He looks around with eagerness and wonder, but this happiness does not seem to be as extreme as shown during his dance in the beginning. Still, he reaches out before him to wave at something he sees in the distance.



The forest fades away to show a stone wall beside a wooden plank floor. NOVUS dismounts and quickly places the benches back in their original positions. His attention is immediately caught by someone to his right. He approaches this person, holding his hands flat before him in an obvious effort to be as unthreatening as possible. As NOVUS sinks carefully to his knees it becomes obvious that he is talking to someone considerably shorter than himself: a child. He goes through the same gestures of proselytizing that he performed in the village, but now the movements seem gentler, more personal. NOVUS reaches out to hold the child by the shoulders as a look of amazement comes across his face. Suddenly the invisible child rushes into his arms, and he carefully wraps his arms around him. NOVUS holds him at arm's length then stands. Once again his hand is taken by another person echoing his interactions in the village and town. Now, however, NOVUS is leading. As the music swells, NOVUS does a small dance with his young student. The movement carries them to the left where NOVUS spots another child. He again drops to his knees and addresses the new arrival. Like the first, this child comes to him. NOVUS stands and takes the hands of his new students. With a look at each of them, he walks with the children offstage.

The image on the screen fades out to be replaced with the text "25 years later...". This text fades only to be quickly replaced by a view of another scriptorium and a monk scribe hard at work with a quill and parchment. NOVUS, now the abbot of his own mission, enters and speaks for the first time.]

NOVUS: Brother. Brother! It is time, brother. It is time for you to leave us, go out into the world, and begin your own mission. It is time, brother.

[With a last look at his departing student, NOVUS turns, bows his head, and exits. The image on the screen fades out to white. Momentarily this is replaced with the original stained glass image from the beginning with the text “Stained Glass: The Missionary”. After a few seconds this image too fades out. The performance ends.]

**Researcher’s Analysis of the Artistic Inquiry Process:** After completing the inquiry performance, reviewing the video recording many times, and discussing the piece with other educators the researcher wrote the following reflection on the piece analyzing what he had learned through the MetaScen process. This is presented below in first-person to reflect both the researcher’s voice in this process and to firmly establish and acknowledge the background and biases he brought to the analysis:

What did I discover? The first thing that comes to mind is the theme of isolation was even more heavily pronounced than I expected. I suppose I knew intellectually that the story-telling required Novus to alternate between connecting with people and being alone, but I truly did not realize it until I performed the data. The isolation was pronounced but was not always unwelcome. Within the isolation I was not being persecuted, nor did I have to explain myself. There was a reflective element that seemed to come through the performance in the sections when I was alone. Yet despite finding a silver lining in the solitude, the inescapable fact is that I did **feel** terribly alone in the character during the entire piece - even when someone reached out to help me in the town. Certainly I felt the warmth of human contact and felt the relief of being noticed and helped. However, when I go into the inn what do I do? Thank the person simply and pull back into myself and sleep. Is this common for theatre educators? Is our true

connection with others so limited that we fundamentally do not do it as well? I have to acknowledge my own personal make-up since I have a healthy streak of introvert in me despite my love of people and performing. Ironically, on the isolation front, I had planned to have several of my students be part of this inquiry with me. In my original sketch for the piece I was hoping to have the students form silhouettes on the screen to be the mob, the children, the townspeople, the other monks, etc. However, thanks to summer scheduling – and the fact that I filmed the inquiry on July 4th – I had no students available to help. Isolation came to me again. Interesting.

Another interesting factor was the palpable relief I felt when I finally was able to connect with the children who became my students. I know the data definitely supports the concept of everything in a teacher's day seeming to come between them and their students. Yet this was not something that was an overriding theme nor did I plan to include it in the inquiry. However, it certainly put itself in the inquiry. I am not a person who 'becomes' my characters. I think about them deeply, analyze them, learn about them, and play them. My joke to my students is that if you become your character you don't need a director you need a psychiatrist. However, there I was feeling such absolute relief and joy at finally reaching a student who would listen to me and – could it be – believe me! The look on my face when I connect with the first student is most definitely not acting. Students are definitely at the heart of what we do. Our isolation is broken, even if we still feel alone when it comes to our teaching peers. I understand how theatre teachers and their students sometimes combine for an 'us against the world' kind of mentality concerning the rest of the school.

Whenever I do one of these inquiries I always try to examine what happened that I did not plan (and what did not happen that I did plan.) Often these moments are when my unconscious mind attempts to get something through to me. There were a few such moments in “Stained Glass: The Missionary”. The first is the scene where Novus is preparing to leave the monastery to go on his mission. The moment where he returns to the bench and starts organizing books before finally pulling away and leaving on his journey was completely unplanned. I even remembered thinking ‘What are you doing?’ during that part of the pantomime. I found it interesting that I was obviously pantomiming books. Whether books would even exist in that form in this type of monastery I’ll leave to those more concerned with verisimilitude. The point is they were books. I gathered them carefully, almost reverently, as if I was going to take them with me. Then I left them. Not just vanishing into thin air as is common in pantomime when a performer forgets about an invisible prop. I intentionally set them down and walked away. Is this the theatre education student leaving his book-learning behind? Did I decide – even before the journey – that the preparation I received was not applicable to my mission? Could I just not bother to be burdened? Do new teachers not want to be burdened with what they have learned, more interested in the excitement of plowing ahead into their own classroom? Interesting.

I was also surprised by how terribly long the time seemed to drag when I was performing the section in the village – especially when Novus is directly involved in conflict with the villagers. I just timed it on the recording: that section was only 35 seconds. It felt interminable. Yes, it was pantomimed conflict. Yes, it was an intentional part of the performance. No, I did not expect to feel like I just could not get

away no matter what. I know that part of my inspiration for undertaking this research study was my own difficult transition to the classroom. While I in no way intended to reflect my own story, this part of the inquiry dredged up some dark days for me. I remember clearly walking to the teacher planning area in the middle school where I began my career in a fog of depression and inferiority. I would go to my little planning cubicle, grab a marker, and harshly draw an X on the box in the desk calendar representing that day. I lived for that moment daily. I felt those feelings again in this section. Those 35 seconds were very troubling for me. It is probably equally telling that in the majority of my initial viewings of the video of the inquiry I would skip over this section. I had to force myself to watch it. While I will certainly bracket this experience to make sure it is not influencing my analysis of the data, I must also accept it as a reminder of how difficult those moments can be for new educators. I know some of my participants who also had difficult transitions had similar moments. The feelings are real. That's the lesson. The situations may seem minor to those outside of the theatre classroom – it's not that important a subject anyway, so what if what you do is not appreciated, you're not being hurt, you're still able to do your job, you're doing fine, people like what you're doing, you just don't know it – but the feelings of the theatre teacher inside the situation are real and visceral. Any solution to this problem has to connect vitally to teachers or it is useless.

Another moment that surprised me upon viewing the video occurred during the transition from sleeping in the inn to riding away on the horse. While Novus was certainly appreciative to be given food and a place to sleep, the larger gift of the horse was hardly acknowledged. Part of this was probably due to the mechanical challenge of

trying to get the benches set up properly before the moving forest clip began playing. However, that would not have stopped me from turning and waving behind me as I rode off. Why did I not thank this extremely kind supporter more? Did I feel entitled to finally getting some help? Probably. But this was **huge** help: a horse for crying out loud! This suggests again the importance of the advocacy piece. Part of advocating for theatre is letting those who support you know how important their support was to you. You can't assume they know because they helped you. The advocacy has to continue throughout the moment. This is an important realization, I feel.

I have also thought deeply about the last scene. Obviously, I had planned to end the inquiry by beginning the cycle again. Novus sends off another young monk to begin his own mission much as the participants and I are trying to help send off new theatre teachers to their own mission in the classroom. Sadly though, I was struck while doing this that I might be doing exactly what others had done before me: sending the new monk out proudly (my own personal pride in preparing a wonderful new missionary) yet sending him out with just as little preparation as I myself had. In other words, I am just perpetuating the same cycle without even realizing it. Interestingly, other people who have seen the inquiry have told me they felt that Novus had done more to assist this one. It is certainly not shown in the inquiry. I hope their interpretation is correct and that we are actually coming to some things that will actually be a practical help to new teachers.

The final concept that struck me during this process and the subsequent reflection was, strangely enough, the dealings I had with my costume. This inquiry was intentionally rehearsed very little. The more planned the rehearsal, the less likely for the subconscious to do its magic. I had danced a bit to some of the music, just getting a feel

for the tempo and warming up a few kicks and turns. This I did in shorts, t-shirt, and running shoes: the clothes I wore to the theatre. I never rehearsed in the monk robes or without shoes. When I performed the piece I was stunned at how much the robes changed everything for me. My effortless kicks were now stopped abruptly a foot lower than I expected. My turns felt strange and a bit unbalanced. I almost killed myself trying to get up on the 'horse'. Every move to the ground, every step onto a bench had to be a deliberate choice to either look fluid or simply not to cause me injury. The stage was also littered with several small rocks. I had not noticed them in the least while dancing in my shoes during the brief rehearsal. I was more than aware of them as I painfully danced through them in bare feet during the filming. I even adjusted the path I followed during the remainder of the performance to avoid another uncomfortable encounter. This seemed like a good metaphor in itself for the new theatre teacher. It looks easy in practice. You are confident in your abilities. I know how to dance. I've danced for 40 years. I've danced professionally. I teach dance at my school and choreograph a competition dance team. However, I neither danced in monk robes before nor barefoot on stones. My years of dance training allowed me to adapt, but I had to adapt instantly. Without those 40 years of learning how to adapt, I would have had to stop the camera and do some serious rehearsal in the robes after sweeping the stage clear of debris. I survived the experience. I could go into an unfamiliar classroom and adjust on the fly to teaching in almost any environment. Could a new teacher? Most likely not. It is vital that we do not get jaded by our own careers to expect new teachers to see clearly what we have learned through years of experience. Certainly experiential learning is part of the answer, but isn't there something else lurking in this idea? Is it possible to teach someone how to adapt? How

do you prepare someone to change everything on the fly? Is it enough to know that you will have to change? How hard is that to internalize without just agreeing with it and moving on to the next lesson? How do we prepare new teachers for making deliberate change both in how they teach and how they connect with their school community?

### **Analysis Step 3: Pragmatic Analysis**

The first step of this final phase of analysis is to compare the findings of the study with the assumptions the researcher made entering the study as well as the applicable reviewed literature. The goal of this process is to determine both connections and divergences that might be helpful in developing methods that would assist new teachers through the process of induction to the theatre classroom.

**Revisitation of Researcher Assumptions.** The researcher acknowledged three basic assumptions that were directly connected to the transition of theatre teachers to the classroom. The validity of each, as viewed now through the lens of the study findings, will be evaluated separately.

*The variety of paths theatre teachers take to the classroom do not fully prepare them for the realities of teaching.* This assumption was widely supported by the study findings. While one participant in particular felt she had been well prepared for the classroom the other teachers' experiences showed numerous areas where they were not prepared. These areas of need included better training in specific pedagogical techniques, a better understanding of the school environment, improved communication skills with other educators and administrators, and preparation for the new level of advocacy for theatre required by their new role. Even Lulu



with her outstanding experiential training found gaps in her preparation for the school environment.

*Theatre teachers have more difficulty making the transition to the K-12 classroom than those who teach more traditional academic subjects like language arts or mathematics.* While the study did not seek to compare the experiences of theatre teachers with those of teachers of other subjects, areas of difference were apparent in the study that could be perceived as being more difficult. The largest area of difference leading to a more challenging transition lay in the school community's understanding of the needs and benefits of a theatre program. In some cases this manifested itself by there simply not being a mentor or anyone with direct experience with theatre to aid the new teacher. In more difficult situations the lack of understanding led to the participants feeling demeaned or actively persecuted by administrators and other teachers. Besides dealing with the usual difficult induction into the classroom they carried the added burden of having to advocate for their subject area.

*Theatre teachers have numerous extracurricular requirements that keep them at the school outside of normal school hours.* This assumption was validated repeatedly by the participants. Not only did the participants experience these added requirements, many of their challenges in making the transition to the school environment directly emerged from the extracurricular performances and competitions for which they were preparing their students. In schools without a culture prepared for theatre the extracurricular element of theatre teaching exacerbated the problems of the classroom with increased need for support and elevated interactions with other members of the school community.

**Revisitation of Reviewed Literature.** The literature review attempted to put early theatre educators into the proper theoretical connotation by examining them through an

increasingly specific series of categories: adults, artists, new teachers, and finally new arts teachers. However, the more specific the categorization the less research was directly applicable to the unique situation of theatre educators. How much was this theoretical exploration representative of the educators in the study?

In the most generalized category of the participants as adults the theoretical underpinnings of the study were reinforced. The adult development theories of Kegan (1982) and Levinson (1996; 1978) were particularly apt in providing context to the participants' experiences. As new teachers the participants found themselves transitioning between two stages: the comfort of the known theatre environment and the *terra incognita* of the classroom. Levinson symbolized this transition as a step up a staircase while Kegan utilized the metaphor of perpetually swinging from one temporary phase of stability to another. Yet the transition to the theatre classroom is the transition interrupted, not the smooth flow suggested by Levinson and Kegan's elegant models. Perhaps a more accurate mental image of this transition would be a person stumbling on a missed step, desperately trying to regain their footing or a child's balance failing them on a particularly daring outing on the playground, their hands instinctively grabbing the chains of the swing as they attempt to keep from injuring themselves on the ground below.

Kegan's placement of young adults into the transition between his Interpersonal and Institutional balances is particularly relevant in this case. Kegan's theory suggests that as early educators the study participants were trying to move into a new role that was defined by their relationship with others, i.e. their students, administrators, and fellow teachers. Yet the participants overwhelmingly experienced a stronger sense of individuality, forced into isolation by their many differences with the school community and the inherent requirements of teaching theatre. In this case, their new role was defined often by their lack of a strong relationship with

others. This interruption of the swing between Kegan's balances is at the crux of the challenge of preparing new theatre educators: preparing them for inclusion in a system that whether by accident or design specifically excludes them from the general community.

In defining how the study participants learned about their new roles as educators, the literature review is particularly relevant. Mezirow's (2000) transformative learning theory is obviously suggestive of the participants' experiences. The new experience of teaching in a K-12 classroom is practically a textbook example of Mezirow's "disorienting dilemma." The participants definitely reassessed the knowledge they brought into teaching and found it to be insufficient to support them through the transition. The challenge for the participants lay in the next step of the transformation: finding the knowledge, actions, or relationships to allow for the adaptation to the new environment. Their lack of preparation led to the disorienting dilemma, but the lack of natural mentors or exemplars hindered and extended the process of adaptation.

It was at this point in relating their experiences that many participants specifically referenced experiential learning by name without it being suggested to them by the researcher. Without a guide through the process, the participants were forced into endless cycles through Kolb's (1984) phases of Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation. It should be stressed that this common ordering of Kolb's phases was not necessarily the order followed by the study participants, nor does Kolb suggest an arbitrary first stage. In fact, for many participants, their experience was quickly deemed inappropriate to the new surroundings. A more common entry point into the cycle for the participants, therefore, would be at the Abstract Conceptualization stage. The participants developed methods for teaching theatre on the fly, tried them out in their classrooms and during rehearsals, experienced what happened, considered the results, and then tried it all again. Those

teachers with stronger pre-service preparation entered the cycle more often with Concrete Experience, but still went through a similar process of what Josephine termed “trial and error, but it felt like a lot more error than anything else.” Therefore the improvement of theatre teacher preparation would seem to require preparing pre-service teachers with both improved experiences to inform and energize the experiential learning process as well as proficiency in the process of perpetual experimentation, adaptation, and change. Familiarity with the process they were about to transverse would seem to better equip them with a sense of Bandura’s (1993, 1997) self-efficacy: the personally-held belief that they are capable of making the transition strongly. The findings of the study would suggest that it is not enough to have self-efficacy in theatre knowledge or teaching experience without also having belief in the personal ability to change and adapt.

It is in the ultimate preparation of new theatre teachers that the existing literature in the field falls woefully short. While the challenges of the experience are well documented with the induction literature often paralleling the communicated experiences of the participants (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Day, 1999; Feiman-Nemser, 2010; Little, 1999; Moir, 2011; Pultorak & Lange, 2010), specific strategies to aid theatre educators are almost non-existent. The suggestions of Silver (2014) for new teachers to focus on small areas for improvement with the support of administrators seems painfully shortsighted in respect to the experiences related by the study participants. How can we only focus on a few small things, they might argue, if our survival in the school environment hinges on the enormous things like gaining acceptance and support for theatre as a subject? What if the kindly support of administration is not present? Administrators have many responsibilities. The assumption that they would have specific knowledge to support and aid theatre teachers seems dangerously optimistic when viewed

through the experiences of the participants. Perhaps Théberge (2007) and Mucchielli (1986) are more on right track with the idea of developing a strong sense of identity in new teachers. If one accepts, with reluctance, that a certain amount of isolation and alienation are an inherent part of theatre teachers' transitions to the classroom then it is logical that preparing them with a well-developed sense of identity could allow them to survive in the abyss long enough to help develop the culture needed to support both their theatre programs and themselves as educators. This connects back to self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993, 1997) as well: a strong identity would lead to belief that one could accomplish the needed tasks. However, despite suggesting a solid theoretical base for a potential pre-service preparation program for theatre educators, these concepts do nothing to change the fact that the reviewed induction literature does not specifically and pragmatically diagram a path for theatre educators to follow to the classroom. While the robust research on mentoring suggests possibilities in this area, the paucity of available mentors in a school environment renders this avenue, at least as currently envisioned, as impractical in the extreme.

The overall perceptions of the participants could provide a starting point for developing methods, programs, or networks that would support new theatre educators as they enter the classroom. Members of each of the three perception groups shared a dominant theme. The members of the positive perception group had the benefit of a school culture that wanted a theatre program and were willing to provide the support necessary to either make it happen or support a new theatre teacher in continuing an existing tradition. The neutral perception participant was focused on improving communication issues with various individuals and groups within the school community for the purpose of theatre advocacy. Teachers in the negative perception group all fundamentally lacked the support of their community. When compared with

each other these seemingly different themes actually share a similar core: advocacy. With the positive group the teachers had less responsibility to be an advocate because the work of advocacy has been done for them. The neutral participant was driven to be an advocate, fueled by her past professional theatre experience and willingness to seek further education to make her advocacy possible. The majority of the negative group lacked a pre-existing theatre advocacy and struggled to fill both the role of advocate in addition to managing the numerous challenges of becoming a teacher. From these perceptions the first element needed in a system to support the transition of new theatre educators would involve training in becoming an advocate for theatre and the arts.

When asked to specifically provide suggestions for new teachers based on their experiences, the recommendations of the participants were condensed into two distinctive areas. First, the participants were adamant that new theatre teachers need a thorough, experiential preparation for the classroom that includes the many divergent requirements of a K-12 theatre educator: deep theatre knowledge, proper classroom management skills, specific theatre pedagogy, and the wide range of artistic and technical abilities needed for the preparation and performance of theatrical productions. Both the experiences of the participants and their recommendations suggested that most efficacious method of learning these skills would be by the side of a master theatre teacher within an established classroom and extra-curricular performance environment. If new teachers enter a classroom without this type of experiential learning then they would require some type of training or support to fill in the gaps of their preparation. The other distinctive area of recommendation from the participants was that new theatre educators be prepared to adapt both their attitudes and their tactics after they enter the

classroom. This recommendation recognizes the near impossibility of being precisely trained for any teaching environment.

While considering these suggested requirements for the preparation of theatre educators, the other findings of the study should be considered as well. Is **isolation** a natural function of teaching theatre or can it be alleviated somewhat through induction? How is **support** for theatre educators improved? Does preparation for being an **advocate** include improving how theatre teachers **interact** with other teachers and groups? What part should **students** play in induction?

Combining all of these elements provides a general concept of what a system to assist theatre teachers in making the transition to the classroom might contain:

*A system for theatre teacher induction should:*

1. Prepare teachers to be theatre advocates within their school community.
2. Augment theatre teachers' existing knowledge with experiential training in classroom and school theatre production techniques.
3. Assist educators in developing the ability to adapt to their individual teaching environment.
4. Alleviate isolation.
5. Increase support for theatre educators.
6. Improve communication between theatre teachers and other members of the school community.
7. Include students in the process.

## **Summary**

This chapter examined the study findings through three separate analyses to determine what theatre educators needed to support them in making the transition to the K-12 classroom. The first analysis was performed by the participants themselves as they related their overall perceptions of their individual experiences. These personal analyses were combined into three perception groups – positive, neutral, and negative – with the experiences of the members of each group compared to establish consistent group traits. The participants also made recommendations on how their experiences could be utilized to improve the transition of new teachers entering the field. The teacher preparation concepts of advocacy, experiential training, and adaptability were developed through these analyses.

The second analysis was performed by the researcher, utilizing the study findings and organizing metaphor to explore the data through the MetaScen research method. His process in completing this analysis was discussed followed by a transcription of the resulting performance piece. This phase of the analysis ended with a first-person reflection by the researcher that both identified his personal biases and suggested increased focus on the areas of isolation, advocacy, adaptability, and methods of induction.

The final analysis began by examining the validity of the researcher's original assumptions when compared with the study findings. The researcher then performed a meta-analysis which compared the results of the previous analyses with the reviewed literature in the fields of adult learning, adult development, and teacher induction. The chapter concluded with the development of a general list of potentially beneficial elements of a future system of theatre teacher induction.



## **Chapter 6: Recommendations**

In this the final chapter of the study the researcher attempts to connect the analysis of the data with his own recommendations about new possible directions for both theatre teacher induction and the Metaphor-Scenario research method. The first section of the chapter focuses on theatre teacher induction, working from a base of the newly identified components of an improved induction system in an attempt to hypothesize methods for putting these ideas into practice. The researcher attempts to stay true to the pragmatic paradigm by considering issues of practicality in considering program elements. Simply, if a program cannot be implemented it is of little use no matter its theoretical underpinnings. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the future of MetaScen with recommendations for the expansion of the method to allow for connectivity with additional arts modalities and improved participation.

### **Pragmatic Challenges to Improving Theatre Teacher Induction**

Before making his recommendations the researcher acknowledged the pragmatic challenges to assisting theatre teachers in transitioning to the classroom. The data analysis in Chapter 5 suggested that a system for theatre teacher induction should:

1. Prepare teachers to be theatre advocates within their school community.
2. Augment theatre teachers' existing knowledge with experiential training in classroom and school theatre production techniques.
3. Assist educators in developing the ability to adapt to their individual teaching environment.
4. Alleviate isolation.
5. Increase support for theatre educators.

6. Improve communication between theatre teachers and other members of the school community.
7. Include students in the process.

As if fulfilling a wish list like that would not be hard enough, imagine finding a way for all theatre educators to go through such a program in consideration of the many paths to the theatre classroom. If such an appropriate induction system was instituted in college teacher training programs, how would teachers that enter teaching directly from professional careers benefit? What about those educators who train in college theatre departments or conservatories without benefit of teacher training? The one common location for all of these teachers is their final destination: the K-12 classroom. Yet it is difficult to imagine a school having the specific resources needed to provide such an induction experience for what would most commonly be only one teacher on their campus.

An additional challenge is the concept of training a teacher to be an advocate. The tenets of Knowles' (1973) characteristics of an adult learner seem especially applicable to predict potential challenges in this area. Adult learners thrive when they are self-directed in their learning and can see a definite need for the particular learning. Would a theatre practitioner immersed in a community of fellow theatre devotees appreciate the need to become an advocate? The missionary metaphor is particularly apropos here: if you have always lived amongst believers, how do you comprehend the concept of unbelievers let alone see the need to learn how to reach such people? Either the potential missionary would have to be thrown straight into the situation to experience it himself or he would have to hear it from someone he respected and trusted to be convinced of its importance. Hence, the need for a mentor, what Daloz (1999) calls a "keeper of the promise" (p. 18).

In fact, a theatre mentor would seem to be the most direct way of addressing many of the items on the induction wish list. A mentor would be a powerful tool for preparing a new teacher for advocacy, providing experiential training, suggesting strategies for adaptation, and alleviating the overwhelming sense of isolation. The other areas on the induction wish list: increasing support for theatre educators, improving communications within school communities, and including students in the process could certainly be addressed in a limited way by a mentor but seem to require a more in-depth solution.

While a mentor might be a possible solution for implementing many parts of the proposed theatre teacher induction system, from where does this mentor come? As mentioned numerous times in the study, theatre mentors are almost never available at the same school with new theatre teachers and often not in the same school system. There is some hope that a qualified fine arts department chair would have enough breadth of knowledge in the arts to mentor a new theatre teacher. Unfortunately, not all schools have a fine arts department or a formal arts leader on campus (Strickland, 2008). Expecting new theatre teachers to locate qualified mentors themselves seems impractical, even with the vast informational resources of the internet.

### **New Directions for Theatre Teacher Induction**

Keeping these challenges in mind the researcher presents the following recommendations for installing a new system of theatre teacher induction. Each set of recommendations is directed to different stakeholders in this induction process: college theatre education programs, theatre organizations, school administrators, current theatre teachers and fine arts department chairs, and new theatre teachers. It should be stressed that none of these recommendations are intended to

criticize the excellent work already being accomplished by these groups. These are merely suggestions of how the findings of the study could be integrated into the work that has already been begun.

### **Recommendations for College Theatre Education Programs**

- Provide opportunities for more classroom teaching experience in a variety of environments and situations.
- Prepare new teachers to be advocates for theatre.

While not every theatre teacher goes through a formal theatre education program, additions to these programs can assist the teachers who have the benefit of this type of preparation. Finding classroom student teaching placements for theatre teachers can provide a challenge, yet the researcher encourages college theatre programs to seek out multiple opportunities for their students to experience the K-12 classroom before entering formal student teaching. The goal should be to allow the theatre education student to see as many situations as possible, even if it means placement into non-theatre classes. In theatre class placements the student should be exposed to both classroom and extra-curricular environments. Allowing the student to be part of the preparation and performance of a theatre production would be equally beneficial to learning the ins and outs of the classroom. If a production-based placement is unavailable in a school the students should be encouraged or required to do volunteer work or internships in children's theatre programs or community theatres. The emphasis in all of these experiences would be to expose the student to as many of the facets of teaching and preparing theatre productions as possible. Varying the environments would aid students in their own

transition by showing them the differences between different schools thus preparing them for the adaptability they will have to show in their classroom.

In addition to the theatre clinical experiences, advocacy should be taught formally in the college theatre education classroom. While this preparation could include strategies for becoming an advocate at multiple levels, there should be a definite focus on advocacy at the school level. The goal should be to prepare teachers for the advocacy they will need to become and remain theatre teachers before looking to the important task of increasing awareness of theatre at the local, state, and national levels.

### **Recommendations for Theatre Organizations**

- Expand existing theatre advocacy programs to better assist new educators on the school level.
- Develop online guides to aid new theatre teachers.
- Organize members into formal mentoring pools.
- Make it easier for new theatre teachers to join national organizations.
- Network with other organizations to make mentors available to schools.
- Encourage student members to support new teachers.

Theatre organizations have long embraced the role of advocate. The researcher fondly remembers the day during his troubled first year of teaching that an envelope arrived from the American Alliance for Theatre & Education (AATE). The packet was part of AATE's "Theatre in Our Schools Month" promotion and included ideas for local advocacy and a small poster that graced the researcher's wall for the rest of the year. This mailing was the researcher's first exposure to the concept of national-level advocacy for theatre programs.

Twenty-two years later, the national organizations still are strongly involved with advocacy. Both AATE and the Educational Theatre Association (EdTA, the organization behind school Thespian troupes) have large sections of their websites dedicated to helping people become advocates for theatre (AATE, 2015; EdTA, 2015). EdTA's advocacy site in particular reads like a direct address to novice theatre teachers:

Advocacy may not be part of your job description or class schedule, but it is an important part of your work. Advocacy is more than simply the act of speaking or writing in support of something. As a theatre educator or student, each time you step onto a stage or into a classroom you are affirming the value and purpose of your subject area as part of a well-rounded school curriculum. Even if your theatre program is not at risk for cutbacks or elimination, a proactive, well-organized effort to build support for what you do can ensure that a strong and articulate community of advocates is ready to speak up on your behalf when a crisis arises. (EdTA, 2015)

EdTA and AATE are only two of numerous organizations at the national, state, and local level that advocate for theatre in education.

The researcher suggests that these organizations build on their advocacy efforts to better support new teachers in finding their voice. Much of the advocacy information available focuses on broad, bold steps like approaching school board members or influencing legislators. Advocacy guidance specifically aimed at new theatre educators would be especially welcome, particularly guidance that takes into account the limitations these teachers already face. This type of advocacy preparation could expand into full online tutorials focused on helping teachers navigate their first year of teaching. Practical advice for handling difficult situations could be

combined with curriculum ideas, checklists of important steps for the year, links to helpful resources, and connections to other teachers to provide a supportive online environment.

Theatre organizations do have some mentoring structures in place. Much of this is focused on online forums where members can ask and receive information on various theatre issues. The researcher has been part of several of these theatre forums and has had many opportunities to share guidance and curriculum with new teachers. He recommends that the theatre organizations continue this good work by formalizing mentor programs within their organizations. Experienced members could be recruited to mentor teachers in their local areas or to be available through the various forms of distance communication to connect with teachers across the country and the world.

The challenge in making this type of mentoring pool function would be in connecting to the teachers who need the mentors. While the organizations certainly put time, money, and effort into connecting with as many people as possible, a focused strategy would be necessary to truly connect mentors to new teaching protégés. The first step would be to get as many new theatre teachers connected with the organizations as possible. To encourage this process, theatre organizations could offer free or highly reduced membership fees to new educators, perhaps incentivizing membership recruitment to encourage existing members to seek out early career educators.

The researcher also recommends expanding the outreach to school administrators and their national, state, and local organizations. It stands to reason that principals and other school leaders would be eager to harness mentoring opportunities that would help their new theatre teachers succeed and become a valuable part of the school community. However, getting word to them about such programs would be an important first step.

The researcher also encourages organizations like EdTA that have large student memberships to develop online forums or local discussion groups where new teachers can talk to students in a safe, moderated environment. It can be hard for new teachers to address their own insecurities about teaching with their own students, but having a pool of theatre students available to answer questions about what they need, respect, and appreciate in a theatre teacher could be helpful indeed.

### **Recommendations for School Administrators**

- Learn more about the needs of theatre teachers.
- Actively seek mentors for new theatre teachers.

The researcher has long had appreciation for the complexities involved with being a school administrator. This appreciation grew exponentially when the researcher became the director of fine arts for his school and took on some administrative duties of his own while working first-hand with his school's leaders. He was amazed at the breadth of knowledge these administrators needed to accomplish their daily tasks. Yet even with the daunting amount of knowledge these dedicated educators possessed, the researcher was able to share additional information with them about the needs of the arts teachers at his school. He therefore recommends that school administrators seek out additional information on how to support theatre educators, whether through theatre organizations, colleagues with successful theatre programs at their schools, or other sources.

The researcher also recommends that administrators connect theatre teachers with a local mentor. If a mentor who is knowledgeable about theatre is not available locally, he suggests assigning another experienced teacher at the school to be a mentor. Even a mentor from another



subject area could help dispel some of the sense of isolation felt by new teachers, foster communications between them and the school community, help ease them through the socialization process, and prepare them for the various administrative practices of the school. A local mentor of this type could be augmented with a distance-based mentor to provide more theatre-specific guidance.

### **Recommendation for Current Theatre Teachers and Fine Arts Department Chairs**

- Look to become a mentor or support mentoring initiatives.

As discussed earlier in this study, the job of being a theatre educator requires a huge investment of time and energy. After a long day of teaching followed by many hours of rehearsals and preparing the technical elements of a theatre production, the last thing a theatre teacher may want to do is spend a few moments talking about teaching theatre. However, the researcher recommends that theatre teachers do just this very thing by volunteering as local mentors or participating in online mentoring initiatives. While new theatre teachers would gain immeasurable benefit by having guidance from master teachers in their field, the researcher suggests that there could be a benefit for the experienced teachers as well. The researcher was surprised as he conducted the interviews for this study to discover how much he valued the opportunity to talk with the study participants about the daily tasks of teaching theatre. The isolation experienced by theatre teachers is not exclusive to those first entering the classroom.

The researcher makes a similar recommendation to fine arts department leaders. Take the opportunity to guide and support new teachers in your department even if your own training is not in theatre. Theatre utilizes every other arts modality in some way, so teachers in all arts areas

have direct knowledge that would specifically assist new theatre teachers as well as the general knowledge of the school and its established norms.

### **Recommendations for New Theatre Teachers**

- Look for the resources that are available and make use of them.
- Recognize your own students as valuable resources.

As the study participants have repeatedly expressed, the transition to the theatre classroom can be a difficult, lonely experience. The researcher recommends to new theatre teachers to find the resources that are available to them. Proactive steps such as joining a national theatre organization, attending a state theatre conference, or identifying supportive online communities can help connect new educators with a wider theatre community. The researcher reminds new teachers that despite all evidence to the contrary, they are not alone.

New theatre teachers can quickly realize that they are not alone in their transition journey just by looking around their classrooms. The researcher encourages theatre teachers to consider their students a valuable resource for adapting to the school environment. Establishing trust and a sense of rapport between teacher and student can take a great deal of focus and effort. However, after developing this connection with a teacher, students can be an endless source of support and advocacy for a school theatre program. They are, after all, the primary stakeholder of theatre education.

## **Chapter 7: Analysis of the Effectiveness of the Metaphor-Scenario Research Method**

Part of the original focus of this study was to determine the effectiveness of MetaScen for use in formal research. This led to the study being designed to gather data both on the participants' transitions into the K-12 theatre classroom and their experiences in using the MetaScen process. This chapter explores the application of MetaScen to this study tracing the progress of the participants through learning about the method, enacting each stage of the method, then evaluating the entire process. The researcher concludes the chapter with his own evaluation of the method in reference to this study.

### **Learning the Method**

This study presented new challenges in communicating the process of MetaScen to the study participants. During the initial piloting of MetaScen the study participants all lived in the same geographic area as the researcher. While the pilot study used similar written instruction to those distributed as part of this process, each of the pilot participants had the opportunity to meet with the researcher face-to-face in order to learn about the method. Also, as previous acquaintances of the researcher, the pilot teachers had a level of comfort in asking him any questions. For this study the participants (with the exception of Bard who was local to the researcher) had to learn the method at a distance from a researcher they either did not know well or did not know at all.

In general, the participants had a positive experience with learning MetaScen from the written instructions. Josephine found "how explicit but gentle the directions were also to be very helpful" while Lulu thought the instructions were "clear without being too wordy...if you give too many directions then it limits the creative process." Marie also felt that the written

instructions explained the method sufficiently to her but expressed concern that for other teachers who did not have her background in research

...it's probably going to be a little bit harder. They're gonna have to have some one-on-one question and answer time probably just 'cause they don't have that experience in the past, you know, things to compare it to or to be like, 'oh, yeah, this is like this' or you know, anything like that. I mean, you know, again I'm an old lady that's been doing this a long time so... (laughs) But I think for newer teachers it's going to be, it's going to take possibly a little bit of communication, verbal communication versus just the written.

Bard shared this opinion about the importance of verbal communication having struggled himself with the complexity of the written instructions:

So that may have been a bit too much instruction or too many things to keep in mind, because it was... It was very structured. And I wanted to, you know, if I'm going to do this I want to do it well and I want it to be worthwhile. So I worried a little too much about structure. And probably would have at some point called you and said, "I'm just not gonna be able to do this." But you were, like you say, you were able to visit and take me by the hand. We had a couple of phone calls.

Without the researcher's knowledge, Bard also turned to one of the pilot study participants for additional advice about handling the structure of the process. The reassurances he received through verbal communication with her and the researcher eased his apprehensions about not being able to complete the study properly. Bard suggested that verbal communication like this be a more formalized part of the process: "... you need to try to provide that opportunity somehow. Have you set aside a time where we'll talk specifically at this point about what your fears are, because you explained it."

One of the greatest challenges to the researcher was deciding whether or not to include a written example of the method in practice. While the example could bring clarity to participants about how the process worked there was the attendant risk that the participants could be unduly influenced by the example. The goal was to present the idea of someone else going through the study that was clearly an example and not an exemplar. For the pilot study, the researcher went through the process himself and described the steps he took to create an artistic inquiry performance. He used his own experiences in the hope of developing a rapport with the participants through a sharing of his experiences that would hopefully prepare them for the reciprocal sharing of their own experiences. However, in discussions with his committee while preparing the instructions for this study, it was decided that while there might be merit in sharing a personal experience with the participants it added too much weight to the example, making it something that should be imitated instead of simply a guide to the process. The researcher kept the same example for this study but replaced all references to himself with a pseudonym and mentioned specifically that the example was not intended to be imitated by the participants.

As expected, there were mixed reactions to the inclusion of the example. The majority of the participants found the example to be helpful and in some cases instrumental in learning the MetaScen process:

Well, I think the example was good. The example made me sad, so I think that part of that was my experience was very different and then it made me realize, okay, I'm not just going to follow that. ... It's better than being everything was all happy and great. You know, they run off into the field together, so that type of thing. Then it makes you realize, it's easier to say when everything is great and that's not your experience you say,

“Oh, there’s something wrong with me.” But when, you know, it feels a little different the other way around. I thought the example worked well. (Lulu)

I think the example is necessary. It really kind of gave me a direction. It showed me...hey yeah, I got the instructions; yeah, I can read them, and I kind of know. I kind of get the idea, but when you have the example and you see what somebody else has done it gets your mind going. Oh, okay, and now I’ve got this. You know, I got the track now. I don’t have to do that, but I’ve got a direction I can go with it now. And if you watch my video, you can see I didn’t do the same thing he did. ... But it did give me kind of an arrow pointing in the general direction at least. (Jack)

No, I think you’re gonna have to have those examples, you know, in regards to that sort of stuff. I don’t think they’re gonna be able to come up with their own examples. In that I may be, I don’t mean to be speaking down, but I just think it’s gonna be very difficult for them to come up [with] those types of things. (Marie)

I also really appreciated that you were, you highlighted how everything was optional in terms of process and gave examples. The examples were really helpful. (Josephine)

While the example assisted many of the participants, it was a stumbling block for Erin:

I really struggled at first because I wasn’t sure if I could, like, do the way you gave as an example. Because you had an example there without, like...almost like that example. I was fixating on it and wanted to use that example. You know what I mean? The example – I am always this way with my kids as an English teacher – I’ll put up an example and

I'll say, "Now don't copy my example!" And of course everyone copies my example, right? Probably because that example was what I was thinking before I had even read it. You know? And then I was like, dammit! Then I couldn't think of something else.

A possible answer to the challenge of including examples was suggested by Josephine. She discussed the possibility of setting up the instructions in a blog format where participants could choose to see multiple examples if they felt they needed them. This would also allow the inclusion of examples that gave contrasting views of the study's topic so as to lessen the possibility of unduly influencing participants. The blog would also allow the instructions to possibly not be as overwhelming since participants could choose to read as much or as little as they felt they needed.

### Reflection

Table 7.1: Participants' Use of MetaScen Step 1: Reflection

<b>REFLECTION USAGE</b>	<b>Used Reflection</b>	<b>Did not use Reflection</b>	<b>Used Reflection in an altered manner</b>
<b>Number of Participants</b>	7	0	0

None of the seven participants reported difficulty in completing the reflection step.

Several, like Lulu, found that

It was interesting because as I reflected on it things just kept popping up, and it was a continual process that would things would pop up. You know, at different points, as I let things roll around in my head.

While the instructions did not require that the participants write down their reflections, four participants mentioned that writing played an important part in their reflection process. Three of those participants offered their reflection notes to the researcher. These written accounts proved to be very valuable artifacts for learning more about the participants' experiences and their approaches to using the method.

One of the researcher's major concerns entering the study was that the reflection process might be painful for those teachers who had a difficult transition to the classroom. One participant, Erin, did reflect on difficult experiences, but found the process cathartic:

And then I just started writing down everything that I remembered. And then I realized it was like all, you know, like me and them, me and them ... And so it was actually kind of cathartic, you know, to sit here and do this. Like healing. You know, because I could sit here and reflect on it without crying and getting all upset and thinking my life was over. So that part was good.

Bard also reflected on many uncomfortable memories during this stage of the process but likewise did not experience any difficulty with thinking about those times:

And emotionally? I'm an emotional person. And I lived these things a lot. So it didn't harm my psyche or bring up any bad times, because I survived all those times. And those times all have pretty good outcomes as far as the students.

No negative experiences were mentioned by any of the other participants either concerning their work with the reflection step.



## Theming

Table 7.2: Participants' Use of MetaScen Step 2: Theming

<b>THEMING USAGE</b>	<b>Used Theming</b>	<b>Did not use Theming</b>	<b>Used Theming in an altered manner</b>
<b>Number of Participants</b>	3	2	2

The theming step was originally added to the process by the researcher to provide a transition between reflection and metaphor. Based on the pilot study the researcher suspected that this step might be skipped by some participants, especially those who regularly use metaphors or those who more organically organize their thoughts. The participants who did utilize the theming step used it in different ways. Bard focused on theming his reflections into the different emotional states they triggered for him:

So I was able to put a lot of work into it, but I remember the elation, the enthusiasm turning into frustration, and sometimes anger, and sometimes wanting to shake my fist, and to this rewarding feeling that this is why I did that. So I took those three feelings and just kinda immersed myself in those and remembered the different events that made me feel those things.

Marie's themes focused on the relationship between different large concepts: knowledge and skill, drive and passion, and success and development. Josephine, on the other hand, combined these two approaches by selecting themes that linked her emotions to larger concepts like insufficient training in theatre pedagogy.

The participants who did not use the theming step generally skipped it because they were already formulating a metaphor or scenario and did not feel they needed additional organization.

As Lulu explained:

I did not do a whole lot with that step. I kind of...it kind of all fell together, you know, as far as my thoughts. So, I did not...I'm not a big organized person, very organized person. (laughs) I did not do it, did not do that.

Two participants, Erin and Jack, felt that they skipped the theming step. Jack explained why this occurred for him:

Well, there wasn't really a...my organizational thought processes are different than most people. I'm just kind of a 'throw against the wall and see what sticks' kind of guy. And I just kind of tried to figure out something I could, a way I could represent these thoughts, a way I could represent all this and get it together and show what I wanted...

While Erin and Jack did bypass theming formally, both accomplished the same steps of organization during the writing process of their scenario. For Erin the themes arose as she rearranged her written reflections to make a poem:

RESEARCHER: Did it come just from your, kind of, dump writing that you were just getting everything there on paper and it kind of just naturally became a poem? Is that...

ERIN: Yes, that's exactly what happened. I just started...yeah, and then I realized it just became that and then I started to chunk things together, move things around so they kind of went together in themes and made sense and stuff. Just like random how it started.

For Jack too themes were at the heart of his artistic inquiry performance despite avoiding the theming step of the process:

But I wanted that theme of struggling with something and trying to make it through something and then I just wanted that feeling of elation, but then overall I wanted that idea of everything is going to be okay, but there's going to be struggles along the way.

You know, it's going to be good, everything's going to turn out right, but it's going to be hard.

### Metaphor

Table 7.3: Participants' Use of MetaScen Step 3: Metaphor

<b>METAPHOR USAGE</b>	<b>Used Metaphor</b>	<b>Did not use Metaphor</b>	<b>Used Metaphor in an altered manner</b>
<b>Number of Participants</b>	5	2	0

An interesting dichotomy arose between the participants who used the metaphor and those who did not. The five that chose a metaphor found vastly different ways to express their experiences with a welcome mat, building with Legos, a man at work, a dam, and catsitting/housesitting all being chosen as representative metaphors. Several of these choices were influenced by very pragmatic means: the fact that the metaphor would later have to be performed somehow. In fact, the majority of the participants who used metaphor said they changed their metaphor to make it more performance-friendly:

Well, I selected the metaphor of building with Legos. I originally was thinking about a gardener and that. But then I thought it worked because you come in, and you want to foster it, and it takes time and everything, but I am not a gardener and so when it came time to actually put things together I had this idea and I realized I don't have the flowers, I don't have anything. And I don't really, that's not something I feel akin to, you know. But I thought that was a good metaphor. And so then I thought of the Legos because my children, my son and my daughter both play with Legos a lot. (Lulu)

And my original idea was to have me working on a car and then everybody keeps bringing me the wrong pieces and that was my original idea and my original vision of it. But I'm like, I can't really tear apart my car to do this. So I ended up going a different direction with it. (Jack)

I also thought of, you know, talking about enacting like a dating situation and maybe going through the popular first-date montage thing or second date montage thing. And then I also for a while played with the idea of making the bed, but every time you make it like something, something goes wrong. You know, so I actually like was playing with that and kept remaking my bed and like having an extra pillow case or having no pillows or things like that. And I found that for the amount of time I had to work on it, I would actually have to get props and things to make the bed-making thing work better, you know, props outside of my current supply of linens. (Josephine)

Even though these participants changed their initial metaphor for practical reasons, all were able to tie their new metaphor to their experiences clearly.

Erin and Bard, on the other hand, did not use the metaphor step at all. Perhaps not coincidentally, both had difficult transition stories to tell and chose to tell them in a more literal manner. This was particularly interesting as the researcher believed that the metaphor could be a useful tool for participants with difficult experiences as it could provide something of an emotional buffer. Neither Erin nor Bard wanted that buffer. Quite to the contrary, as mentioned during the discussion on reflection, they both found a level of catharsis in the literal depiction of their experiences. The metaphor, as Erin expressed it, was just something that "hindered" the telling of her story.

## Scenario

Table 7.4: Participants' Use of MetaScen Step 4: Scenario

SCENARIO USAGE	Used Scenario	Did not use Scenario	Used Scenario in an altered manner
Number of Participants	4	1	2

The study instructions for the this step encouraged the participants to use a scenario – an outline or other unscripted form of preparation – for their performance while assuring them that they could use a script if they felt that was necessary. Four participants chose to work from the scenario format. One participant did not complete the scenario or performance steps, but suggested that her inquiry would also have been largely improvised therefore based on a scenario. The remaining two participants chose a more scripted method with each writing a poem.

Much like the metaphor step, many of the participants found their choices heavily influenced by practical concerns. Bard, for example, chose to do his piece as an unscripted monologue, “Because I could control it. Because I didn’t have to do a lot of memorization. Because I thought I can freestyle easier.” Jack also felt that his scenario was influenced partly by reducing his workload on the project:

The honest reason I chose pantomime in particular is ‘cause I didn’t have to write a script. That’s laziness on my own behalf, but I really think ... That’s the main reason, but I mean I actually did some artistic thought to this I guess you could call it, and my thought on that was, I just think it’s going to be more effective with no voice. I figured it

would have more of an emotional impact without me actually having any words that I said in the script.

Josephine had a similar reaction to Jack, finding that the choices she made to simplify her scenario actually improved her work:

So I definitely like went, okay, what do I have here, and sort of went in that direction. ...

Well, and it's actually one of those situations where the limitations actually inspired a more specific creative vision.

This type of pragmatic change to the scenario was unsurprising to the researcher. Theatre educators are conditioned to adjust constantly to overcome obstacles to prepare their productions for performance.

It is possible that Erin and Brook, the two participants who wrote poems instead of using a scenario, were completing this step through equally conditioned habits. Both participants were naturally drawn to poetry through comfort with that modality. For Erin poetry was a natural choice as she currently teaches English and regularly works in that form. Brook's use of poetry was tied to the deeply personal challenge of talking about herself:

I am not interested in writing an autobiography or revealing my life onstage. I would feel even more strange if someone else were to portray my experience. The only time I feel comfortable revealing myself is through poetry and spoken word – those are mediums that work well for me. They are generally regarded as acceptable forms of personal expression.

In short, whether they chose to use a scenario or not, all participants seemed to be drawn to a method that allowed them to work in the most comfortable manner possible. This manifested

itself in the participants choosing familiar forms of expression and adjusting scenario ideas to fit practical and personal needs.

### Performance

Table 7.5: Participants' Use of MetaScen Step 5: Performance

<b>PERFORMANCE USAGE</b>	<b>Used Performance</b>	<b>Did not use Performance</b>	<b>Used Performance in an altered manner</b>
<b>Number of Participants</b>	5	2	0

The performance step of the study provided several challenges to the participants. Perhaps the most surprising of these challenges was the discomfort many of the participants felt in actually performing and recording their work. Prior to the study the researcher believed that the performance element would allow a natural, comfortable form of expression for the participants. While this was the case for Bard, Jack, and Josephine the other participants who completed this section dealt with issues of self-confidence and performance anxiety:

Um, well, I would say like I had a bit of self-esteem issues, you know, like, is this performance going to be better compared to all of the other people he gets, you know, kind of stuff. Oh no, I've been out of it so long is it going to look terrible? You know, that kind of stuff. So, that was probably the hardest thing, getting over that. (Erin)

So, in short, I have extreme anxiety playing myself. I don't think my story is interesting, relevant, or necessary. I am not a boastful or showy person by nature, though I understand its place in the world. (Brook)

...I realize the thought of being in front of the camera is not something I do any more, you know, I don't perform. And so the idea of actually being seen on camera was more of a challenge to me than I had thought it would be. So then we just kind of narrowed the shot and filmed the hands as a way of getting around that. (Lulu)

Lulu was not the only participant to struggle with having to film the inquiry. From dealing with the personal challenge of being filmed to figuring out the technical challenges of recording and sharing a video, the filming portion of this step proved to be quite a hurdle for the majority of the participants:

We started on my iPad...We thought that would be really easy just 'cause you can look at it, set it up. Well, I go to send it off and it was upside-down. Whatever. So then, like crap! So then we had to go get a camera. So we filmed the whole thing on the camera and when we were done, [he] dropped it and it died. Then we had to go get the other camera and that one the batteries are dead. So we had to change the batteries. And then we finally got that one going and it worked. And then there was the whole thing of getting it off the camera onto a video I could send. (Erin)

There was also like a technical challenge of filming on my iPhone, and my iPhone...really, I didn't have a tripod so it was at butt-level a lot, and I kind of wished, I kept trying to change the angle so that, you know, my butt wasn't the star of the show. ... So I experimented with that, so some of it was creative but some of it was just technical and trying to like get the box of crackers to hold up the iPhone at the right angle kind of thing. (Josephine)



I think I am having a difficult time filming because I don't like how it looks in my head on camera. I don't have access to a performance space, so I feel awkward filming. I was originally going to film in my classroom or on our school's stage, but that just didn't feel right. ... I have carried my video camera around for weeks now, looking for a place to film. I give up. (Brook)

While Brook ultimately chose not to film her poem because of the difficulties she encountered, the other participants were able to overcome the challenges and record their performances. However, the problems caused by the need to record the performances may be even greater than suggested by these responses. One participant, Bard, had his performance recorded by the researcher while another, Marie, did not use the performance step due to time commitments. This leaves Jack, a teacher with previous film production experience, as the only participant who handled the filming portion of the project on his own with ease.

### **Participant Evaluations of MetaScen and Recommendations**

The researcher ended each of the interviews with the study participants by asking them to evaluate their overall experiences with the MetaScen process and make recommendations for the future. The majority of the participants were very positive about the experience. For several of the teachers the process, while requiring a great deal of effort, was fulfilling because of its direct link to creativity and performance:

You know, I enjoyed it so much that I...I mean it was definitely work, both creatively and in terms of digging up memory. (Josephine)

I took a long time on this, and I put quite a bit of thought into it trying to figure out what would work and what would be the best way to do it, and how can I do this. And I ended up changing my idea quite a few times. ... Honestly, I really enjoyed the process. I liked doing this and putting this together. (Jack)

We as theatre professionals work with the idea of created project ... and worked at using the different forms and so it's a great, I think it's a great method for something like this, because it's a neat challenge. Although, there was a point where I thought, "Okay, if you just would have said [write] an essay, that would have been really much easier." (Both laugh.) But that doesn't mean it's better, but it's good to take that next step out of the box. ... It made what I was thinking more physical ... rather than just the idea in contrast to just writing a paper or responding to questionnaire or something like that. (Lulu)

Many participants also found that the research process led them to make discoveries about their past experiences and how they currently view their careers:

And, you know, I felt like very at the time weak, like I couldn't do anything about it.

And now, looking back at some of those things, I was pretty strong. I stood up to them a lot. You know, a lot more than I thought I did thinking back, you know? (Erin)

It reinforced me, it was more positive than negative. Because sometimes I would think, "Oh, [Bard], if you knew then what you know now, and, you know, you weren't as knowledgeable." I was more of an instinctual teacher. And that you...you know, since then I have directed here and on a higher level and learned some things. I discovered that it was okay what I was doing. I was adapting to my environment, you know. (Bard)

But I think for theatre and dance professionals it's a little different world, but it's good to seek out those opportunities and to be reminded of what that's like because we're asking our kids to do that, you know, all the time, and to express their personal feelings through their theatre work. So that was a really good reminder through this process. (Lulu)

It made me really appreciate the preparation I had before I took that first position, and all the opportunities I had had. (Lulu)

It helped me remember...so, I'm in a teacher education program right now that's not specific to the arts although that's what my specialization is, and as I see students going into – we call it their internship year, it's when they go into student teaching or when students from my classes do a drop-in and teach an activity or a lesson plan that they developed in my class, I have a little bit more empathy for their situation, and how they're feeling, and about themselves, and about the work they tried, and how they feel before they go in. And, you know, trying to remember the...having this exercise to sort of bring up those memories and realize, 'okay, I've come a long way.' (Josephine)

Although the participants were actively encouraged by the researcher to offer criticism about the research process, very few critical comments were offered during the interviews. It is unclear if this is an accurate reflection of the participants' feelings about the process or if they did not feel comfortable in providing the criticism directly to the researcher. Those participants who offered suggestions for improvement discussed the aforementioned challenges with

recording the final performance and the amount of time needed to complete the study. Some participants felt that having the researcher physically present as a facilitator would have eased the process, particularly when they were unclear about specifics of the study. Increased communication from the researcher was suggested as a way to overcome this problem if geographic proximity was not possible. Suggestions for improvements in this area ranged from pre-arranging regular phone conversations to support the participants' efforts to placing more information in an online format that they could access without having to contact the researcher.

### **Researcher Evaluation**

The researcher discovered that many of his original expectations concerning the practical application of MetaScen to a research study were supported by these findings. In the pilot study (Strickland, 2012), the researcher listed participant recruitment as a particular area of difficulty:

**Recruitment of participants is a major issue.** The suggestions by the participants are a good starting place, but the researcher will need to explore numerous possibilities for expanding the sample size. The difficulties in obtaining three participants for this study make finding a larger sample rather daunting. (p. 33)

Recruitment was indeed a daunting process with the sampling process taking nearly two years to complete. Even when participants did agree to be part of the project, a large number were not able to complete the process. While attrition of participants is certainly a part of any human participant research, the researcher had to restart the recruitment process several times often with only two or three participants from a group of 10-15 completing the study. The factors most often stated by the teachers dropping from the study paralleled challenges mentioned by the participants who completed the study: the large amount of time required to complete the project

and the difficult requirement of creating and recording a performance. Many of the people who dropped from the study expressed excitement about the method and asked to be informed of the results of the study, yet were unable or unwilling to complete the required process.

The challenges of recording the process were a concern as well. In early stages of preparing for the study the researcher made plans to have small digital video recorders available to mail to participants to aid them in recording their performances. However, what emerged from this study was that the challenge was largely not in having the correct equipment, especially with the proliferation of mobile phones and tablets with video capabilities. Instead, the participants found the actual act of filming and sharing the performance pieces was difficult. This was partially attributed to technical issues as well as personal discomfort with performing in front of a camera.

A new difficulty in implementing MetaScen emerged from this study through the participants who felt uncomfortable with actually performing their pieces. The experience of Brook was especially impactful to the researcher. She was able to develop an extremely clear and flexible metaphor and develop that into a poem that presented the metaphor in a strong, focused form. Yet the emphasis on performance, included in this study to connect these theatre practitioners more comfortably with the method, led Brook to weeks of frustration with herself and with the process. Other participants that were ultimately able to perform their experiences also dealt with similar feelings of unease. In some cases this was due to the fact that as theatre instructors their schedules had become so busy that they rarely had the chance to perform any more. Their acting skills were rusty and the thought of trying to develop a performance that would then be watched by another theatre colleague was off-putting at best and terrifying at worst.

Considering the experiences of these participants, it is possible that the performance element of the MetaScen technique could work in some situations to actually constrain expression. The pragmatic requirements of performance might lead participants to present a less than ideal representation of their metaphor than what they envisioned. Also, the requirement of creating a performance piece could possibly generate a selection bias in recruitment: people willing to perform might see the issues differently from those unwilling to perform, yet only the performers could successfully complete the process and be included in a study's data.

These challenges with performing the data suggest that other means should be available for participants to develop and present an artistic inquiry that represents their experiences without performance. Performance could certainly still be a possible modality, but areas such as poetry and visual art could also be incorporated. The researcher himself regularly uses visual art in his artistic inquiry work. While he focused this study on performance-based techniques to both connect to his participants' skills and provide consistent data, future work with the method might be better served with a wider selection of artistic modalities.

While several of the researcher's concerns with MetaScen were confirmed by this study, many of the positive aspects of the method were also reinforced. MetaScen did allow for deep reflection by the participants while the creative elements of the process both captured their attention and helped them stay connected with the study. The artistic inquiries provided new ways to look at the participants' shared experiences, while the creation of the poems and performance pieces required the participants to be immersed in their reflections in a way that a questionnaire or interview might not have accomplished. Metaphor was a useful tool for representing, analyzing, and sharing experiences. The shared act of creation inherent in the project also cemented the status of the study participants as co-researchers. And while perhaps

seeming trivial, the fact that several participants felt a true sense of discovery and enjoyment from working on the process also suggests future possibilities for MetaScen.

### **Recommendations for MetaScen**

The researcher was initially reluctant to formalize the artistic inquiry process he was using for his own reflective practice. However, after the years spent adapting the process into the MetaScen method and utilizing it with participants in this study, he is encouraged by the possibilities it might provide for furthering the field of arts-based research. To this end, the researcher makes the following recommendations for the Metaphor-Scenario method:

- Using the method in additional research studies.
- Expansion of the method to facilitate the use of all arts modalities.
- Experimentation with using the method in situations that require less time requirement from participants.
- Making the method available for use by other researchers in the field to further vet and improve the process.

Like all new methodologies, MetaScen would greatly benefit from increased use. The process is still quite raw and very much in need of further refinements that only continued application to research studies can provide. However, before the method can be realistically utilized more it will need to be improved in several areas. The two most prevalent drawbacks to the method that were revealed by this study were the large time commitment required by participants and the difficulty many participants had in creating a performance-based artistic inquiry.

To address these concerns, the researcher first recommends the expansion of the method to facilitate the use of all arts modalities. Several participants dropped from this study due to the challenges posed by creating and executing a performance piece while one participant completed the process by substituting a written poem for her performance. The researcher himself regularly uses non-performance arts modalities as part of his own reflective practice applications of MetaScen and acknowledges their effectiveness in his work. Adapting the formal method of MetaScen to adopt these other modalities would not seem to be difficult. The initial three steps of Reflection, Theming, and Metaphor could remain as previously established. Scenario, on the other hand, is very much a performance-based term. Perhaps nomenclature such as Conceptualization could be used for this step to capture the idea of preparing to create art, while the Performance step could be replaced with a more generic term such as Art Piece or Art Expression. Completing the expansion of Metaphor-Scenario would require changing the name of the methodology to better reflect the broadened Conceptualization step. The researcher suggests Artaphor or other nomenclature that emphasizes the important link between the metaphor and the final artistic expression.

While having a non-performance option in the method could help with both participant recruitment and time commitment, the researcher also recommends experimentation with MetaScen in conferences or other time-bounded settings. While participants may not be able to gain the benefit of long periods of time for reflection and preparation of the artistic expression, a short form of MetaScen could allow for expanded application of the method while reducing some of the challenges faced by the researcher.

The final recommendation of the researcher for MetaScen is that it be disseminated to the research community. While the researcher enjoys using MetaScen and believes it has a place in



qualitative research methodology, it will only truly be vetted and improved through the collaboration and collective experimentation of the researcher's colleagues in arts based research.

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**Appendices****Appendix A – IRB Approval Letter**

29 Everett Street  
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**Institutional Review Board**

September 19, 2012

To: **Andrew Strickland**

From: Robyn Cruz and Terrence Keeney, Co-chairs, Lesley IRB

RE: Application for Expedition of Review: *A Dramatic Transition: Exploring the Early Career Teaching Experiences of Theatre Educators through Artistic Inquiry*

**IRB Number: 12-002**

This memo is written on behalf of the Lesley University IRB to inform you that your application for approval by the IRB through expedited review has been granted. Your project poses no more than minimal risk to participants.

If at any point you decide to amend your project, e.g., modification in design or in the selection of subjects, you will need to file an amendment with the IRB and suspend further data collection until approval is renewed.

If you experience any unexpected “adverse events” during your project you must inform the IRB as soon as possible, and suspend the project until the matter is resolved.

An expedited review procedure consists of a review of research involving human subjects by an IRB co-chairperson and by one or more experienced reviewers designated by the chairperson from among members of the IRB in accordance with the requirements set forth in 45 CFR 46.110.

Source: 63 FR 60364-60367, November 9, 1998.

**Date of IRB Approval: September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

## Appendix B – Study Recruitment Webpage

Artistic Inquiry - Current Projects

Page 1 of 1



### Theatre Educator Research Study

Thank you very much for taking a moment to show interest in this doctoral research study. Please read the information below which will give you a brief overview of the research process. If you are interested in participating, please follow the [survey link](#) at the bottom of the page. The survey will simply gather your name, e-mail address, and some basic demographic information.

If you would like any additional information, please feel free to e-mail the researcher, R. Andrew Strickland, at [rstrickl@lesley.edu](mailto:rstrickl@lesley.edu)

### RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION

The study is open to theatre teachers in any grades from Kindergarten through 12th. Participants may be retired or no longer actively teaching at this time.

Participants will be asked to share their early-career teaching experiences by using MetaScen, a new research method. This method asks for participants to reflect on their experiences and follow a process that leads to creating and presenting a short performance piece. The performance will be filmed, and the study will culminate with a 30-60 minute interview with the researcher.

No travel is required of participants. The researcher will either travel to you or arrange for the study to be completed over the internet or via telephone.

It is hoped that the data gathered through this study will lead to assisting new theatre teachers make the transition to the classroom.

The study will begin in mid-September. Participants will complete the process at their own pace. Final interviews will be completed no later than December 2012.

Your help is needed! Please consider sharing your experiences and artistic abilities to help future teachers succeed. Follow the link below to communicate your interest in the study.

[Click here to complete the short interest survey.](#)

**Appendix C – Participant Interest Survey**

**Theatre Teacher Research Study - Interest Survey**

Thank you very much for your interest in the upcoming theatre teacher research study. This short survey will be used only to gather your contact information and a few demographic statistics. The confidentiality of all participants will be strongly protected.

**1. What is your name? (First and last)**

**2. What is your e-mail address? (This information will be used only for the researcher to contact you. Your address will not be shared with anyone.)**

**3. In what state or U.S. territory do you live?**

Other (please specify)

**4. In what grade levels have you taught or currently teach theatre/drama? (Choose all that apply.)**

Kindergarten through Fifth Grades

Sixth through Eighth Grades

Ninth through Twelfth Grades

**5. How many years have you taught theatre/drama?**

Years:

**6. Did you take education courses in college?**

Yes

No

Thank you very much for your responses. The researcher will contact you through e-mail in the next few weeks. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact the researcher at [rstrickl@lesley.edu](mailto:rstrickl@lesley.edu).

## Appendix D – MetaScen Instructions and Examples

### **Exploring Early Theatre Teaching Experiences through Artistic Inquiry** **Researcher: R. Andrew Strickland, Lesley University**

Thank you for agreeing to be part of this research study. The purpose of the project is to explore the early teaching experiences of theatre educators. Instead of answering a survey or writing your experiences, you will use theatre performance skills to share your experiences with the researcher.

The process utilizes 5 steps:

#### **Step 1: Reflection**

Think deeply about your early experiences as an educator. Following are a series of questions to help guide your reflection. Do not feel the need to address every question and do not feel limited to only reflecting within these prompts. You do not need to write down any answers, however feel free to take notes or do whatever helps you to think more deeply and clearly.

Reflection Prompts:

- How did you adjust to the role?
- Did you feel prepared for the classroom?
- What knowledge gained in your arts training served you well in the classroom?
- Did you notice areas where you had gaps in your knowledge?
- Did situations arise that were difficult or different than you expected?
- How did you relate with other teachers and administrators?
- How did you relate with the students?
- What were your dominant feelings during this time?
- What stands out from your first year of teaching?

#### **Step 2: Themes**

After reflecting on your early teaching experiences, try to organize your thoughts into dominant themes. How do your experiences relate with each other? What do they say about each other? Again, do not feel compelled to write any of this down unless it helps you organize your thinking.



*EXAMPLE: To help with this process, I have included examples taken from a previous study. These examples are not meant to influence your own choices, only to show how experiences can be applied to the research method.*

*Ian's (a pseudonym) adjustment to becoming a theatre educator was very difficult. Much of his reflection focused on how unsupported he felt by his administrators and fellow teachers, the challenges he faced communicating with some of his students, the disdain for arts at the school, and his own personal feelings of worthlessness and failure. After considering his reflection, Ian decided on themes of isolation, confusion, and impaired communication.*

### **Step 3: Metaphor**

Selecting a metaphor is the heart of this research process. Consider your experiences and the themes you identified from the earlier steps. Try to select a metaphor that could strongly communicate your experiences to another person, especially someone who may come from a different background.

*EXAMPLE: Ian wanted to choose a metaphor to express his themes of isolation, confusion, and impaired communication to others. As he thought about the theme of isolation, he started to think about a prisoner locked in a jail cell, unable to talk to those around him and unable to get free to do the things he wants to do. After careful consideration, Ian decided to use the jailed prisoner as the metaphor for his presentation.*

### **Step 4: Scenario**

If you have been trained in *commedia dell'arte* or other improvisation-based performance techniques, the concept of scenario will be quite familiar to you. In simple terms, a scenario is an outline of a performance. At this stage in the research process, you should turn your attention to how you could present your metaphor as a performance. How could you, alone or with other performers, perform the metaphor in such a way that an audience can share in your experiences? Any style of performance is open to you: monologue or dialogue, pantomime, dance, song, puppetry... whatever best conveys your metaphor in a style that is effective and comfortable for you. For the purpose of this project, I encourage you to create a scenario instead of a word-for-word script. The more generalized scenario allows your instincts and subconscious to inform the performance. That being said, if for your work you need to work off of a script you are welcome to do so.

*EXAMPLE: For his scenario Ian decided to portray a workman reporting for his first day of work. He happily comes into work and begins shoveling, his job. After a few attempts a loud,*

*disembodied voice tells him, “NO!” He tries to shovel in different directions, using different methods. Each time the huge “NO!” echoes down at him. Finally, his shovel is taken from him and he is thrown into a cell. He cannot figure out what he is doing there and tries to get free. He reaches through the bars, but cannot reach the shovel. He tries to communicate with people outside of the cell, but fails. He finally falls asleep. He awakens to find the cell gone. He grabs the shovel and happily goes to work, literally dancing his joy. He returns to the same spot to fall asleep, exhausted by his many successes. He wakes up only to find that it was a dream – he’s still trapped in the cell. He marks off the days on the wall of his cell until he is freed. He leaves, wounded and scared, but seems to develop hope as he picks up his shovel and leaves the stage.*

### **Step 5: Performance**

After you have a scenario in place, rehearse and perform the piece. You may have others perform with you, if you choose. You are welcome to perform in front of an audience or not – whatever makes you the most comfortable. Remember that for the purposes of this research study that the performance will need to be video recorded. I will be happy to do this for you, or you may utilize your own equipment. I will not show the recording to anyone without your written permission (and that of anyone else appearing in the performance.) The specifics of the performance are up to you. This could be performed alone, in street clothes in a classroom or wearing a costume with theatrical lighting on stage. It does not have to be a huge production, just a communication of your experiences.

*EXAMPLE: Ian decided to perform his piece on the empty stage of a theatre with some simple lighting. He wore a coverall as a costume and carried an actual shovel. Ian performed the piece alone, using recordings for the “NO!” and music for the dream sequence. He spoke during the performance except for the dream which was only danced.*

### **Conclusion: Interview**

After you have completed the performance step I will interview you about the research process as well as your early teaching experiences. This interview will take 30-60 minutes and can be done in person or over the phone. I will transcribe the interview and send a copy to you for corrections and additions.

### Appendix E – Interview Protocol

Note: Structural questions are grouped in related clusters with possible clarifiers and follow-up questions. It is not expected that all questions in each cluster will be utilized.

1. During the reflection stage of the research process, what were your dominant memories of your early teaching experiences?
  - a. Which events, emotions, or other elements presented themselves to you strongly?
  - b. How do you feel these events shaped you as an educator?
2. What themes did you use to categorize the memories explored in the reflection process?
  - a. How did you choose these themes?
  - b. Did the themes largely include your experiences or were there notable outliers?
3. What metaphor did you select for the study?
  - a. How did this metaphor suggest itself?
  - b. What other metaphors did you consider?
  - c. Was it difficult to conceptualize your reflection through a metaphor?
4. How did you create your scenario?
  - a. Have you worked from a scenario before?
  - b. What other ideas did you consider?
  - c. How did your metaphor suggest the scenario?
  - d. Did you have trouble transitioning from metaphor to scenario?
  - e. How did you notate your scenario?
5. What was your process in performing the scenario?
  - a. Did you work with others?
  - b. Were your students a part of your work?
  - c. What were the challenges of performance?
  - d. How did you choose your given modality? Why pantomime, monologue, song, or other choice?
6. What did you discover about your early experiences through the research process?
7. What do you feel is important about your experiences that would help new educators?
8. What parts of the research process were difficult for you?
9. How would you recommend explaining the research process to other participants?
  - a. Does the written instruction sheet suffice?
  - b. Did the researcher's examples in the written explanation help your understanding of the process? Did they unduly influence how you viewed your memories or approached the process?
  - c. Would a film work better?
  - d. Should participants take part in a workshop or personal conversation with the researcher?
10. What other recommendations would you make to improve this research process?

**Appendix F – Participant Informed Consent Form**

**Title: A Dramatic Transition: Exploring the Early Career Teaching Experiences of Theatre Educators through Artistic Inquiry**

Principal Investigator:

**R. Andrew Strickland**  
**1294 Happy Trail**  
**Macon, GA 31220**  
**(478) 475-1371**  
**rstrickl@lesley.edu**

Faculty Supervisor:

**Terrence Keeney, Ph.D.**  
**Associate Professor, Lesley University**  
**tkeeney@lesley.edu**

Institutional Review Board:

**Robyn Cruz, Ph.D.**  
**Co-Chair, Lesley University Institutional Review Board**  
**rcruz@lesley.edu**

- **Why are you being asked to volunteer in this study?**

You are being asked to volunteer for a research study conducted by R. Andrew Strickland, a Ph.D. candidate at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. You are being asked to volunteer because you are a theatre educator teaching within the range of Kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The study is looking for participants who came to teaching directly from a theatre career or professional training in theatre without being formally trained as an educator.

- **What is the purpose of this study?**

The purpose of the study is to learn about the experiences you had in making the transition to teaching as well as experimenting with a relatively new method of research. Volunteers in the study will learn about theatre-based artistic inquiry, a research technique that uses theatre performance skills to explore and present life experiences.

- **How will the study work?**

You will be asked to read instructions and consult with the researcher to become comfortable with the techniques of artistic inquiry. You will then work on your own, with guidance as needed from the researcher, to create a short theatre performance that

represents your experiences as an early-career teacher. This performance will be video recorded, either by you or the researcher.

After the process is complete you will be interviewed by the researcher, either in person, over the phone, or through video conferencing. You will be asked about your experiences in creating the performance piece. Other questions in the interview will ask about your early experiences as a theatre teacher. The interview will be audio recorded.

You will receive a copy of the transcribed interview as well as a video recording of your performance piece. You will be given the opportunity to make corrections to the transcription or to add information that you feel is necessary to accurately reflect your experiences.

- **How much time am I expected to commit to this study?**

Your time commitment will consist of approximately 1-2 hours to explore the techniques of artistic inquiry, adequate personal time to reflect on your experiences and create, perform, and record the performance piece, approximately 1 hour for the interview, and appropriate time to review the transcript and discuss corrections and additions. The study will be carried out between the dates of September 15, 2012 and December 31, 2012.

- **Will my information be kept confidential?**

Your confidentiality will be protected during the study. A pseudonym of your own choosing will be used by the researcher in all work related to this study unless you specifically request that your real name be used. All recordings, video and audio, will be utilized only by the researcher. No third party will listen to or see any of the material. The researcher may ask you for additional permission later to show your performance piece as part of the presentation of the completed study. If so, this permission must be granted by you in writing. You will be put under no pressure whatsoever to grant this additional permission.

- **Are there any risks associated with volunteering for this study?**

The risks of this study are believed to be very minimal. You will be in complete control of which experiences you share through your performance. You have the right not to answer any interview question.

- **Are there any benefits associated with volunteering for this study?**

It is also believed that the study may be beneficial to you through the introduction to artistic inquiry as well as having the opportunity to share your experiences and performing abilities. You will also be helping to develop a technique that utilizes theatre as a research tool.

- **Do I have to participate in the study?**

Participation in research is voluntary. You have the right to refuse to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right drop out at any time.

- **Can I contact the researcher, faculty supervisor, or IRB Co-Chair with questions about this study?**

You are encouraged to use the contact information at the top of this document to ask any questions you may have at any time.

- **Will I be compensated for participating in the study?**

There is no monetary compensation for participating in the study.

You will receive a copy of this signed form. It is recommended that you keep this copy for your records.

a) Investigator's Signature:

		<u>R. Andrew Strickland</u>
Date	Investigator's Signature	Print Name

b) Subject's Signature:

I am 18 years of age or older. The nature and purpose of this research have been satisfactorily explained to me and I agree to become a participant in the study as described above. I understand that I am free to discontinue participation at any time if I so choose, and that the investigator will gladly answer any questions that arise during the course of the research.

Date	Participant's Signature	Print Name

## Appendix G – Participant Video/Photograph Informed Consent Form

### VIDEO RECORDING/STILL PHOTOGRAPH USE INFORMED CONSENT FORM

A Dramatic Transition: Exploring the Early Career Teaching Experiences of Theatre Educators through Artistic Inquiry

As part of this research project, we will be making a video recording of you during your participation in the study. Please indicate what uses of this video recording or still photographs captured from the video you are willing to consent to by initialing below. You are free to initial any number of spaces from zero to all of the spaces. We will only use the video recording in ways that you agree to. In any use of this video recording, your name would *not* be identified.

The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be studied by the researcher for use in the research project.

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be played/shown to members of the researcher's doctoral committee.

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be played/shown to other research participants.

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be used for scholarly publications.

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be played/shown at public presentations of the research.

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be posted to the researcher's website ([www.artisticinquiry.com](http://www.artisticinquiry.com)).

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

**I have read the above description and give my consent for the use of the video recording and still photographs captured from the video as indicated above.**

**The extra copy of this consent form is for your records.**

**PRINTED NAME OF PARTICIPANT** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix H – Additional Performer Video/Photograph Informed Consent Form****VIDEO RECORDING/STILL PHOTOGRAPH USE  
INFORMED CONSENT FORM – ADULT PERFORMER****A Dramatic Transition: Exploring the Early Career Teaching Experiences of Theatre Educators through Artistic Inquiry**

As part of this research project, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of teacher participant) has created a performance piece in which you will be appearing. We will be making a video recording of you during your participation in this performance. Please indicate what uses of this video recording or still photographs captured from the video you are willing to consent to by initialing below. You are free to initial any number of spaces from zero to all of the spaces. We will only use the video recording in ways that you agree to. In any use of this video recording, your name would *not* be identified.

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be studied by the researcher for use in the research project.**

**Please initial:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be played/shown to members of the researcher's doctoral committee.**

**Please initial:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be played/shown to other research participants.**

**Please initial:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be used for scholarly publications.**

**Please initial:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be played/shown at public presentations of the research.**

**Please initial:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be posted to the researcher's website ([www.artisticinquiry.com](http://www.artisticinquiry.com)).**

**Please initial:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I have read the above description and give my consent for the use of the video recording and still photographs captured from the video as indicated above.**

**The extra copy of this consent form is for your records.**

**PRINTED NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix I – Additional Minor Performer Video/Photograph Informed Consent Form****VIDEO RECORDING/STILL PHOTOGRAPH USE  
INFORMED CONSENT FORM – MINOR PERFORMER****A Dramatic Transition: Exploring the Early Career Teaching Experiences of Theatre Educators through Artistic Inquiry**

As part of this research project, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of teacher participant) has created a performance piece in which your child will be appearing. We will be making a video recording of your child during their participation in this performance. Please indicate what uses of this video recording or still photographs captured from the video you are willing to consent to by initialing below. You are free to initial any number of spaces from zero to all of the spaces. We will only use the video recording in ways that you agree to. In any use of this video recording, your child's name would *not* be identified.

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be studied by the researcher for use in the research project.**

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be played/shown to members of the researcher's doctoral committee.**

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be played/shown to other research participants.**

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be used for scholarly publications.**

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be played/shown at public presentations of the research.**

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

**The video recording and still photographs captured from the video can be posted to the researcher's website ([www.artisticinquiry.com](http://www.artisticinquiry.com)).**

Please initial: \_\_\_\_\_

**I have read the above description and give my consent for the use of the video recording and still photographs captured from the video as indicated above.**

**The extra copy of this consent form is for your records.**

PRINTED NAME OF MINOR \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix J – Erin’s Artistic Inquiry**

Inquiry Modality: Performed Poem

**Are you serious?**

<b>Me</b>	<b>Them</b>
Where is the curriculum?	Check the course description.
But that is only one paragraph long. How am I supposed to know what to do for each class?	You’re the one with the theatre degree.
Well, where are the textbooks?	There aren’t any.
I have an idea for the English department.	But you don’t know anything.
I could take an English 9 to help out the department.	But you don’t know anything.
I know of a great cognate you could take for your English Masters. It’s called reading children’s plays.	No thanks; I’m getting a real degree.
You will never make it in the real theatre world if you don’t go to rehearsal.	Ms. Erin, I think you did some interesting things in college, but it’s not like you were on Broadway or anything.

She has to come to try-outs if she wants a part in the play.	But her mom is on the PTA so you have to give her a part.
Her daughter was absent 10 days this card marking and didn't make up the work.	But it's drama- it doesn't matter. Give her an "A"
We had three kids win states and make it to Nationals, can we go?	No.
Can we go on a field trip to see a play?	No.
Can we have a cast party after the play?	No.
Can we at least have weekend performances?	No, we don't want to pay the custodians overtime.
Can we do a fund-raiser?	No.
Can we sell refreshments at the play?	No, the lobby has carpet.
Can we raise the ticket price?	No.
How are we supposed to make money?	I'm writing you up for running out of money.
Can I have the use of the theatre the week of the play?	No, it is a District Theatre and there is a band and choir concert that week.

Well, could I at least have it the day before the performance for a dress rehearsal?	Do you want me to tell the band director from Rival High School to move the date of his concert because you're being a bitch?
Now just one minute...	Excuse me, Mr. P, I heard yelling- do you need help?
Why did I get this low score on my evaluation?	Well, there was that time you yelled at Mr. P. for no reason.
Can I please have the use of the dressing rooms?	No, the band needs it to store their uniforms.
Can I please have the use of the backstage area?	No, we need to store the choir risers there.
Can I please have the use of the storage room back stage?	No, we need to store band instruments there.
What is this big wooden box taking up half of the stage? Can we please move it?	No, that is where we store the grand piano so it doesn't get ruined.
Where are all the costumes?	I had the custodians clean out the

	theater storage room over the summer.
But there is nothing in there.	Exactly, they cleaned it up.
Where is all the stage make-up?	The custodians cleaned it up.
Where are all the tools?	Aren't they backstage?
No.	The custodians must have put them someplace safe.
Where are all the flats?	What are those?
Do we at least have wood?	The custodians cleaned it up.
Can I have the remote to bring the stage lights down to replace the lamps and adjust them?	No, you cannot have that remote. Only the district's head custodian can use it.
Does he know anything about stage lighting?	No.
What am I supposed to do about the lights?	Turn them on and off.
Where are the speakers for the sound system?	Aren't they there?
No.	The custodians must have put them

	someplace safe.
Well what is my budget for the first play?	\$500.00
Are you serious?	

**Them**

**Me**

Our school could never compete with Rival High School.	So I entered us in real competitions.
I don't like your sets.	But we won the award for best set design at regionals.
I didn't say they weren't good. I just don't like them.	Are you serious?
Why can't you do a nice play with no conflicts?	Because plays revolve around conflict.
Why can't you do a nice musical with no romantic relationships? We just can't have any sexual innuendo.	You find me one like that and I'll do it.

Fine- how about Guys and Dolls?	Are you serious?
You should only do big name shows.	How about Shakespeare?
Shakespeare isn't big name.	Are you serious?
Besides, Shakespeare isn't appropriate for high school.	But we teach it.
These plays on teen issues are not appropriate.	But it's okay for the kids live it; just don't talk about it.
The kids can't write their own plays.	But aren't we supposed to teach them how to write?
No one comes to see your shows.	But there were five hundred people in the audience.
It looked empty to me.	That's because it's a thousand seat theatre. The seats were only half-full, but there were a lot of people there.
Well Rival High School sold out their play, why can't you?	They only have a two-hundred seat auditorium. We had more than twice the people they had. The numbers don't lie.

You'll never be as good as Rival.	Are you serious?
Your kids are too loud.	They are just practicing.
Why can't you get the nice kids to be in the plays?	Because I'm not racist and homophobic.
Ms. Erin- you people are so emotional!	And what do you mean by "you people"
I don't trust your judgment, that's why I'm moving you to English only.	I want my union rep.
I think you are very talented. One day you'll be a great drama director. When one door closes another one opens.	Are you serious?
HaHa. They fired you. What are you going to do about it- cry!	Yes.



**Appendix K – Brook’s Artistic Inquiry**

Inquiry Modality: Poem

**WELCOME MAT**

Welcome!

(TEACHERS): We all agree your class is such a worthless joke;

That’s why we put it at the bottom of our vote.

‘Cause this is an elementary school;

We want our science back

It’s too hard to do on our own

And the kids must pass the test.

Welcome!

(SELF): Who am I- I’m your brand new welcome mat;

Stomped on and muddied becoming threadbare and flat.

But this is an elementary school

All should be welcome here,

With hugs and smiles and art and song

Not worksheets, tests, and fear.

Welcome!

(SELF): Who am I- a speedbump in your perfect road;

Slowing you down before you lose all control.

Since this is an elementary school,

I'm the doormat of the world;  
A bridge to help kids step inside  
Another person's door.

Welcome!

(COP): Who are you- just sign in here with your ID.

Each day you're here you must pass by security.

(SELF): But this is an elementary school;

Somehow that can't be right.

Why do we have a cop in here,

To lock these kids down tight?

Welcome!

(SECRETARY): Here's your timecard and right here I have your key.

Each day you're here you'll sign with a secretary.

Take this three-ring binder now

It's got everything you need;

Forms and forms and forms and forms;

Fill them carefully.

Welcome!

(TEACHERS): Who are you- and you teach what if we may know?

Drama? Are you kidding? Oh, please don't let it be so.

When you babysit my class

You don't do it right.

Boys and girls in separate lines

In order of their height.

Welcome!

(SELF): Who am I- and how did I end up here?

An institution run by antiquated fear?

This is an elementary school

A place to learn and grow.

I see perfect little soldiers;

Where did the children go?

**Appendix L – Bard’s Artistic Inquiry**

Inquiry Modality: Performed Monologue

BARD: I remember the year as a high school English teacher when I was told that would be allowed to teach three drama classes. This was a big deal to me. Maybe not so much for the school – I think they just needed some more electives to give the students – but it was my first opportunity to do something real in teaching drama. I planned, and I got excited, and I thought this year will have the first senior play the school has ever had. This senior play will be so great that it will be something they will want to continue every year. I could do plays with the students at school. We could go into other teachers’ classes. We can give demonstrations. We can show what we’ve learned in drama. Oh, I got so excited when I thought how excited the parents would be when they got to come up to the school and see their kids perform, and see what they’ve learned in this drama class that I was so excited about and could not wait to get off the ground. Why I even imagined toward the end of the year I can get a trip to New York together, and I can take these drama students who will be so excited about going to New York to see a play on stage. I was pumped; I was ready for the year.

I remember the first English teachers’ meeting we had. I tried to sell it to the other teachers and told them how excited I was and what I was planning on doing, and how they could become involved, and how I could bring my class to their class to perform. They could give me some ideas on the type of things that needed to be performed. Well, I was a little bit put-back at their lack of enthusiasm to say the least. In fact, a couple of teachers looked at me and said, “So, what are y’all going to do in that class?” I said, “We’re going to learn about acting, about theatre,

about drama, about self-expression. They said, “So, y’all are not gonna really do any real work, huh? Oh, the kids oughta have fun in there.” And I thought, yeah, that would be good if they had fun. That’s not a bad idea. But I couldn’t get their enthusiasm to the same level as mine, but oh well. I could do it without them.

So then I went to the principal, and I told her my plans. And she said, “Are you going to need any money?” And I said, “Yes, I probably will because I’ll have to pay for royalties and maybe we can take some trips together and visit other theatres.” She said, “Well, how are you gonna raise it?” And I was thinking, well maybe I thought it was available in the school budget. She said, “No, we don’t have any money available for drama. You’ll have to raise it on your own.” So I asked her some ideas about fundraising. She says, “That all has to be approved by the board. So, you figure out what you are going to do and detail it and submit it to the board for their approval.” Okay, okay. Maybe not the start I intended. But I knew this was going to be great.

And then I realized we had access to the stage. Yes, we had a stage. It was in the gymnasium, but it was still a stage and it had a curtain that opened and closed. So I thought this is great. So, I went into the gymnasium to look at the stage and get some plans. And there were the coaches. And the coach says, “Yes, can I help you?” Surely he knew who I was, I had been teaching there for five years. And I said, “Yes, Coach, I’m Mr. Bard the drama teacher and we want to talk about using the stage.” He said, “Well, we’ll be using the stage during the football.” I thought, you practice football on the stage? I didn’t see how that was possible. He said, “Well, we put the players’ equipment up there so they can get it when we’re handing out equipment.” I said, “Oh, but you’ll be outside soon. So, we’ll be able to use the stage then.” He says, “Well, you’ll have to talk to the wrestling coach. You know, he has the stage then.” “The wrestling coach

uses the stage?” “Yeah, that’s where they like to work out.” I said, “How about the gym floor? We could work out a deal where I could use the stage and they could be on the floor.” “Nah, he likes to do it up on the stage because it makes the boys sweat more. That way they lose weight.” “Okay, okay, well I’m not going to worry about this right now, but I’ll get back in touch with you because there will be times when I would like to work out a deal with you where I can use the stage.” “Well, the stage is pretty much in the gymnasium, and I’m pretty much in charge of the gymnasium, so yeah, we’ll see about that.”

Okay, okay. These were just minor hurdles. There was nothing that could stop my enthusiasm. So, I couldn’t wait for my first day of class. And soon it arrived and in came the students. And they didn’t quite have the same enthusiasm that I had, but I knew it was just a matter of time. In fact, most of them looked like they were ready to fall asleep when they hit the desks. I said, “Okay, guys, this is drama. We’re gonna go around, and I’m going to ask you each why you took drama and find out what it is that you want from me here.” It seems that the main answer was that “I needed an elective and this is the only one I haven’t taken.” Okay, okay. So it’s up to me to build some enthusiasm. Not a problem. So I said, “Here are the things we’re going to be doing in class.” One eager kid raised his hand. I said, “Yeah, yeah, question?” He said, “Yeah. Does this mean we’re gonna have to get up in front of each other and do stuff?” “Well, yeah, so to speak. We will be performing.” “I don’t think I particularly like to perform. I’m shy.” “Oh, I can take care of that. Once you learn about drama and the thrill of performing you’ll be eager. Any more questions?” One student raised his hand and he said, “Are we going to have tests?” “There may be some tests, but the main thing will be participation.” “What do you mean participation?” “What you do in the class, how you participate, how you perform. Why, we’re going to do things that will be fun and interesting that will keep you awake and keep

you energized.” “Well, I don’t keep awake in most of my electives.” “Well, why did you take drama?” “Because my coach said I had to have something right before sixth period so I can get out and dress for football and I had taken all the PE classes that they were offering.” “Okay. Well, guys, stick with me. This will be fun. I promise. And you’ll learn things about yourself.” “What do you mean about myself? I thought this was a drama class.” “Just trust me. It’ll be fun.”

So, we leapt into drama. And I told them about the history of theatre, Greek drama. I told them things that I knew would inspire them and make them want to be part of this great, great art. It didn’t go so well at first. Some of them had a hard time staying awake, but you know that was probably my fault. So I thought, let’s get them up here. Let’s get them up here. Improvisation. Who doesn’t love improvisation? I love improvisation, surely they’ll love improvisation. So, I came up with some really clever schemes and some clever scenes and some situations to put them into. Basically, they just sort of looked at each other at first. I said, “Okay, okay. Now what would you say if that happened? How would you respond if that happened to you in real life?” “Uh, it probably wouldn’t happen to me in real life.” “But what if it did?” “But I don’t think it will.” “But don’t you understand we’re going into our heads? We’re going to our imaginations.” “Man, are you high?” Why, I thought that was a clever retort. Anybody who thought of something that clever would surely be good in drama. So I taught them in improvisation the main thing you want to do is take what is handed to you and develop it and move it forward. Never say no, and never remain silent. With that simple thing in mind I put ‘em to work. Okay, it was kind of hard, it was kind of hard at first. But I just knew that once they got the hang of it... Well, as time passed they seemed to get into it a little bit. There was a handful there that really caught on, and they were the ones who wanted to always, “Let me go!

Let me go! Let me be first!” And I knew that their natural desire would drive them, but I had to get the others involved. So we went through scenes, we read scenes, we discussed scenes, we discussed plays. And I’m going to tell you, I had a good time. And I enjoyed it every day. But the problem is, this class wasn’t for me. It was for the students.

Okay, so I lowered my standards a little bit, and I thought, “Okay, maybe I can just keep them focused on what we are doing and at some point they would all be inspired. Because that’s what theatre does. It inspires. Okay, so it didn’t go very inspirational, but I was busy trying to raise money, and we had fundraisers. Uh, we actually sold posters because I saw it in the back of the Weekly Reader that you could order these neat posters that teens would buy. Well, I wound up with two or three dozen posters on my hands that...well, I eventually paid for most of them, because, you know, I could give them out as gifts, and I could maybe give them to the students as incentives to learn. But the fundraising didn’t go too well. Oh, I did go to some parents, and I did call a parents’ meeting. I called it after school one afternoon about the time I thought people would be getting off work, so I could talk to the drama parents about helping these kids. Three parents showed up. They didn’t quite understand why they were there. Two thought their kids were in trouble and wanted to discuss with me what was going on, and if he was a bad kid then just kick him out of the class. But I couldn’t quite make them understand that I needed them to help their children learn and love about drama. But that’s okay, I knew as soon as we put on a play they’d get it, and they’d get it.

So, here I am, no money (that’s okay, there are a lot of no-royalty plays out there), no place to rehearse (you know, if you stand in the hallway after school and you kind of do it longway there’s plenty of room to rehearse in the hallway after school. That is when the teachers aren’t walking though and saying you know, “What are y’all doing in the hall. You’re making a lot of



noise out here. But that's just because they didn't understand. As soon as they saw all these kids in action they'd get it.) Okay, so the first major thing I did was to have auditions for the senior play. A lot of kids showed up. They really did. I was really pleased and surprised. So we signed the sheets, and I got the information, and I told them about rehearsals and how important rehearsal is. Well, most of them raised their hands and said, "You know I have a job, don't you?" And I said, "Of course, and I'm willing to work with you any way I can to make this work. And I'll give you a couple days a week on the job and you get your boss to let you come to rehearsal. No problem. Okay, if you get a role you have to sign a piece of paper saying you'll show up to rehearsal. That's no problem. Oh, I'll show up. Oh, I promise. Yeah, I want to be in this. Okay, good. I had one kid eagerly raise his hand. Yeah, yeah, what is it? If I can get in this play will that put me in Hollywood? Can I become a movie star? Um, I can't promise you that, but I can certainly say that this will give you an experience that you can use in the future if you are interested. Yeah, but I've always wanted to be a movie star, you know like a rapper. Well, this probably won't help you rap, but it'll help you be in front of people and express yourself, so yeah, sure that'll all be a part of it. Come on out. So we held auditions. And I actually had enough talent – well, raw talent that could be taught, that could be molded – and I thought I had enthusiasm. I cast the show.

So here we are on our first day of rehearsal. I got scripts printed out because I had to do them on the mimeograph of course because we didn't have any money to buy scripts. That's not a problem. You know they [deep sniff] smell good. So, I'm passing out the scripts. Another hand. Yes? Are we gonna have to learn this or can we use this in the play? No, we're going to learn our lines. When are we going to do that? Well, hopefully you're going to do that at home, you're going to do it on the weekends when you have time, and through rehearsal I'm sure that a

lot of your lines will come to you. Okay, first day of rehearsal I call the roll. Eight people were absent. That was pretty bad seeing as we only had twenty in the show, but I could work around that. I could work around that. But it didn't get any better. Each day more and more people were absent, and you know why? Because of their jobs. Because they couldn't come. Oh, they had signed the paper. So when I confronted them and said okay, you're going to have to explain to me why you accepted the role in this play and now you can't come to rehearsal. 'Cause my boss says if I miss the day on the work he'll fire me. And he told me to decide do you want to be in a stupid school play or do you want a check. And I said, So I guess you want a check. I can't not come to work if he's going to fire me. But we made a deal. Why is it that you are more afraid of him and being fire than you are afraid of letting me down? Well, you don't pay me, and you're not mean like he is. You're too nice. Okay, yeah I can see how that might be a problem. But we rehearsed, and we got something together, and gradually most of them learned their lines. Not perfectly, but good enough because I knew what would happen on opening night.

So now we're going to sell tickets, we're going to sell tickets to the students and to the parents. And then Mrs. Johnson, she did come to rehearsal, her daughter was in the play and had a role. And I thought, this is great, maybe she can help. What can I do for you Miss Johnson? Yes, ma'am. No, the parents do have to buy tickets. We expect you to buy a ticket. Well, we need to raise money so that we can have another play. You know, plays aren't for free, and we need to raise money so we can have a drama account. I know your daughter's in the play. I know, and you're right, you probably should get in for free. But we can't just let all the parents in for free, because I'm afraid most of the parents are going to make up our audience. You could buy a ticket and maybe help sell tickets to your friends, that would be such a big help. No, ma'am, I don't think it's unfair. I know you have worked hard at home, and you've helped her with her

lines, but I can't just give away free tickets. Because if I give you free tickets, I'll have to give all the parents free tickets. No, ma'am, I'm sure you won't tell them, but it's just something we can't do. Well, I'm sorry you feel that way. Well, I'm sorry, and I want you to think about that because I do think you should come see your daughter in the play. I think it's simple. Yes, ma'am, well thank...thank you for coming by, and I'm sorry...but that's okay.

We had opening night. It was so exciting. We couldn't do it in the gym so we didn't do it at the school. But I was lucky enough that the local museum had a lecture stage. And it wasn't the biggest area in the world, but it was big enough. We didn't have much set. We just had some tables and two chairs, and we put three chairs together and that was the sofa, but we draped cloth over it so it was easy to see it was a sofa. But there were seating in the lecture hall, and the students – actors – they came on from the sides. Some of them waited back in the dinosaur room where they had the dinosaur exhibits and made their entrances and exits and the others were over in the mechanical room, and when you opened the door it did make a little bit of a noise, but people didn't notice. The night of the play it was wonderful. The lights went down. Well, they actually didn't go down, we just turned them off. There was no stage lighting. But then we had two spotlights that the museum let us use. We were so excited, and the play went very well. Rodney did fall off the stage, but remember now this is not a big stage, this is just like a two and a half foot, you know, platform, and some of the audience I'm sure .thought it was part of the show, and some people even clapped when he fell off the stage, but that's okay. They were entertained and he wasn't hurt. That's the main thing. The play progressed. The students became more and more amazing. I could not believe, could not believe what happened. Those that had known their lines in rehearsals pretty much knew their lines. Those that didn't want to do this suddenly came alive with energy and action that I had never seen before. Maybe this was

going to work out. The play finally ended to a rousing success. The audience applauded. The parents stood very proudly as if they knew it was going to be great all along, and look what they did for their children, and look what their children did. That's fine.

The next day at school it was a success for most of the kids. People came up and told them how good they were. They heard, "I didn't know you could do that." Several kids came and asked me how do you get in drama class? I said, "Well, we'll talk about that, and we'll be sure to sign you up next semester if you're interested. Several of them said, well I heard it's a lot of fun. I'll buy that. That's good enough. Several of the teachers came up to me and told me that it was really good and that they enjoyed it. That was of the five that came. Out of 32 faculty members only five were able to come support me, but I'm sure that others had things to do and were very busy. I particularly wanted Mr. Murphy across the call to come see it, because all he had to say about my drama class is, "Y'all sure do make a lot of noise in there." He says, "Do y'all do anything other than play?" I wanted him to see what our play resulted in, but you know I don't think I was ever (looking?) for him. He seemed to resent the fact that kids enjoyed coming to my class and actually felt like they got something out of it. But I can't solve all of the problems in education.

So, our first semester ended. I felt like it was fairly successful. The gym and the stage were still off-limits to the drama department. The principal still couldn't find any funds to support us.

Most of the kids in school heard it was a fun class, but I don't think anyone was really inspired to look into the art of theatre and study drama and maybe one day find life's work in that area. But it didn't matter, it was a start. And I'm going to be honest. I was a little depressed. In fact, I had to decide do I want to do this again next year. Do I want to go through this again? I had some high points, but it just makes me tired.

And I was putting away some of the few scripts we did have and packing them away at the end of the semester and there came Marie at the door. She was very shy. She was in the class. She had a small role in the play. She was the first to learn her lines. She didn't have much stage time, but she really came alive on the stage. "Hi, Marie. Can I help you? Sure, come on in. I'm not busy. Sure, you can tell me anything you want to. Well, good! I'm glad you enjoyed it. Well, you were very good; you know that don't you? You were one of the best ones up there; I think you were the first to learn all your lines. But we thought you did fine. Well, thank you. I'm glad you enjoyed it. Well, your mother came? Well good, I'm glad she came. Oh. So, you don't live with her? And you haven't seen her in a few years, and she came to your play? Well, that's nice! She what? Of course she was proud of you! Why wouldn't she tell you she was proud of you? Oh, she never said that before. Well, I'm sure she...she just...you know, didn't think you needed to hear it, but I'm glad that your mother came and told you that she was proud of you." I said, "I was proud of you too...Well, thank you. I'm sure, I'm sure that other good things have happened. This can't be the best thing that has ever happened to you. Well, good. Just remember how you were on that stage. Just remember how you felt. And just remember the joy that you brought to others. You have it in you. It was just a matter of doing it...Sure, I think it would be all right if you gave me a hug. Sure. Come here. You're welcome. I'm looking for you next year, you know? We have a second level of drama, and you're certainly welcome to take that. Thank you. Thank you very much."

Wow! I mean, it seems to have meant a lot to her. You know, I didn't realize that there were some of those kids that were experiencing some things for the first time, finding out about themselves. That's what I told them I wanted to do from the beginning, and somehow in this process I forgot what's really important about drama, and I was worried about, you know, sets,

props, first class plays, putting on something that was Broadway quality. And I think I understand now through this theatre course what my mission is. So, you know what? Next year's going to be different. Next year is going to be great. Here's what I'm going to do. I'm gonna go ahead and plan a trip to New York, and I'll find some people that will help me raise money, and I'm gonna take those kids to New York and let them see some Broadway plays, and we're gonna move that senior play maybe to one of the local theatres. Maybe they'll let us use the stage at one of the local theatres, that's right. And we can raise money. We can raise money by selling things after school. And car washes on the weekend, of course! Who doesn't love a car wash on the weekend? Okay, this is great, this is gonna be wonderful. Maybe, maybe I can get them to let me have four drama classes if I'm lucky, and we'll fill them up, and we'll have a great year. Okay, I gotta go now because I gotta get some lesson plans done, and I gotta look ahead to the future. It's gonna be great!

**Appendix M – Lulu’s Artistic Inquiry**

Inquiry Modality: Short Film

[A close-up shot of a table. Two Lego instruction manuals and a small pile of Lego bricks are on the table to the left of the shot. A pair of hands enters from the right “walking” on all ten fingers.]

FIRST HANDS: (walking to the manuals and Legos) Oh, I’m excited to try to do this! This is gonna be great. I used to love putting things together when I was younger. This is going to be so much fun. (opens a manual and turns pages) Okay, the manual. Oooooooh. Oh, my. This might be a little more complicated than it used to seem. I don’t know. Well, I can do it. I know I can do it. Okay. Well, here we go. (HANDS walk off with the manuals then return to start building with the bricks.) Wait a minute. I don’t even know if these are the right parts. What am I going to do? What am I going to do?

[Another pair of hands finger-walks in from the left.]

SECOND HANDS: Hi!

FIRST HANDS: Hey! Hey, can you help me with this?

SECOND HANDS: Well, you are a first-year. Maybe I can.

FIRST HANDS: Come on, here, let’s see, (goes off and returns with more bricks) and I’ve got some other pieces here. Let’s see if we can try them.

SECOND HANDS: Oh, I’ve done this stuff before you know, and not as easy as it looks sometimes.

FIRST HANDS: Yeah, I know.

SECOND HANDS: Yeah, that looks okay. Did you kinda plan this out ahead?

FIRST HANDS: Well, I have some ideas, and I looked at the book...

[The scene fades seamlessly showing the hands working on a now nearly constructed  
Lego model of a stage complete with lights, speakers, and microphone.]

FIRST HANDS: ...and now this goes here.

SECOND HANDS: Yeah, I think that it might have it here. Now, that really worked out pretty good.

FIRST HANDS: That's great! And the finishing touch... (puts a Lego girl mini-figure into the completed model standing behind the microphone) And we're ready.

SECOND HANDS: (drawing out the word while giving two thumbs up) Nice.

FIRST HANDS: Thank you for your help. This is gonna be great.

SECOND HANDS: (gives the "okay" sign then waves) Toodle-loo.

[Inquiry ends.]



**Appendix N – Jack’s Artistic Inquiry**

Inquiry Modality: Short Film, Pantomime with music.

The music and lyrics are an important part of Jack’s inquiry. To show in this transcript how the music directly connected to the action, the left column will describe the visual action of the piece while the right column will present the song lyrics that corresponded to each action.

Visual Performance	Music (lyrics in italics)
A fade-in reveals JACK sitting at a computer desk with headphones around his neck facing two screens. One screen shows what appear to be columns of data. JACK is working at the other screen, navigating to first a school system site and then to that of a specific high school.	Music begins playing: “Under Pressure” by Queen and David Bowie
Finally JACK reaches the access screen for an online teacher gradebook program.	<i>Mm ba ba de</i> <i>Um bum ba de</i> <i>Um bu bu bum da de</i>
His initial attempts to log in are unsuccessful with an error tone sounding and JACK showing frustration.	<i>Pressure pushing down on me</i> <i>Pressing down on you, no man ask for</i>
JACK tries to access the gradebook portal again, this time successfully gaining access.	<i>Under pressure that burns a building down</i> <i>Splits a family in two</i>

	<i>Puts people on streets</i>
The gradebook portal is open, but most of the screen remains blank. Only the top and side navigation bars appears.	<i>Um ba ba be</i> <i>Um ba ba be</i>
The shot switches to a direct view of JACK's face. He looks at the screen with perhaps confusion or mild frustration. One corner of his mouth lifts up as if in resignation.	<i>De day da</i> <i>Ee day da - that's okay</i>
JACK picks up a landline telephone. He listens for a moment then, in pantomime, carries on a very animated conversation with whoever is on the other end of the line. By the end of the conversation he is smiling and nodding happily.	<i>It's the terror of knowing</i> <i>What this world is about</i> <i>Watching some good friends</i> <i>Screaming, "Let me out!"</i> <i>Tomorrow gets me higher</i> <i>Pressure on people - people on streets</i>
The shot changes to show JACK and the screens again. The JACK's pleased nodding segues into dancing as, while remaining seated, he sways back and forth and waves his arms in time to the music.	The music changes quickly to "Happy" by Pharrell <i>It might seem crazy what I'm about to say</i>
The shot switches back to a front view of JACK's face as he continues to celebrate.	<i>Sunshine she's here, you can take away</i> <i>I'm a hot air balloon, I could go to space</i> <i>With the air, like I don't care baby by the way</i> <i>Because I'm happy</i>

	<p><i>Clap along if you feel</i></p> <p><i>Like a room without a roof</i></p> <p><i>Because I'm happy</i></p> <p><i>Clap along if you feel</i></p> <p><i>Like happiness...</i></p>
<p>JACK settles down and looks at the screen.</p>	<p>The music changes abruptly to “Complicated” by Avril Lavigne</p> <p><i>Tell me</i></p> <p><i>Why do you have to go</i></p>
<p>The shot switches to once again show JACK looking at the screen. Apparently what he sees there does not please him as he gestures towards the screen with frustration. He once again picks up the phone and begins another animated conversation accented by gestures from his free hand.</p>	<p><i>and make things so complicated?</i></p> <p><i>I see the way you're acting like you're somebody else</i></p> <p><i>Gets me frustrated</i></p> <p><i>Life's like this</i></p> <p><i>You, you fall and you crawl and you break</i></p> <p><i>And you take what you get</i></p> <p><i>And you turn it into honesty</i></p> <p><i>You promised me</i></p> <p><i>I'm never gonna find you fake it</i></p> <p><i>No, no, no</i></p>
<p>JACK switches the phone to his other ear. HE</p>	<p>The music stops, no sound now other than the</p>

<p>continues the conversation his hand coming to his eyes in frustration. As the discussion continues JACK sags in his chair. HE takes a breath and sighs, regaining his calm. HE listens intently and seems to respond with short affirmations to the phone. With a sense of acceptance he ends the conversation and hangs up the phone.</p>	<p>ambient sounds of the room.</p>
<p>The show switches to the straight-on view of his face again. His hand covers his mouth and lower part of his face as if he is deep in thought. His eyes close as he takes another deep breath and lets it out. His hand drops, but he continues to look like he is deep in thought. Finally, he nods with his mouth once again lifting on one side. A decision has been made, and JACK turns his attention back to the screen.</p>	
<p>JACK seems determined as he returns to work, occasionally talking to himself in what seems to be an encouraging manner. He gestures strongly with his hands, index fingers pointing up on each hand. JACK nods, a small smile</p>	<p>Music begins, "Life's Been Good" by Joe Walsh.</p> <p><i>I can't complain but sometimes I still do</i></p> <p><i>Life's been good to me so far</i></p>

lifting the corner of his mouth. His focus returns to the screen as the shot fades to black.

The instrumental music continues, fading out several seconds after the image goes to black.

**Appendix O – Josephine’s Artistic Inquiry**

Inquiry Modality: Short Film

Josephine’s inquiry was filmed using her cell phone and was submitted to the researcher in three parts with instructions of the proper order in which to view the videos. Each video begins with her starting the camera and getting into position and ends with her breaking character to turn the camera off. For the sake of the narrative flow, these starts and stops are ignored in this transcript although the divisions between the separate parts are still indicated.

Film Clip #1

[The shot shows an interior shot of the entry door to an apartment or small house. The room is currently empty. A low bookcase is off to one side covered with books and one houseplant that hangs down well past the pot. The door opens revealing JOSEPHINE who has apparently just let herself in with the key. ]

JOSEPHINE: (as she enters) Kitty? Kit kit kit kitty?

[JOSEPHINE continues into the room and looks around. She has a large duffel bag over one shoulder, obviously quite full, and a backpack on the other shoulder.]

JOSEPHINE: I guess somebody’s shy. (closes door) This is gonna be a fun week. Ha.

[She looks at the houseplant, touching the trailing growth.]

JOSEPHINE: Ohhhh. Doesn't look very... (She touches the top of the plant part of which breaks off in her hand with a dry crackling sound.) Oh, shit. Shit. (She hides the broken section down in the pot and adjusts the top leaves.) Um...leave that alone. (continuing to look around) Um, yeah...okay, cool.

[JOSEPHINE exits from the shot heading further into the apartment. Film clip ends.]

## Film Clip #2

[The scene changes to a view of a kitchen. Large overhead cabinets dominate the top of the shot. A counter runs along the length of the kitchen covered with various small appliances. The sink is filled with dishes. A dishwasher is beneath the counter while a refrigerator is half-visible on the far left of the screen. JOSEPHINE enters from the right.]

JOSEPHINE: Greaaaaat. Woo, fancy kitchen! Why're there dishes in the sink? I'm not your maid, lady. Gym note of excuse. (She runs her hand on the counter finding it dirty.) Oh, God! Slob. Whatever.

[JOSEPHINE looks around, seeing something on a counter out of the shot.]

JOSEPHINE: Ah! (grabbing a note and perusing it while leaning back against the counter) Dear, dear. Thank you. You're welcome. (with obvious sarcasm) Yes, I love your cat so much! He

hasn't even come out yet. Yes. (impersonating the writer of the note with a snobby, affected voice) Sorry, dahling about the dishes. Ran away in a hurry. (back to normal voice and normal sarcasm) Of course, dearest, for what you're paying me I'm happy to do them. Love being maid. Hmmm.

[She makes a decision and moves suddenly to slap the note back down on the counter where she found it.]

JOSEPHINE: (as she moves) You'll be paying me in food as well as cash! (She explores the various cabinets.) Let's see...nope. (Tries another revealing dishes.) The clean ones. (Moving on.) Okay, I see some crackers, chips, boring. (Opens a container and smells it.) Raisins. (Returns it to shelf.) At least that's edible. Peanuts, sardines. Awesome. That'll be helpful. (Closes cabinet and moves to the last one.) Yeah, great: tea. My fave. (Close cabinet and moves to the refrigerator.) What's in here? No, no. Oooh! What's this?

[JOSEPHINE emerges from the refrigerator with a resealable plastic bag. She opens it and sniffs inside.]

JOSEPHINE: Banana bread. I'll do that. (She takes a small plate from the cabinet, removes the banana bread from the bag, and places the bread on the plate.) Okay. (Opening toaster oven.) Thank you, Mr. Toaster Oven. (She finds a messy crumb tray inside and promptly empties it into the sink.) Oh. People are slobs. (Returns the tray to the oven and puts the banana bread inside.)



Good. (Bends over to look over the oven controls.) Good. (She brings her head close to listen to the oven to see if it is working then careful sets her hands on each side of the oven to feel for warmth.) Just leave it alone. It'll be fine. (Moving on to the next task, again in an affected voice.) Okay. The dishes, dahling!

[JOSEPHINE tries to open the dishwasher without success. She runs her hands over various parts of it. She finds no opening lever but does find more grime on the dishwasher door and reacts with disgust. She backs up to get a better view of the door mechanics.]

JOSEPHINE: Um. (Tries again to open the dishwasher, then changes tactics.) Is it turned off? Yeah. Yeah. (Tries again to open it then smacks the front of the dishwasher several times.) Oh, come on! Really?

[JOSEPHINE backs away and tries to calm down and think her way through the problem.]

JOSEPHINE: Just... (going to the built-in oven) I can open this. (She does.) So I should be able to open this. (She goes back to the dishwasher. It does not open and she once again takes a step back regarding it. She briefly touches the toaster oven then returns to the dishwasher yet again, getting down to stare straight at the controls and mechanisms on the front of the appliance. After a moment she laughs.) Oh, I've gotta get more sleep. (Sighs and unlatches the dishwasher.)

There we go. (Success! The dishwasher opens. She leans her head against it ruefully.) I'm so awesome it hurts! (She pulls out the top rack, examining the dishes.) These dirty or clean? We'll say dirty. (Pushes the rack back in and closes the dishwasher door. She returns to check on the toaster oven.) Okay, we'll see how this is doing.

[JOSEPHINE touches the toaster oven tentatively in several places. She discovers that the small appliance is not heating. She opens the door and places her hand directly on the rack and tray inside. Finding it cold she removes her hand and shuts the door with exasperation. She bends over to get a direct view of the toaster oven.]

JOSEPHINE: Okay, how do I work this now?

[She looks back at the dishwasher, trying to get ideas from her previous success that might help her figure out the toaster oven. She drums her fingers on the counter thinking then manipulates the various controls on the small oven.]

JOSEPHINE: Ha, ha! (giving her hands a brisk clap then pointing at herself with two thumbs up) Captain of the awesome team right here! (She waits for a moment staring at the oven.) It'll be fine, it'll be fine.

[JOSEPHINE waits a moment longer, patting her hand on her leg. She makes her decision.]

JOSEPHINE: (calling) Kitty? Kitty!

[JOSEPHINE exits the shot, apparently looking for the cat. Film clip ends.]

### Film Clip #3

[The scene switches to a living room area. The kitchen from the previous scene can be viewed in the distance through a large open bookcase. Books and other items cover the shelves. The center of the bookcase is open at counter-height creating a window into the kitchen counters. To the right of the bookcase is an entryway to the kitchen.

JOSEPHINE's backpack is seen sitting in the living room area. JOSEPHINE herself opens the shot by walking into the kitchen to check on her snack.]

JOSEPHINE: (burning herself on the toaster oven) Hot! That's hot. (Shaking her hands then opening a cabinet.) Let me do this and... (She finds some utensils to allow extraction of the banana bread from the oven.) Okay.

[After several moments of work around the toaster oven, JOSEPHINE returns to the living room with a plate, eating the banana bread.]

JOSEPHINE: Mmmm. Whoo, that's hot. (She licks her fingers and goes to experiment with a radio sitting on the center cabinet window.) See what we got here. (a light piano solo plays) Oh, my God, no. (changes the music several times skipping past other music and a news broadcast

before apparently settling on a song. She bounces her head and arms to the music for a few seconds.) All right, I can do that. (She starts to back away but reconsiders.) No, I can't.

[JOSEPHINE changes through several stations again finally settling on listening to "Dirty Laundry" by Don Henley. She dances along with the music while eating the banana bread. She mumbles through a mouth of banana bread as she sets down her plate and starts exploring the book shelves.]

JOSEPHINE: What's up here? (She takes out a book with a horse on the cover and flips through it, still dancing to the music.) Caring for horses. You are a fancy lady, aren't you? Kitty! Kitty, kitty! (looking around for the cat, returning to the book) No wonder you eat what you eat. (putting book away) Yeah, that's awesome.

[As JOSEPHINE puts the book away she knocks something out the open back of the shelf. It falls onto the floor of the kitchen. She hurries in to retrieve it.]

JOSEPHINE: Oh! Ah, shit.

[JOSEPHINE reshelves the book and tidies the row carefully. She returns to her slice of banana bread, eating it as she once again grooves to the music. As she passes by the edge of the bookshelf she accidentally knocks several things over.]

JOSEPHINE: Oh, fuck!

[JOSEPHINE backs up to stare at the mess, sets the plate down, and turns off the music.

With a sound of exasperation she tries to push a fallen row of books up again. They

promptly fall through the open bookcase. With more sounds of frustration and anger

JOSEPHINE falls to her knees for a moment. She immediately bounces up and gets back to the task of tidying the bookshelf.]

JOSEPHINE: Seriously? Come on. You stand up there. Um. (Picking up the many items that fell into the kitchen.) Okay. (Several books refuse to stand up on the shelf.) Oh, come on!

[JOSEPHINE finally manages to restore some order to the shelf. As she returns to the front side of the bookcase with a stack of books she sees the cat off screen.]

JOSEPHINE: Oh hi, kitty. (returning to the shelf) Is there an order to this? Think this was... (She returns the stack to the shelf.) There. That's the most ridiculous thing. (turns her attention to the unseen cat) Hi, kitty cat. Hi, kitty. Can you come here? (bends over and makes beckoning noises) Kitty? Good kitty! Come on, make everything better. That's your job. Yeah. (She bends over as if to pick up the cat.) Here, here. Can I? (The cat runs off.) Kitty! (She beckons to the cat again now bouncing a stick with a string on the end of end against the shelf.) What's that? What's that? Come on! Come on! (She picks up the stick and playfully tosses the toy dangling on the end of the attached string towards the cat.) What's that? What's that? What's that? Come on, cat. You wanna...you want to play? Come on! Meow, meow, meow, meow.

Meow, meow, meow. (She looks around.) Kitty, I'm supposed to exercise you. (in a silly talking-to-the-cat voice) You want to exercise? You want to exercise? No, you don't, do you? You're just going to judge me, aren't you? Yes, you are. Come here! (makes cat-beckoning noises again) Come here, kitty. Kitty! Kitty, catty, catty, catty, catty. Kitty, kitty, kitty, kitty, kitty, kitty, kitty. Oh, oh. Kitty! Kitty. Kitty, kitty, kitty, kitty, kitty. KITTY! (more cat beckoning noises)

[JOSEPHINE sits on the couch and looks at the cat.]

JOSEPHINE: Dogs are easier, you know? Kitty! I don't even like cats. Kitty! (in silly cat voice) Kitty, kitty, kitty, kitty, kitty! (She holds up the cat toy.) Kitty. Come on. What are you... Come on. (singing to herself) What do cats want? I don't know. Come on.

[JOSEPHINE flips the toy at the end of the string towards the cat once again knocking down the books she just straightened on the shelf.]

JOSEPHINE (quietly to herself as leans her face into her hand in frustration) Oh, fuck.

[Film clip ends.]