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ETHNODRAMA AS A PATH TO TEACHER EUPHORIA: HOW MIGHT ETHNODRAMA INFLUENCE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEMSELVES AND PROMOTE TEACHER EUPHORIA?

RODNEY W. GRIST

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Ph.D. in Leadership and Change Program
of Antioch University
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

August, 2015

This is to certify that the Dissertation entitled:

ETHNODRAMA AS A PATH TO TEACHER EUPHORIA: HOW MIGHT ETHNODRAMA INFLUENCE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEMSELVES AND PROMOTE TEACHER EUPHORIA?

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- Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Jon Wergin; Dr. Laurien Alexandre,

Dr. Susie Erenrich and Dr. George Belliveau

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- Staff and Faculty at Antioch University
- My brilliant daughter, Aryell, who believed in me, scolded me, and never failed to assist when asked.

The good man is the man who no matter how morally unworthy he has been,
is moving to become better.
-John Dewey

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my partner, my lover, and my best friend, Carla. It is with her encouragement and unwavering belief in me that I have reached this pinnacle.

Damn, Carla, you were right ... *I am good enough!*

Abstract

This study is intended as a mini-pilot program, exploring the potential of ethnodrama to positively impact the burnout experiences of urban public secondary teachers. The current study holds small sample sizes and limited development time, yet an informant panel of nine teachers met in three sessions to discuss and reveal their personal stories, and to plan an ethnodramatic performance to be shared with the entire school faculty and administration (Mienczakowski, *Handbook* 468; Saldaña, *Anthology* 2). Informant panelists' dispositions toward burnout was measured pre and post experience via the Maslach Burnout Inventory, and a small, non-participant group was also measured for comparison purposes. The research project was essentially Action Research through performance, with the researcher positioned as an insider, working in a joint effort with other insiders in my organization (Mienczakowski and Morgan 219). Qualitative in scope, my research grows from a place of concern and passion for my vocation. The purpose of this study was to determine how interactive theatre, specifically Ethnodrama, might have a positive influence on teachers by promoting teacher euphoria©, thereby increasing self-efficacy, reducing stress, and minimizing the loss of quality human capital in our schools. Results, though statistically insignificant, demonstrated a clear and present need for effective teacher development in the urban public school. Further, the study continues to support the growing research on ethnodrama as a tool for change in a variety of professions. A larger sample size, more time to develop the ethnodrama, and an assessment tool more closely aligned with the specific topic areas dictated by the panel, are among the recommendations for further study. This mini-pilot shows potential for widespread use with teacher groups. This dissertation is available in open access at AURA: Antioch University Repository and Archive, http://aura.antioc.edu/ and Ohio LINK ETD Center, https://etd.ohiolink.edu

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements i

Abstract ii

Table of Contents iii

List of Tables vi

List of Figures..........vii

Chapter I: Introduction..........1

Background 1

Increased Pressure from Evaluation Tied to Student Performance 7

Diminishing Autonomy 9

Higher Stress 11

Less Support from School Administration and the Public 13

Teacher's Self-Perception 14

How Did Education Get This Messed Up? 16

Current Recommendations and Efforts of Policymakers 18

Forging a New Approach 21

The Promise of Interactive Theatre and Ethnodrama 22

Teaching and Leadership 25

Dissertation Question 27

Dissertation Concept 28

Rationale for This Research……………………………………………………………...28

Organization of This Dissertation……………..……………………………………...31

Chapter II: Review of Literature ………..……………….…………….…………………….…..34

Teacher Stress …….………………………………………………………........….35

Teacher Stress Leading to Burnout ……………………………………................. 38

Measuring Burnout ……..……………………………………………….............42

Burnout Interventions……..……………………………………….……….......... 44

Teacher's Perception of Self ...………………………………………………………….51

The Courage to Teach ………..………………………………………………………….52

Teacher Development ………………………………………………….............. 55

Ethnodrama - Ethnotheatre …….……………………………………………….......58

Chapter III: Methodology…..……..…………………………………………..….................65

Multiple Methodologies ……………………………...……………………………65

Theory of Action ………………………………………………….............…72

Who Are These Informant Panelists?...……………………………………..……… 76

Exploring the Project Outline ………………………………………….……………79

Making Sense of the Project Data …….……………………..………………………88

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)……………………………………….………..92

Chapter IV: Results …….……………….…………………………………………..………94

Chapter V: Interpretations and Recommendations……..………….……………………………145

Overview …..……..…………………………………………………..................145

So, What Does It All Mean? ………………………………...……..……………147

Appendix …………………………………………………………………………... …156

Appendix A: Permissions ……………………………………………………………157

Appendix B: Informant Panel Meeting Agendas ……………………………………..158

Appendix C: Follow-Up Interview Questions, POST-Ethnodrama Questions ……….166

Appendix D: Panelists' Self-Reported Demographics ………………………………..167

Appendix E: Introductory Letter to All Faculty ………………………………………168

Appendix F: Qualifying Questions…………………………………………………… 169

Appendix G: Sample MBI Questions ……………………………………………........170

Appendix H: MBI License …………………………………………………………......171

Appendix I**:** Panelists Demographic Collection Sheet ……..…………………………173

Appendix J**:** Teacher's Exit Survey ……………………………………………….. …175

Works Cited ……………………………………………………………………………..176

List of Tables

Table 1.1 Consequences of Occupational Stress 12

Table 1.2 Parallels of This Research to The Social Change Model ……………………… 26

Table 2.1 Current Theoretical Perspectives on Burnout …………………………….......40

Table 4.1 Complete Ethnodrama Script …………………………………………………96

Table 4.2 Quoted Dialogue in Thematic Category ……………………………………......124

Table 4.3 MBI Means and Standard Deviation …..……………………………………..128

Table 4.4 Exit Survey Summary. ……………………………………………………....139

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Logic Model of Hypothesized Mindfulness Training Effects …………………46

Figure 2.2 Model of Ethnodramatic Process ………………………………………………54

Figure 3.1 Theory of Action ………………………………………………………………73

Chapter I: Introduction

Background (Exploring the Problem)

Teachers in the United States' public schools are in trouble. According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF), the latest 2007 report states "46% of all new teachers in the United States leave the profession within five years" (Barnes, Crowe, and Schaefer, NCTAF). This is not surprising: teachers, in a profession that offers an average base starting salary of $38, 210 and tops out at $61,380 after thirty years, face increased pressure from evaluations tied to student testing performance, diminishing autonomy, higher stress, and less support from school administration, parents and the media (Nat'l Cent. Educ. Stat.). The bleak and oppressive situation leads to rapid burnout and an early attrition rate, which is costing $2.2 billion a year (Barnes, Crowe, and Schaefer, NCTAF). Certainly, a great case could be made for change based on dollars alone. Most would agree that teachers in the U.S. are underpaid, under-appreciated, and overworked, but this dissertation is not about money. Instead, it is about the shameful, unnecessary loss of quality teachers *burning out* and a potentially efficacious tool to alleviate the situation.

Within this introduction I will outline: the existing conditions in public education, build the argument that this is a very real and potentially devastating problem, highlight significant historical contributions to the history of public education that have accompanied its current challenges, examine the recommended prescriptions of our policy makers, and suggest a new approach to the existing turmoil which I have addressed in my research. Further, I will familiarize the reader with the terms *euphoria* and *burnout*, as they can be particularly ambiguous. The purpose of my study is to determine how interactive theatre, specifically ethnodrama, might have a positive influence on the growing problem of teacher stress leading to

burnout and the loss of quality human capital in our schools. Furthermore, this study intends to mount support for teacher self-care leading to increased contentment, euphoria, and effectiveness in the public school classroom. This introduction will provide a solid foundation upon which to build my research and contribute a new perspective, one based on my own experiences in the classroom, my creative inclination for performance arts and my desire to contribute to the current education reform movement.

First, I will examine four demanding challenges for today's public school teachers. My assertion is that teachers face increased pressure from evaluations tied to student testing performance, diminishing autonomy, higher stress, and less support from school administration and the public. Each of these could stand alone as a severe problem facing the classroom teacher in the U.S., but together they are breaking the proverbial camel's back. They prompt headlines like these: "Subtract Teachers, Add Pupils: Math of Today's Jammed Schools" (Rich); "A Teacher's Troubling Account of Giving a 106-Question Standardized Test to 11 Year Olds" (Strauss) and "Education Isn't Broken, Our Country Is" (Nelson). More importantly, these destructive elements lead to increased anxiety, health issues, a sense of hopelessness, reduced energy, apathy, and in far too many instances, teacher burnout (Maslach, *Progress* 217–221; Smylie 68–73).

Burnout, a term originally investigated in the 1970s and applied to social service workers, generally refers to conditions of fatigue, frustration and related apathy resulting from extended stress or overwork (Huberman and Vandenberghe 1). More specifically, it is the unfortunate phenomenon of teachers who face "intensification," of their work demands and are being pressed to "do more work with fewer resources while at the same time receiving fewer rewards and less recognition for their efforts" (2). Social psychologist Christina Maslach's work contends that

burnout is realized in three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization (excessively detached response to other people), and reduced personal accomplishment (qtd. in Hansen and Sullivan 8). These elements of burnout have been empirically validated in numerous studies and are best summarized by Barbara M. Byrne in her article, "The Nomological Network of Teacher Burnout: A Literature Review and Empirically Validated Model":

> Teachers exhibit signs of emotional exhaustion when they feel that they can no longer give of themselves to students as they did earlier in their careers. They become depersonalized, developing negative, cynical, and sometimes callous attitudes toward students, parents, and/or colleagues. They have feelings of diminished personal accomplishment when they perceive themselves as ineffective in helping students to learn and unmotivated in fulfilling their other school responsibilities. Overall, teachers who fall victim to burnout are less likely to be sympathetic toward students, have a lower tolerance for classroom disruption, are less likely to prepare adequately for class, and feel less committed and dedicated to their work. (15–16)

Stressful moments are clearly not unique to the teaching profession, but are more frequent. According to John Rosales' article, "Surviving Teacher Burnout," published on the National Education Association's website, "Most teachers experience job stress at least two to four times a day, with more than 75 percent of teachers' health problems attributed to stress." The extremely high stress factors that lead to burnout leave teachers disengaged, apathetic, or headed for an exit from the profession. Current research indicates that "the teaching profession has the highest burnout rate of any public service job" (Williams 10), and "Teachers in urban schools constitute a subgroup that is at particular risk for stress and burnout" (Farber, *Crisis* 44). This burnout is costly in terms of both dollars, as the national teacher-turnover rate costs school districts approximately $7 billion annually (Williams 10), and in its threat to a quality education for our school children.

Before examining these stressors that lead to potential burnout, the somewhat surreal concept of *euphoria* should be discussed. I have carefully and purposely chosen this term with at

least two intentions. First, the idea that teachers have a right to and a need for contentment, satisfaction, and joy in their service is, in part, a matter of wishful thinking. That is, most anyone, in any career field, might make the argument that it would be great to feel euphoric in their workplace. And they would be correct. Teachers are a unique class of public servant. They are similar to other public servants in that they work in close relationships with recipients (students), but vastly different in that the relationship is established and maintained en masse within the classroom (Maslach and Leiter, *Agenda* 295). This relationship is at once the most rewarding aspect of the teaching profession and the point at which teachers are most vulnerable to "emotionally draining and discouraging experiences" (296). Further, a teacher undertakes a tremendous responsibility in educating other people's children. The 170 young people in my classrooms each day are not my children. I am not permitted, and at the same time, required, to treat them as my own. I am in charge of their behavior, their special needs, their emotional well-being, their physical safety, and oh yes, their education. I am in charge but depleted of any real power or support from school administration. I am charged with educating in direct competition with smart phones, video games, and an unexplainable sense of entitlement from enough students and their parents to disrupt and eventually decay any real hope of the prescribed content learning experience. I recognize that under such circumstances, *euphoria* is highly implausible. It is precisely this unimaginable element of *teacher euphoria* that ignites my second intention.

As a parent, I want my children to learn from someone on-fire for their content, and passionate about their work. I want them to fall in love with learning, enough to incorporate it in their lives long after I am gone, and pass it along to their own children. I understand that I must do my part as a parent for my own children, and that the teacher must not be handcuffed by disruption, disrespect, and disregard. So my second intention in choosing specifically *euphoria*

as the goal for teachers is that it is, in my mind, in view of the present circumstances, nearly unattainable. However, I know it is possible, as I have experienced it. In a later section of this work, I will share a personal story of such euphoria. Setting the goal high, yet attainable is an effective strategy in career success. "Teaching is a people-changing profession" (Labaree 34). I want, as a teacher, and as a parent, educators who are enthusiastic, energized, passionate, and relaxed enough to focus completely on their responsibility in the classroom. I believe that teachers can move from a point of burnout up the continuum to a place of euphoria.

The title question of my dissertation work utilizes an engaging and somewhat indefinite term, *euphoria.* The term, variously defined and susceptible to subjectivity, has been lost for many people in our modern world. It seems we are forced, by matters of materialism, competition, and the media-corporate profit partnership, to settle for good enough when we select and maintain a career choice; as long as it pays us well enough to keep us in the game, regardless of what personal fulfillment, or happiness it may yield. Euphoria has become transparent, and yet it is necessary to the continued energy, and self-efficacy of today's teachers. Euphoria is considered unreachable and is also unimaginable for many of us, and beyond conception in today's hectic, demanding, and all-too- often unstable world.

Often associated with, discussed, and studied in the context of drug induced states (Adderall, methamphetamine, opiates, morphine, etc.), the idea of euphoria seems unrealistic, illusionary, and at best, vague. Does euphoria really exist in any profession? If so, to what extent? Is it fleeting? Is it temporary? Recurring? The damaging connotation of the word may explain its absence in studies of career choice and job satisfaction. I choose to use the word and pursue its various meanings for teachers, as I have front-line experience with both euphoria and despair. It should be understood that I was hoping to impact teachers toward euphoria, yet given

the intangible nature of action research, the direction of my informant panel was never a certainty. I have experienced the elation and self-confidence of euphoria and the multiple frustrations leading to extreme stress and burnout. I know I am not alone. In order to provide clarity, a deeper look at the term euphoria is warranted.

Though used in today's world as little more than a casual colloquialism to indicate an intense transcendent feeling of happiness in conjunction with contentment, the term originates with the Greek, ευφορia, or "power of enduring easily; fertility" ("Euphoria" 235). For the Greeks, the term held a far more moral position than the tag of light-heartedness or general sensation of elation we attribute it today. Its Greek root of *eu*, meaning goodness, happiness or contentment, and *phoria*, signifying the act of carrying, reveal a more effort-bound situation in which the individual supports happiness or bears themselves with joy. The etymology suggests that contentment and joy are states demanding a persistent and active engagement (Blackmore and Jennett 35). Because of the rise of Calvinism and the advent of Christianity, the idea that euphoria is achieved through effort has vanished. In its place is the depiction of euphoria as abnormal in some way. In fact, it is often regarded as a state that overwhelms the personality, and in medical terms, is defined as "mood elevation inappropriate to the situation" (35).

My research project calls for a return to the early meaning of the word. I believe that euphoria is a state achievable through work, persistence, and attention to self/environment and worthy purpose. This is not to say that euphoria is necessarily a religious experience or phenomenon, though American psychologist William James noted, "the emotion emerged only when the self gave up its struggle with the world and instead surrendered to the uprushes of the subconscious life" (James 43).

Euphoria then, though considered by most to be a transitory state, will be addressed in this research as synonymous with the related familiar terms: happiness, contentment and fulfillment. It will be held at a distinct distance from the connotation of euphoria as an exaggerated state induced by psychoactive drugs, and the temporary high of natural behaviors including athletic triumph, orgasm, or love. In regards to teachers specifically, euphoria includes, but is not limited to, feelings of excitement, satisfaction, energy, certainty, wonder, and self-efficacy. Euphoria is any feeling, ideology, practice or understanding which rekindles the hope left in teachers who have adopted intense cynicism when their initial energy and high hopes have been dashed by experience (Palmer, *Exploring* 49). Yet, the reality in our public schools includes a multitude of stressors leading to potential burnout.

Increased Pressure from Evaluations Tied to Student Testing Performance

It is not oppressive to request that a teacher be evaluated. It is fair to expect that a teacher is teaching effectively. We do want to know if a teacher is effective in facilitating the transfer of knowledge to the student. That is, after all, what a teacher is paid to do. So why or how are the current popular practices in teacher evaluation flawed? Danielson and McGreal list six fairly specific areas of deficiency in current teacher evaluation systems:

1. Outdated, Limited, Evaluative Criteria
2. Few Shared Values and Assumptions About Good Teaching
3. Lack of Precision in Evaluating Performance
4. Hierarchical, One-Way Communication
5. No Differentiation Between Novice and Experienced Practitioners
6. Limited Administrative Expertise (3–6)

A combination of these factors leads to “a culture of passivity and protection,” and creates an atmosphere “not safe for taking risks” (6). Indeed, the situation is toxic at best, and intensified by the recent denunciation of teachers as the scapegoat for all education woes. “Teachers are universally praised as the solution to our educational problems and simultaneously condemned as the root cause of all that’s wrong with our schools” (Rose, “Letter” 239). To date, the assumption by most educational policymakers and the general public has been that, “if we want to improve teaching, supervision and evaluation are effective levers” (K. Marshall 1). However, according to multiple recent research studies, evaluations of teachers by principals “rarely improve classroom teaching” (1). One can add to this the accepted knowledge that teacher s are generally only accountable for one-third of the overall impact toward student success or failure. From as far back as the 1966 *Coleman Report,* the ratio of “one-third in-school factors, two-thirds family characteristics has been used to explain variations in student achievement” (Barkan 42). This quotient is reconfirmed more recently in Richard Rothstein’s 2004 book, *Class and Schools,* “No analyst has been able to attribute less than two-thirds of the variation in achievement among schools to the family characteristics of their students” (14).

More specifically, the hammer has dropped since 2010 when the U.S. Department of Education in the *No Child Left Behind* legislation demanded that teacher evaluation would be henceforth based on fifty percent observation and fifty percent student performance data. While the common stress of being judged by an administrator who may have lost touch with the challenges of the public school classroom is timorous enough, the notion that one’s career is hinged on the unpredictable and often treacherous environmental factors that may lead to subpar scores on standardized tests, creates unbearable anxiety. The public, district, state, and local expectation that a teacher should be able to maintain creativity, autonomy, and academic

freedom in the face of this anxiety is the oppressive element of our current situation.

Diminishing Autonomy

"If teachers are to be empowered and exalted as professionals, then like other professionals, teachers must have the freedom to prescribe the best treatment for their students as doctors/lawyers do for their patients/clients" (Pearson and Moomaw 38). What follows is a highlight reel of commentary published by the *Washington Post* in Valerie Strauss' on-line editorial column, *The Answer Sheet*. The tidbits are borrowed from an e-mail sent by a Frederick, Maryland teacher who chooses to remain anonymous to protect her job. The comments perfectly illustrate the problem of disappearing autonomy or the growing puppet mentality so prevalent in our public schools:

> My job is to be debased by an inescapable environment of distrust which insists that teachers cannot be permitted to create and administer their own tests and quizzes, now called "assessments," or grade their own students' work appropriately. The developments of plans, choice of content, and the texts to be used are increasingly expected to be shared by all teachers in a given subject. In a world where I am constantly instructed to "differentiate" my methods, I am condemned for using different resources than those provided because if I do, we are unable to share "data" with the county and the nation at large.
>
> This counter-intuitive methodology smothers creativity. It restricts students' critical thinking, and assumes a one-size-fits-all attitude that contradicts the message teachers receive. Teacher planning time has been so swallowed by the constant demand to prove our worth to the domination of oppressive teacher evaluation methods that there is little time for us to carefully analyze student work, conduct our own research, genuinely better ourselves through independent study instead of the generic mandated developments, or talk informally with our co-workers about intellectual pursuits. For a field that touts individuality and differentiation, we are forced to lump students together as we prepare all of these individuals for identical, common assessments. As a profession, we have become increasingly driven by meaningless data points and constant evaluation as opposed to discovery and knowledge.
>
> Originality, experimentation, academic liberty, teacher autonomy, and origination are being strangled in ill-advised efforts to "fix" things that were never broken. If I must prove my worth and my students' learning through the provision of a measurable set of objectives, then I have taught them nothing because things of value cannot be measured. Inventiveness, inquisitiveness, attitude, work ethic, passion, these things cannot be quantified to a meager data point in an endless

> table of scrutiny.
>
> I am paid to give out gold stars to everyone so that no one feels left out, to give everyone an A because they feel sad if they don't have one. I take the perpetual, insane harassment from parents who insist that their child's failings are solely my fault because I do not coddle them to the point of being unable to accept any sort of critique; if each student is not perfect and prepared for college and life by age twelve, then I must be wrong about the quality of their work. I lower my own standards so much that I have been thinking my grades were generous. After years of being harangued, I gave B's to D-quality work, but that is never good enough. All I can do is field the various phone calls, meetings, and e-mails, to let myself be abused, slandered, spit at because that is my career, taking the fall for our country's mistakes and skewed priorities. So if you want your child to get an education, then I'm afraid that as a teacher, I can't help you, but feel free to stop by if you want a sticker and a C. (Strauss)

Sadly, this teacher is not alone, nor is she representative of a minority contingent of agitators. Rather, she speaks with the voice of four million teachers, who have been systematically entrapped in a high-stakes, test-driven machine we call modern public education. When a "scripted curriculum" (Rose, *Mismeasure* 14) is mandated, when no child is permitted to fail, when Art and Music are cut entirely to accommodate additional time for Literacy and Math, then there is "no joy here, only admonition" (14). Indeed, autonomy has disappeared. A teacher is expected to enact values and a sense of morality in the classroom, and this requires a "commitment to the work itself, as well as the prerogative to make consequential decisions about that work, and control over important aspects of the teaching process" (Huberman and Vandenberghe 3).

So why is autonomy in the classroom important? It is what distinguishes teaching as a profession. The freedom to create, organize, deliver, influence, share, listen, give feedback, and lead young minds to discovery of their own truths, is essential to the profession. Additionally, as curriculum autonomy increases, on-the-job stress decreases, and as general teacher autonomy increases so do empowerment and professionalism (Pearson and Moomaw 48). Mike Rose, in his contribution to the book, *Public Education Under Siege,* points out that in the modern push for

school reform, teachers and students are discussed only as abstractions "stick figures on a policy grid" (11). Teacher autonomy is displaced because we no longer place high importance on the non- economic reasons for sending students to school—reasons that in a democracy were once justifications for schooling: intellectual, social, civic, ethical, and aesthetic (11). If portions of the organizational structure, or conflicting expectations from within or without, block the teachers' ability to pursue their values, then burnout is far more likely (Huberman and Vandenberghe 3).

Higher Stress

At times, it seems a teacher is treated as little more than a babysitter. Such a realization is stressful indeed to an individual who took on the vocation as a professional, continues to acquire (at their own cost) updated schooling as a professional, is expected to conduct himself professionally, and is directly responsible for the nurturing and guidance of as many as 160 students every day. It was the mid 1970s when references to "stress in teaching" began to appear more widely in the media and in research (Coates and Thoresen 160; Dunham 1; Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, "Review" 299). The most widely accepted definition of teacher stress is "the experience by a teacher of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher" (Kyriacou, *Directions* 28). The relevance of teacher stress in this research is that "prolonged stress can lead to teacher burnout" (29). Stress, widely attributed to maintaining discipline, teaching students who lack motivation, time pressure and workload, coping with change, being evaluated by others, administration and management, role conflict and ambiguity, and poor working conditions (Travers and Cooper 37; Benmansour 14; Pithers and Soden 270), is prevalent in the teaching profession. In fact, the latest surveys indicate that teaching is one of the "high stress" professions (Travers and Cooper 37; Dunham and Varma 5; Kyriacou, "Review" 146). Stress,

with its accompanying attack on physical, psychological, and emotional well–being, leads to burnout and the loss of experienced human capital.

Everybody is stressed it seems. In our modern world full of extra demands and limited time in our work and home pursuits, we can easily feel the symptoms of stress. Stress is what is experienced when people feel overwhelmed by things happening in their lives, to the extent that it produces a psychological and physiological response. In a healthy individual, the stress response can keep us sharp or keep us from danger, but left unchecked, stress can lead to serious medical problems, including high blood pressure, depression, fatigue, insomnia, headaches, memory loss, high blood sugar, digestive problems, stroke, back pain, brain tissue damage, and even reduced sex appeal (Fodor 44).

Table 1.1

Consequences of Occupational Stress

Personal	**Psychological**	**Behavioral**
Cardiovascular Disease	Anxiety	Dispensary visits Drug use and abuse
Gastrointestinal disorders	Depression	Over or under-eating
Respiratory problems	Dissatisfaction	Nervous gesturing
Cancer	Boredom	Pacing
Arthritis	Somatic complaints	Risky behavior
Headaches	Psychological fatigue	Aggression Vandalism Stealing
Bodily injuries	Feelings of futility	Poor interpersonal relations
Skin disorders	Feelings of inadequacy	Suicide or attempted suicide
Physical strain or fatigue	Low self-esteem	
Death	Alienation	
	Psychoses	
	Anger, Repression	
	Loss of concentration	

Source: Corsini, Raymond J. and Auerbach, Alan J. Concise Encyclopedia of Psychology NY: Wiley 1998. 600. Print.

Stress has been known as the silent killer because if ignored, it has serious ramifications. Table 1.1 charts the purported consequences of occupational stress.

So what does this mean for someone in a highly stressful occupation? Teaching is a highly stressful occupation. It has been determined that teacher stress and burnout inevitably affect the learning environment (Guglielmi and Tatrow 61) and that "the high level of stress associated with teaching has serious implications for the healthy functioning of individual teachers and schools" (Hansen and Sullivan 611), as well as individual consequences such as heart disease (Theorell and Karasek 23).

Teaching is stressful because it is hard; it is perhaps one of the most difficult of the professions. By comparison, in other professions (e.g., doctor, lawyer) "success lies in the skills and knowledge of the practitioner and outcomes are relatively predictable" (Labaree 33), but in teaching, we depend on students, with their often unpredictable, erratic, and ever-changing needs, for our success. This fact alone is an ample agent for stress. Add to this an uncertainty about job security tied to standardized test results, a disappearing ability to make decisions of consequence in the classroom, and a feeling of abandonment by the general public, and the stress is formidable. Though certainly not the only stressful occupation, alarming numbers of teachers experience "psychological distress, mental and physical fatigue, and psychological burnout when compared to other professions" (Shernoff et al. 59).

Less Support from School Administration and the Public.

On several recent lists of "causes" for teacher stress is a concern about administration and management. In a recent empirical study by researchers at Texas A & M University, administration was found to be one of "the biggest influential factors" impacting teacher attrition (Gonzalez, Brown, and Slate 6). Participants in the study listed disrespect from administrators as

one of the biggest problems. Corrupt administrators, and administrators with questionable ethical standards were also cited. This is a grave contrast to the ideal "Principals can profoundly influence student achievement by working with teachers to shape a school environment conducive to learning" (Bottoms and Fry, iii)

Regarding public support, teachers are functioning daily in the midst of reports on reform attempts that target them as the enemy of student achievement. Reformers from both sides of the political fence have expressed a desire, and funded efforts to realize a "value-added" measure of teacher performance because "in the eyes of reformers, teachers are not sufficiently professional, competent, or reliable to be granted the autonomy of a real profession" (Labaree 39). Criticism for teachers has never been scarce throughout our history because "society expects so much and so many different results from schooling" (Sarason, *Schooling* 36). Even today, the prevailing attitude of the public toward teachers is heavily influenced by the cultural assumption that "teaching is neither full-time nor fully professional work" (Farber, *Crisis* 210), when, in reality "teaching is hard, teaching looks easy, and teachers are an easy target" (Labaree 33).
It seems that every day a new attack on teachers appears from local or national political organizations, zealous politicians, or well-meaning but misinformed citizens. Such a frequency of disdain for a profession considered "central to student achievement" (Rose, *Mismeasure* 14), is troubling and contributes to the anxiety and frustrations of today's public school teacher. "In the end, the quality of American education can be no greater than the dignity we assign to teaching" (Boyer 11). Where did we go wrong in our estimation of blame?

Teacher's Self-Perception

Given all the truths of the preceding sections, it is not surprising that a teacher's self-perception might diminish or disappear completely. Self-perception, one's opinion of

themselves, is vulnerable in a land of disrespectful, disenchanted, and entitled urban adolescents. Imagine spending eight hours (or more) a day surrounded by loudly demanding, aggressive, and disgruntled teenagers, and being tasked with the charge to "teach" them. Whatever you thought you were at the onset, no matter where your self-perception had led you to, at the end of each of those days, you are depleted. Yes, there are wins for rejuvenation. But the wins are too few to sustain us. I often quip that the students are "winning" as though the classroom were a battlefield. I am prone to overdramatize situations, but there is real drama in students who are asked to do less and less, while teachers are consistently required to do more and more to accommodate them. A prime example is my own school district, which has recently enacted "value grading" which is newspeak for "make it easier to pass so we can count you on our graduation stats and point to our great success." Truly, with this system, a student can pass one quarter of my four-quarter class, and just pass the final exam, earning him a passing grade for the course. This may do wonders for the adolescent's self-perception, though it is a false perception. But for the teacher there is an immediate crush to self-perception, as we begin to see our knowledge, our teaching skills and ourselves as un-valued. Because most teachers are teaching as a vocation of passion, such an assessment can be devastating.

Self-perception studies with teachers are difficult to find in the existing research literature. Many scholars are still citing the work of Daryl J. Bem at the Carnegie Institute of Technology who offered self-perception as an alternative theory to cognitive dissonance. One study in recent years is the work of Jacqueline Kareem who found that the social self, teaching effectiveness, academic problem solving and self-esteem, which together constitute self-concept of teachers, are dependent on their everyday teaching and learning activities. Therefore, to achieve mutual benefit between goals and objectives of education, the institutions should ensure

achievement of positive self-concept among teachers, which could result in better teaching and learning outcomes. (Kareem and Ravirot 68) A second study of interest and applicability is a 1992 study by Issac Friedman and Barry Farber in which the primary goal was to investigate the relationship of teacher burnout to the various ways that teachers view themselves professionally, and to the ways in which they sense that others within the educational system view them. The duo used the MBI with 641 teachers in Israeli elementary schools. Results indicate that:

> of several dimensions of professional self-concept, professional satisfaction–how teachers feel about the gratification they receive from discrepancies among scores on the self-concept dimensions, the discrepancy between teachers' views of themselves as professionally competent and professionally satisfied bore the strongest correlation to burnout; that stronger correlations to burnout existed in terms of how teachers perceive themselves rather than how they feel that others perceive them; and that from the point of view of teachers, both parents and principals have an exaggerated sense of teachers' professional satisfaction, discrepancies that in both cases were significantly correlated with burnout. Teachers, it was argued, need to give themselves credit for even partial educational successes, to prevent burnout. (Friedman and Farber 1)

Both are very compelling studies and give great credence to the need for attention to self in teachers. Clearly, the current efforts are nowhere near enough. What the studies do not expand into is the "what to do about it" portion of the problem. This area is specifically what my study attempts to address. Ethnodrama, when applied to teachers, will improve teacher's self-concept and self-perception, enabling them to deliver the quality, effective education our children deserve.

How Did Public Education Get This Messed Up?

The stresses of the public school classroom are not limited to those I have addressed above, though for most battle-weary educators, the challenges fall loosely within these markers. Most teachers learn to roll with the punches that the daily teaching experience throws at them. We can learn to shake our heads and move on when inexplicable bureaucratic snafus place

incredible burdens upon our already limited time. We learn to deal with a myriad of student issues, from behavior to emotional and physical health, to depression, to acting out for no apparent reason. But for many, there is just no getting used to, or understanding, what seems the constant belittling of teachers by parents, media, school personnel, community leaders, and the public at large.

The original notion of burnout emphasized a state of exhaustion brought on by working too intensely and without regard to one's personal needs (Farber, *Crisis* 6). In the mid 1970s Freudenberger drew attention to the problem in public service employees and told us that workers were burning out because "they were working too hard and caring too much" (161). His work did little to improve the image of teachers in the public eye, as by 1991, 80% of teachers had never felt satisfied with their standing in society (Farber, *Crisis* 58). Today, three of four Americans say they have trust and confidence in teachers (Bushaw and Lopez 10), yet only 44% of teachers report that they are satisfied with their jobs (The Metlife Survey). The gap between public opinion of teachers and teacher's self-perception is troubling, as it emphasizes the added stressors teachers face in successfully teaching students. It is inherently difficult to serve a public whose opinion of you is less than admiring. No doubt, there are teachers who shut down in the face of undeserved or misplaced public criticism, and others who see the mistrust as a challenge. The point, of course, is that teachers are not solely responsible for the failure of public education. What the reader may have experienced, or observed through film, television, and Internet media, is not the reality of the American public school classroom. Admittedly, there are problems with the public school system attempting to keep pace with forces vying for student attention, and struggling to be a one-stop social services, education, and parent stand-in. In a relatively short period of time, educators have sustained serious damage from misguided legislation, while some

politicians continue an attempt to discredit teachers and dislodge the unions that protect them. What is relevant about the changes our U.S. education system is going through is that "the issue of teacher responsibility for student learning must be placed within the broader context of what has been happening in American society for more than a generation outside the classroom" (Breslin 1). We must be careful in blaming teachers, and allowing that blame to dictate our plan to "develop" better teachers.

Current Recommendations and Efforts of Policymakers (Trends in Teacher Development)

Despite the obvious increase of pressures from current value-added teacher evaluation, which is a product of the federal government's 2001, *No Child Left Behind* enactment, relatively little renewed attention has been given to the alarming rate of high stress, burnout, and early attrition of teachers. Worse, the current education reform effort targets teachers, and promotes an "accountability mechanism that results in the narrowing of curriculum" (Katz and Rose 232). Reform efforts favor content over pedagogy to the extent that it leads to reckless teacher certification that does not include adequate student teaching and pedagogical training (Porter-Magee 27). An excellent example of such reform effort is the *Teach for America* program created by Wendy Kopp as a part of her senior thesis at Princeton, funded by Ross Perot and other politicians (Clabaugh 101) and touted as a "revolutionary teacher training program" (Morrison 1). The program, which, "attracts people to the classroom who apparently either are unwilling or unable to make a legitimate, much less adequate effort to become expert teachers" (Clabaugh 101), is maligned by the National Education Policy Center as "a program best understood as a weak Band-Aid that sometimes provides some benefits but that is recurrently and systematically ripped away and replaced" (Heilig and Su Jin Jez 1). If we currently face an excess of burnout among pedagogically trained and experienced teachers, what will be the results

when teachers with heavy content and no pedagogy enter the urban classroom?

The efforts toward education reform lack any attention to teacher well being, teacher spirit, enthusiasm, energy, or creativity, only teacher accountability. This accountability seeks to assign a measurement to the teacher's effectiveness by testing students' content knowledge going in and coming out. This orientation ignores that teaching is more than transferring content from one vessel to another, and neglects the disparity in students' preparedness; it is nearly impossible to achieve grade-level standards when some students come in so vastly underprepared. Teaching is hard. "Education requires more than acquiring knowledge, since we ask it to take students and turn them into something else – law-abiding citizens, productive workers, ambitious achievers. Changing people's behavior, attitude, character, and cultural yearnings is a lot harder than fixing a technical problem in the human body" (Labaree 34). Teacher development is addressed in section 9101 of NCLB, and, like the remainder of the legislation, proceeds to heavily regulate what is a permissible (funded) professional development activity. Missing from the descriptors is any mention of teacher well being, emotional health, energy, or enthusiasm.

Teacher development typically means teaching teachers to be more effective in the classroom. Current topics in professional development for teachers include STEM initiatives (Jolly 50), positive discipline (Nelsen, Lott, and Glenn 2), and technology integration in the classroom (bestprep.org). Each of these and so many more, are understandably student-focused, as the successful student is the ultimate goal of the teaching-learning routine. However, in the melee of programs, workshops, and quick-fix seminars, the teacher-as-person is often neglected. It is time to pay attention to those on the front lines. Parker J. Palmer speaks of good teachers and their hearts "animated by a passion for some subject and for helping people learn" (*Exploring* 17). For most, the things they teach about are the things they care about and "what

[they] care about helps define [their] selfhood" (17). In order to reclaim our hearts, our selfhood, for the sake of ourselves and our students, attention must finally be paid to the teacher's own wellness.

Concern for teacher well being then, is nearly non-existent in the current prescription for improvement. To date, fewer than five fledgling programs focus on teacher health and wellness. These are programs designed to address teacher stress and improve teacher performance via mindfulness training (MT) and habits of mind. Two of these are outlined here as they include elements and practices potentially relevant to my study, and are theoretically sound. The first is a teacher development program called Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE). The second effort is a Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program developed at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Both programs focus on the individual (the teacher), and address spiritual and emotional health, leading to improvements in classroom management, interpersonal relationships, image of self, and generally a happier, more positive outlook.

CARE was developed at the Garrison Institute (NY), to "reduce teachers' distress and promote improvement in teachers' well being, motivational orientation/efficacy, and mindfulness" (Jennings et al. 38). The program includes work in three primary areas: Emotion Skills Instruction, Mindfulness/Stress Reduction Practices, and Caring and Listening Practices and is presented in four daylong sessions over a 4–5 week period. CARE has been found to be effective in improving teacher self-awareness and well being and effecting a positive impact on – classroom management and maintaining supportive relationships with students (42). A second program, from The Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts, uses Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction techniques in combination with Parker J. Palmer's Courage to Teach

Program. The University of Massachusetts web site (http://umassmed.edu/cfm) lists a five-day mindfulness tools workshop as well as on-line support and training opportunities for those who wish to teach mindfulness.

Both programs support the concept that if teachers practice mindfulness “they are better able to cope” (Napoli 34), and “meet the stressful challenges that confront them today” (31). As I am interested in assessing the stressors leading to teacher burnout, attention to the individual teacher as a person is paramount. Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, though not new, is relatively recent in application to teachers’ stress. One glaring challenge to the use of MBSR is the time commitment required. “MT (Mindfulness Training) programs often require a significant time commitment from teachers who already have hectic lives” (Roeser et al. 171). A second, subtler, but very real challenge in getting MT to teachers is the likelihood of teacher skepticism. Both challenges are addressed in my research.

Forging a New Approach

How is this problem to be addressed? The first recommendation of the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) in their 2007 study, *The Cost of Teacher Turnover in Five School Districts: Executive Summary,* is “invest in new teacher support and development” (Barnes, Crow and Schaefer 3). I am not the first in recent years to recognize a missing link in teacher development. I applaud the efforts and impact of those who share my concern. Parker J. Palmer in his *Courage to Teach* series, Joanna Krop in her teachingwellbeing.com website and Adam Saenz who heads thepowerofateacher.com website, in addition to the MT programs outlined previously, are all concerned with the wellness of the person who is daily charged with guiding, counseling, advising, correcting, delighting, and teaching our nation’s youth, often in environments fraught with barest resources, culturally

fueled unrest, parent apathy, and administrative exigencies. Although I am not the first to be concerned about or diagnose a need for change in this arena, I believe that my proposed approach to the problem is unique.

Existing efforts lack feasibility. That is, they require too much time investment from teachers who already suffer from the marked increase in assigned responsibilities and high expectations for performance of those tasks; "Task load and performance expectations become particularly potent stressors when they interact with time constraints" (Smylie 62). A second shortcoming of current mindfulness training for teachers is one of credibility. Teachers may be hesitant to commit the time and even minimal effort to a program perceived as experimental, soft, or ultra-progressive. A better approach might be to make the mindfulness work more palatable, more appealing, and perhaps even more effective through the medium of edutainment; a simultaneous learning and entertaining experience.

The Promise of Interactive Theatre and Ethnodrama

Immediately, the word *theatre* brings to mind a more mirthful, enjoyable experience than, say, *seminar* or even *workshop*. Interactive theatre is simply a theatre experience in which the audience is invited to participate. It is not uncommon that interactive theatre is used at colleges and universities, for example, "to facilitate student affairs training: sketches on topics like date rape and substance abuse are often used at orientation sessions" (Kaplan, Cook, and Steiger 3). However, the use of interactive theatre practices in faculty development to "present research on teaching improvement focused on problems instructors typically face" (3) is an even more recent and limited practice. Of note in this arena is the work of the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) at the University of Michigan, the Difficult Dialogues Interactive Theatre at the University of Missouri, and the Interactive Theatre Project at the University of Colorado.

Each of these programs seeks to bring learning and insight to their audiences in a more palatable blend of education and entertainment often called “edutainment.”

Interactive theatre works because “it combines the best elements of reflection and exchange characteristics of professional development workshops with the power and creativity of theatre. And the sketches use a set of strategies that allow the faculty to open up regarding issues that they would normally resist dealing with” (Kaplan, Cook, and Steiger 7). Interactive theatre can assume different formats, but typically an audience of faculty and other stakeholders will view a sketch, then engage in dialogue with the actors still in role, or discuss the issues, and then see a reenactment incorporating their suggestions, or even taking on a stage role themselves. The discussions sparked by the performances are often uncomfortable and difficult, as the theatrical elements have enabled participants to more quickly reach the core of issues. “Faculty are drawn into making sense of the issues portrayed, relating them to personal experience, and strategizing about how to transform a difficult situation” (11). It is the theatrical distance that promotes more difficult dialogue to surface, perhaps even a sense of anonymity for the teacher or other stakeholders to utilize when they would not normally in a typical meeting. If you have ever worn a mask to a party, you know the feeling of anonymity, which allows you to release reserved pieces of your opinion and personality.

Ethnodrama, alternatively known as ethnotheatre “employs traditional techniques of formal theatre production to mount a performance event whose characters are actual research participants portrayed by actors” (Saldaña, *Ethical* 181). In ethnodrama, important selections from interview transcripts and field notes of a study are arranged, scripted and dramatized for an audience (182). Johnny Saldaña, recently retired from Arizona State University, is the foremost scholar and practitioner of ethnodrama in the United States today. He has almost exclusively

pioneered the form of "research oriented art" (194) over the last twenty years, and authored or co-authored over ten books, including *Ethnotheatre: Research from Page to Stage*, and *Ethnodrama: An Anthology of Reality Theatre*. Saldaña was influenced early on by the work of Norman K. Denzin and his work in *Interpretive Ethnography*. Denzin intrigued and motivated Saldaña with his assertion that "the performance text is the single, most powerful way for ethnography to recover yet interrogate the meanings of lived experience" (Denzin 94–95).

Both interactive theater and ethnodrama are branches of the same tree, and get their sustenance from the work of Augusto Boal, who in turn, was heavily influenced by educational theorist, Paulo Freire. Freire believed that people learn best by doing, and Boal incorporated that view into a method that involved engaging people by presenting a problem in action (theatre), then asking the audience to develop and discuss solutions to the problem. The method works because most people see theatre as a diversion, a form of entertainment that "inspires, amuses, or provokes us and that engages our creative imagination" (Kaplan, Cook, and Steiger 33). The connection then, is performance to reach people and cultivate authentic response. Freire's "learning to do by doing it" (*Monopoly* 30), led to Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed.* This spawned many variations including *Forum, Image,* and *Legislative* Theatre, and these have led to further adaptations of interactive theatre practices. For example, *applied theatre*, which "is derived from the 'theatre of the oppressed' tradition of Augusto Boal" (Thompson 16), and more recently, Saldaña's *Ethnodrama* and *Ethnotheatre*. The point here is that interactive processes, where observers are incorporated as opposed to distanced, are effective in promoting authentic dialogue. The present study is an exploration of the potential of interactive theatre to impact the lives of teachers.

Teaching and Leadership

Are teachers leaders? The question typically draws a confused look, and a stammered answer along the lines of "yes, but in a different way." Today, teachers are still considered the lowest pawn in a hierarchical school system where a clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities presents a major barrier to the idea of teachers as leaders (Harris 314). The short answer is "yes" teachers are leaders, in both an informal fashion – classroom functions like planning, communicating goals, regulating activities, creating a pleasant workplace environment, supervising, motivating those supervised, and evaluating their performance. The more formal leadership roles teachers assume include responsibilities such as committee membership, department heads, and advisors (Ash and Persall 16; Gehrke 2). Regardless of these delineations, "the social exchange theory of leadership still prevails" (Harris 314). That is to say that the Principal as "leader" provides services to the group (faculty), in exchange for the group's approval or compliance with the leader's demands.

The pursuit of a new specific area of study currently known as *Teacher Leadership* is still in play. Today there is much more talk about shared leadership, leadership teams, and distributed leadership as the case for building teacher leadership. "Teacher leadership is centrally and exclusively concerned with the idea that all organizational members can lead, and that leadership is a form of agency that can be distributed or shared" (Harris 317). While the current literature on school leadership contains many definitions and subtle differences among descriptions of "leadership," one major premise prevails – that leadership somehow equates with position or role. "It is premised upon individual impetus rather than collective action and offers a heroic view of leadership predominantly bound up with headship" (318). The informant panel workshops described in this dissertation are agents of distributed leadership carrying

Sergiovanni's notion of the "'lifeworld' of the school rather than the 'systemworld,' where attention is focused upon developing social, intellectual, and other forms of human capital instead of concentrating upon achievement of narrow, instrumental ends" (321).

The discussion of leadership would not be complete without the mention of Social Change Theory. Susan Komives and Wendy Wagner in their book, *Leadership for a Better World,* describe social change in terms appealing to college students wishing to get involved. They address a number of elements contributing to the definition of "social change," some of which I list here in Table 1.2 as perfectly aligned with my research.

Table 1.2

Parallels of This Research to the Social Change Model

Social Change Defined	Relation to the Present Research
Addresses the root cause of problems	Looking for basic issues in discussion
Is collaborative	Is collaborative
Being Directly Affected by the Problem	Teachers are certainly affected
Marginality	Teachers under growing strain and pressure consistently feel not valued.

"Change is the ultimate goal of the creative process of leadership – to make a better world and a better society for self and others" (HERI 21, qtd. in Komives and Wagner 9). This is the thrust of my research work, to make a better world for all by positively impacting teachers, who nurture our most precious resource, our children. Both leadership and change are integral to the daily responsibility of teachers and teaching. This research seeks to change teachers' perspectives on their relationship with teaching, and to help them recognize their roles as leaders. Yes, teachers are leaders, and more importantly, their leadership prepares generations of future leaders.

Dissertation Question

The research question for this dissertation is: How might ethnodrama influence teachers' perceptions of themselves and promote teacher euphoria? Such a question, though simple in construction, holds strong implications for the teaching-learning profession. If teachers are not well, and as a result, experience *burnout* and leave the profession before they are seasoned, or even marginally effective, where does that leave the student, the school system, the taxpayer, and the nation? For any chosen vocation, self-health is important, and stress is not unique to the teaching field. However, with so much riding on the education of our youth, teacher wellness, stability, creative energy, and sense of sufficiency must immediately be addressed in order to stay the current trend of deterioration.

It is my contention that interactive theatre practices (ethnodrama), by their educative and entertainment capabilities have a unique, although largely untested, advantage in reaching teachers. Good theatre, as a performance art, touches the spectator and the performer emotionally, and provides a lasting self-reflection, potentially leading to self-assessment and self-improvement. Interactive theatre goes a step beyond, providing the audience an opportunity to interact with characters on stage - questioning, sharing, and learning with each communication. In a best-case scenario, the resulting synergy is cathartic. Ethnotheatre is the interactive technique I employed in this project. It is defined as a practice that "employs traditional craft and artistic techniques of formal theatre production to mount a live performance event of research participants' experiences and/or researchers interpretations of data for an audience," (Saldaña, *Primer* 218).

Dissertation Concept

The project I have completed here has required: a thorough understanding of the challenges currently facing public school teachers, theoretical and practical efforts to overcome these challenges in the past, current teacher professional development practices, interactive theatre work in faculty development, best practices in collection and analysis of ethnographic data, a measured grasp of action research, and human wellness study and practices.

In addition to a background, an introduction to the problem, and an associated literature review, this project pursues the following steps:

1. Select and assemble a panel of willing teachers (informants) to discuss their experiences in education, share their concerns and explore options.
2. Create a scripted sketch or play using the data collected from the informants.
3. Build, rehearse, and prepare the script for production, using the informants as much as possible from the performers.
4. Perform the sketch for an audience of teachers, apply interactive techniques.
5. Assess immediate reported impact.

The project has a dual focus, and ethnographic data was collected on both the smaller teacher informant group and the larger faculty group. The informants had the small-group, intensive experiences, and a deeper experience as performers in the produced sketch. The larger teacher group mandated by district guidelines to attend faculty developments was the audience for the performed sketch in a faculty development workshop environment.

Rationale for This Research

My rationale for researching this question stems from my passion for teaching, the clear and present struggles of our nation’s public education system, and my great respect for the power

of theatre arts to move our emotions. As an educator, I have seen directly the effects of stressed teachers both in the classroom and in their personal lives. It is abhorrent to me that in a country that often claims to highly value teachers as leaders and shapers of young minds, we do so little to ensure these public servants a chance at long-term effectiveness, career satisfaction, and community supported self-efficacy. Furthermore, as a teacher of theatre arts, I have seen the immense power of performance to enlighten, entertain, and change lives. It is natural for me to connect the power of live performance to the desperate need for improvement in the lives of teaching professionals.

The study employs action research, which not only produces local knowledge, but has the "potential to inform the knowledge bases of other fields of study" (Herr and Anderson 128). Action research is still in its relative infancy, yet is the perfect choice in my inquisitive mission, as I mimic the model of "action research as liberation," made prominent by the work of Myles Horton of the Highlander Center, and previously by Paulo Freire in his *thematic research* (*Pedagogy* 15). Freire emphasized the importance of oppressed people becoming masters of their own thinking and supported a view of education that "starts with the conviction that it can not present its own program but must search for this program dialogically with the people" (Freire, *Pedagogy* 125). In fact, the inductive process of Freire's work, in which *generative themes* were drawn from community members, used for instruction, and were catalyst for change (Herr and Anderson 15), is precisely what my project does.

Therefore, my study is both relevant to the practice of teaching and teacher's personal well- being, and makes a significant contribution to the field of educational studies, specifically Teacher Development. The project contributes to the improvement of social conditions for teachers, making them better suited for the stresses of the ever more challenging classroom, and

ultimately, leads to higher achievement in the students they teach. I believe that this project promotes the dignity and worth of teachers, as well as better resourcing and positive attention to these unsung warriors. Additionally, my work contributes to positive community and organizational change amid the fascinating blend of cultural idiosyncrasies and societal beliefs thrown together in our public schools.

I am well prepared and especially qualified for this research project by way of my various learning achievements in this Ph.D. program, as well as my two decades of teaching experience in the urban public schools, and a few years of private and higher education experience. My background includes a deep kinship to the performing arts, as an actor, director, designer, and teacher. My life has been enriched by my experiences, and this culminating study reflects the depth of that richness and my passion and commitment to human dignity and social consciousness.

An experience I encountered as an instructor at the United States Air Force Academy is the emotional and spiritual infrastructure to this research work. For nearly two years I was employed as an English and Study Skills instructor. My students were U.S. Air Force cadets, accustomed to the rigid structure of military life, and voracious learners. I recall the exaggerated feeling of accomplishment and pride I held as I walked out of my classroom each day. I was thrilled that students were interested enough to ask questions, to contribute to discussion, to challenge each other, and me, in our thinking, our values, our socialization, and our general understanding of the world and of each other. In short, it was exactly what I believe education should be, and not at all what I had ever experienced before or since. I recall that I was so "pumped up," so excited, that I quite often bragged good-naturedly about how great I was in class that day, how I had set them "on fire," and how we had explored so much. I honestly loved

teaching.

When my Air Force Academy experience ended and I eventually returned to the inner city public school system, I recognized a major maxim that sticks with me daily as I again floundered about un-supported, disrespected, taken-for-granted, overworked, and relegated to the lowly public service position of public school teacher. I am not sure where I first heard the statement, but I know that I wholeheartedly agree, and this dissertation is my first attempt to correct the snafu: *At the end of the day, if you, the teacher, are more exhausted than your students, you're doing it wrong.* I believe that we are doing it wrong in this country. Despite the ever-growing legislation and regulation, we will always have to trust our teachers to be our surrogate parents. Teachers matter. Teachers make us who we are, and by doing so, shape the future of our world. The feeling, challenge, and exuberance I felt in the Air Force Academy environment is one I wish to experience again in public school. This then, is the euphoria all teachers are entitled to, and a goal worthy of aspiring to in this research endeavor.

Organization of This Dissertation

Beyond this introduction, Chapter II provides an in-depth review of the current relevant literature for each aspect of my project. This necessarily includes the extant literature on stress, morale, and burnout in teachers, mindfulness and self-care as effective in public employees, interactive theatre practice, and to a lesser degree, action research and ethnography practices. The review of literature also includes related theoretical works that have had influence on the current situation in education, the power of theatre to change, the introductory background of mindfulness work, and a symbiotic relationship to positive psychology.

Chapter III describes in detail how my study was conducted. Specifically, ethnodrama as action research, and as the chosen methodology is discussed and applied to my research

questions. Within this chapter, I describe the participants of the initial small group work, my role in the group, my data collection methods, and the script writing process. Covered in detail in Chapter III are: The Problem, The Question, The Purpose, The Assumptions, and The Procedures.

Chapter IV is a report of the results of the project. Here I have included comments from participants, a summary of the large group faculty event, and any significant action or discussion that may have happened as a result of the project. Additionally, a copy of the script generated from the informant panel data is included in its final (performance ready) form. In reporting these results, I have included an artistic analysis of the data. By this, I mean I have heeded the strong warnings of the aforementioned leading authority on ethnodrama, ethnotheatre, and qualitative research for artists, Johnny Saldaña. In his latest book: *Ethnotheatre: Research From Page to Stage*, Saldaña writes “Stop thinking like a social scientist and start thinking like an artist. Don’t code your empirical materials as you would for a traditional qualitative study” (117). As an artist-practitioner-scholar, I fully understand and appreciate Saldaña’s charge. Each collection of data-suppliers is in reality, a group of thinking, changing, fickle, and amazing *humans*. As I encountered and interacted with these special humans (teachers), I was acutely aware of their value to society, and I approached the work as “a case study, artistically rendered and customized in its structural design with the unique empirical materials [I had] collected” (118).

Chapter V is a discussion of the project value in terms of the change experience for both the small group (actor – informants) and the larger faculty group. Discussion includes: participant responses, comparison of outcomes to similar studies, and comparison to my expected results. The concept of euphoria and its definition for teachers prior to and after the

ethnodramatic experience is a central focus of this chapter. Also included in Chapter V are recommendations for further study.

Chapter II: Review of the Literature

In this chapter I present a brief review of the extant literature surrounding teacher stress and burnout, the initiatives to alleviate the problem, interactive theatre practices, the potential of ethnodrama as a technique to facilitate the healing, and the ideology represented by Parker Palmer in his work with whole self, as it has served as the common thread connecting my informant panel. Because my project culminates in a presentation to a teaching staff, I also survey current trends in Teacher Development.

Additionally, I am interested in how ethnodrama might impact teachers' perception of themselves, so the current and relative literature on teacher's perception of self is included. Presenting the relevant research helps to frame my work and expose the gaps in current inquiry my project seeks to fill. As discussed in the introduction, the purpose of this research project is to determine the value of ethnodrama in alleviating symptoms of stress and burnout in public school teachers. This chapter also examines current theory and practice in ethnodrama as applied to teacher development. In relating these elements, I am establishing my position within the larger area of theory and practice related to faculty development, teacher wellness, and ethnodrama as a therapeutic approach to rebuilding the energy, enthusiasm, creativity, and drive of teachers in the public school. Finally, as a meaningful ingredient of the related literature inspection, positive psychology will be referenced.

The first order of this project is to examine stress studies as specifically applied to the teaching profession. Second, I examine the literature surrounding current efforts to alleviate stress for teachers and attend to their wellness. Third, I look at burnout interventions, examine Parker Palmer's Book, *Courage to Teach,* and discuss teacher development initiatives. Finally, I share current research utilizing ethnodrama and conclude with a look at positive psychology

theory. Each of these will strengthen my argument that current research offerings are incomplete and do not significantly address the research question.

Teacher Stress

The notion of stress as it directly relates to teachers did not appear in the literature until Chris Kyriacou coined the term in 1977 (Kyriacou and Sutcliffe 299). It is important to note that teacher stress literature is a subset of a much larger aggregation of research on job stress in various occupations and settings. Since the mid ‘70s, methodological and theoretical analysis of teacher stress research has grown sufficiently to isolate it in regards to its larger sibling. The term was used to describe the “experience by a teacher of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration, or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher” (Kyriacou, *Directions* 28).

Workplace stress has been examined from a variety of perspectives including a person-environment-interaction in which stress results from an imbalance between a person’s environment and his/her attempts to conform the environment to their needs (Cherniss 12–14). Another perspective is the “goodness of fit,” defined by John French and his colleagues, where stress results from a lack of fit between the resources of the environment and the worker’s needs and expectations (318). A third view argues stress may result from an environmental situation seen as demanding because it exceeds the worker’s capabilities or resources for handling it (McGrath 1354).

Others have added to the literature with publications and research referring specifically to stress in teaching (Coates and Thoresen 160; Dunham 4–6; Travers and Cooper 7; Vandenberghe and Huberman ii–iv). The most widely accepted definition of teacher stress was shared in the previous chapter and is most often tied to the notion of teacher *burnout*: “a state of emotional,

physical, and attitudinal exhaustion which may develop in teachers who have been unsuccessful in coping effectively with stress over a long period," (qtd. in Kyriacou, *Directions* 28). Stress stems from teaching unmotivated students, attempting to maintain discipline, time pressures and added workloads, evaluations tied to student performance, self-esteem and status issues, administration and management, and role conflict / ambiguity (29). Often cited as the most common motive for leaving teaching (Huberman 143), stress appears as "fatigue, nervous tension, frustration, wear and tear, difficulties in adapting to pupils, personal fragility, and routine," (Kyriacou, *Directions* 29).

There is no shortage of empirical research on teacher stress. Most early studies on teacher stress were of a quantitative variety, employing structured survey instruments (Beasley, Myette, and Serna 12–14; Cichon and Koff 2; Kyriacou, "Sources" 114; Schwab and Iwanicki 65). Such studies controlled the research subject's responses, limiting them to predetermined answers so that they may not have "accurately reflect(ed) the subject's perception of a given phenomenon" (Blase 14). Recent major contributions to the quantitative research literature on teacher stress include Barry Farber's 2001 survey using a modified Maslach Burnout Inventory, Pearson and Moomaw's inquiry into the relationship between autonomy and teacher stress using the Teacher Autonomy Scale (TAS), and a plethora of others measuring everything from stress in its relation to the classroom (Doyle 29), to vague and conflicting goals (Lieberman and Miller 14), changing student populations (Pallas, Natriello, and McDill 34), higher expectations for performance and accountability (Firestone et al. 257) and the shift in social, political, economic, and cultural relations (Hargreaves 20–21).

Two primary models of teacher stress have been studied in recent history. First is the transactional model of stress originally offered by R.S. Lazarus in 1966. The model posits that a

person's cognitive appraisal of events and circumstances along with his or her ability to cope, are the incubators of stress. This requires an individual's coping strategies to be constantly changing to avoid being exceeded by their resources. However, many stressors in the teacher's work environment are beyond the scope of his or her control and therefore lead to a great prevalence of stress in teachers (Kyriacou, *Review* 147). In simplest terms, this model defines stress as a response syndrome determined by a judgment of the threat to the teacher's self-esteem or well-being. A second model may be considered an expansion of the first. Developed by Worrall and May (1989), this extension "implies that the emotional status of teachers influences their cognitive appraisal of demands" (Rudow 40). Thus, stress is created by emotional responses triggering cognitive reaction to overload, or the sense that one has too few resources to handle the demands.

Fewer qualitative studies on teacher stress exist. In 1986 Joseph Blase developed the Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI), an open-ended instrument "designed to collect detailed qualitative data reflecting teachers' perceptions of stress" (14). Essentially grounded-theory research, Blase began with questions rather than hypotheses and allowed categories and relationships to emerge from the data. After coding and constant comparative analysis of the data, he was able to report on "what teachers themselves believe to be the most important sources of work-related stress [because] the research methods employed allowed teachers substantial freedom to explain the meanings of stress from their perspective" (33). This approach is similar in intent to the action research/ethnodrama method I utilize in my project.

Another study of particular interest and application to my work is that of Howard and Johnson. This study explored the experiences of teachers who were coping very well under high-stress teaching conditions. Conducted in Australia, the study focused on discovering whether

"protective factors" used by children and adolescents in stressful situations were being drawn upon by teachers as well. Effectively, the study examined what was going well, rather than what was going wrong (Howard and Johnson 403). The positive-side perspective is refreshing and the study was able to identify a small group of teachers who "persistently cope well with serious occupational stress" by relying on protective factors identified in larger stress coping studies. These protective factors included "a sense of agency, a strong support group, pride in achievements, and competence in areas of personal importance" (415).

Qualitative or quantitative, both approaches to the study of teacher stress indicate that although teachers are not unique in their experience of work-related stress (Miller 40), they report more work-induced stress than non-teachers (Cox and Brockley 85), and teachers in the urban setting are at particular risk for stress and burnout (Farber, *Crisis* 44). Furthermore, teacher stress leading to burnout can be found at the individual, organizational, and societal levels. It is the combination of these widely varied and subjective factors that can lead to a teacher's self-perception of inconsequentiality, and to a serious, debilitating, and costly condition known as burnout.

Teacher Stress Leading to Burnout

Stress, when allowed to fester and when experienced in prolonged and frequent episodes, can lead an individual into what is widely regarded and empirically validated as the three constructs of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Byrne, "Nomological" 15). Symptomatically, teachers may experience feelings of diminished personal accomplishment when they see themselves as ineffective in helping students learn, are likely to be less sympathetic toward students, have a lower tolerance for class disruption and are less apt to prepare for class (16). Furthermore, burnout has been described as

"a progressive loss of idealism, energy, purpose, and concern as a result of conditions of work" (Edelwich and Brodsky 11). Generally, burnout "is a function of feeling inconsequential—feeling that no matter how hard one works, the payoffs in terms of accomplishment, recognition, or appreciation are not there" (Farber, *Suburban* 325). Herbert Freudenberger, as early as 1973, was the first professional to use the term "burnt out" to reference a client in his psychologist practice (Farber, *Crisis* 5). He noted, even in his early studies, that because the concept of burnout is typically applied to human service professionals, there could be no end to the work required of the professional, as the client is insatiably needy. Though not coined for educators, his words nonetheless ring true for teachers today, and quite accurately paint a dim picture of a teacher's struggle to cope and survive:

> The population, which we help, is often in extreme need, and because of this they continually take, suck, demand...these people require a continuous giving on our part. And our feeding supplies appear both to us and to them to be endless. We soon learn, however, that this is a mistaken notion. The supply can–and very often very quickly does dry up. (Freudenberger, *Alternative* 75)

Before surveying the extant literature on burnout in teachers, a distinction must be made between stress and burnout. Stress can, at times, be a good thing, as a moderate amount may motivate action (Selye 31). Burnout is not the direct result of stress, but of unchecked, unresolved stress – the feeling of being trapped with no way out, no support system, and no adequate rewards (Farber, *Suburban* 326). There are four useful theoretical perspectives on the development and concept of burnout. They are very briefly noted in Table 2.1.

Beyond the analysis of these four theoretical perspectives, Byrne contends, "there is currently no established and empirically testable theoretical model of burnout" because there are multiple studies linking burnout and other findings among a variety of professional groups, but

"findings have not been summarized into one conceptual framework that can be replicated and tested statistically" ("Nomological"16).

Table 2.1

Current Theoretical Perspectives on Burnout

Theoretical Perspective	Attributed To:	Features
Clinical	Freudenberger, H.J. "Staff Burnout" *Journal of Social Issues.* 1974	Exhaustion, which results from working too hard without regard for one's own needs.
Social-Psychological	Maslach and Jackson, "The Measurement of Experienced Burnout." *Journal of Occupational Behavior.* 1981.	• Emotional exhaustion Depersonalization • Reduced personal accomplishment
Organizational	Cherniss, Cary. *Professional Burnout in Human Service Organizations.* 1980.	Maslach's elements are coping mechanisms as reaction to stressful, frustrating work
Social-Historical	Sarason, Seymour. *Schooling in America: Scapegoat and Salvation.* 1983.	Impact of society, if social conditions are not right, difficult to maintain a passion for human service work

Source: Byrne, Barbara M. "The Nomological Network of Teacher Burnout: A Literature Review and Empirically Validated Model." *Understanding and Preventing Teacher Burnout.* Eds. A. Michael Huberman and Roland Vandenberghe. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999. 15–37 Print.

Among the four perspectives, Sarason's social-historical perspective rings most relevant to the struggles teachers are experiencing today in the face of misguided reform efforts and misplaced blame for the failure of our schools. "Few things are as destructive of the sense of personal and professional worth as the perception that one's knowledge and capabilities are

underutilized or the feeling that one is being prevented from expanding one's accustomed role (Sarason, *Psychology* 287).

There are many plausible explanations of how burnout might occur, and three are worthy of review here as they will cast light on the problem as it exists, and the sensibility and practicality of suggested solutions. First, from the mid-1990s work of Isaac Friedman is the understanding that burnout is a process undergoing several stages from beginning to realized end. Like most models of the process, Friedman's is unidirectional. That is, it consists of one bit following upon another, in phases: "an emergence of stress, the emergence of stress induced experiences, and finally, the emergence of reactions to the stress-induced experiences" (Friedman, *Shattered* 596). Friedman adds that individuals may follow a cognitive path that leads to feelings of personal, then professional unaccomplishment, or an emotional pathway leading to a sense of overload, then to exhaustion. Typically, burnout is a multidimensional blend of both paths. In both scenarios, the individual responds to such feelings with a composite of functional and dysfunctional reactions (597).

A second insightful analysis and explanation of high stress and burnout begins with the distinction between the components of stress. If we are to assess stress levels, or plan to intervene for improvement, it is important that we share a common language surrounding the issues. Three major components come together to produce what most of us recognize or experience as stress. First is the *stressor.* This is the event, the happening that occurs in the work environment. What that event causes or results in physically or psychologically for the individual is known as the *strain.* We know that not all stressors lead to strain. For some individual teachers an announcement about $50 million in cuts for the next school year may cause muscle tension, or frustration, or anxiety while the same news may have no perceivable effect on another teacher.

This is due to the last component, the ability to make a judgment about the degree of threat of a particular stressor, known as *appraisal* (Hansen and Sullivan 4). By dividing and understanding these separate components, the workplace stress can be manipulated, modified, or reduced to positively impact the damaging stress and fend off burnout.

This stress, when prolonged at high levels, can lead to psychological problems like depression (Paykel 3), physical problems like heart disease (Theorell and Karasek 9), chronic back pain and stomach ailments (Bigos et al. 1), and to a severe condition of extreme exhaustion resulting in negative attitudes toward work and feelings of helplessness and ineffectiveness: burnout (Cordes and Dougherty 639). Along the road to burnout are indicators of high stress: increased absences due to stress-related illness, impaired relationships with coworkers, and feelings of hopelessness and disillusionment, all byproducts of increased workloads, longer working hours, and low salaries (Hansen and Sullivan 4). Major studies on burnout in teachers are numerous and varied. Many seek to isolate the source of stress and dissatisfaction that may lead to burnout (Farber; Friedman; Kyriacou and Sutcliffe; Mazur and Lynch)[1], or examine the psychological effects of teacher stress or burnout (Borg; Cunningham; Kyriacou)[2], or consider the negative physical effects of teacher stress and burnout (Israel et al.; Murphy)[3]. More complementary to my study is research that explores the effectiveness of various intervention strategies in reducing stress and burnout, as this is the driving purpose of my work.

Measuring Burnout

In a recent Google Scholar query for "measuring burnout" the first ten returned citations included the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) as the instrument for determining burnout. The

1. See Farber, "Stress"; Farber, *Crisis*; Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, "Teacher Stress"; Mazur and Lynch.
2. See Borg; Cunningham; Kyriacou, "Teacher Stress."
3. See Israel; Murphy; Ravalier, McVicar and Munn-Giddings.

MBI, developed by Stanford University Psychologist Christina Maslach and Susan E. Jackson in 1986 has been utilized widely in studies of various people-centered vocations, including nursing (Laranjeira), social work (Winstanley and Hales), and education (Bartholomew et al.).

Clearly the leading authority on burnout, Maslach initiated her exploration of burnout in 1976, when she published "Reversing Burnout: How to rekindle your passion for your work" with Michael P. Leiter. Since that time, she has published numerous articles and several books on the subject, including *Burnout: The Cost of Caring* (2003) and *The Truth About Burnout*: *How organizations cause personal stress and what to do about it.* The inventory measures burnout along three general scales: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. It is lauded as an "invaluable tool for assessing professional burnout in human service, education, business, and government professions" (mindgarden.com). Furthermore, the three-factor structure of the MBI has been studied and confirmed for both clinical validity (Demerouti et al. 500) and construct validity (Koeske and Koeske, 143). It has also been found to have "general equivalency across gender, calibration/validation groups, and teaching panels" (Byrne, "Testing" 310).

Not as widely used is the Occupational Tedium Scale (OT), a self-diagnostic inventory containing twenty-one items and used largely in environments where burnout may be seen as a subset of tedium, rather than in those occupations where dealing with people is the major part of service delivery (Arthur 187). Though the tedium scale is an economic instrument for measuring burnout, the Maslach has been found to be "more useful in investigating patterns as well as stages of burnout" (Stout and Williams 283).

The most recent addition to the burnout measurement family is the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CPI), a questionnaire created by a team of researchers at the National Institute of

Occupational Health (NIOH) in Copenhagen, Denmark. The research team found fault with the MBI as "many of the questions are phrased in a way so that they can only be understood by people who do 'people-work'" (Kristensen et al., 193) and that it was "not available in the public domain" (196). The first concern is readily answered by the specialized versions of the MBI. In my project, I use the MBI-ES, specifically worded for those in the teaching profession. The NIOH researchers faced an internal limitation in regards to materials not in the public domain, a limitation I do not have. I am pleased to trust and use the inventory that has been applied in more than ninety percent of all empirical burnout studies in the world (Schaufeli & Enzmann 71).

Burnout Interventions

Intervention strategies and proposals in the research range from cognitive behavioral technique and relaxation training (Forman, Kipps-Vaughan, Tunnecliffe, Leach, and L.P. Tunnecliffe, Cecil and Forman), teacher-student relationship building (Ross, Romer, and Horner), mindfulness training (Roeser et al.; Napoli; Jennings et al.) gratitude and forgiveness (Chan) and a technique utilizing Eastern discoveries to alleviate stress via a needleless version of acupuncture (Reynolds). Most pertinent to my proposed research are the studies examining mindfulness training, teacher self and wellness, and the concepts of gratitude and forgiveness. Additionally, I am reviewing a recent study exploring the "call to teach" and "teacher hopefulness" (Bullough and Hall-Kenyon); though it does not examine intervention per se, it is fundamental to the spirituality and wellness work grounding my research.

Two recent studies on the effectiveness of mindfulness training (MT) for teachers laud its potential to "facilitate positive changes in the classroom" (Napoli 31), and "support relationships with students and classroom climates conducive to student engagement and learning" (Roeser et al.167). Mindfulness, a particular way of deploying attention and awareness in the present

moment in a nonreactive and nonjudgmental manner (Kabat-Zinn 4), is useful in cultivating "habits of mind" (Roeser et al. 167), which have previously been studied as "professional dispositions" (Dottin 86). Applicable in this study because they directly address the qualities, skills and dispositions of teachers, habits of mind parallel desired outcomes of ethnodrama, discussed in a later section of this chapter. In teaching, these habits of mind include "tendencies to gather data through all of the senses, to be aware of and reflect on experiences in a nonjudgmental manner, to be flexible when problem solving, to regulate emotion and be resilient after setbacks, and to attend to others with empathy and compassion" (Jennings and Greenberg 494). These new ventures into MT for teachers are based on the construct of social emotional competence (SEC) made prominent in the last decade (494), and most recently defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning.

The first of these two important inquiries is an exploratory study examining current MT for teacher programs in the United States, and summarizing the need for habits of mind in effective teaching (Roeser et al.). The work presents a logic model (see figure 2.1) describing the hypothesized effects of MT for teachers and espousing improvement in teachers' occupational health and well-being through the cultivation of mindfulness and related habits of mind (170).

Also pertinent in the research report is a recommendation that further research in this new field will benefit from studies that use "rich ethnographic descriptions ... and other forms of qualitative assessment" (170). The authors specifically mention first person and self-report measures as necessary in getting at outcomes such as teacher well-being, and perceived stress and burnout (171). A second look at mindfulness training for teachers is a pilot study measuring the self- reported changes in perception of classroom effectiveness for three elementary school teachers who experienced mindfulness training over a one-year period (Napoli).

Even though the sample size was very small, the study reported promising use of mindfulness training as a curriculum aid, a tool to deal with conflict and anxiety in and around the classroom, a way to bring awareness and sensitivity to teachers' personal lives, and a tool to make changes in the classroom (40). Napoli sees mindfulness for students as a means of reducing stress and affording them more opportunity to absorb and retain information (33). Then, echoing the work of John Miller and his contemplative practitioner model of classroom practice (Miller 55), she theorizes that mindfulness promotes a similar benefit to teachers: that of "being

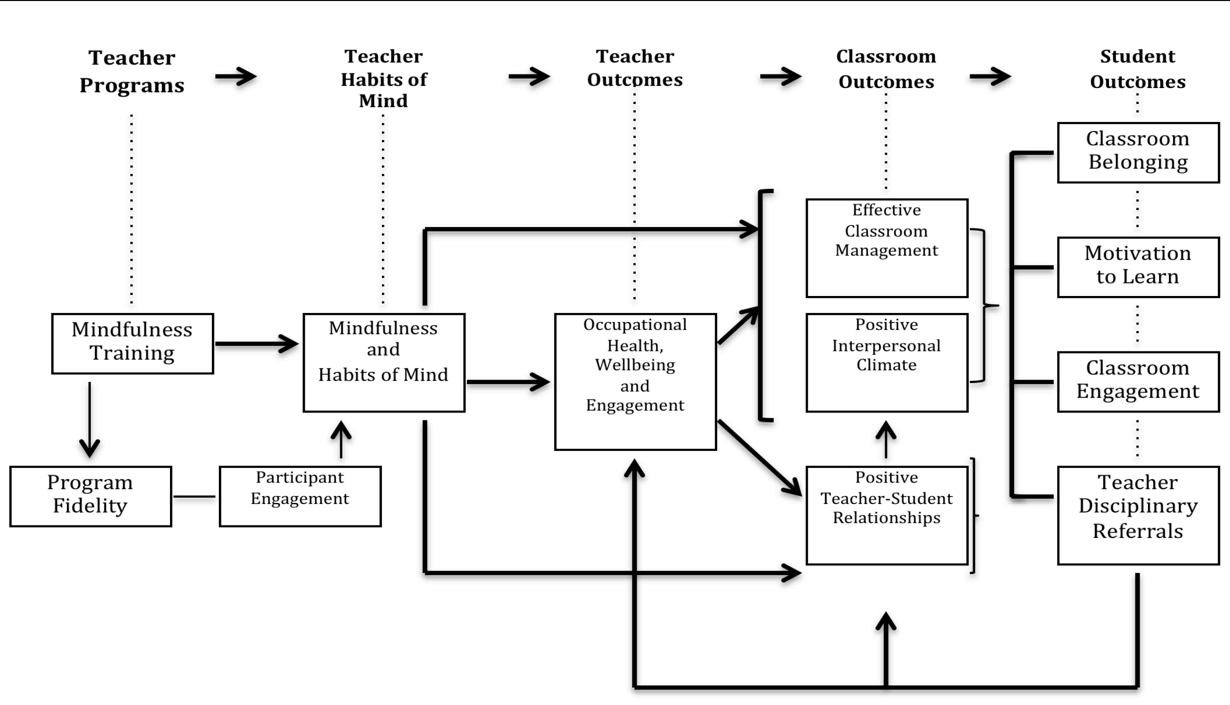

Fig. 2.1 Logic Model of hypothesized mindfulness training effects on teachers, classroom, environments, and students. Roeser, Robert W. et al. "Mindfulness Training and Teachers' Professional Development: An Emerging Area of Research and Practice.*" Child Development Perspectives* 6:2 171 (2012) Print.

present." Her study, as mine, connects directly with the Kabat-Zinn philosophy:

When we are mindful, we implicitly or explicitly (a) view a situation from several perspectives, (b) see information presented in the situation as novel, (c) attend to the context in which we are

perceiving the information, and eventually (d) create new categories through which this information may be understood (Kabat-Zinn 111).

Both of these examinations of mindfulness are important. My work is not necessarily about mindfulness training, although it could have been if the informant panel had decided to pursue that direction. But, because the underlying concept of teacher wellness and whole-self awareness and care is weaved into mindfulness, the work is included here. Also related are two other recent innovations in teacher wellness interventions, included because they connect mindfulness training to professional development, a connection similar to the central focus of my project.

A study examining the Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) professional development program concluded that the program was probably more effective for teachers working in high-risk settings (urban schools) in reducing stress and increasing teacher performance by improving mindfulness and time urgency (Jennings et al. 37). The CARE program is a teacher professional development program designed by the Garrison Institute (Binzen et al.) to “reduce teachers’ distress and promote improvements in teachers’ well-being, motivational orientation/efficacy, and mindfulness” (Jennings et al. 38). The CARE workshops are based on the Prosocial Classroom theoretical model (Jennings and Greenberg), which posits: “to successfully address the management, instructional, and emotional challenges of the classroom, teachers must be capable of reducing stress through mindfulness and emotional training. The CARE program includes instruction in emotion skills, mindfulness/stress reduction practices, and caring and listening practices.

Two studies were completed, each a two-year investigation. The first used the CARE program with educators from four low-performing elementary schools in high poverty

neighborhoods, while the second utilized student teachers and their teacher-mentors from suburban or rural upper or middle class neighborhoods (43). The studies grew out of the base understanding of the potential for a "burnout cascade" (Jennings and Greenberg 492), which may occur as classroom climate deteriorates and prolonged distress exists (Tsouloupas et al. 174). Conclusions of this study support CARE as a promising intervention, at least for those teachers experiencing the emotional stress of working in challenging settings (Jennings et al. 46). Furthermore, the study calls for more investigation aimed at supporting teachers' social and emotional competence.

Sprouting from the field of positive psychology, the concepts of gratitude and forgiveness have been suggested as alternatives to the standard focus on the negative components of teacher burnout (Chan 178–179). That is, it may make more sense to look less at the negative components of burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced sense of personal accomplishment), and focus instead on the "diametrically opposites" (the good life, the engaged life, and the meaningful life) (Chan 165). In recent years, the work of Seligman led the shift from traditional study of human weakness to the examination of positive emotions, positive characters, and positive institutions (169). There are two perspectives on what might constitute the positive or pleasures of life, and that distinction is critical to my study. One view, rooted in hedonism, and originating with ancient Greek philosophers, sees pleasure as the key to life satisfaction (Kahneman, Diener, and Schwarz). The other view, also noted by the ancient Greeks under the notion of eudaimonia (being true to your inner self, living in accordance with your virtues) suggests that pursuing meaning in life is the way to achieve satisfaction (Ryan and Deci 143). The latter, I believe, proves more consequential in my research.

My intuition leans this way as I consider what has been recently proposed as a third perspective to the true happiness dilemma. Based on the early work of Csikszentmihalyi and the idea of positive flow that accompanies highly engaging activities, the third perspective allows for both hedonistic features, as well as meaningful pursuits, and adds a third crucial element, *engagement* (Peterson, Park, and Seligman 27). A satisfying life, a happy life then, is one that successfully pursues pleasantness (pleasure), service of some purpose greater than self (meaning), and involvement in some activity or productivity (engagement). Because these are in sharp contrast to the burnout elements, it makes sense "to shift the focus of coping with teacher burnout from repairing deficits or pathologies to positive intervention efforts to help teachers lead the pleasant life, the engaged life, and the meaningful life" (Chan 171).

Csikszentmihalyi has contributed much to the research on happiness and the pursuit of the optimal experience in our vocations. Guided by the major premise of prevention (of substance abuse, depression, schizophrenia, and more) rather than just curing the disease, "the major strides in prevention have come largely from a perspective focused on systematically building competency, not on correcting weakness" (Csikszentmihalyi and Seligman 7). The research presented here is positioned in the same vein. The perspective of this ethnodramatic research is focused on systematically building competency, confidence, and well-being, not on labeling and attempting to correct teacher weakness. It is certainly possible that teachers establishing and maintaining a daily routine that keeps them balanced between skill and challenge might avoid depression and burnout.

Add the well-studied concepts of *forgiveness* and *gratitude* to the shifting focus, and a platform for rebuilding of self may be provided for teachers after they rid themselves of their victim roles in the burnout experience. Both forgiveness and gratitude have been studied as a

disposition (McCullough et al.,"Forgiveness, Forbearance") and as an emotion (Emmons and McCullough). Numerous studies have linked gratitude and forgiveness to well-being (McCullough et al., "Forgiveness"; Berry and Worthington; McCullough et al. *Theory*), and it has been suggested that the cultivation and practice of forgiveness and gratitude provides viable intervention options that could help teachers cope with the experience of burnout (Chan 178).

There are yet two other related and meaningful considerations in today's tumultuous education landscape, and they have been identified as *the call to teach* and *teacher hopefulness* (Bullough and Hall-Kenyon 128). The most recent school improvement efforts seem to assume that "threats of punishment – from termination to school closure – motivate teachers to work harder" and "student scores on standardized tests accurately portray both school and teacher performance" (127). Both are anchored in fear and promote reform efforts neglecting teacher well- being. A recent study collected data on pre-service and in-service teachers assessing their perceptions of themselves as hopeful and their personal beliefs about their call to the teaching profession. Crucial findings in this study reveal that teachers identify very strongly with their work (both pre-service and in-service teachers indicated that they were called to teach) and that teachers are extremely hopeful as measured on the Hope Scale (Snyder, et al). As a result, the study concludes that "successful school improvement efforts must not merely seek to alter teacher behavior but also engage teacher conceptions of self-as-teacher" (Bullough and Hall-Kenyon 134), and "policies that strengthen teachers' hopefulness are likely good for children" (137). Both constructs, though studied little, are believed to be of real consequence for long-term and successful school improvement (128).

A "call to teach" means that one is drawn intrinsically, mysteriously, spiritually, or even religiously to the vocation. Answering the call may provide a means of being whole, complete,

having purpose, direction, and a sense of moral grounding. Sociologist Parker Palmer conveys this call as “coming from the voice of the teacher within, the voice that invites me to honor the nature of my true self” (Palmer, *Exploring* 29). Thus, teaching as a calling represents a deep and distinctive service ethic (Serow, Eaker, and Forrest 28). “Calling” has been variously defined, but the clearest definition comes from Hall and Chandler: “(A calling) is a work that a person perceives as [their] purpose in life” (160).

Similarly, the concept of hopefulness has been studied little in regard to teachers. The term is often connected to optimism (Peterson 7) but the two terms are not synonymous, as hopefulness allows the presence of some doubt, therefore some anxiety about a negative outcome, whereas the optimist is forever confident that everything will work out (Lazarus 672). The Bullough and Hall- Kenyon research referenced here concludes that wise educational policy and reform efforts should support the development and sustaining of teacher hopefulness because it is good for teachers and likely supports student learning (130). A sense of calling brings a deep dedication and a determination to succeed and persist against the greatest odds, and to maintain that sense of calling over time requires hopefulness (Bullough and Hall-Kenyon 132). This is the fuel required to combat the stressors leading to burnout. A call to teach may also require a great deal of courage to answer.

Teacher’s Perception of Self

Everyone perceives themselves in a specific manner, or possessing a distinct style, flair or panache. Several studies have investigated this relatively new idea of an individual’s self-perception. In the teaching profession self-perception is paramount. Some research has explored the premise that in order to transform the public education machine, the cogs of the machine (teachers) must change as well. And that change is the ability and willingness to become students

as well as teachers. “This transformation from exclusive classroom authority to fellow learner involves a complex set of changes in perception of self and work” (Beatty 75).

Not unlike my project, where teachers work together in a substantially self-directed forum, Brenda Beatty, at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, completed a study in which she purposed to “investigate professional growth as an individually reflective and authentically collaborative phenomenon” (73). She found that after a five-month (one meeting a month) set of study sessions with a small group of teachers, the teachers reported increased feelings of self- efficacy, and increased potential for flow at work (74). In interviews, all participants reported changes in their perceptions of self and work as having resulted from their participation in the study group. They felt more motivated and satisfied, more in control, more confident about their ability to self-direct professional learning, more confident about their effectiveness in the classroom, and more likely to experience ‘flow’ in connection with their work. (74)

Well before Beatty, and equally interesting and parallel to my study are reports that teachers working together in research and inquiry find it meaningful and rewarding, and improvements in the classroom are clear as a result (Cochran, Smith, and Lytle 40). And such study groups are an important source of support, adding depth to professional reflection and collaboration (Osterman and Kottkamp 17). The collaborative study group parallels the loosely structured informant panel discussion in the present research.

The Courage to Teach

There is one other thoughtful, reasonable, and intriguing commentary on the precipitations of stress and burnout for teachers. Parker J. Palmer offers the theory that “teaching, like any truly human activity, emerges from one’s inwardness, for better or worse”

(Palmer, *Exploring* 2), and "intellect, emotion, and spirit depend on one another for wholeness. They are interwoven in the human self and in education at its best" (5). For this reason, when the inner self is not in sync, or is out-of-balance, the physical, visible person is disproportionate and may compensate by any of a variety of fight or flight responses. Parker Palmer, in his celebrated book and workshop series, *The Courage to Teach,* examines fear, among other factors, as leading to teachers' loss of heart and opening the door to damaging stress and potential burnout conditions.

Fear, according to Palmer, is a natural result of conflict in both the teachers' inner and outer landscapes (3). The inner landscape includes intellectual, emotional, and spiritual pathways, which depend upon each other for wholeness, while the outer includes the techniques, methods, and content knowledge, i.e., the elements on which most current reform efforts focus. Fear is everywhere, in the student certainly, but equally prevalent and sometimes debilitating in the teacher/leader as well. We fear being undervalued, by administrators, parents, colleagues, neighbors, and by our students who challenge us daily with blank faces hiding judgments about our irrelevance because we are out of touch and could not possibly value the things that they value. We fear being underappreciated, discovering that we have chosen the wrong profession, being discovered as a fraud, being overwhelmed by demands external to the classroom, and being forced into a state of stagnation wherein we hide behind the desk, our entitlement of authority, and do what requires the least contact with our students.

According to Palmer, this fear requires a spiritual path of recovery in order to transcend and "reconnect with reality for the sake of teaching and learning" (Palmer, *Exploring* 58). Of additional relevance and interest in Palmer's work is his examination of two simplified models of Teaching – Learning practice. One, what Palmer recognizes as the traditional method; *The*

Objectivist Myth of Knowing (103), places the teacher between the object of learning and the students, thus, all learners must get the knowledge from the teacher who carries the power. The alternative model: *The Community of Truth* (105) keeps the subject or object to be learned in the center where everyone who wishes to learn (knower) has equal access. I find the simplicity of his model fascinating and my adaptation of this concept for the informant group is depicted in Figure 2.2. Each informant (teacher) had equal access to the planning, developing, and presentation of the ethnodrama as it is their ethnography.

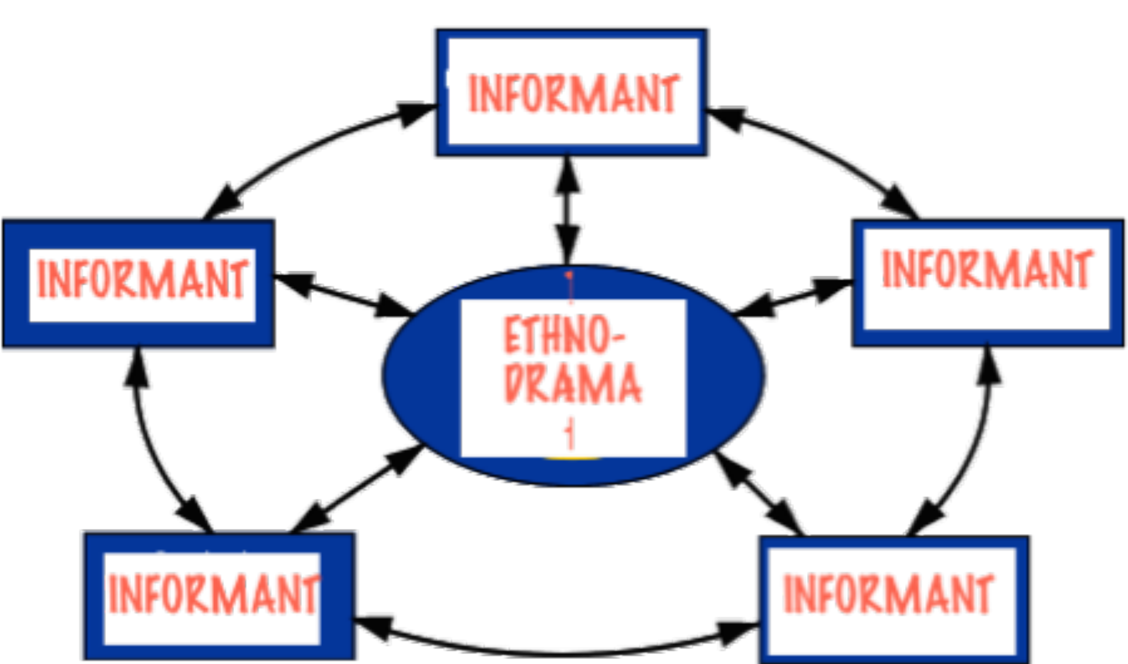

Fig. 2.2. Model of the Ethnodramatic Process.

I have included Parker Palmer's work because his ideas support the underlying assumptions grounding my question. Certainly, it is student learning that is the goal of effective teaching. In some instances, students learn without or in spite of the presence of a teacher. But, in most situations in modern public education, the teacher possesses the power to create conditions that

can help students to learn a great deal, and "good teaching requires that we understand the inner sources of both the intent and the act" of teaching (7). It is the selfhood of the teacher that is key to his or her effectiveness, longevity, energy, and sanity. I have used Parker Palmer's *Courage to Teach* as a common reading for my panel of informants because I believe it unifies the group, opens their minds to the possibilities at hand, and gives us fodder to begin the conversation leading to change. Further, I agree with Palmer, who defines a "professional" as a person who can say, "in the midst of the powerful force field of institutional life, where so much might compromise my core values, I have found firm ground on which to stand – the ground of my own identity and integrity, of my own soul – ground from which I can call myself, my colleagues, and our workplace back to our true mission" (213). The need to remember teachers as whole beings, to consider their inner-self health and well-being when we "develop" them, and to encourage self- care in a population of professionals is at the core of my research purpose. To do this, is to encourage a conversation beyond technique, method, and evaluation, but into the realms of mentors and the human condition of teachers and learners, our highs and lows as teachers and as people, and our identity and our aspirations (150).

Given these notions, what is the current theory driving teacher development in this country, and how effective is the effort?

Teacher Development

The training, teaching, re-teaching, honing, preparing, fine-tuning, and refreshing of teachers for the classroom role, is teacher development. For some, teachers are primarily seen as "conduits," merely transmitting information, an approach characterizing teaching as passive, with teachers as middlemen between content standards and children (Mirra and Morrell 409). Such a vision demoralizes and defeats those men and women who chose teaching as a passionate

vocation, and neglects their hard earned, and deserved status as professionals and intellectuals. It is this vision of teachers and teaching, promoted by some as generalizable to all and a distrust of teacher unions, and the popular belief that performance-based funding is the solution, that has driven the focus on methods and techniques and performance outcomes measured in numbers generated on standardized tests for teacher development over the last decade. We have been preparing students to be competitive in a global economy. Even President Obama identified the pecuniary purpose of education; "Education is an economic issue – if not 'the' economic issue of our time" (July 29, 2010). The current effort at reform "implies a philosophy of basic human capital: education is necessary for individual economic advantage and for national economic stability" (Katz and Rose 221). This core purpose neglects any mention of preparing children for democratic citizenship, or developing their critical thinking and questioning skills, as it "distorts and narrows the purpose of education in a democracy" (221). Beyond the impact for students, teachers have lost classroom autonomy and face mandates of boxed curricula in the face of reform efforts fueled by this ideology.

With such a focus, no attention is given to developing the more delicate, nearly indefinable skills, qualities, and traits of our teachers. Such traits as "interpersonal helping," listening, and conflict resolution (Cherniss 222), are not even on the agenda. Given such a reality, it is timelier than ever that teachers are given the opportunity and encouraged to look inward at something other than technique. In contrast to the oppressive targeting of teachers in today's reform efforts, my research examines the impact of teacher self-care efforts on combating stress and burnout while creating a more creative, energetic, and euphoric teaching professional.

Teacher development has for too long concerned itself with techniques and how-to's, yet there is something missing, and that is the well-being of the teacher as a person. Palmer suggests many alternative topics of discourse among teachers that he considers more "productive of insight" (Palmer, *Good Talk* 4), and designed to push the development of teachers beyond technique:

- Critical moments in teaching and learning
- The human condition of teachers and learners
- Metaphors and images of what we are doing when we teach, and
- Autobiographical reflection on the great teachers who helped bring us into academic life (4).

Current teacher development efforts, geared toward the techniques, methods, and measurements of teachers and teaching are proving largely ineffective anyway. In a forward to Michael Huberman's book, *The Lives of Teachers*, Professor Andy Hargeaves (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education) wrote:

> ... developing teachers and improving their teaching involves more than just giving them new tricks. We are beginning to recognize that, for teachers, what goes on inside the classroom is closely related to what goes on outside it. The quality, range, and flexibility of teachers' classroom work are closely tied up with their professional growth – with the way that they develop as people and as professionals. (vii)

From Huberman's extensive survey research come two interesting and relevant conclusions. First, that "while the principal task of professional educators is to guide children in their course of development, it seems that they themselves, do not have the inclination to reflect on their own situation and their own professional future" (262), and second, teachers' relationship with their institution is critical to their wellbeing (259). Huberman's data accurately

portray teachers as indifferent to their own needs, a condition I propose is closely related to their selflessness, and the higher priority they give to the needs of their students. In short, teachers are so focused and overwhelmed by the pressures and responsibilities of the classroom that they seldom pause to consider their own needs. My project asks teachers to do exactly that, with the target being better self, and better teacher. Huberman's second point that institutional norms "dictate the conditions under which, with experience, teachers become more cautious, mistrustful toward changes and reforms, and more fatalistic in terms of their degrees of freedom and means of action" (259), is also accurate. It is a desired by-product of my project that teachers' well-being would become a greater priority in the practices prescribed by the organizational culture. How then, might the practice of Ethnodrama contribute to the improved well-being of teachers?

Ethnodrama-Ethnotheatre

As early as 1995, Jim Mienczakowski identified Ethnodrama as a research methodology that "seeks to tell the truth as they (stakeholders) see it, so as to give them voice" (Mienczakowski, "Reconstruction" 367). Mienczakowski's stakeholders were people involved in alcohol dependency or other mental health issues. Ethnodrama and ethnotheatre, though sometimes mistakenly used interchangeably are two distinctive approaches Saldaña uses to identify this interactive drama method. The distinction is that ethnotheatre includes the physical production of a theatrical event, while ethnodrama typically refers to the written or scripted material (*Page to Stage* 15). Both however, embrace a worthy goal " to investigate a particular facet of the human condition for purposes of adapting those observations and insights into a performance medium" (Saldanã, *E and E* 196).

Ethnotheatre, still in relative infancy, is a form of ethnography in which the data (narrative interviews, participant observation field notes, journal entries, print media, documents,

etc.) are compiled and presented as a performance. It is what Saldaña calls "dramatizing the data" (*Data* 2). The purpose of such a presentation is beyond novelty or mere entertainment, but rather, holds an artistic and aesthetic value that "possesses 'emancipatory potential' for motivating social change within participants and audiences" (Mienczakowski, "Reconstruction" 363). Ethnotheatre is also considered by some to be "the single, most powerful way for ethnography to recover yet interrogate the meanings of lived experience" (Denzin, *Performance* 94).

The use of ethnodrama/ethnotheatre as a presentational mode for ethnographic data is not new. Victor Turner was exploring the technique with his "ethnodramatic" exercises with students in the early 80's (Turner). Current scholars in ethnodramatic theory and practice include Dwight Conquergood, Norman K. Denzin, D. Soyini Madison, Jim Mienczakowski, Johnny Saldaña, and Richard Schechner. The practice, simultaneously known as both a research methodology (Mienczakowski, "Reconstruction" 367) and a form of research representation and presentation (Saldaña, *Data* 220), is also known by other names: ethnographic performance text, performance ethnography, documentary theater, docudrama, nonfiction playwriting, theater of reenactment, and reality theater. For the purposes of my project, ethnotheatre will be utilized as a presentation method for the data collected while simultaneously serving as integral to the methodology. Like the ethnographic performance work of Denzin and Mienczakowski, the data to performance process in my project will "heighten and crystalize the representation of the participants' culture and lived experiences for its audiences" (qtd. in Saldaña*, E and E* 196).

It is important to remember that the primary goal of theatre is to "entertain" rather than educate or enlighten. However, when considering ethnographic performance, the responsibility of the researcher is to create an entertainingly informative experience for an audience, in a way

that is authentically depictive of the data. The ethnodrama is part of the process for healing, understanding, analysis, and growth of the informant panelists, in addition to being an educational, emotional, and entertaining experience for the audience.

I am most interested in the potential of ethnotheatre to carry the story of public school teachers in a distinctly powerful and poignant manner. The image of teachers and the education system in general has been tarnished and abused in recent years. Utilizing ethno theatrics, as has been done in support of other causes, e.g., race relations in a rural community (Pifer), incarcerated African American males (Keck), and homeless youth in New Orleans (Finley and Finley), is an appealing approach to polishing that image, healing teachers' wounds, and re-creating a stronger, more energetic, and more effective classroom leader. Of equal consideration is the ability of ethnotheatre to provide a much needed and curiously absent glimpse into the actual life of a school.

In recent years, little study has focused on what would seem to be the core of the educational process, the teacher-student interaction. Instead, attention has been given to the measurement or assessment of the characteristics of students, teachers, or studying, etc. As a public institution, schools are oddly private and protected from the general public, the media, and in some cases, the associated stakeholders (parents). This pseudo sacred environment has remained such because of tradition and habit, but as the national spotlight on "failing education" creates more pressure on schools, the veil will be removed. It has been suggested that this cloak of secrecy has existed partly because of the teaching profession's fear of uninformed criticism and partly their fear of justified criticism (House 112). Either way, with greater transparency comes the risk of reduced autonomy. Ethnographic studies with the performance presentation allow a "reality show" glimpse into the formerly mysterious world of schooling and can be an

authentic, sincere unshrouding.

Several qualitative and ethnographic research projects in and around educators have been presented in this dramatic form. One particularly relevant study arose from the researcher's desire to "portray schooling [using] formats and skills unfamiliar to researchers and evaluators" (Walker, Pick, and MacDonald 82). The study examined the teaching experiences of twenty science instructors and collected written accounts (diaries, life histories, additional e-mail correspondence), which were compiled and presented as a radio script. The authors felt the dramatic reading presentation was necessary in order to authentically represent the data they had collected (83). The analysis and eventual creation of the script was guided by (1) Thematic Relevance, (2) Anecdotal vividness, and (3) Range and Variation (83–84). These criteria, not unfamiliar to playwrights, are useful checkpoints as I approach the data in my project.

A second study focused on new teachers, and the creative presentation of the data grew from a dissatisfaction with the first and more traditional written research report, which the authors found to be "empty, lifeless, and extremely unsatisfying" (Rogers, Frellick, and Babinski 53). Here, 100 beginning teachers in North Carolina were interviewed and participated in support groups from 1995 to 2000. The raw data collected from these groups were thematically sorted and authentically represented in the writer's (beginning teacher) original words. The researchers looked for stories that illustrated the speaker's feelings, rather than just listing them, and note that they "did not set out to prove something as much as to 're-present' the data that had been 'presented to us'" (56).

A play (reader's theatre) was scripted, shared in pre-performance private readings with various members of the interviewed population to gain insight and feedback, revised, and edited, and eventually completed and entitled, "Of Trailers and Trenches." Approximately fifteen

minutes in performance length, it is designed specifically to open up critical space for teachers (beginning teachers and associated stakeholders) to "reclaim their self-worth by hearing their struggles" (55). It was to be a catalyst for discussion and perhaps "instigate some action toward solving the challenges these teachers face." Rogers, Frellick, and Babinski note that their intention was "to re-create, in the presentation of data, the drama and emotion that had characterized the data collection process" (55).

Both of these studies are very closely aligned with my presentational method. In reviewing them, I am both encouraged by the innovation and strongly cautioned by the finesse required to remain objective. My encouragement comes from the mere existence of these accepted and published studies, and the reinforcement of my own belief in the power of live theatre to heal and connect:

> Theatre has an immediacy that film, television, narrative fiction (and research reports) do not ... "theatre-going is a communal act ... one of a dwindling group of activities that bring (people) into communication with each other." (Brustein 12)

My caveat is the reminder to resist temptation toward unnecessary bias and influence that may be so easily, even without specific intent, dipped into while creating the script. The data must be authentically represented and presented in a most neutral fashion to maintain any degree of credibility. As an artist, I was concerned that my creative instinct would push me to "create a compelling account that can engage an audience" (Rogers et al. 67). It is my personal involvement and experiences as an urban classroom teacher that I had to hold in check to prevent the omission, confusion, misinterpretation, and other manipulations of the data, which may not have authentically represented the informant participants.

These studies and my work begin to fill a gap in the existing research left by researchers who choose to keep the information to themselves, disguised by lofty language and indistinct

conceptual depictions inaccessible to the common person. Ethnotheatre is a fascinating tool enabling sharing of accounts of schooling in an understandable, descriptive manner. Robert Stake coined the term *portrayal,* which is a precursor to ethnotheatre suggesting that "an important task for the evaluator is to display the educational process in ways which enable people to engage it with their hearts and minds" (Stake 116). Walker, Pick, and MacDonald, as noted in the project mentioned above, were motivated by their concern for the accurate and accessible portrayal of schooling and suggested a "collaboration between researchers and those who are skilled in forms of communication which constitute a research novelty" (82).

In my research, I am both the skilled dramatist and evaluative researcher. I believe that my work will fill a gap in the existing body of research. Ethnodrama and ethnotheatrical productions are emergent practices and continue to be applied to a wide variety of disciplines and social issues. Johnny Saldanã provides an extensive list of known ethnodrama studies in his definitive book, *Ethnodrama: An Anthology of Reality Theatre* (10–14), ranging from Education to Health, to Ethnic/Racial Identity and Racism, to Gender and Sexual Identity, Homelessness, and Justice Studies. Listed ethnodramas in Education examine struggles of beginning teachers, the writing process of middle school children, nonheterosexual physical education teachers, and evaluation of specific schools and programs (10). Missing in Saldanã's list, and provided by my research project is an examination of experienced teachers suffering from symptoms of burnout and learning to cope.

Within this chapter I have established the debilitating nature of burnout, the cost to teachers, schools, and especially to students, and the growing frequency of the problem. Through

ethnodrama, utilizing mindfulness and self-care training, I believe I have begun to change the perspectives, habits, and understandings of the informant panel participants, and positively impacted the stakeholder audience as well.

Chapter III: Methodology

Multiple Methodologies

How might ethnodrama positively influence teachers' perceptions of themselves and promote *teacher euphoria*? Adjacent to this central question is a related inquiry: to what extent does ethnodrama, mindfulness, and collaborative performance work contribute to teacher self-efficacy and minimize stress that may lead to burnout?

The questions are unique in that a relatively new mode of inquiry (ethnodrama) is paired with a fresh and affirming perspective on the current approaches to alleviating teacher stress. This project is heavily influenced at times by both Ethnodrama and Appreciative Inquiry, but rests firmly under the umbrella of Action Research, the same Action Research that Bradbury and Reason have come to regard as not so much a methodology as an "orientation toward inquiry" (xxi). Regardless of the nomenclature, Action Research embodies two important differences from traditional research. First, it "seeks to foster development and planned change, while traditional research seeks to build a body of accumulated knowledge" (Schmuck 1), thereby matching my stated purpose. Second, Action Research focuses on local change and improvement while traditional research focuses on building universal theory and valid generalizations (1). This second difference is primary to my research as well, as I focused on local teachers seeking real and immediate solutions.

These differences however, were also challenges to my research as they often are to researchers in this research mode. While I was "seeking development and change" in my participants and observers, I was also aware of the need to produce some analyzable data, and this may have led me to utilize assessment tools inappropriate to my question, a matter discussed in Chapter V. Furthermore, I did focus on local change, using local teachers, and perhaps

handcuffing myself by the level of familiarity and socialization inherent to such a relationship.

Action Research is discussed at length in Chapter II, as is ethnodrama. Yet, as action research anchors my research design, it is worthy of a glance at its relevancy to my specific project. My research project is essentially Action Research through performance as defined by Mienczakowski and Morgan: "Critical ethnography has been combined with performance to construct a new form of action research, which utilizes participatory and 'interactional' theatre to negotiate and construct understandings and meanings with its participants and audiences" (219). Action Research has been variously defined as a reflective process (Herr and Anderson 3), a form of self-reflective problem solving (McKernan 175), and as "systematic inquiry that is collective, collaborative, self-reflective, critical, and undertaken by the participants of the inquiry" (McCutcheon and Jung 147). More applicable to my work is this simple definition: " ... action research is inquiry that is done *by* or *with* insiders to an organization or community, but never *to* or *on* them" (Herr and Anderson 3).

A great number of astonishingly successful Action Research projects create the current landscape. Myles Horton and the Highlander Folk School emanated the philosophy that "for institutional change to be effective, solutions must come from the people who are experiencing the problem and who will be directly affected by the action taken" (Lewis 356). Although Horton's work is grounded firmly in the participatory Action Research camp, the premise of change coming from the affected people is held here by the participatory performance element essential to my model. Others have contributed significantly to establishing reflexive practices as powerful and redeeming in education (Dewey; Schön; Stringer). Action Research, as a reflexive practice, provides a practical and viable means for teachers to make a difference in their students' lives and their learning (Darling-Hammond 171). The added layer of my project

through Action Research impacts teachers and the self-reflection they can make about their own teaching practices, relationship to the organization, and their perceived status in the community. I am interested in Action Research as a catalyst for social change, following the model of "action research as liberation" originating in Latin America by Paulo Freire (Herr and Anderson 15). My research with teachers parallels the *thematic research* Freire developed while exiled in Chile in the early 1970s: "... the methodology proposed requires that the investigators and the people (who would normally be considered objects of the investigation) should act as co-investigators" (Freire, *Pedagogy* 106).

I have used generative themes developed collaboratively by my informant panel to help them acquire applicable literacy and help them engage in social critique and social action. These three terms, applicable literacy, social critique, and social action are also derived from the work of Paulo Freire, who stimulated participatory Action Research for liberation in the U.S. when his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was published in English in 1970. Again, the reader is reminded that *participatory action research* is quite different than the *action research* done herein, yet the selected terminology is still fitting to my research and proper explanation.

Like Mienczakowski and Morgan, I have used the umbrella of Action Research as a methodological approach and completed two distinct phases of the research process: (1) the data collection among teachers, and (2) the actual performance of the data which is "deliberately designed and performed to encourage interaction between the audience and performers" (219). Mienczakowski and Morgan focused their work in the health field, but the Action Research/ethnodrama pairing has been utilized in areas outside health as well, including attitudes toward women and technology (Diaz) and understanding the motivations of students seeking fame (Saldaña, *Juicy Stuff*). Ethnodrama then, is a mode of Action Research inquiry that seeks to

influence change among participants and audience while retaining the potential to construct new understandings (Mienczakowski and Morgan 220). Within the boundaries of my research, ethnodrama connects my informant panelists to the larger audience. Action Research with the extension of ethnodrama as a means of delivering the data provides enrichment, depth, and potential impact to both the informant panel and second-level observers.

Qualitative in scope, my research grows from a place of concern and passion for my vocation, in addition to a degree of frustration with the current conditions for some teachers and current trends toward correction that are missing the mark. Therefore, my work reflects an *emancipatory interest* (Habermas 286), meaning that my ultimate goal was "emancipation of participants from the dictates or compulsions of tradition, precedent, habit, coercion, or self-deception" (Carr and Kemmis 153–155). My orientation is one that uses critical reflective/action sciences to propagate "problem posing rather than mere problem solving" (Herr and Anderson 28). Such a direction requires a description of my positionality in this research.

Simply stated, and perhaps most important in establishing positionality, is the knowledge that I am a teacher. I am a teacher, collaborating with other teachers, to examine ourselves, our organization, and the assumptions of our chosen profession. This puts me in the most common category of educational action researchers; I am an insider, working in a joint effort with other insiders in my organization. It is important to remember that positionality "does not fall out in neat categories and might even shift during the study" (32), so while I am initially cognizant of my place, I am continuously practicing self-reflection and exploring multiple positions in regards to the research and my colleagues. In simplest terms, my research is Action Research with an appreciative inquiry approach, using an ethnodrama model. I am also aware that I am a researcher assuming multiple roles within the parameters of the research. Herr and Anderson

noted, "Action research is a messy, somewhat unpredictable process " (78). Contributing to the messiness in my project is the matter of my multiple roles. In this research I assume no less than six different roles, each separate yet overlapping and influencing the others. I am at once, participant, researcher (scholar), facilitator, employee, colleague, and friend in the context of this research project. A very brief note on each role serves to remind me of my responsibilities in attending to each role, and helps to sketch a working model of who I am in regards to the project. Furthermore, it is evident that I have considered the risks, political and social, involved in my inquiry.

First, I am a research *participant*, a member of the informant panel. My interests in the question posed are genuine, driven by my personal experiences, and my desire for change. I sit on the panel with curiosity, wonder, and a sense of hope for the betterment of my profession. Like each of the other informants I have been a teacher in the urban classroom, responsible for shaping young minds and at times frustrated by outdated resources, weak administration, and other barriers to my self-efficacy. I share with these informants the reality of public education, and the accompanying knowledge that our profession is often disrespected in spite of our advanced degrees and considerable responsibility for shaping the future of the world.

Next, is the consideration of my role as *facilitator.* Wadsworth described two conceptual levels of facilitation, one in which the facilitator carries out a number of undertakings (e.g. observing, talking, framing, questioning, developing interpretations, etc.) for themselves, and a second in which the facilitator "keep(s) watch and takes actions to ensure these things are happening for others, individually and collectively" (420). Both are my responsibility in this project. Thus, I was both encourager, pulling in participants' involvement, and gatekeeper, managing time and agenda.

Ever present was my role as *researcher.* Here, I include the reality that I am an interested participant (informant) while also being the student, the name on the title page, and the final master of my scholarship. This knowledge may distance me in some ways because I am thinking about everything being shared in terms of its "fit" for my needs. That is, I process everything through a filter of "How might this look in a performance?" and "How will this write up in the dissertation?" These filters, though impossible to completely remove, were minimized by my awareness, and my genuine passion and concern for the ethnos, the importance of the participants' stories.

There was also the reality of my *employee* status within the project. While I would have preferred the objectivity (freedom) of the outside observer without restrictions, the actuality is that I am employed by the organization I studied, and I would like to remain employed. Therefore, political and social considerations are influential and ever present. Again, the uncertainty of Action Research becomes a factor. As I was attempting to collect data as stories, recollection and retelling of lived experiences, I was not in control of what was said. I did, however, have opportunity to control what was finally presented to a larger, public audience. I choose however, to keep the shared monologues true to the writer, regardless of content, as I felt the presentation would lack meaning if it appeared scripted rather than authentic. I did not anticipate that the data would contain aggressiveness, personal attack, or evidence of wrong practice, abuse, etc. The final script of the performance did not contain anything excessively harmful, but did include some harsh language, eye-opening reality, and subtext attacks on the system and administrators.

Closely related is my position as *colleague,* while serving as facilitator and researcher. As a teacher, someone who does generally the same thing as each of my informants, I have both the

advantage and disadvantage of my like experiences, and my history with them. I have been teaching with most of these panelists for about eight years. In that time, they have known me to be light-hearted, helpful, and generally kind. I have established for myself a reputation as a team player. I am not typically someone that is consulted in matters of curriculum, teaching and learning theory, or pedagogy. In brief, I am often thought of as "happy-go-lucky" or "clownish," descriptors I internalize as "positive" and "creative." Such monikers were useful in panel discussions, as they cushioned the severity of academic research. I believe, however, that the informants amended their individual perspectives and opinions of me as they experienced my preparedness, the depth of my research, and the passion with which I presented my questions.

Furthermore, I had already established, through shared experiences, a collaborative relationship with these colleagues. This collaborative connection allowed us to perform as a community of practice, as we possess Wenger's three required dimensions: "mutual engagement; a joint enterprise; and a shared repertoire" (126). Conversely, colleagues are sometimes friends, and that dimension could be troublesome, as it is often unpredictable. My precautionary measure was to establish an environment of professional inquiry in all communications and behaviors associated with the project. So, while there are potential risks, the imaginable benefits of this exploration were far greater. Finally, it has been established that collaboration in research generally improves collegiality (Calhoun 53). It was with this knowledge and great hope that I embarked on this study.

Perhaps the greatest strength of ethnodrama as a contributor to the methodology and as the edutainment piece to carry the data is that it is organic. It develops via the depth and direction of the panelists' conversations and interactions, making it authentic and powerful. With this advantage comes the disadvantage of the researcher's inability to plan for assessment, at least

using a standardized assessment tool like the MBI. The second disadvantage of ethnodrama is that it requires a delicate balance of guidance versus freedom, to align with time constraints, participants' needs, and academic requirements.

My work is also not unlike current explorations utilizing *appreciative inquiry:* a philosophy for change which assumes at its core something positive, something working in every organization, and that "change can be managed through the identification of what works, and the analysis of how to do more of what works" (Hammond iii). David Cooperrider, who is credited with coining the term *appreciative inquiry* in the mid- eighties, pioneered the thinking that through positive questioning people could be directed to move in a positive direction. As an insider in this Action Research I have depended upon the understanding that "Human beings have the capacity for symbolic interaction and, through language, they have the ability to collaborate in the investigation of their own world" (Cooperrider and Srivastva 130).

Appreciative inquiry's influence on my research was advantageous because it framed the panelists' workshop experience in a positive vein. Each session was begun with a bonding, a challenge, or an inspiration, and this in turn, set the tone for the conversation and planning work. The challenge in such an approach is that teachers are sometimes easily influenced by what seems a grand and glorious new solution to much of what oppresses them. It seemed as if they were all too eager to put on the "rose-colored glasses." Again, it was a question of balance, how much reality should be kept, and when should it be tempered with positivity.

Theory of Action

Given that the purpose of my research is to determine what effects, if any, ethnodrama might have on a specific group of people (public school teachers), I anticipated that my procedures would yield that specific result. The ethnodrama would have no, negligible, or

considerable impact on the thought processes and resulting actions of the teachers who experience the ethnodrama either as participants or audience. I believe that there is ultimately a causal link between increased feelings of euphoria and deep satisfaction in teachers, and student achievement.

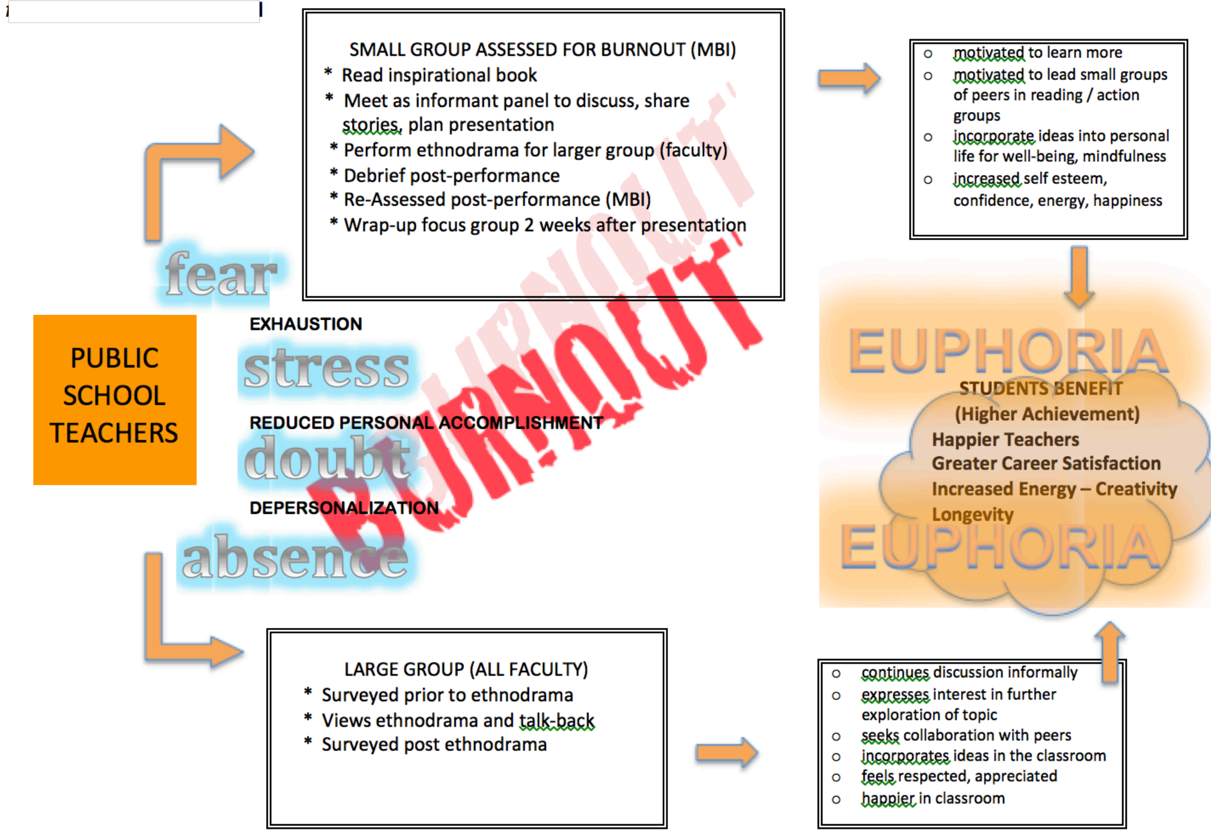

Fig 3.1. Theory of Action

Figure 3.1 visually depicts the procedural aspects of my project. The design begins with a focus group or informant panel, drawn equitably from the urban high school where I currently teach. I pre-planned and gained interest and a preliminary commitment from twelve colleagues. I engaged the small group and assessed their level of burnout using the Maslach Burnout Inventory, accessed and completed on-line. In regards to diversity and equity, the final nine-member panel was as balanced as possible given the time commitment and schedule availability.

I considered issues of gender, race, ethnicity, subject area taught, and years of experience as I selected the panelists. My goal was to not overload the group in any of these components.
The informant panel members completed reading and journaling the Parker Palmer book, *The Courage to Teach,* and the on-line self-assessment MBI prior to the first panel meeting. Three meetings of the panel were planned and completed, each approximately 180 minutes in length. The agendas followed in each meeting are included in Appendix B.

The first meeting was an explanation of the project, the panelists role, the expected performance outcome, as well as a discussion of the Palmer text. All meetings were audio recorded (although a technical glitch interfered with two of three meetings) and later transcribed. The second meeting continued discussion and initiated the writing/planning phase of the ethnodrama, while a third meeting was planning, rehearsal, and preparation for the large group presentation. Permissions and space arrangements for meetings were completed prior to the commencement of the study, as were all technical considerations for recording the proceedings.

Rationale for use of the MBI has been previously discussed and I selected Parker Palmer's work as common reading for the panelists for several reasons. First, it is readable. The content is unambiguous and clear, and completely relevant to the panelists. Second, it is a quick read (at 200 pages), so it represents less of a demand on professionals already stretched to the point of excess in their lives. Third, Palmer's writing has personally motivated me, and I am a teacher, a teacher in the throes of burnout. I have found great comfort in alignment with Palmer's admission that "the very act of writing helps me discover what I feel or know about something." (Foreword, X). For Palmer and for this researcher, the act of writing is the mortar of personal credo. It is reasonable that I expect a similar affection for Palmer's work from the panelists, and I am aligning myself with an important component of the Antioch PhD philosophy, reflection.

Finally, I could wish nothing more gratifying for me, nor more critical for my colleagues, than a rekindled hope leading us closer to "an education for transformation [that] would raise up professionals in every field who have ethical autonomy and the courage to act on it, who possess knowledge and skill *and* embody the highest values of their vocations" (Palmer, *Exploring* 213). Sharing meaningful discussion prompted by Palmer's writing is a step toward such a reality. The intent of the groups' work to culminate in a performance piece was not held secret, but made clear from the beginning of our time together. Ideally, the leap to performance as an expression of the data would be a naturally occurring process. However, given the time constraints, and the purpose of the project, the group was guided to a performance arts outcome. It was entirely possible, given the limited time available that the "writing" of the performance piece would fall expressly to me. I had anticipated this and planned the final meeting (rehearsal/planning) at a greater interval from the first two. As it turned out, the panelists were quite determined to write their own story/commentary for the performance, which worked out splendidly.

Based on results reported from similar studies utilizing ethnodrama, (Mienczakowski, *Handbook;* Denzin, "Yellowstone"; Saldaña, *Anthology*; Coffey and Atkinson; Ellis; Richardson) I expected that the panelists, after participation; and the audience, after viewing, would experience a "staged audience catharsis, collective audience responses, and emotional enlightenment" (Mienczakowski et al., "Catharsis"440). More specifically, I anticipated that the informant panel members would be motivated to seek more information on particular mindfulness and esteem practices, demonstrate interest in leading small groups formally or informally in further practical applications for the classroom, incorporate learned ideas into their personal and professional lives, and experience a rejuvenated self esteem, increased confidence, and a deep happiness. It was my hope that these participants would gain an added benefit, that of

a lasting impact. By "lasting impact" I am referring to the practice of self- care, the re-alignment of their daily thought practices, and the deeper understanding of their roles as teachers, leaders, and human beings. If this could be incorporated in their daily routine, then the project would be worthwhile. I checked on this in my follow-up interview with each of the informants, asking the question: *Have you experienced any lasting impact from the ethnodrama project? If so, what?* A complete list of follow-up interview questions is included in Appendix C.

Furthermore, I expected that the larger group, viewers of the ethnodramatic performance, would benefit and express interest in further information about the shared topics, incorporate ideas into their teaching practice, feel more positive, respected, and appreciated for their efforts, and generally be happier in the role of teacher.

From both directions then, the informant panelists, and the general faculty observers, a greater career satisfaction, increased energy, and a happier disposition were expected. The benefits for teachers are clear; self-assurance and pride in accomplishment will lead to greater career satisfaction and increased longevity, as well as better health through reduced stress. Ultimately, a happier teacher is a more creative, energetic, and positive teacher. What I have referenced as *euphoria* may be equally defined as *elevation;* a term first used by Jon Haidt, a University of Virginia professor who studied emotional reactions to a better side of humanity. Haidt may well have been on the earliest edges of positive psychology (Seligman, *Optimism* 8–9).

Who Are These Informant Panelists?

Demographic data for the participants in the informant panel group is included in Appendix D, but a better understanding of these men and women will strengthen the reader's understanding of my "subjects" as real people. To begin, the group was intended to be bigger. I

had hoped to secure 12–15 teachers for the panel, and ended up with only nine, after "qualifying" sixteen colleagues. The qualifying process was simple enough. I first sent an introductory letter to the entire Fort Hayes Metropolitan Education Center faculty (see Appendix E), which netted 18 responses. I managed an in-person brief conversation with each of the 18 teachers who had expressed interest. In the conversation I loosely followed the list of "Qualifying Questions" (Appendix F) I had created beforehand. These are questions that I designed to begin conversation that might allude to the individual teachers' emotional or mental state, and determine if they had been thinking along the lines of the burnout focus of my study.

The questions were delivered in a very conversational manner. In the end, I only actually rejected one willing participant based on the qualifying interview; this was a young teacher who had already learned his contract would not be renewed and clearly had an abnormally high resentment of the administration and the district. I had five who terribly wanted to participate but had scheduling conflicts. I sent letters of confirmation to twelve teachers and eventually lost three more before the sessions started.

A teacher's life is one of a constantly shifting calendar of availability, and I was fortunate given the tight time-line, that I was able to secure the nine participants that I did. A review of the demographics reveals an astonishing balance in terms of gender (five female and four male), yet not so for race (66% percent white), nor age (77% greater than or equal to thirty). I am not certain that in this small sample where I nearly chose anybody who breathed, that the balance of gender is anything but a fluke. I do know that "men and women are very similar in their experience of burnout" (Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter, *MBI* 96). Women commonly score higher on the emotional exhaustion scale, perhaps because they are by society's measure, more nurturing, sociable, and sensitive to feelings, than the rough and hardy male. The male

conversely, rates higher on the depersonalization scale (97). The gender imbalance reflects the greater number of whites in the general population and the under-representation of blacks and other ethnic groups in the teaching profession. In my local research, it may just have a connection to the number of faculty invited to participate who recognized my name, knew me well enough to trust the project, and were willing to make time based on their relationship with me. The age breakdown makes the group seem old, but the range of ages, (22–60), is quite wide, and carries with it distinctions in experience, wisdom, and years of service. As the latter increases it should logically increase the propensity to burnout.

Demographic information was collected on the nine members of the informant panel. These demographics include gender, race, marital status, age, and a select response to a statement about their mission as teachers. Generally, gender has little impact on the likelihood or frequency of the condition known as *burnout.* Men and women then, are very similar in their experience of burnout. Minor differences may be apparent in the particular sub-categories of Maslach's inventory; women tend to experience more emotional exhaustion, while men are more likely to have depersonalized and callous feelings about the people with whom they work (Maslach, Jackson and Leiter *Burnout Manual* 96). In terms of race, the group reports that there are "dramatic differences in burnout between black and white helping professionals. Compared to whites, blacks do not burnout as much" (98). One possible explanation is that they come from communities in which family and friendship, and one-on-one relationships with people are highly valued. Consequently, blacks may be more experienced dealing with people, especially in emotionally charged situations (99). Age is another factor in burnout. "Burnout is greatest when people-workers are young and is lower for older workers" (100). This may well be attributed to the adage, "older but wiser," as with increased age comes more stability and a somewhat

balanced perspective on life. Marital or relationship status is the final factor included in the demographic data. Those who are single experience the most burnout. Conversely, those who are married, experience the least. And those who are divorced fall somewhere in the middle, experiencing higher emotional exhaustion like the singles, but lower depersonalization and a greater sense of accomplishment like the marrieds (101). Maslach also discusses the impact of education level on the occurrence of burnout, but this was not examined in the current study as teachers are all at minimum college-educated.

The last entry on the demographics registration sheet asked panelists to select a single statement about their mission as a teacher. Panelists were asked to select one of the following statements as true for them: (A) I believe I have accomplished my mission as a teacher. (B) I believe I am still accomplishing my mission as a teacher. (C) I believe I have lost sight of my mission as a teacher. Not one of the teachers selected the first response; six of those surveyed selected the second response, and three of the panelists (one-third) responded that they felt they had lost sight of their mission as teachers.

Exploring the Project Outline

The Problem: Current research, if it addresses teachers' self-efficacy at all, is focused on alleviating factors that lead to burnout. Instead, an approach that focuses on the positive and seeks to promote *teacher euphoria* is warranted and may be found in ethnodrama.

The Question: How might ethnodrama influence teachers' perceptions of themselves and promote teacher euphoria?

The Purpose: The purpose of my study is to determine how interactive theatre, specifically Ethnodrama, might have a positive influence on teachers by promoting teacher euphoria, thereby increasing self-efficacy, reducing stress, and minimizing the loss of quality human capital in our

schools. I was curious and hopeful that ethnodramatic application to the problem of teacher burnout would ignite conversation leading to action and the attention our teachers so richly deserve. Through this dissertation project, I have begun to uncover the potential of ethnodrama to impact positive change for teachers by building sustainable euphoria from personal story, efficacy, and mindfulness. This positive step for teachers ultimately impacts student learning.

The Assumptions:

- Teachers are stressed.
- The stress is leading to greater occurrences of burnout than ever before.
- What is currently being done in reform is about content and technique.
- Little is being done to address the wholeness – wellness of the teacher-as-person
- Teachers inherently want to make things better for themselves and other teachers
- Successful teachers teach from the heart

The Procedures: Upon final approval by the Program's IRB, I proceeded with the project as outlined below:

1. Selection of informant group (8–10). As noted in the previous section, this was a process taking about two weeks, in which I minded the following guidelines:

- Prequalifying questions based on prevalence of feelings of stress, burnout, compromised self
- Strive for diversity (gender, race, experience, subject area)
- Consider panelists trust and comfort with each other

2. The informant group completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) prior to our first meeting.

- The MBI is a 22-question Likert-scale survey, widely used to measure burnout in public service workers. A sample set of MBI questions is included in Appendix G. Informant group participants were given a two-week window of opportunity to complete the inventory prior to the first meeting. All surveys were completed on-line. I remained blind to the results, as I did not want to influence the group (I was one of the panelists as well as the researcher). All nine participants completed the survey prior to the first meeting.

3. The informant group read and journaled *Courage to Teach* (Parker Palmer) prior to the first group meeting.

- I commented at length earlier about the subject matter of Palmer's book, and its intended motivation or inspiration for the panel. I have evidence that most of the panelists read all or nearly the entire book, as most of them made notations in the text of the actual book. I used a few passages I have considered my favorite to stimulate discussion such as, "Teacher-bashing has become a popular sport. Panic-stricken by the demands of our day, we need scapegoats for the problems we cannot solve and the sins we cannot bear. Teachers make an easy target, for they are such a common species and so powerless to strike back" (Palmer, *Exploring* 3). For the most part, however, the book was a jumping-off point, and panelists were free to reference Palmer, provide a related story, agree or disagree, and take a new perspective as the discussions grew.

4. Participants also maintained a journal of response and thoughts throughout the research process, or at least a few of them did.
    - I requested the journal writing as I was attempting to appeal to different learning styles. A few of the panelists chose to make all of their comments in the book, others chose the journal, and some did both. Journals are exceptionally powerful resources for creating three dimensional character portrayals of the participants in an ethnodrama (Saldaña, *Ethnodrama Anthology* 16).
5. The panel of Informants met together for the first time on Wednesday, February 18, 2015 from 3:00 – 6:00 P.M. in a secluded room off the main library at Fort Hayes Metropolitan Education Center, in Columbus, Ohio.
    - I selected the campus location for convenience. Seven of the nine panelists work on this campus and two teach at a high school minutes away. The library is perhaps the only place on campus where a good combination of comfort (for the discussions) and space, (for the bonding and warm-up work) could be easily accommodated.
    - The session began with small talk, snacking, and an air of excitement about this somewhat mysterious project and the colleague who was leading it. During this time I requested that participants complete the demographic data sheet (Appendix I), as well as the Informed Consent Document. There was laughter and I felt a bit of apprehension from a few as we discussed who might "see" what they were about to give of themselves, or read it, or might be able to identify them with potentially adverse consequences. In the end, all signed the ICD, and were satisfied with my explanations.

- We spent about thirty-five minutes engaging in some warm-up and trust-building exercises (Complete agendas for each session are included in Appendix B). Again, some laughter at first, and a few jeering comments, but I was surprised at how quickly the group took to completing the task assigned by the exercise. They were able to move quickly from a fun mode to a focus mode. After the games, I spoke briefly about the research, with few details, but generally outlining the goals and purpose of the work, my position in the research, and the tight schedule we faced. This discussion transitioned seamlessly into a discussion of their "homework" which was to have read Parker Palmer's book and make some notes either via journal or directly in the book.
- The book discussion was lively as each participant was anxious to share their favorite thoughts, or note a section that did not sit right with them, or to gain further insight on Palmer's writing as needed. I attempted to guide, but little was needed, as the panelists shared personal stories relevant to the book, and to my dissertation questions. We closed the session with a reminder that we were headed to a performance piece of some kind, to share what we had learned, to share what we feel, to share where we are and where we want to be. I invited participants to please stay in contact with me between sessions by, making suggestions, furthering a line of thought, or commenting as they saw fit.

6. The second meeting of the informant panel took place on Wednesday, February 25, 2015 from 3:00–6:00 P.M. in the same space.
    - The warm-up session took a bit longer this time, as I hoped to drive home some clear lessons on teambuilding, facing a challenge, and trust for the

group. We ended the session with an exercise called *The Chair* (Boal 78). This activity challenges participants to form a marching chair, slowly, and figure out a way for it to self-sustain. The activity can easily get out of hand, because it is entertaining to see adults squatting and walking and holding on for dear life. The point, of course, is that no part of the circle can exist without dependence on another.

- Next, after a quick eating break, a discussion ensued as a recap of last week. Vulnerability, the difference between power, authority, and fear were the emphasis of the discussion. I knew that the group needed to turn toward performance and I initiated a bit of writing, prompting the participants to write briefly about their best, and then their worst moment in teaching. This led to a discussion about storytelling, as it is the power of story that allows us to turn issues and facts into people and lives (Smith 16). We worked with their stories, telling and retelling, gaining insight and peer assistance. The session closed with a homework assignment challenging these teachers to dig deep to discover:
- What is your greatest challenge as a teacher?
- What is the greatest problem in the U.S. Education System?
- I always thought teaching would be like ...
- Jobs that look better to me if I were not teaching

7. The last working meeting of the group took place on Monday, March 30, 2015 from 3:00–6:00 P.M. This time, the group met in the Theatre of the Performing Arts Center

on campus, so that we could get a feel for the actual performance that would take place there the following day.

- We had decided as a group at the previous meeting that we would be preparing a "reader's theatre" style performance. Early on at this session, a suggestion was made about tying the personal stories together with a *Teacher's Anonymous* parody. We used a great deal of this time to write, edit, and stage the performance piece. My role here, in addition to writing my portions of the script, was to observe and comment, reminding participants of our established themes. In the last hour we rehearsed several times, making suggestions to each other about reading styles, speeds, authenticity, etc. Before closing, I reminded the panelists of the purpose of my research and our established goals as a group.

Before moving on to the performance piece itself, remember that I also have by this time, selected a control group, this being a separate group of teachers who were willing to (a) take the MBI on-line assessment, (b) attend the panelists' performance piece, and (c) re-take the MBI on-line assessment. This would allow me a set of similar data (untreated) to evaluate and compare to the impact data of the informant group. This group was relatively easy to put together. Primarily it was the teachers who had expressed interest earlier but were unable to commit to the time, and teachers who had heard about the research and wanted to be a part. The control group shared the same basic characteristics as the informant group, a wide range of ages, teaching experience, a variety of ethnic groups, and a balance of gender. All members of the control group completed the on-line assessment within a three-day window prior to seeing the performance, and again within seventy-two hours following.

9. On Tuesday, March 31, the informant panel presented their reader's theatre before an audience of about forty-five people.
    - These audience members were primarily teachers or staff members at Fort Hayes, or representative of the other nearby high school. The performance began promptly at 3:00 P.M. As the house lights went down, I appeared center stage with the other panelists sitting in a large semi-circle behind me. I approached the panelists, who were ad-libbing disturbances and uncooperative attitudes, mimicking a rather hostile and certainly disorganized classroom, with me as the harangued teacher in charge. This ad-lib went on for a couple of moments until I had to get very loud and angry to get the "students" attention. Then, I turned downstage to the audience. I was lit from above in white light, which darkened the areas of the other panelists, and I began the *Teacher's Anonymous* (TA) meeting.
    - Following my introduction and welcoming comments, we enacted our version of what such a meeting might be like. This was a support group for teachers who were ashamed to say they were teachers. As each of the other eight panelists spoke their piece, they were individually lit in a solo harsh spotlight, focusing audience attention, blocking out all others, and making the teacher seem desperate, sad, and alone. To accompany each speaker was a projected slide on the cyclorama behind them. The projections ranged from inspirational quotes, to horrific depictions of the ugly side of teaching, to pictures of calm and hope. Each projection was

selected by the participant to be shown when they performed their piece.

- Following the presented pieces, the panelists slowly moved into the downstage area (a large area of black stage floor) with large colored chalk and drew words, pictures, and shapes to represent their current feelings about the teaching profession or their own struggles with the stresses they feel. This section was accompanied by inspirational music, and the lights gradually brightened on stage. When the panelists were nearly finished, I again went to center stage as moderator of the *TA* meeting and invited the audience to come to the stage, take the chalk themselves, and add their emotional response to the visual depiction before them. This too, was accompanied by music. Several of the panelists went out into the audience and handed chalk to the other teachers and encouraged them to come to stage and express themselves through the chalk media. As the event came to a quiet and thoughtful close, audience members exited and were given a short survey to fill out to garner their reaction to the work.

10. In the days following the performance, I ensured that both the panelists and the control group completed the on-line MBI for the second time. I also had a chance to speak one-on-one with a few of the panelists and gather their reactions to the experience. What remained now was the compiling of data from multiple sources including: the MBI survey one and two for both groups, the journals panelists wrote, the transcripts of each of the three working sessions, the conversations held with panelists after the performance, and the exit survey from audience members.

Making Sense of the Project Data

Data analysis and interpretation includes two levels in my study. First, the data revealed/collected in the informant group sessions had to undergo some thoughtful analysis and face some informed decision-making. This process is much like what any director or writer of a play must do. So what have I done with the data I collected from the informant panel sessions?

In typical qualitative research, the researcher analyzes the data, "coding" or organizing it to identify major and minor trends. The atypical nature of ethnodramatic research calls for what Saldanã identifies as, "theming the data" (Saldanã, *Coding* 267). He further defines a theme as different from a code as it is "an extended phrase or sentence that identifies what a unit of data is about and/or what it means (267). Screening the transcripts, tracing key themes, and transforming those to the panelists as they wrote their performable scripts were all my responsibilities as the researcher. Because I work in close proximity to the entire group of panelists, I was able to share and gain approval of the emerging script, then work with these same colleagues in rehearsals. I am confident that my experience in the technical and creative aspects of theatrical performance enabled me to successfully lead production of the ethnodramatic performance piece:

> If the audience is receptive; if the director, designers, and performers are good at their craft; and if the script's content is meaningful to us in some way, then ethnotheatre "works" as research representation. These conditions are necessary prerequisites for the genre to be engaging and effective. (Saldaña, *E and E* 205)

I depended then, on my own creative experiences and performance savvy to take on the roles of writer, director, and designer. It should be noted as well that two of the panelists were also performance trained, and made decisions and suggestions about their individual presentations. Blocks of time between panelist meetings were utilized to informally gather input

from panelists and write, rewrite, edit and refine the data, then return the data as themes to the panelists allowing them to tailor their scripts. It is important to remember that this is not a dry documentary, verbatim account of the data shared in the group meetings. It was fictionalized (only insomuch as names were changed and locations or other easily identifiable elements were replaced), dramatized, and fortified to become a blend of authentic data and dramatic flare: edutainment.

Before the data became a script, it was analyzed, a process that takes on dual meaning when working within Action Research and utilizing ethnodrama as a delivery method. First, as with all qualitative data, there is the "theming" as previously discussed. Thematic analysis is accomplished by the script construction process for the purpose of creating "thick description" (Geertz 88). Donmoyer and Yennie-Donmoyer describe the script writing process as a series of aesthetic decisions about which stories, and in what degree of completeness, etc., will be presented on stage, as well as the rhetorical considerations in traditional research presentations which seek to "compress findings and limit complexity so as not to confuse and tire the reader" (214). Traditional analysis of data includes *recognition*: the finding of themes and concepts, *clarification*: determining what is meant by the separate data, and *synthesis*: where I can put together my understanding of the overall narrative (Rubin and Rubin 207).

Second, analysis must concern itself with a specific understanding of audience. Saldaña explains:

> What an ethnodramatic playwright might think will be well received may be condemned by others because it is either "too" real or misrepresents their personal perceptions of reality and thus truth. Max Stafford Clark's observation that a verbatim play 'flashes your research nakedly' means that some readers and audience members may be intrigued and even titillated with ethnodramatic revelation, while others may take offense to the disrobement and baring of life's messiness on stage. (*Page to Stage* 42)

After careful examination of the transcribed panelists' meetings and the panelists' journals and comments shared informally, my theming included headings for stress, burnout, frustration, euphoria, self-esteem and self-efficacy. In my analysis, I kept in mind the performance, but followed Johnny Saldaña's advice, "participants first, playwrights second, and audiences third" (42). He warns that no matter what I may want to see on stage as a researcher hoping for a desired result or statement of my personal position, "the participants' desires for how they wish to be represented and presented on stage take precedence" (42).

In addressing the second level of data analysis I utilized Rubin and Rubin's straightforward organization listed above. I *recognized* themes and concepts, *clarified* meaning of the separate data, and *synthesized* my understanding of the narrative in whole (207). It is this second level that examines the entire research process and what the data says about how it may or may not have impacted the participants. Ultimately, the researcher is looking for generalizability to other similar groups, or finding positive links to possible impact should the study be refined and repeated. This notion, however, that generalizability is the ultimate goal of all good research is a misapprehension. Rather, "an appropriate sample size for a qualitative study is one that answers the research question" (M. Marshall 523).

As stated earlier in this draft, Saldanã notes the use of "theming" when labeling data that others may see a need to "code" (*Coding* 175). More than just a preference or choice of synonyms, "A theme is an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent [patterned] experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole" (DeSantis and Ugarriza 362). Lichtman suggests that a majority of qualitative studies in education will develop 80–100 codes initially that will be organized into 15–20 categories and subcategories, ending up eventually

synthesized into five to seven major concepts" (194).

To recognize emergent themes and concepts in the collected data, I carefully examined the separate units:

- The Final Performance Script
- MBI survey (one and two) for both groups o Journals the panelists wrote
- Transcripts of each of the three working sessions
- Conversations held with panelists after the performance
- Exit survey from audience members.

Note that this list is expanded from the earlier list, as I now had access to the second round of MBI surveys, exit surveys and post-presentation conversations with panelists. While repeatedly examining these data sources, I jotted what I saw as repeated themes, sometimes interpreting them as well as seeing them verbatim. My initial looks at the data yielded multiple themes, although many of them were longer than one word or one phrase; they tended to be concepts. Once established, I reexamined the data sets and used a tally system to record the number of occurrences of each theme. This process enabled me to see that what I had originally thought to be frequent themes were not as frequent. In this way, many of the themes were eliminated, and I settled on six themes of significance based on frequency in the data:

1. Concern about potential for burnout
2. Stress and anxiety
3. Fear and its manifestations
4. Hope and Despair
5. Passion for life and vocation
6. Realizing euphoria

Rubin and Rubin's second step, *Clarifying* the meaning of the separate data is the emphasis of Chapter IV.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)

The inventory was easy to use and evaluate. The format consisted of twenty-two items. These items scored according to their designated subscale: Emotional Exhaustion (EE) containing nine items, Personal Accomplishment (PA) containing eight items, and Depersonalization (DP), containing five items. Directions instructed respondents to answer each question with a number ranging from zero to six. Survey numbers represented a response from a Likert-type scale, with zero being "Never," and six being "Everyday". Scores were tabulated for each subscale. Each subscale score was given a rating of low (low degree of burnout), moderate (average degree of burnout), or high (high degree of burnout). Ranges for these cut-off scores are the following: Emotional Exhaustion (EE), low = sixteen or below, moderate = 17–26, high = twenty-seven or above; Depersonalization (DP), low = six or below, moderate = 7–12, high = thirteen or above; Personal Accomplishment (PA), low = thirty-nine or above, moderate = 38–32, high = thirty-one or below (Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter 6). An individual with burnout would likely have higher levels on the Emotional Exhaustion (EE) and Depersonalization (DP) scales, and lower scores on the Personal Achievement (PA) subscale. Burnout is not an "all or nothing" concept. Instead, burnout is on a continuum and is a "process" not a fixed "state" (Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter). Research by Maslach and her associates, as well as independent researchers, such as Barad, Beck and Gargiulo; Belcastro and Hays; Iwanicki and Schwab; and Meier[4] support the reliability and validity of the instrument. In addition, a factorial analysis by

4. See Maslach, Jackson and Leiter. Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual. 3rd Edition

Maslach and colleagues (Jackson and Leiter; Leiter; Jackson,) was completed on the instrument. The factor analysis indicated that the Personal Achievement (PA) subscale related more with the concepts of internal locus of control and autonomy issues. This analysis also gave support for the theory that Depersonalization (DP) and Emotional Exhaustion (EE) subscales were distinct concepts in and of themselves. These subscales highly correlated with mental and physical symptoms of burnout. Additionally, Cronbach's alpha (n= 1,316) estimated the internal consistency of the instrument. Subscale reliability coefficients were .90 for the Emotional Exhaustion (EE) subscale, .79 for the Depersonalization (DP) subscale, and .79 for the Personal Achievement (PA) subscale. (Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter, *Manual* 12)

Chapter III has presented a brief discussion of the multiple methods blended within my research, the theory of action for this work, detailed the demographics of my participants, detailed the process I completed, and laid the groundwork for making sense of the study. Additionally, I have commented on the reliability and dependability of the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Chapter IV will present a summary of the data in terms of its meaning and value.

Chapter IV: Results

I do not believe that in my 18 years of teaching experience, I have ever felt more satisfied and awed by one man's simple comment. Following the ethnodramatic performance, a well-respected teacher on our faculty, came to me and said, "Why did this take so long? Don't give up on it. Your work here is not finished." And with that he walked away.

In the initial overview of this project, I made a number of claims about the potential outcomes of my project based on my knowledge of live dramatic performance to change perspectives, increase curiosity and stimulate discussion leading to action. Earlier in my work, I claimed that:

[1] Participation in ethnodramatic development and performance would:

- improve teacher's clarity about their roles as teachers.
- improve teacher's self-esteem
- better their scores on significant items of the Maslach Burnout Inventory
- build camaraderie, and a sense of belonging among the panelists
- reduce stress or help teachers find a way to address it
- re-ignite hope and an understanding of euphoria as it may or may not apply to them in their roles, and if it does not currently apply, instill hope that it should, or could

[2] Passive observation of a performance from one's peer group may improve teachers' realistic thinking about the job they perform everyday, and the differences between a job and a "calling."

[3] Teachers can move from a place of "Burnout", to a place of "Euphoria."

[4] Euphoria is achievable through work, persistence and attention to self.

A number of these claims were realized in the quantitative data from the MBI administered before and after the ethnodrama work sessions and performance with two separate groups. Other parts are less clear in the quantitative data, but detectable in the script, comments, journal entries, and transcripts of meetings, or qualitative data.

The current study holds the qualitative data as paramount and utilizes the quantitative as support, making the qualitative more credible.

Qualitative data are presented herein via a system of "theming the data" as contrasted with "coding the data" (see Chapter III for a brief discussion). Themes emerging from the qualitative data included *burnout, stress, fear, hope* and *passion.* Presented here is the complete ethnodrama script as presented at the final faculty performance, followed by analysis. Then, I have condensed the quantitative data (MBI) followed by my narrative of application and understanding.

The current study is Action Research, using two instruments to collect data. First, the completed ethnodrama script, written wholly by the teacher participants, transcribed commentary from 12 hours of informant panel workshops and writing sessions and post ethnodrama statements of perceived value. The second instrument was the Maslach Burnout Inventory, a Likert-scale response survey of 22 questions specially designed for educators. Beyond the data, the numbers and charts and graphs, lingers the real story of urban public school teachers suffering a tremendous battle with students, administrators, parents, public officials, the general public, and most importantly, with themselves. To convey this story, I will blend my understanding of the qualitative and quantitative data, with the ethnographic narrative of the process. These are real people. They have real stories.

Because it is the finished script that provides the greatest impact in this research it is presented first. This is the complete script of the final presentation to faculty. This includes the scripted monologues and technical cues. The performance was essentially a “Reader’s Theatre” with each performer’s monologue being accompanied by technical additions: lighting, sound, image projection, and live chalk drawing on the stage floor.

Table 4.1

The Complete Ethnodrama Script

HOW MIGHT ETHNODRAMA INFLUENCE TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THEMSELVES AND PROMOTE TEACHER EUPHORIA?

3:00 CUE #1	Lights to black Informants to “PLACES”	**OKAY, are we ready to do this?** **Let’s just do it liked we rehearsed.** **I don’t believe you, you act like such children!** **Get off your phone!** **Get your head up, pay attention!** **Please sit down!** **I am calling your MOM!** *(ALL GO SILENT)*
CUE #2	Lights up area 9	**Now, let us begin!**
	SLIDE #1: Teacher’s Anonymous	**Good afternoon, and thank you for being here for our weekly meeting of Teacher’s Anonymous. I am Rodney. I am a Teacher.**

		I am thrilled to see so many newcomer's here. I know how difficult it can be for us to admit that we are Teachers in today's hostile climate, but I assure you … you have taken the first step by being here today. **Did you know that in the United States, a whopping 46% of teachers leave the profession in fewer than 5 years? It is true, it is sad, but it is true. As Teachers we face a bleak and oppressive situation. We get added pressure from evaluations tied to student performance, diminishing autonomy, and less support from school and district administration, as well as parents and the media.** **That, my friends, is why Teacher's Anonymous exist. We are a safe haven, a place to really share and discover our best and worst selves, and perhaps find a way to overcome the obstacles we face …** **Our one day at a time approach can be a career and life saver for many teachers. Here at Teacher's Anonymous we live by the**

		mantra … ***Searching for Euphoria, one day at a time.*** **I hope you enjoy today's meeting and find a way to connect. Who knows, it may change your mood, your perspective, your career, and your life! And now it is time to hear from some of our members.**
CUE #3	Lights down in AREA 9 Lights up in AREA 1 SLIDE #2	JM SPEECH Hey. My name is John, and I am a Teacher. I remember (oh so many moons ago) a Tuesday that seemed like any other in the Metropolitan Singers. I was ALREADY exhausted from the week so far. I had binged on water for breakfast and emergency granola bars for lunch. My previous classes had depleted me. There wasn't enough time to replenish myself before the bell rang and my darling students were already expecting my attention and focus. My mind was split in so many areas. We had District Contest coming up in less than three weeks, and we recently had our week long "Post Winter Break Break."

		In my exhaustion, I think I found myself in a place where I was only holding onto my fundamentals. I refused to let anything stop my kids' from being successful. They WILL be successful at Contest. They WILL achieve a higher level of musicality than yesterday. Somewhere inside of me, a fire turned on. I started class like any other. Slowly, things began to ramp up and speed to a high level. I was able to give all of my heart and focus to their music and growth. We were able to focus on tuning and phrasing with a fine-toothed comb. Eventually, I realized I was teaching like the fate of the world depended on how much the kids grew as musicians and singers. I eloquently weaved us throughout the traverses of our musical endeavors and helped guide them through many challenges. They diligently followed and used their trained skills to help themselves and each other. I elevated myself, brought my best to the table, and expected them to do the same. They elevated themselves and brought their best to the table in response. The fire in our eyes was

		palpable. We discovered and finessed so many intricacies in the music we had spent the last three to twelve weeks learning. I could tell that our work was wearing the kids out mentally but they were fueled by our shared passion and constant success. At the end of the class, we talked about the work we did. I praised them for their hard work, focus, and success. They all had the look we've all had after a strenuous workout; exhaustion and pride. After they left, I thought a few different things. How can I get them to do that all the time? How did I do that? Wait…Did I inspire them to be their best? What inspired me to do my best? Did I do that???
CUE #4	Lights DOWN in AREA 1 Lights UP in AREA 2 SLIDE #3	CT-A SPEECH Hi, I am Carla, and I am a Teacher. In 2014 I wanted to increase my students' scores for the state exam for nursing assistants. I purchased test from the testing company that test my students. The company is located in another city and only has training one time per year. Each

		day my teaching partner and I worked with students on a set curriculum mandated by the state. Students tested together using the small group learning strategy and teacher led discussions to debrief. Working with students in small groups was so effective I used it again this year to increase my scores again. What made this my best teaching moment was that students felt they were supported and understood the value of using the testing company's material to increase their passage rate on both the written and skills portions of the test. Students loved the discussion format and they were able to use several strategies to get the correct answers. The first strategy they used was process of elimination. Many students before taking the course did not have critical reading or writing skills. Healthcare requires thinkers, readers, and writers. The second strategy students used was discussion and debate. Students discussed questions on the screen and discussed why they were correct or incorrect. Many students do not know how to have a discussion without yelling.

		Teaching the art of debate was valuable because in the world of work professionalism is a must. The final reason working with students to earn better test scores added to my best teaching moment was because the students had an Aha moment. Students understood the power of working hard and collaboration. This is a skill that they can take to the workforce and use in everyday life. I say aha because it has transformed my classroom into a place where students discover they love learning. Teaching to me is more than the content I teach. Teaching is reaching a student and helping them to discover the power within to achieve goals and continue dreaming. Euphoric, you bet because without this sense of accomplishment, why teach at all. The whole reason I come to work everyday is for the thrill of helping others reach their destiny. The most important part of this story is that before I became a teacher I was a teacher. A parent, a daughter, a wife, a mother all equals teacher.
CUE	Lights DOWN IN AREA 2	JJ SPEECH

#5	Lights UP in AREA 3 SLIDE #4	Hello, my name is Jeff… I am a Teacher I've been a teacher for seven years, which is just about right. Once upon a time there was a young boy who held laughter, passion, curiosity, and hope in his heart. He was maybe a bit too sensitive, but it was okay because he was surrounded by good, decent, caring folk throughout his youth. As the world opened up during his early teens, he developed a fierce sense of justice and equality despite his suburban life of white privilege. It was around this time, that he discovered his calling. And although he didn't fully understand it, he decided he would give – not the pollyana "I'm gonna change the world" give or the "I'm doing this because it makes me look so awesome" give, but more like a quiet, firm conviction that being present to what others had to offer would provide deep waters of meaning throughout his life. So at 18, he worked with the severely mentally

		ill. And let me just say, a seven years at a locked inpatient psychiatric unit will teach you a thing or two about life. About the dark and the light and about cruelty and kindness. So this young man decides to take a detour in his mid-20's. With his father's voice solidly entrenched in the back of his mind, he decides that he should be practical and find a respectable job that earns him some bank. So he goes back to school, gets an MBA and starts making good money. Real good money. The kind that makes him uncomfortable because it clashes with his sense of fairness and equality. He marries and manages operations for a 13 million dollar company. And he is miserable. He hires and fires people. He creates complex databases to track utilization data. He presents financial reports to his Board. He travels the country, and in the process, becomes a little bit smaller for it. So this guy's wife, she dies tragically at a young age and he chucks it all. He visits Japan, sells his house, and moves to a new city. He volunteers at

		a homeless shelter working with teens and everyone keeps telling him he should be a teacher. So it's back to school for more book learnin' again. His life is a montage of new relationships, combined humanities, amazing students, Japanese hiragana, Senate Bill 5 protests, chemistry and physics, presidential visits, IEP meetings, arrivals and departures, engagement, imagination, maturation, and that stunningly beautiful, horribly messy experience called life. Then the man gets sick. A disease that tears his guts up and slowly wears his body down. To make matters worse, some bad guys introduce legislation that fundamentally changes his job. He now spends as much time filling out forms and documenting specific behaviors and events and incidents and codes and reports as he does working with his students. He experiences futility and anger. He is depressed and sad. And he knows change must come.

		Hello, my name is Jeff… I've been a teacher for sever years, which is just about right.
CUE #6	Lights DOWN in AREA 3 Lights UP in AREA 4 SLIDE #5	NK SPEECH Hello, my name is Nichole, and I am a Teacher. For those of you who don't know, I work in Special Ed with ED students. And if you haven't caught wind, the special Ed department as a whole is currently being dragged through a pit of wolves while holding a raw steak. The changes keep coming and the guidelines are about a clear as mud. So, I attended a meeting that was meant to answer questions about all the changes, explain reasoning and provide some kind of relief to those who are overwhelmed and overworked. But to no one's surprise the chaos continued… Special Ed is being asked to make about half a

		million changes and improvements and are just not being given enough time or resources. A teacher commented, "There is just not enough time to complete all that you are asking. How are we supposed to do all of this paperwork and complete all the guidelines AND teach our students?" The representative from the state department of education replied "Instruction comes second". I'm sorry, I think I was misinformed about what my job description was… I have never been so angry and hurt and plain confused. I wanted to rip the bolted down row of chairs straight out of the floor and heave it at every person in the front of that room. How dare you tell me my kids are not the most important! Why does every day feel like a never ending path of 100 foot high walls for me to climb over? Why do I feel that every single wall for me to climb is directly put between me and my already disadvantages students? Why do I

		feel that those words of "instruction comes second" rings more and more true every day I come to work with the hopes of helping someone learn….
CUE #7	Lights DOWN in AREA 4 Lights UP in AREA 5 SLIDE #6	JA SPEECH Hello my name is Jennifer and I'm a teacher. I try to take it one day at a time. Parker Palmer says teachers are asked to hold more in their heart than it is possible to hold. And I would add that we are asked to do that every day. I am not always successful in holding the hearts of my students in my hands. Sometimes I feel like I fail more than I feel like I succeed. Some days I succeed more than I fail. On those days, the high is so great, it keeps me coming back for more. Nothing is greater than that…euphoria that we get when a student confides in us or grasps an important concept that we have been going over and over and over.

		As an artist, there's a light bulb moment…a moment that happens after you try and you try and you try and something's…never…quite…right. But BAM—you nail it. The moment sings after a dozen or two clunks. Teaching is like that…the moment that sings is the one I keep chasing. And I might get one in a week. One moment in a week. And that is enough. Enough. Enough to sustain me when my own child cries in the morning and says Mommy don't go, I MISSED you. Enough for one more meeting with my superiors about how my subject is an extra. Enough for me to sit through one more training on how to administer a test that I know is going to hurt instead of help my students. Enough for all the two a.m. texts from students, the missed lunches, the sleepless nights, the constant crick in my neck from hunching over the computer, planning lessons, and writing and reading curriculum until my eyes are blurry.

		I am afraid. I am afraid all of the time. I am afraid that I spend too much time at work. I fear that the "me" that goes home at the end of the day isn't good enough. I fear that I won't be good enough at work. That there won't be enough money for my program. That I am such a small piece of the puzzle but so much depends on me. That no one but me will show up for my students. I'm afraid that no one else remembers that we have their hearts in our hands. That my students will forget I hold their hearts in my hands and run too far to get them back. That if I stop—if I give it up—that it won't go on without me. And some of my students need for it to go on—with or without me. Teaching is like a drug…you know it's hurting you. It's damaging your "self". It's taking more than you have to give. Sometimes the cost is too much. But I keep paying it---in search of one more euphoria…one more high.

CUE #8	Lights DOWN in AREA 5 Lights UP in AREA 6 SLIDE #7	DC SPEECH Hello, my name is Daryl, and I am a Teacher. I don't know if this should be considered my best moment or my worst, I do know that this is how it happened. **"AHOY"** **"EI EI MATEY"** **"SHIVER ME TIMBERS**" It's "*talk like a pirate day*" in my classroom. **"EXTRA CREDIT - EXTRA CREDIT"** (*aside*) It's always about the credit. **"Triple points for sneaking your best pirate lingo into a conversation with the Principal…. ALL DAY TODAY!"** **"Don't forget your Jolly Rodger eye patch … Wear it with pride me crew."** And away they go, exiting with spirit and a newfound sense of wonder and imagination.

		So….. FAST FORWARD . maybe 5 minutes after they exit my classroom. Eyes tightened, jaws clenched, circling up, hurling insults, throwing up the gang signs. Shirts slide off (*aside*) Jolly Rodger patches stay on. The crackle of the walkie "Call Security, send a cruiser" Now am stepping between raised fists, angry faces – misunderstood young men **"Look, you promised to use pirate lingo all day and you can't seriously fight while using pirate lingo – and wearing those patches … so Get it Together."** Posturing, the puffed chests visibly deflate. **"Ei Ei Mutha Fucka"**

		He puts his shirt back on, returns to English class. **"What are we reading tomorrow Curry?**
CUE #9	Lights DOWN in AREA 6 Lights UP in AREA 7 SLIDE #8	RG SPEECH **Hello. My name is Rodney, and I am a Teacher.** **I called it Euphoria.** **Immediately my colleagues and members of my Cohort cautioned me about the connotation of the word… "It's about non-reality" they said, "it brings images of psychedelic drugs, it is not possible for a Teacher or any public servant to experience a consistent euphoria in such a role"** **2004-2006 I was in Colorado Springs, Colorado, teaching English at the U.S. Air Force Academy…. And my experience, on a pretty consistent basis, was nothing short of exuberance, elation, bliss, intoxication…and**

		on some days, it even moved to rapture, ecstasy, and glee … OR WAIT… maybe that is just the synonym page for EUPHORIA …. Regardless, it was very real. Perhaps I was so impressed because it was sooooooo much different than my previous ten years at an urban public school here in Columbus. **I recall so distinctly the in-class discussions around Machiavelli, Socrates, Plato, and the incredible level of thought and insight these students brought to the classroom.** **Every day, I walked the short path back to my office with my Teaching colleagues, most of whom were military officers. Those trips must have grown tiresome for them, as they heard me bubble over about my great students, the discussions, the debates … I of course, in my modesty, proclaimed that it was all because I was an awesome teacher! No, it was, of course, a combination of elements, just like various elements made and make my public school experience dreadful.**

		So, is the answer to just move to a better environment? Academies,? Private schools? Religious schools? Suburban schools? Well, first of all, NO! **The plausibility of that solution is dubious at best, and it totally misses the focus of our work…the student. Our students in urban public schools have extensive needs, but deserve, as humans; humane treatment, an opportunity to grow, to learn, to become capable informed citizens …** **And we were grateful and humbled, and excited to take on our role when we signed our first teaching contract. But my guess is that, for most of us the "dis" soon took over … disillusionment, disappointment, disenchantment and led us to disgruntled, disheartened and dissatisfied. For some of us, it has become, like nasty bacteria, a scaly, rotted outer skin that we wear daily, because we think we can hide our disappointment with "the System" the students, the parents… and**

		more importantly, our disappointment with ourselves. **You see, it is precisely the same characteristics that made us well-suited for teaching in this environment, that leads us to take on the full responsibility for our disdain, what we tell ourselves is FAILURE… and if we are ineffective , bitter, stressed and exhausted in the classroom, we are ineffective.**
CUE #10	Lights DOWN in AREA 7 Lights UP in AREA 8 SLIDE #9	SB SPEECH
CUE #11	Lights down in AREA 8	
CUE #12	Lights up on THRUST WASH SLIDE #10	Informants move silently to thrust floor to draw with chalk. CUE MUSIC: *We Are Young* 4:13
CUE #13	Lights up on AREA 9	(*As music ends, informants quietly move to audience. GRIST moves to downstage thrust to address audience)* So, now that you have seen how it is done, we

		invite each of you to come up and add your artistic comment to our stage art … the chalk is your ticket out …. as you finish your chalk contribution, you may exit through the side door, where a short survey awaits you. Thank you. Thanks for attending today, and come on up…
CUE #14	Lights down on AREA 9 Lights up on THRUST WASH	MUSIC CUE: Audience members come to stage, draw, then exit

The script here is full of richness that screams "help" and whispers "joy." From the opening in shadows depicting the reality of the urban classroom, to the closing combination of music, visual, and performing arts, the performance opened up space for the entire faculty to make their statement. Remember that these individual monologues were written by the panelists themselves and the projected image behind each of them was dictated by their wishes as well. Even the music to accompany the opening and closing segments was selected by the informant panel.

I described the mood and the lighting effects used to help achieve the mood in the previous chapter. The meaning beyond the theatrical is described here. The opening scene, where the faculty took on simultaneous roles as the presenters getting ready for a performance, and as children bickering aggressively, was powerful and slightly humorous. It was humorous in that nervous, self-reflective sort of way; you laugh because it's true. The scene was played in blue

shadows, so that faces were at best, silhouetted. This generalized the participants, making them "any high school kid." It provided a great way to transition into the central performance and served as a reminder to the audience that what they were about to see was "created." Though primarily ad-libbed, a few of the lines were definitely rehearsed: "Hey bro, can I call my Mom?" "I gotta charge my phone." What time is this class over?" "Damn it, Joey, if you touch me again…" "She is such a slut." All of these and far more can be heard in the hallways and classrooms of urban classrooms everywhere. These lines culminated with the "leader" screaming at the top of his lungs, "PLEASE, can we just do this?" The group goes silent, the leader turns down stage toward the audience, and just as he is about to speak, from the darkness behind him, we hear, "Damn, bro, you ain't got to get so hostile." This is a very clever use of humor to deaden the angst of the scene and to remind us that somehow, the student always wins.

The second segment is an introduction to the audience, providing exposition and preparing them for what they will see and hear. Not only does it set up the imaginary *Teacher's Anonymous* organization, but it allows for a couple of eye-opening statistics to be gently served to the audience, which explain why we are here at all. Also, in this opening address to the audience is the mantra, created by the whole group after several minutes of debate: "Searching for Euphoria, one day at a time." This, of course, is a tie-in to the idea that euphoria is possible for a teacher. The euphoria thread, though not adored in informant sessions, did manage to stay with the panel and reappear in crucial moments, indicating its staying power and importance to the panelists.

The first informant to speak paints a picture of overcoming exhaustion and still somehow being able to teach like "the fate of the world depended on how much the kids grew as musicians and singers." He infers that the students elevated themselves because he elevated himself as a

teacher. He then quips, as a very young teacher, “Did I do that?” It is a positive story to open the monologues and relieves the audience that this is not about to become just a gripe session, like any they could hear in a teacher break room. He, as all of the participants, opens his monologue with the solemn words, “Hello, My name is _________, I am a teacher.” These few words keep the performers and audience aware of where they are. It further forces everyone to ask, “Why would a teacher need a support group?”

Next up is a second extremely positive review of a “best teaching moment” from a well-seasoned teacher. She notes that as she has had to teach to the test, she has made the best of it and given her students valuable life skills as well. She refers to her work as “euphoric” and notes that before becoming a teacher, she was already a teacher, as mother, daughter and wife. This contribution is consistent with the words of any perpetually positive personality type. She showed a great ability throughout the panel sessions to stay positive, and to few each problem as a challenge. Her input legitimizes teaching, in that typically teachers do find a way to cope, to make students’ experiences positive despite their own, and work very hard to shine through the darkness.

The closed circle of Jeff’s monologue is brilliant and perfectly bookends an admirable career as a teacher. If you are not able to see it in the opening and closing lines of his monologue, Jeff resigned his position immediately following the presentation. He assures us that he had already made the decision to do so prior to his participation.

When he says then “which is just about right,” he is stamping the end of his teaching career. He uses his monologue to tell one man’s story about why he went into teaching and what his life circumstances taught him. Thoughtfully, he weaves the script, noting his early “quiet, firm conviction that being present to what others had to offer would provide deep waters of

meaning throughout his life." Then, that he gets an MBA and makes "real good money, the kind that makes him uncomfortable as it clashes with his sense of fairness and equality." If I were to choose a poster-child for this dissertation I would select Jeff for sure. What he writes is about wellness, self-care, the peace that comes from within. All of these are elements of euphoria. As I read and re-read Jeff's words, I personally came to understand that euphoria is not external, only the trappings of euphoria are. The real euphoria is internal.

The next speaker is disgruntled, angry, and frustrated to be sure. She does remind us of the resiliency of teachers, the fact that we hold on to hope at all costs. It seems she holds on to hope even though special education paperwork, requirements and non-teaching demands have taken over her life. She shares a shocking, yet telling moment when a representative of the State Department of Education tells her that "instruction comes second (to paperwork and guidelines)." She ends reminding us that she has trouble not hearing the voice of state authority everyday when she comes to work holding on to the hope that she can help someone learn. Certainly, she is support for the claim that there is too much added pressure from politicians, and controlling bodies, which curtails our ability to teach, regardless of how good we are.

The next presenter has taken the words of Parker Palmer and used them to measure her own life. This is a scary proposition for most of us. She ponders what it means to "hold something or someone in your heart," which, according to Palmer, teachers are asked to do more than possible. She also utilizes the euphoria concept, equating it with the artist' "aha" moment. That moment she says is enough if she gets one per week. Then, the landscape of her monologue changes, and she seems to be trying to convince herself that one breakthrough moment a week is enough to sustain her, even up against a child begging "don't go Mommy, I miss you" and on and on, a list far more horrible than what she promotes as the glory of an "aha" moment. Finally,

she caps off her speech by admitting that she is afraid, also a major theme in Palmer's work.

The last thought she leaves us with is the comparison of teaching to illegal drug use. "You know it's hurting you. It's damaging your 'self.' It's taking more than you have to give. Sometimes the cost is too much, but I keep paying it – in search of one more euphoria – one more high." I have never heard burnout so perfectly described. It is indeed an emptying of self, and forces us to constantly choose between our own family and our school family. As teachers, we love both.

Tucked in the middle is a moment of hilarity, a teacher telling a story of her own "special" moment, for, as she says, she is not sure if it can be considered her best moment or her worst. Her story is effective as it allows the audience to regain its composure and be entertained, yet still draw an important lesson from the sharing. In some ways, the speaker reminds us of the fact that children are children. She manages to expose child-like innocence in the angry, misguided, underserved population of inner-city boys playing "cops and robbers" through the bonding of a gang. Also noted is the extreme temporary characteristic of flaming anger. As quickly as the boys had jumped to hostility and violence, they drew back to "ok, let's get on with the school thing." What the speaker fails to really highlight is her ability, honed over years of experiences with teenagers, to disarm the boys with humor, and fun. The situation so easily could have escalated to horrible, as it does in schools everywhere many times a day. Where is the public accolade for her skills, quick thinking, and calm in this situation? Was she taught that at a teacher development? No. This is the hero quality of teachers that is never spoken of, yet always expected.

The next presentation is a story of contrast told to make a point that euphoria is possible in the classroom, because the speaker had experienced it. He shares that euphoria is a product of

a combination of elements, students who want to learn, teachers energetic, knowledgeable, and open-minded, a supportive environment, and plentiful resources. As he closes, he shares a discovery that the same characteristics that made us good teachers, are the characteristics that make us internalize the responsibility for the failure of our schools. We believe the media hype that throws blame our way because we are about caring, working hard beyond expectations, and facing challenges with an even stronger resolve to make a difference. This passage supports the notion that there is indeed a problem in the teaching ranks and that there is a time to say, “Enough is enough.”

The presentation concludes as the panelists, accompanied by thoughtful music and dimmed lighting, move to the open stage and draw with multi-colored chalk on the expanse of black floor. The audience watches in surprise, then in awe, straining to see what is being scrawled. This is a move to make the surreal of the speeches seem real as it is recorded on the stage. There is no speaking for this three to four minutes. The audience waits and ponders what they have seen and heard. When the panelists are near done, they move to the audience with pieces of chalk and invite the audience members to come up and share in our artwork as well. Still, in silence, now the two groups (panelists and audience) have become one. The brotherhood is established. The support is complete.

All in all, this presentation of the data from the panel discussions is powerful and well received. Many members of the audience stand around afterwards admiring the artwork, absorbing the meaning of what has just happened, and asking about further exploration possibilities. There is no doubt in this researcher’s mind that the event achieved its intended purpose. Further, the existence of a problem for teachers is confirmed, as well as an interest in taking further action. That is what I have asked of the pilot, and what has been delivered.

What about the other qualitative data? Here I have included summaries of comments made in work sessions with the informants, comments made in individual conversations, and passages or comments from journals as well. This list was created primarily before the performance of the ethnodrama, and was used to narrow themes and concerns to something we could characterize on stage. These themes are sifted from the expansive list of themes and concerns expressed by the panelists and other participants. Following the large list is a categorized display of quoted dialogue (Table 4.2) in their final theme divisions. The initial list of possible themes included derivatives of the following:

- Stress and anxiety caused by the mix of lowest performing students with Gifted, but requirement to teach to the lowest common denominator in order to protect ourselves in evaluation tied to job security.
- Fear about raising our expectations for students because they may temporarily falter and we are not supported in that by the way the system is set up.
- The system is set up to control us, so that we please administrators and ultimately policy-makers,
- The system forces us to be less than authentic.
- Passion = more energy for teacher = euphoria
- We must see Teaching as an art form. Do we?
- Drills and worksheets are "safe" for students, from students' perspective
- We have a serious lack of the feeling of community. "Pursuit of Truth in the company of friends" – Palmer
- Work-Life Balance (Children, partner, spouses)

- Fear – Fear of failing – managed by fear – Parents vs. Teachers – public vs. Teachers – Culture of fear – Fearful way of knowing.
- My content has value outside of what is measurable. Great deal of frustration in hearing constantly how my subject is not core, therefore not important.
- Learning is not linear
- Evaluation – measurement keeps teachers in their place.
- Arts at the bottom of the academic pecking order.
- Grades as fear. What if not knowing is not failing?
- Process is not valued as much as product
- Are we afraid to teach, “Like our hair was on fire?”
- I don’t have that passion I had when I wanted to become a teacher.
- I am this close to “being on” – but I am only reaching 3 out of 30 students.
- Greatest Challenge facing you as a Teacher?

staying in teaching – protecting students from government

- I always thought teaching would be _________.

easier – more rewarding – more gratifying – more respected

Table 4.2

Quoted Dialogue in Thematic Category

CONCERN ABOUT POTENTIAL FOR BURNOUT
“Good point. Burnout is probably most difficult for folks who started out the most hopeful.”“Aren’t we all burned out to some extent?” “Burned out means I have given all of me, and there is truly nothing left to give, to school, to the kids, and to my own family, sad really”

“Think of the power we would have, and the energy, if we could alleviate these symptoms of burnout …. and lower medical cost too.”
STRESS AND ANXIETY “What I do is not valued.” “Why are we constantly being placed on trial?” “For me, I felt the process of the ethnodrama helped me to reduce stress by addressing it.” “You know the story I just told, you know, the one nobody else will ever hear? Stress my friends, stress was my undoing.”
FEAR AND ITS MANIFESTATIONS “Tick-tock – Always waiting for the pendulum to swing the other way. If more of us were unafraid would it swing faster?” “Funny, the inherent fear in education reform and testing is one of the reasons I am leaving teaching.” “Amen!” Academic culture distrusts personal truth. Bam!” “I am afraid most of the time. Afraid I am not good enough, afraid I can never do enough, afraid that no matter how good I am – it’s not enough. “ I am not afraid of losing my job, or upsetting someone, but in some way, I am afraid of my students not learning. – of letting them graduate when I know they are not ready.”
HOPE AND DESPAIR “Public education no longer fits for me.” “Learning is not Linear” “Focus on measurement is faulty keeps us in our place – the element of fear”

"I don't want faculty walking away in shame – disillusioned" Response to : "Daily they return to their classrooms, opening their hearts and minds in hopes of helping children do the same" (Palmer) "Exactly how I feel some teachers burnout. The task to me seems overwhelming and insurmountable sometimes. We push ourselves each day – and this concept brought tears to my eyes. I hope this process (for this project) helps me stop suppressing the "inner self." Maybe I can learn to use that self in my teaching to enhance – not detract from – what I am doing. I remain hopeful. The wins have seemed further apart from each other lately"
PASSION FOR LIFE & VOCATION "Teaching is theatre." "My heart loves learning. I try to impart my love of learning to my students." " I know I make a difference, I just wish the journey wasn't so painful." " I am a little shocked that after only two years in the classroom, I am jaded, I just seem to have lost my vigor, my passion, my vision of what Teaching would be like."
REALIZING EUPHORIA "Performance" – the ego of teaching. We all deal with this I think. I LOVE THIS! (Response to: When you truly possess all you have been and done …. you are fierce with reality. - Parker) "This year, with many students failing the written portion of the state exam, I felt depressed. I felt a sense of euphoria when other teachers shared their stories and experiences."

Qualitative data mean so much less when in a box on an 8.5" x 11" plain white sheet of paper. Which, by the way, is exactly the point of ethnodrama as a vehicle for delivering the data

to an audience of stakeholders. Non-academics are not likely to pick up the nearest dissertation for leisure reading. Imagine the comments from above made in context. Every session with this amazing group of teachers was riveting. There was laughter, and there was sadness. There were outbursts of excitement when one shouted, "I love this!" There were pregnant pauses of silence following a heartfelt story of a teacher's worse moment, as other teachers realized they had felt the same way, or been very, very close to the same reaction. Though our time together was relatively short, we bonded over the struggles and triumphs we all share. And at the last departure, following the ethnodrama, I was told by each of the panelists that they would miss this, or that we need to do this again.

How right they are.

I recall the afternoon of the ethnodrama performance. The excitement built just as it does for every public performance of a play or concert. My panelists were nervous, they paced while the room filled with audience members. I heard several deep breaths when I directed them to places. The house lights went down, there was silence. The music cue faded. I approached the panelists, now in a soft blue light, and we began. Following the performance, as if in ceremony, the panelists walked about slowly and deliberately. We had not rehearsed this. They were drawn into the magic that is live performance. They invited audience members to participate in our visual art happening on the stage floor, and escorted them majestically. I am excited at this moment recalling the emotion that filled the room. My emotions, pride, relief, awe, and the panelists' emotions of joy and release and pride in a cause well represented filled the space and radiated in our faces. The audience too, had no choice but to fall under the emotional spell showered upon them. They approached the stage, solemnly, with an odd combination of joy and sadness. Their joy of being a teacher was battling with the sadness for what has become of their

profession. That day was electric, and despite what the numbers may say, there exists a connection between ethnodrama and improved wellness for teachers.

The quantitative data are presented below. Table 4.3 summarizes the results of the MBI.

Table 4.3

MBI Means and Standard Deviations

	INFORMANTS				CONTROLS		
SUBSCALE	PRE	POST	DIFF		PRE	POST	DIFF
MBI EE	Mean 23.86 SD 13.96	Mean 22.29 SD 16.56	1.57		Mean 23.86 SD 13.96	Mean 22.29 SD 16.56	-1.57
MBI DP	Mean 11.00 SD 7.43	Mean 6.88 SD 5.59	4.12		Mean 6.29 SD 6.52	Mean 6.33 SD 7.00	0.04
MBI PA	Mean 29.00 SD 8.79	Mean 34.50 SD 7.01	-5.50		Mean 40.71 SD 5.82	Mean 40.00 SD 6.63	0.71

In this table, I have listed the mean scores and standard deviations for both assessments of the MBI for both the informant group and the control group, as a means of simple comparison. What happened for each group between the first assessment and the second assessment? We know that the informant group experienced 12 hours of workshops and discussions about teaching, while the control group only attended an ethnodrama performance before retaking the assessment. Because of the small sample size (less than 10), statistical significance would be extremely difficult to reach, and indeed none of these pre-post differences are statistically significant, The trends however are obvious: In simple terms, the informants, after the 12 hours of workshops showed improvement in each of the three subscales, Emotional Exhaustion,

Depersonalization and Personal Achievement. The control group saw negligible improvement in two of the subscales and a worse result in the third.

The improved numbers for the informant group could point to the positive impact of the ethnodrama experience. It is easy to understand that a teacher might record more positive responses to these subscale questions because (s)he has had time to examine himself in relation to his teacher role, and he might be benefitting from the attention being paid, after such a long period of negligence. The Personal Achievement category improved because the participant is feeling more accomplished by virtue of her participation in the study, and again, by having the time to think and share intellectually about the profession. To begin this project I called upon the power of the ethnodrama to:

A. Improve teacher's clarity about their roles as teachers.

There is little quantitative data aligning specifically with this call for clarity in a teacher's role. I believe it is a question that could have been worded more carefully. As it was utilized, it does not align with any of the MBI subscales. It could be argued that a portion of the survey statements in the Depersonalization subscale offer assumptions about what a teacher believes *is* a part of their role, namely that a teacher should (1) *not* treat students as if they were impersonal objects;(2) should *not* be callous toward people; (3) should *not* be emotionally hardened; (4) should care what happens to *all* of their students. In this manner, role clarity is addressed. The statistics for this category were not significant, but the comments shared from informants in workshop dialogue, and via e-mail indicate that the ethnodrama did improve or at minimum, encourage teachers to consider these roles.

"After completing my script and participating in the ethnodrama, I felt more clear but the book and work sessions grounded the entire process. Discussions about feelings,

thoughts and ideas along with journaling helped increase my clarity." (CTA)

"Much of the process created great wonder about my role as a teacher and oh, so many more things. It is inconceivable that a single person, even with the heart of a teacher, could be expected to do so much, and impart knowledge as well." (SB)

B. Improve teacher's self-esteem.

Again, self-esteem is not a perfect match to any of the terms used in the MBI questions, and this was not my intent. I formulated my assumptions about the ethnodrama's potential to impact self-esteem because I know that I suffer from low self-esteem after facing a barrage of teenagers every day who hurl curses and destructive comments, bring aggressive attitudes and emit clouds of hatred. Who could live in that environment for 18 years and maintain a healthy self-esteem? Several comments from informants connected directly to this issue:

> *"As a teacher in the early stages of my career, it was helpful to hear other, veteran educators have similar concerns and issues with the education system and the students in the classroom. This gave me more confidence that I am doing my job correctly and it's normal (unfortunately) throughout a teaching career."* (NK)
>
> *"This year, with many students failing the written portion of the state exam, I felt depressed. I felt a sense of euphoria when other teachers shared their experiences and stories. I felt less alone and therefore my self-esteem did improve."* (CTA)
>
> *"It is a great boost to my self-esteem, which has been battered over the last 5–7 years, that we are sitting here as colleagues focused on a central purpose and finding joy, intellectual challenge, and a bit of fun. Thank-You*. (SB)

C. Better their scores on significant items of the Maslach Burnout Inventory.

Although the pre vs. post scores on the three subscales of the Maslach Burnout Inventory did not prove to be statistically significant, the individual participants' change range numbers do show a reasonable trend of positive impact. The Informant group participated fully in 12 hours of workshops, discussions, writing and performance. The individuals moved on average 4.8 points (mean scores) down on the Emotional Exhaustion scale, indicating an improvement, as higher mean scores correspond to higher degrees of experienced burnout. Additionally, the factor on this subscale, which Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter, identify as the one with the highest factor loading (.84 on frequency and .81 on intensity) (*Manual* 10) faired well with the informant group individuals. The highest factor loaded question was "I feel burned out from my work." The informant group registered an average response score of 4.1 on the pre-test, and a 3.8 on the post-test, showing an overall improvement. On that same question, 4 informants bettered their score by one point, 4 stayed the same, and 1 indicated they were 1 point more burned out than they had been prior to the ethnodrama project.

Other factors in the Emotional Exhaustion section showing overall improvement include "I feel emotionally drained from my work" (4.7 Pre, 3.5 Post); "I feel I'm working too hard on my job" (5.4 Pre, 3.9 Post); "I feel like I'm at the end of my rope" (3.1 Pre, 2.7 Post); and "I feel used up at the end of a work day" (4.8 Pre, 3.0 Post). No causation is implied, but the positive movement on the scale between the pre-test and post-test is encouraging.

Emotional Exhaustion is not the only subscale on which we find a trend toward the positive. Depersonalization, "an unfeeling and impersonal response toward recipients of one's care or service (students)" (10), consisted of 5 survey items. Four of the five items trended toward improvement. Two items showed distinct improvement; " I've become more callous

toward people since I took this job" went from a Pre average score of 2.3 to a Post average score of 1.3, indicating fewer now felt they had become more callous. Also, "I feel I treat some students as though they were impersonal objects" went from a Pre average of 1.7 to a Post average of 1.0. The only item in this subscale that did not show improvement was, "I feel students blame me for their problems." The Post score was slightly higher here (3.1) compared to the Pre score of 2.9. Indicating that on this element, the informant panelists felt even more blamed by students after the ethnodrama experience.

The Informant group results on the Personal Accomplishment subscale (8 items) were not as promising with three of the subscales showing diminished results from Pre to Post. Informants' scores indicate that fewer felt they "deal(t) with emotional problems very calmly" or "deal(t) very effectively with the problems of their students" or "could easily create a relaxed atmosphere with their students." Four of the subscales showed improvement. More informants felt they "had accomplished many worthwhile things in this job" (3.1 to 4.2); felt they were "positively influencing other people's lives through their work" (3.5 to 3.7); could "easily understand how their students feel about things" (4.8 to 5.1), and "feel exhilarated after working closely with their students" (3.4 to 4.2). The final item in the Personal Accomplishment subscale, "I feel very energetic" showed absolutely no change.

Explanations for these survey results are difficult to determine because there are always the influence of unknown factors. I would like to assume "all things being equal" but this is clearly not the case. The time period between the first and second survey assessments for the Informants was approximately 7 weeks, a period of time in which many things can happen, and my research was not consuming these hard-working teachers lives. Further, responses to the survey, done completely on-line, may have been done on a "good day," when the teacher was

feeling more positive, rather than on a “bad day” when the teacher would be likely to feel more apathetic toward any intellectual pursuit. Finally, the alignment of the specific items on the three subscales of the MBI does not match the specific topics pursued in the Informant workshops. This is by design, as the ethnodrama is a product of the conversations taking place in these workshops. There is a decision to be made by the researcher about the intensity of his guidance and direction. I chose to lead only by introduction of broad topics and concerns prompted primarily by Parker Palmer’s *The Courage to Teach*.

MBI results for the “control” group were interesting as well. This group (7 teachers), took the MBI no sooner than 3 days prior to the ethnodrama performance, watched the performance, then took it again no less than 3 days after the performance. This is a far shorter period than the informant panel experienced, perhaps promoting more focus on the “treatment” (ethnodrama). In the Emotional Exhaustion subscale the control group members improved their scores, that is, in the second MBI assessment fewer respondents said that:

“Working with people all day is really a strain for me,”

“They were “working too hard at their job”

“Working with people directly puts too much stress on me”

“I feel used up at the end of a workday”

“I feel emotionally drained.”

For two of the items in the subscale, “I feel burned out from my work” and “I feel frustrated by my job,” there was no change. However, for the remaining two items, “I feel fatigued when I have to get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job,” and “I feel like I’m at the end of my rope,” average scores were trending poorly. More participants (2.1

Pre to 2.6 Post) said that they did feel fatigued, while slightly more (2.1 Pre to 2.3 Post) respondents said they felt like they were at the end of their rope. Again, consistency or reliability of the instrument is impacted by many unknown factors. This is why the MBI instrument is supported in the current research by multiple sources of information.

A look at the Depersonalization subscale for the Control group reveals that three of the items yielded better results on the Post-survey when compared to the Pre-survey.

In the second survey, fewer respondents said, "I don't really care what happens to some students"; "I've become more callous toward people since I took this job", and "I feel as if I treat students as if they were impersonal objects." There was an increase in the number of respondents who said " I feel students blame me for some of their problems" (Pre 1.8 to Post 2.3), and no change in the respondents who said they "worry that this job is hardening me emotionally." There is no definitive answer to what may have prompted a person to respond differently on the same item when asked twice. Seeing the ethnodrama may have stimulated some thought s about their own teaching experiences or they may have had a tremendous day in the classroom and were looking forward to a wonderful night with their family.

Finally, the third subscale of the MBI reveals the following for the 7 respondents in the Control group. In the Post survey, fewer said:

"I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job" (Pre 5.1 to Post 4.7).

"I feel exhilarated when I work closely with my students" (Pre 4.8 to Post 4.7).

"I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work"

(Pre 5.1 to Post 5.0).

"I deal very effectively with problems of my students" (Pre 4.8 to Post 4.1).

"I can easily understand how my students feel about things" (Pre 5.4 to Post 4.7).

Likewise, in the Control group Post survey, more said:

"In my work I deal with emotional problems very calmly" (Pre 4.8 to Post 5.0).

"I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my students" (Pre 5.4 to Post 5.7)

In the researcher's mind, these control group data ranges are not trending favorably in the direction of "positive impact of ethnodrama on teachers." I will assert that the items on each of the three subscales of the MBI do not align well with anything discussed in the ethnodrama. There are distant connections, but nothing direct.

It is extremely curious to note that both the Informant Group and the Control group showed zero change from Pre to Post survey on the last entry of the PA subscale, "I feel very energetic." It seems the ethnodrama had absolutely no impact on the energy levels of these teachers. The dilemma in assuming that the participants might "better their scores on significant items of the Maslach Burnout Inventory" is that there are relatively few significant items on the MBI that suitably match the goals of this research, a problem that can be addressed in research beyond this simple pilot.

C. Build camaraderie, and a sense of belonging among the panelists.

There is no item on the MBI that addresses camaraderie, or sense of community among teachers. There were however, snippets of dialogue during the informant panel meetings, and a few from the post ethnodrama comments gathered from faculty following the ethnodrama, that give support to this consideration. First, from an exit survey, handwritten on the bottom of the paper, was this unsolicited comment:

" I have rarely seen on this campus, a sense of brotherhood as I saw and felt in this room today. It was an energy we need more of."

This comment, no doubt, is a product of what Mienczakowski calls the "emancipatory

potential for motivating social change within participants and audiences" ("Reconstruction" 361). How critically accurate Mienczakowski is in identifying this energy, energy that "theatre people" have long recognized as more compelling and dominate than any power point or dry presentation could be.

Also encouraging are post-ethnodrama comments from two of the informants: *"Personally. I feel that this experience helped build a sense of camaraderie. People were able to expose their feelings of inadequacy in the classroom – due to outside influences – as well as their proudest moments. I believe it is not easy to expose a vulnerable side (especially about your career and passion) to a group of strangers who are your colleagues.*

"I also felt it built camaraderie. At least for me (considering I only knew one person previously)."

D. Reduce stress or help teachers find a way to address it.

One of the statements in the Emotional Exhaustion subscale of the MBI deals directly with stress, although it connects stress only with the notion of working with others. "Working with people directly puts too much stress on me" showed a cutback for both the informant group (from 2.7 Pre Average to 2.1 Post Average), and in the Control group (from 1.6 Pre Average to 1.0 Post Average). Also, individual responses on this statement ranged from 0 (Never) to only 4 (Once a Week) for both groups. Stress, of course, comes from many sources, especially in the day of an urban secondary school teacher. The MBI statement seems to be more about relationships and personality types among adults in the school, rather than student rooted stressors. One would hope that there is not a serious aversion to dealing with people in the most people-oriented profession.

Again, a few comments and dialogues from the panelists' work addressed stress. "I felt the process of the ethnodrama helped me to reduce my stress by addressing it" said one panelist in a post-ethnodrama interview. Another noted that she had already seen results by remembering that she was not alone, but shared the same stressors as other teachers. Most powerfully, the exit interview revealed that of the 38 faculty members who turned in the survey, fully 58% said they *strongly agreed* that they "had exhibited signs of excessive stress." Another 24% answered that they *agree* they "had exhibited signs of excessive stress." Simple addition acknowledges that 82% of these teachers have dealt with excessive stress. A recent Gallup Poll showed that almost 70% of K–2 teachers did not feel engaged in their work and nearly half of teachers reported feeling daily stress (Klein). Of course, teachers are not the only workers who report feeling high levels of disengagement, but the attitudes of teachers have a point-blank and real impact on student achievement.

E. Re-ignite hope and an understanding of euphoria as it may or may not apply to them in their roles, and if it does not currently apply, instill hope that it should, or could.

Euphoria, as anticipated, did not readily find acceptance from the Informant Panel: "Every time I think of the word euphoria I am reminded of psychedelic colors and the drug culture of the 60's. It really has a connotation problem" and "I don't know that I expect euphoria, perhaps just peace and a chance to do the job for which I was hired; teaching." These were two of the comments offered in panel discussion. The hesitation for these teachers is a matter of long-term breakdown of their initial hope and passion for teaching. They have been worn down to a point that they forget what euphoria can be like in the teacher – student climate. Now, after a few years of urban classroom experience or after a couple of decades, they have been convinced that they are not entitled to such a feeling of joy and elation in their jobs.

Two remaining points support the concept of euphoria for teachers. First, in Informant Panel discussions, nearly every one of the panelists shared at least one moment they called *euphoric.* Some are evident in the attached presentation script; others were shared in sessions but did not make it to the stage.

" I have had moments of euphoria in my career. I had forgotten, or maybe come to disbelieve, that euphoria was even possible."

"I think that these sessions together have encouraged me to seek euphoria, as my passion for teaching has been lost."

"We have all known euphoric moments, but I don't know if we can expect teaching to be generally euphoric."

Another panelist listed this item specifically as one that was "*accomplished for her."*

The last set of relevant quantitative statistical data is the results of the exit survey completed by 38 faculty members after they had viewed the ethnodrama. The survey is not necessarily a statistically reliable survey, as the Informant Panel created it, and there is no assurance that all audience members completed the survey, and there is a high potential for bias as the audients were colleagues of the researcher. The survey does expose some trends. In the exit survey, 310 of 418 overall individual question responses fell in the "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" categories. Thus, 74% of the responses were positive.

A copy of the actual survey appears in Appendix I, while I have included the breakdown of responses above as *Table 4.4.* The exit survey served as a check of those who had only

Table 4.4

Exit Survey Summary

STATEMENT	STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	DISAGREE 2	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE 3	AGREE 4	STRONGLY AGREE 5
The subject of today's presentation is important to me as an educator.				(2) 5%	(36) 95%
I have thought about my own well-being in regards to teaching.		(12) 31%	(10) 26%	(12) 31%	(4) 10%
I sometimes feel overwhelmed with my teaching responsibilities.			(1) 3%		(37) 97%
I feel that teacher well-being has largely been ignored by district administration and the public.			(3) 8%	(19) 50%	(16) 42%
I have exhibited signs of excessive stress.		(1) 3%	(6) 16%	(9) 24%	(22) 58%
I have felt that I may be experiencing *burnout.*	(3) 7%	(7) 18%	(11) 29%	(9) 24%	(8) 21%
I was moved emotionally by the presentation.			(8) 21%	(16) 42%	(14) 37%
This presentation has motivated me to seek further information?		(4) 10%	(27) 71%	(5) 13%	(2) 05%
I enjoyed the presentation.				(2) 5%	(36) 95%
I believe ethnodrama is an effective tool for teacher development.			(8) 21%	(7) 18%	(23) 60%
I feel more optimistic about myself as a teacher after the presentation.			(7) 18%	(11) 29%	(20) 53%

watched the ethnodrama, nothing else. These were teachers from the Fort Hayes campus. There was one administrator in attendance as well. Of course, I was happy to see that overwhelmingly people "enjoyed the presentation" and "the topic is important to (them) as educators." I was also somewhat alarmed at the high number of responders who said they "had exhibited signs of excessive stress."

Some were not totally convinced that ethnodrama would be effective for teacher development, but 82% felt more optimistic after seeing the presentation. The survey tool was again, an indicator that teachers are hurting, and need to be understood, respected, and taken care of if we expect a quality educational experience for the masses.

The exit survey completed by the faculty members attending the ethnodrama performance indicates these teachers believe (1) that teacher well-being, the ultimate focus of this research, has been largely ignored by district administration and the public [92%], and (2) that these teachers felt more optimistic about themselves as teachers following the presentation [82%], and (3) a greater percentage of these teachers have never thought about their own well-being in regards to teaching [56%] than the portions that say they have [41%]. These results, though not generalizable to all urban public school teachers universally, are indicative enough to signal a problem, and worthy of further study. This tiny sample, in one district in one metropolitan city warrants a larger study to further solidify the data and increase reliability.

F. Passive observation of a performance from one's peer group may improve teachers' realistic thinking about the job they perform everyday, and the differences between a job and a "calling."

This early assumption is not impacted at all by the Informant panelists' MBI data, as it concerns "passive observation," which applies to the control group (teachers taking an MBI

assessment, then watching the ethnodrama, and re-taking the assessment), as well as the teachers who came to watch the ethnodrama, but did not take the MBI at all.

In regards to the MBI scores for the control group, again there is a gap between what is asked by the survey, and the wording of my early assumptions. The only response items on the survey that may be considered connected enough to the assumption above are two items in the Personal Accomplishment subscale.

First, "*I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work*," addresses realistic thinking about teachers' jobs and reminds teachers about their calling to teach.
On this individual MBI statement the control group responded with an average score of 5.1 (which is, "a few times a week they feel they are positively influencing other people's lives through their work"). Remember that a higher score on the Personal Accomplishment subscale items indicates a lesser degree of burnout. Then, after the ethnodrama presentation, the same group scored an average of 2.3, indicating that on average, this group of 7 respondents felt that they were "positively influencing other people's lives through their work only once a month or less. Was the ethnodrama a wet blanket on the otherwise "ok" teachers? By one perspective, yes, but recall that the exit survey of 38 colleagues of the control and informant groups, indicates that a mere 41% of teachers have ever thought about their own well-being in regards to teaching. Thus, when encouraged to actually think about their own well-being, they may experience a demoralizing of sorts. The performance, I admit, was a bit eye opening and set a somber mood as all in attendance realized the great truth and sadness in what was being so authentically shared.

The second response item in the Personal Accomplishment subscale that can be loosely aligned with this early assumption is "*I have accomplished many worthwhile things in my job.*" This item aligns in part with the "realistic thinking about the job they perform everyday." All

too often in the hectic world of teaching in the public school, teachers thinking about their own well-being, their own contributions and accomplishments, takes the notorious last spot on the priority list. Responses from the control group on this item were 5.1 on average for the pre-test, or a response of "I have accomplished many worthwhile things in my job a few times a week." Then, post-ethnodrama, the group average response was precisely the same (5.1). The absence of any change may be due, in part, to the mismatch between the concept of personal accomplishment and the performance that focused on the reality of the teaching experience. Very little of the staged performance mentioned the teacher participants' assessments of personal accomplishment. Rather, the subject matter tended to be recollections of specific experiences that made an impact or taught a valuable lesson, positive or negative, to the teacher speaking.

Next, a look at the exit survey completed by other faculty following the ethnodrama reveals that 92% said that teacher well-being had largely been ignored by the administration and the public. This overwhelming response indicates that these teachers have indeed been "realistically thinking about the jobs they do everyday as teachers," and that they believe other stakeholders have not. Again, a closed group (all colleagues, and a fair number of researcher friends) is not an absolute indicator of anything other than that the researcher is respected enough to get folks to show up. However, it does show presence of dissatisfaction among teachers, which is worthy of further study.

Finally, a single comment from a post-project interview of one of the informant panelists, supports the need for further study of ethnodrama and its potential to impact positive change for teachers in their challenging and increasingly difficult vocation:

"I have been doing this for over 25 years and I can't remember a time when the district, or a parent, or even an administrator asked me how I was doing? I mean in regards to my well-being,

my mental state, my satisfaction as a teacher, my mood, my morale. I hope that somehow this project can be a start."

G. Teachers can move from a place of "Burnout," to a place of "Euphoria."

Nothing in the MBI connects to this facet of my early hopes and assumptions for this project. Oddly, only one item in the exit survey comes close to the idea of moving to euphoria, because, as I stated before, euphoria did not get much of a buy-in during informant panel sessions, and it was the panel that created the exit survey. "I was moved emotionally" got a 79% agree or strongly agree response. It barely connects, but does indicate that the teachers who saw the ethnodrama presentation are now aware that ethnodrama has the power to move people emotionally, a significant part of exuberance, pleasure, optimism, positivity or euphoria.

A few conversations I held with informants after the presentation yielded applicable comments:

> "*When I need a break, I take it. I understand I am not good for my students if I have not cared for myself. My new normal after participating in the ethnodrama is daily exercise, giving up sugar and espresso as stimulants… and as I focus on finding euphoria again, I drink lemon water each morning and have even more energy."*
>
> *" I don't believe that it takes much to allow us to move from burnout to euphoria (these are the extremes). I think we need to garner the attention of district administration, lawmakers, and the general public before it is too late. We seem to be continually losing experienced teachers and our children suffer."*

H. Euphoria is achievable through work, persistence and attention to self.

I must start this section with a comment I received from one of the control group participants following the ethnodrama performance:

"I have made so many efforts to bring exactly this challenge to our union, to our district guys, to our own principal, but it never seems real or ugly enough to get their attention. Maybe this drama method will make it real enough. I think most of our teachers do work hard… we have left out the self-care thing."

Again in this pursuit, the MBI is misaligned. It is the qualitative data that provides support—like this exchange from a panelist to me in a work session:

PANELIST: *It seems like taking care of us is always left out… but honestly, there is so much on my plate, I do not have time to think about me.*

ME: *You don't have the time or you don't take the time?*

PANELIST: *I don't think I am allowed to take the time…I need to keep my job*.

This comment is also disconcerting and revealing:

"You know, I have felt euphoria in my teaching practice. I think sometimes I get closer to it when I work less at it. I mean, I am more relaxed, confident that I am a good teacher, less anxious about evaluations, and testing scores, and reductions in teaching staff. If I have less outside garbage, I feel greater sense of belonging, efficacy I guess."

Chapter V: Interpretation and Recommendations

Overview

One of the most intriguing elements of live performance, i.e. dance, music, drama, is that no matter how perfected it may be in rehearsal, it takes on a life of its own when placed before a living, breathing audience. It is quite the same with ethnodrama, but imagine that every rehearsal is a mixture of both established and developing script. Where then, is the peace-of-mind, the assurance that the "holy performance" will be perfect, moving, adequate, significant, or even sensible? In reality, there is little assurance. Saldaña maintains a clear direction in his work, based on the principle, "participants first, playwrights second, and audiences third" (*Ethnotheatre,* 42). I too, attempted to uphold this principle and found it very difficult to break the "director/writer" habits I have established in my career. In the end, as evidenced by the panelists-created script, participants were honored and authentically presented honest, frequently harsh positions on teaching and the challenges of the public school.

The completed script, which is presented in Chapter IV and includes light and sound cues, is the work of my nine informant panelists, representing 108 hours of discussion, exercises, writing, and rehearsals, and numerous informal discussions outside the confines of the formal group.

The small sample size utilized in my research has been mentioned previously as a barrier to achieving statistical relevance. The sample appears to be representative of the population studied, but this is a fluke because I do not know the characteristics of the entire population I am studying, I can only surmise. Further, there is no evidence that the values, beliefs and attitudes at the center of my study are normally distributed throughout the population so the idea of "probability" is inappropriate here (Marshal 523). In qualitative research, the emphasis is on

improved understanding of complex human issues, rather than generalizability of results (524).

Participants in the informant panel group included teachers in the Columbus, (Ohio) City School System. The teachers represent various subject areas, including performing arts, social sciences, health and wellness, and special needs. Their length of teaching experience were also widely spread from 2 years, to over 25. Gender of the group members was balanced, (5 female, 4 male). In regards to race, 6 participants most closely identified as European American, 2 as African-American, and one as Bi-racial.

The participants in this study, Informant Group, Control Group and Audience are all teachers in an inner-city public school system, not from the same buildings. Each of them is dedicated, but drained, successful, but stressed, first-rate, but frustrated, and all love or have loved their calling as teachers. Participation in this project was on a completely volunteer basis, held no promise of reward, no compensation, no perks, no recognition of any kind. In fact, it represented a further burden of hours spent in meetings and homework, and a potential risk of repercussion, as can often be the case in a hostile environment where administrators “rule” the lowly teacher. Why then, did these teachers agree to participate? Some, I am certain, were extending personal support to me as a colleague, and a friend. Perhaps they felt a chance to repay me for my support of them in previous instances. Yet several participants were absolutely new faces to me, we had never met. It seems to me that all of these professionals connected to this study because it addresses so many of the problems and frustrations they are experiencing, which has led them to doubt their career choice, take on a more apathetic approach, and in one instance (as you have read in the performance script) leave teaching altogether. Regardless of their motivations, their contributions were heartfelt and based solely in the reality of their current situations. So, what does it all mean? Was the project successful? If so, in what way? If not, what

were its limitations? What is the significance of this research? How does it contribute to the field of ethnodramatic study, or teacher development? Is their potential for an extended study? What would I do differently next time? These questions are addressed in this final chapter.

So, What Does it All Mean?

I am pleased overall with the reaction to the project by the panelists, and other faculty observers. The qualitative data really begin to resonate with the affirmation that there is a problem of burnout and minimal self-care among urban schoolteachers. Further, there seems to be a great approval of ethnodrama as an emotional modifier, a forum for authentic representation of the research, and a far more enjoyable way to share. I believe that this pilot has merit for being reproduced under better conditions.

If I were to reproduce the work, I would better align the assessment tool with the questions I am seeking answers for. This could mean writing a custom assessment tool or modifying an existing one. In many ways, I realize I was asking the MBI, a measure of burnout, to assess the effectiveness of ethnodrama to impact change in participants responses to items about burnout. These items may be at the same dance, but they are not going home together. Ethnodrama is a means of presenting the data, not the agent of the change. I know via extensive research and personal experience that ethnodrama is a powerful presentation tool; however, I did not use it correctly. I have unknowingly forced something to do what it was not intended to do. It is difficult to measure ethnodrama via a fixed survey like the MBI, as the whole purpose of ethnodrama is that it should, as much as possible remain organic, be a product of the group. My project tried to bridge that gap unsuccessfully.

So my pilot needs modifications. First, I recommend that the study include a much larger sample size of both informants, and control groups. I also recommend that the time period to

complete the study be expanded considerably to allow for adequate analysis between sessions and increased participation. I would also try to offer some incentive for participants and plan enough time to prepare actors to take the roles of the informant group to perform the piece on stage. Finally, I would recommend a longer creative period for the ethnodrama writer (in the present research this was me) to transform the data (which is really emotion, story, drama and dialogue) into a presentation that fully represents the participants.

Further, I realize that I did not get the panel focused quickly or sharply enough given the time constraints. The balance between organic movement of the panelists toward meaningful performance, and the desire to let the group evolve naturally, and perhaps never find a cohesive shared commentary on their situation, was more difficult than I had supposed. This is due partially to the fact that these were colleagues. Some of them had never experienced me as a scholar, and were hesitant to take my direction when I did provide it. I would recommend further projects to be work with a panel of strangers, although I feel this might shift me into the role of outsider attempting to participate in a strange group. The dynamics would certainly change.

A last recommendation for a detail of the study is the opportunity for participants to seek more information, or take further action. I totally overlooked this step in my concern for the aesthetic elements of the presentation.

In Chapter IV I provided a chart comparing my groups mean scores on each of the three MBI subscales. The chart indicates that very little change happened between the pre ethnodrama MBI and the post ethnodrama MBI for either the Informant or Control groups. In all three subscales, the informant group stayed at the same level of low - medium - high range of experienced burnout. As discussed, a larger sample would have easily led to statistical significance.

Likewise, the control group showed change in only one subscale. The group went from a mean score of 19 (average) in the pre-ethnodrama assessment to a mean score of 14 (high) in the post-ethnodrama assessment. The other two subscales remained the same.

I believe that I might also explore the improving of teacher morale, optimism and euphoria (and thereby avoiding burnout) through the lens of Csikszentmihaly's Flow Theory (Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi). It has been my desire; both in this work, and in my what-if dreams every day in my teaching career, to encourage teachers to find the joy, focus on what they do best, and de-prioritize the rest. It might also be more fruitful to measure flow pre and post ethnodramatic experience using Csikszentmihaly's *Experience Sampling Method* (Csikszentmihalyi, I. and Csikszentmihalyi, M.; Csikszentmihalyi, M.,), having teachers record their mood, feelings, thoughts at randomly assigned moments during their work day. Research with flow theory and teachers is seldom done and could be innovatively auspicious.

Before closing this summary of my project, I want to answer a basic question that has been asked of me a few times by thinking associates and colleagues during this time period. The question is worded, "*Why is ethnodrama so great*?" There is no better way to provide responses to this question than to quote the master, Johnny Saldaña: "Both the researcher and the audience gain understandings not possible through conventional qualitative data analysis and presentation" (*Ethnodrama* 32).

> Many audience members who attend an effective theatre production, even if the play is a fictional work, testify afterward that the live performance event made things seem more "real" – a paradox if you think about it. Yet if the art form has this ability, this power, to heighten the representation and presentation of social life, and if our research goal with a particular fieldwork project is to capture and document the stark realities of the people we talked to and observed, then the medium of theatre seems the most compatible choice for sharing our findings and insights. (Saldaña, *Ethnotheatre* 15)

Now that I have completed my research, I can add to Saldaña's thoughts. Doing the actual research work with ethnodrama reconfirms my life-long belief in the power of theatre to effect change, move people emotionally, and become the catalyst for action. One of my student technical crewmembers commented that they noticed how spellbound audience members were, and another crew student responded, "Yeah, I didn't see the glow of even one cell phone during the performance." This is grand praise indeed.

I believe that the research presented here has met the stipulations described by Saldaña, in that it used the power of theatre to capture and document the stark realities of teachers in the urban public school system. I also believe that the project has warranted attention to the disfavors and disillusionments and struggles of our nation's teachers. This pilot has demonstrated a need for further study. It has potential for real impact and guidance for other researchers, if it is expanded and modified as previously discussed.

The work has demonstrated significance to the field of Teacher Development. To this researcher's knowledge, ethnodrama has not yet been utilized as the vehicle to represent and present the struggle of teachers with stress, emotional exhaustion, over work, lack of self-efficacy and burnout. This small pilot study has opened the door to further studies of this nature. Teachers are by reputation, creative, extroverted, and performance types. Such qualities are in perfect symmetry with the performance and creative insight called for in ethnodrama. There is potential for a variety of studies in this vein.

I see potential for this pilot to yield related studies. Perhaps a very similar study with retired teachers who would be more available, and perhaps less hesitant to speak a true mind about the conditions under which they taught, would be plausible. A study could also be done simultaneously with teachers and the students they teach, which might give insight to how each

holds a different perspective. Studies such as these might lead to the creation of a meaningful teacher development program, and bigger studies assessing the impact of such a program. The research here as contributed to the new and rapidly growing field of ethnodramatic research, as well as teacher development. I believe that I have contributed by reaching a point of effective research wherein, “both the researcher and the audience gain understanding not possible through conventional qualitative data analysis, writing and presentation from ethnotheatre’s artistic rigor and representational power” (Saldaña, *Ethnodrama Anthology* 32).

Limitations to the study were directly related to small sample size, the misalignment of the assessment tool with the research question, and time constraints. To remedy these in future studies, I would increase sample size to 12–15, and I would attempt to use strangers from a variety of different buildings in the same school district, or from various districts. The second option, though more likely to better represent the population of urban schoolteachers, would be more costly and difficult in terms of logistics. Perhaps such a wide sweeping study could be coordinated using Internet technology, although I fear that physical proximity is imperative to building the bonds of trust and joint purpose that promote authentic dialogue.

The misalignment challenge (the MBI did not fully assess ethnodrama’s impact on teacher’s self-perception or it’s capacity to lead toward euphoria) is critical as well. I would continue to search for a more suitable instrument, or more likely, create my own. The challenge remains that to maintain the organic nature of the ethnodrama, one cannot be confined by the specificity of a pre-made assessment instrument. Therefore, a reliable instrument to measure “teacher euphoria” must be created and utilized to effectively measure the impact of ethnodrama.

Time constraints, as the third limitation of the current study could be addressed more easily if I were not full time teaching faculty. Then, my schedule could be aligned completely to

that of the participants. Better planning would be possible to insure that there was ample time between workshops and the final performance for writing, editing and receiving panelists' feedback.

A final note on my displeasure with this study is that I set out to measure what I believed to be euphoria, I wanted to see if an ethnodrama could remind teachers about their right to feel blissful about their roles as teachers, as it is an honorable and essential role. In the wash of the research, I did not measure euphoria at all. I wonder now, about the possibility of finding a way to measure something as obscure as euphoria, especially when it is a misunderstood concept and far removed from the thought processes of teachers who are doing all they can to survive, at the far away end of a spectrum from euphoria.

Overall, I believe that my research has contributed in a small way to both the ever-growing research application of ethnodrama and ethnotheatre, and to the wide examinations of teacher development. As stated previously, I know of no other empirical studies to date that have used ethnodrama specifically with teachers in regard to burnout prevention and the improvement of teacher self-perception. The time is now for us to be concerned and to manufacture change in our public schools, before we as teaching professionals are deemed completely useless and replaced by videos, robots, or dime-a-dozen, government-fed teacher bots.

Additionally, I believe that my project has perfectly aligned itself with social change theory. I return to the chart I provided in the opening chapter (see table 1.2). Komives and Wagner describe numerous elements in their definition of social change and my project has attended to each. The ethnodramatic format permitted an open discussion seeking the root cause of problems teachers face, the effort was certainly collaborative with no exclusions, the teachers involved in the study were directly affected by the problems associated with burnout (stress,

health, longevity, self-perception, etc.), and teachers often feel marginalized, under-valued, under supported and un-cared for. These issues were evident in both the panel discussions and in the final presentation.

Social change theory addresses "each person's sense of responsibility to others and the realization that making things better for one pocket of society makes things better for society as a whole." (Komives and Wagner 10). There can be little doubt that generally, teachers are intrinsically motivated by this sense of duty or responsibility to others. As the social change model was created for leadership development, it is imperative to qualify teachers as leaders. The authors of the social change model wrote that a leader is "one who is able to effect positive change for the betterment of others, the community and society" (HERI 16). Where better, or more often, or more evident, is this positive change enacted then in the classroom?

Though it is difficult to know precisely what changes (positive or negative) are derived from teacher influence on students, or that the added attention to teacher well-being reform suggested by my study will be a stand-alone remedy to the challenges of U.S. public schools, it is certain that this is a step in the right direction. I believe that this project is part of a "coordinated nudging and waiting by many people intentionally influencing toward a shared goal" (Allen and Cherrey 47). I am nudging on the teacher's side, as it is the teacher who directly nurtures our children and our future.

Both leadership and change are integral to the daily responsibility - privilege – challenge of teachers and teaching. This research seeks to change teachers' perspectives on their relationship to teaching, and to help them recognize their roles as leaders. Yes, teachers are leaders, and more importantly, their leadership prepares generations of future leaders.

My project has opened a door, reversed a thought process, and helped teachers to more greatly appreciate themselves in the formidable climate of their chosen career. I was driven in this research by my unhappiness with the current circumstances regarding teachers and their connection to the educational organization, the community, and to themselves. However, I maintain hope, on even the bleakest of teacher days, that something is there, worthy of examining, refining, and perhaps redesigning and rebuilding. I believe that my study from within and in collaboration with the organization has yielded awareness leading to further dialogue, and a motivation for change.

The results of my project inspire me toward more hope. I believe that the ethnodramatic process can become a weapon against the wildly raging rate of teacher burnout. Christina Maslach makes a number of suggestions for combating burnout, including those that can be made at the organizational level; dividing up the work load, acquiring more resources and limiting job spillover into personal time (*Cost of Caring* 198–207), and those that are individual as well; "developing decompression activities or seeking out social support" (217). Each of her recommendations is accompanied by her plea for early detection of burnout symptoms. The ethnodrama work I have presented here is a major step for teachers to self-assess and discover where they might be in terms of burnout. Through open discussion, authentic sharing, and recall of both positive and negative experiences, teachers get "permission" to think about themselves. This permission, seldom recognized or made a priority in the overwhelmed professional's busy life, is essentially empowerment. Regretfully, teachers look to self-care last, when it should be viewed as critical to the successful and effective teaching process.

My innovative approach to teacher well-being through the power of authentic sharing and performance is supported by current research on the innovative capacity of schools (Geijsel, Van

den Berg, and Sleegers; Van den Berg and Sleegers). Among the recommendations of these studies was a call for school restructuring to include “a greater emphasis on collective problem solving, teacher empowerment, experimentation, and teacher reflection” (Sleegers 255).

Ethnodramatic work, as presented in my pilot study, is the practical equivalent to the theoretical solicitation for empowerment, experimentation and reflection for teachers. Issac Friedman contends that the foremost step to healthier schools is improving teachers’ sense of self-efficacy (*Turning*, 174), while Barry Farber discusses the probable failure of any teacher reform effort that does not increase “teachers’ feeling gratified by and successful in their efforts” (Vandenberghe and Huberman165). Like anyone, teachers need to feel wanted and important, and they seek to have these feelings affirmed by those with whom they work and live. Because their “clients” are children, it is not reasonable to depend on them for this affirmation. Instead, it must come from colleagues, administrators, and the community. Thus, the selected audience for the performance piece of this pilot study.

In brief, I am prepared to remain positive and resist the defeatist teacher’s lounge cynicisms. It is time for me to ask about the gratifying, the honorable, the admirable aspects of my profession, “Why are we teachers anyway?” Is it possible, or even preferable to seek a complete sense of fulfillment, satisfaction and euphoria for our teaching professionals?

I believe that my research, respectfully submitted, will stimulate the further exploration of research impacting change for teachers, and keep us *searching for euphoria, one day at a time.*

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Permissions

Figure 1, Page 45 Logic model of hypothesized mindfulness training effects on teachers, classroom environments, and students.

Source: Roeser. Robert W. Mindfulness Training and Teachers' Professional

Development: An Emerging Area of Research and Practice. Child Development Perspectives 6:2 (2012) print; 171.

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Robert W. Roeser, Ellen Skinner; Jeffry Beers; Patricia A. Jennings Licensed Content Date Apr 18, 2012

Appendix B: Informant Panel Meeting Agendas

INFORMANT PANEL GROUP 1 DAY ONE

SESSION #1 - WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2015 3:00 – 6:00 P.M. Fort Hayes Library

PRESET: 9 comfy chairs around edges of space. snack/ beverage table (water, bagged chips, croissant sandwiches, mixed chocolate) 9 stools

3:00 – 3:15 Greet, hand out folders, name tags, complete DATA SHEET and ICD

3:15 – 3:40

set ground rules

never judgement listen for purpose of activity "FREEZE" means stop, maintain position, stay engaged SILENT means SILENT

WARM-UP – TRUST –

1. COVER THE SPACE (SILENT) SEE CARD
2. DEFENDER (SILENT) SEE CARD
3. BLIND HANDSHAKES (SILENT, BLIND)

Variation #2

Variation #3

3:40 – 3:50

BREAK (Eat, move chairs to closer circle, set stools)

3:50- 5:00 Let's talk about your homework ... Parker Palmer *Courage to Teach* General Impressions? Favorite passage? Highlighted? Agrees or

disagrees? Something that stirred your passion? Something you have been thinking more about since you read it?

My Favorites…

p. 34 Differences between POWER and AUTHORITY p. 31 description of *burnout*p. 28 on-stage vs. backstage reality dynamics p. 19-20 power of inwardness

p. 48 - 62 Fear, WRITING .... briefly jot down a description of a moment when (p. 69)

5:00 – 5:10

INTRODUCTION TO MY WORK

Purpose – goals – schedule –

(1) Things were going so well you knew you were born to teach (2) a moment when things were going so poorly you wished you had never been born SHARE

It is the power of story that allows us to turn issues and facts into people and lives

- What is a story? (an event and the relationships and circumstances that surround it) (it is contained and specific)
- What does it mean to tell a story? + Connection between theatre and story.

5:10 - 5:50

STORYTELLING

Partners – 4 min each – Switch Each person will have 4 minutes to tell a true story to their partner about themselves and FEAR (or other if it surfaces) Partner then has 2 minutes to ask any questions ... seek details. Then, end the conversation by saying “the next time you tell the story ....” THEN SWITCH .. REPEAT WITH OTHER PARTNER

- the goal is not to compete, not to tell the deepest, most amazing, most emotional story...but to tell a story you are comfortable about and at ease with sharing.
- you must tell your story for the entire four minutes, if you finish, tell it again ...adding more detail

- for this activity .. a Story has a beginning, a middle , and an end.
- your story will not be shared beyond your story partner unless you wish to. 5:20- 5:25

  TOUR OF A PLACE (the story you just told) Partner – hold hands, 5 min tour, walking about, showing and describing the physical aspects of the space, the environment in great detail. If your partner asks you a question, you may share "story" but if not, you must stick to description. Actually walk about the space, showing your partner the details. Then, we will switch, and partner B does the same. 5:25 – 5:35 Debrief the exercises. What did you learn about your story? What elements might be missing from your story? Would you like to share your story with the group? 5:35 – 5:55 Debrief and challenge Given what you have read from Parker Palmer, what you have shared here today, and most importantly, what you know within yourself....

- What is your greatest challenge as a Teacher?
- What is the greatest hurdle or error of the U.S. Public Education system?
- I always thought teaching would be like ....
- Jobs that look better to me if I were not teaching ...

5:55 – 6:00 Wrap up... Next time ... refine your story. Connect it to education?

Think About ... What do you want to tell an audience of administrators, fellow teachers, new teachers,politicians, community leaders and parents about the experience of teaching?

INFORMANT PANEL GROUP 1 DAY TWO

SESSION #2 - WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2015 3:00 – 6:00 P.M. Fort Hayes Library

PRESET: 9 comfy chairs around edges of space. snack/ beverage table (water, bagged chips, croissant sandwiches, mixed chocolate)

9 stools Greet and WARM -UP

set ground rules

never judgement * listen for purpose of activity

o "FREEZE" means stop, maintain position, stay engaged o SILENT means SILENT o WALK

... As last time, fill the space, and establish rhythm...

CONTINUE TO WALK ... remember the blind hand shakes? ... remember the defender/enemy? Remember our discussion of the Parker Palmer book? Think about what you feel most passionate about in regards to Teaching ...

FREEZE ... CLOSE EYES .... **CIRCLE HEIGHT** (see CARD) Boal OK,,,, MOVE THE CIRCLE TO A LINE, SIT DOWN ON FLOOR, FEET OUT IN FRONT. **AT A RIGHT ANGLE** (see CARD) Boal OK, Great ... everyone grab a stool and sit in a circle. **IN A CIRCLE** (MASSAGE) (see card) Boal **THE MOVEMENT COMES BACK** (see card) Boal **THE BEAR OF POITIERS** (see card) Boal THE FINAL AND MOST CHALLENGING ...

3:00 – 3:45

WARM-UP – TRUST –

WE BUILT TRUST LAST WEEK

***THE CHAIR** see CARD Boal*

4:00 – 4:15 4:15 - 4:25

4:25 – 5:00

BREAK (Eat, move chairs to closer circle, set stools)

All seated. RECAP last week.

- The difference between POWER and AUTHORITY
- Vulnerability
- Increasing pressures on Teachers to be social services
- OTHER ??
- DID WE TALK ABOUT FEAR? p. 48-62 Let's talk about your homework ... Parker Palmer *Courage to Teach* WRITING .... briefly jot down a description of a moment when (p. 69) (1) Things were going so well you knew you were born to teach (2) a moment when things were going so poorly you wished you had never been born

Think About ... What do you want to tell an audience of administrators, fellow teachers, new teachers, politicians, community leaders and parents about the experience of teaching?

SHARE

It is the power of story that allows us to turn issues and facts into people and lives

- What is a story? (an event and the relationships and circumstances that surround it) (it is contained and specific)
- What does it mean to tell a story? + Connection between theatre and story.

Partners – 4 min each – Switch Each person will have 4 minutes to tell a true story to their partner about themselves and FEAR (or other if it surfaces) Partner then has 2 minutes to ask any questions ... seek details. Then, end the conversation by saying "the next time you tell the story

....” THEN SWITCH .. REPEAT WITH OTHER PARTNER

- the goal is not to compete, not to tell the deepest, most amazing, most emotional story...but to tell a story you are comfortable about and at ease with sharing.
- you must tell your story for the entire four minutes, if you finish, tell it again ...adding more detail
- for this activity .. a Story has a beginning, a middle , and an end.
- your story will not be shared beyond your story partner unless you wish to.

5:00- 5:20

STORYTELLING

5:20- 5:25 TOUR OF A PLACE (the story you just told)

Partner – hold hands, 5 min tour, walking about, showing and describing the physical aspects of the space, the environment in great detail. If your partner asks you a question, you may share “story” but if not, you must stick to description. Actually walk about the space, showing your partner the details. Then, we will switch, and partner B does the same.

5:25 – 5:35 Debrief the exercises. What did you learn about your story? What elements might be missing from your story?

Would you like to share your story with the group?

5:35 – 5:55 Debrief and challenge Given what you have read from Parker Palmer, what you have shared here today, and most

importantly, what you know within yourself....

- What is your greatest challenge as a Teacher?
- What is the greatest hurdle or error of the U.S. Public Education system?
- I always thought teaching would be like ....
- Jobs that look better to me if I were not teaching ... 5:55 – 6:00 WHAT HAPPENS NOW ?? We do not meet again until MONDAY, MARCH 30 3:00-6:00 in the PA THEATRE ... at which time we will REHEARSE the piece we will present on TUESDAY, MARCH 31 3:00-4:30 in the PA THEA TRE UNTIL THEN, I will be in touch (personally, e-mail, sharing with you drafts and ideas for what we

might DO ... and seeking your approval.

GRIST PhD: Informant Panel ***MONDAY, MARCH 30***

SESSION THREE *3:00-6:00 P.M.*

DRAWING WITH CHALK ON THE STAGE FLOOR WILL BE AN IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR CONTRIBUTION TOMORROW. Think about the power of a word, a phrase, a simple image.

The goals for today:
(1) (2) (3)

Review what you noted or wrote in your journal to find the most interesting or impactful, or most interesting story.

Construct (WRITE IT DOWN, CLEARLY) a 300-400 word story or commentary on your TEACHING wisdom, pains, euphoric moments, and disillusions.

Think about (and find it if you can) an image that you would like projected on the screen behind you when you present your story. (I would like to get this digitally so I can prepare it for tomorrow)

(4) EAT During eating you may want to review what you have written and practice reading it ... the more familiar you are with the script.... the more sincere you will sound on stage. (5) REHEARSE the presentation for Tuesday.

JA JJ

JM

RG SB DV NK CT

STAGE ARRANGEMENT

Appendix C: Follow-up Interview Questions POST-Ethnodrama

Questions for Panelists

NAME ________________________ *DATE* ____________

Do you feel the ethnodrama experience was worth your time?

Do you think you will retain any benefit from the work?

Have you, or do you plane to incorporate anything we talked about in the sessions in your classroom or your teacher preparation?

Do you feel that the experience positively impacted any of the following for you?

Stress levels	YES	NO
Self-esteem	YES	NO
Coping strategies	YES	NO
Camaraderie	YES	NO
Role clarification	YES	NO

OTHER? ____

____

____

Appendix D: Self-Reported Informant Panelist Demographics

I believe I have accomplished my mission as a

I believe I am still accomplishing my mission as a

I believe I have lost sight of my mission as a teacher.

	GENDER	RACE	REL. STATUS	AGE	YEARS TEACHING			
JA	F	WHITE	MARRIED	33	5		X	
SB	M	WHITE	PARTNER	60	16		X	
DC	F	WHITE	SINGLE	41	15			X
RG	M	WHITE	MARRIED	55	18			X
JJ	M	WHITE	MARRIED	50	4		X	
NK	F	WHITE	SINGLE	26	2			X
JM	M	BLACK	SINGLE	22	2		X	
CTA	F	BLACK	MARRIED	53	7		X	
DV	F	BIRACE	PARTNER	30	2		X	
	44% F	66% WHITE	44% MARRIED	77% ≥ 30	33% >10	0%	66%	33%
	56% M	22% BLACK	33% SINGLE	22%< 30	66% < 10			
		11% OTHER	23% OTHER	41.1 AVG	AVG. 7.8			

Appendix E: Introductory Letter to All Faculty

DECEMBER 15, 2014

Dear Colleague,

As many of you know, I am working on my PhD in Leadership and Change through Antioch University. I am about to commence the research project associated with my dissertation. This letter is to humbly request your participation in my research as a member of a 10- person Informant Panel Discussion Group. I have outlined the project on the attached document, and provided the abstract for my dissertation as well. I trust that you will have enough information to make a commitment to each of the required dates and times.

- I will need you to commit to **all** listed meetings, for the entire duration.
- I will not be hostile if you have to decline.
- I will mention you by name in my Acknowledgements
- This is NOT a paid position, but you will receive a FREE book, some food and drink, and my heartfelt appreciation.

Please respond to this invitation by WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17...if you can do it, or if you must decline ... I want to get materials to you before the Winter Break. If you have questions .... My cell number is (xxx) xxx-xxxx. Feel free to call or text. My school extension is 1206. Hoping to have you on board. It is an exciting project.

Sincerely,
Rodney Grist
Fort Tech
Antioch University Candidate – PhD in Leadership and Change Cohort 10

Appendix F: Qualifying Questions

While interviewing potential Faculty to participate on informant panel.

What is the relationship between the person you are and the teacher you are?

What do you believe are the most pressing and evident challenges facing Teachers and Building Administration in the Columbus City Schools today?

As a Teacher, do you give much thought to your own emotional, physical, spiritual well-being?

How do you balance professional / personal life?

Would you like to see this issue (Teacher well-being, morale, self-efficacy) be addressed more often in Professional Development?

Availability?

Appendix G: Sample MBI Questions

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Human Services Survey Form

The purpose of this survey is to discover how various persons In the human services, or helping professionals view their job and the people with whom they work closely.

Because persons in a wide variety of occupations will answer this survey, it uses the term recipients to refer to the people for whom you provide your service, care, treatment, or instruction. When answering this survey please think of these people as recipients of the service you provide, even though you may use another term in your work.

Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way *about your job*. If you have *never* had this feeling, write a "0" (zero) in the space before the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate *how often* you feel it by writing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

How often:

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

1.	I feel depressed at work.
2.	I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.
3.	I don't really care what happens to some recipients.

Educators Survey Form

The purpose of this survey is to discover how educators view their job and the people with whom they work closely.

Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way *about your job*. If you have *never* had this feeling, write a "0" (zero) in the space before the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate *how often* you feel it by writing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

How often:

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

1.	I feel depressed at work.
2.	I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.
3.	I don't really care what happens to some students.

Appendix H: MBI License

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To whom it may concern,

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Instrument: Maslach Burnout Inventory, Forms: General Survey, Human Services Survey & Educators Survey

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Appendix I: Panelists Demographic Collection Sheet

INFORMANT PANEL – GROUP 1 – DATA SHEET

Informant: Please complete the following as completely as possible.

PERSONAL

NAME ____ *Your actual name will be encrypted*.

MAILING ADDRESS_______________________________ CITY _________________________

STATE _______ ZIP ________ BEST PHONE ________________________________

AGE_______ GENDER _______

MARITAL STATUS

MARRIED **PARTNERED** **SEPERATED/DIVORCED** **SINGLE**

RACE or ETHNIC GROUP with which you Identify

____

EDUCATION

UNDER GRAD ____YEAR RECEIVED_________

GRANTING INSTITUTION ____

GRAD ____YEAR RECEIVED_________

GRANTING INSTITUTION ____

OTHER DEGREE(s) CERTIFICATIONS____

GRANTING INSTITUTION _____________________________ YEAR RECEIVED __________

TEACHING CAREER

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IN WHICH YOU TEACH ___________________________________

THE BUILDING (SCHOOL) WHERE YOU TEACH ________________________________

NUMBER OF YEARS (including current) IN THIS DISTRICT ____

PROJECTED RETIREMENT _____________

SUBJECT(S) TAUGHT _____________________________________

ESTIMATE THE NUMBER OF HOURS YOU ARE AT SCHOOL EACH TYPICAL WEEK

____

NUMBER OF STUDENTS YOU ARE DIRECTLY RESPONSBLE FOR (in class) EACH DAY __________________ AGE RANGE of Students you Teach ______________

NUMBER OF YEARS AS A TEACHER ____________

YOUR AGE WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED TEACHING ______

OTHER DISTRICTS WHERE YOU HAVE TAUGHT

____

IN A SINGLE SENTENCE, STATE WHY YOU CHOOSE TEACHING AS A CAREER.

____

____

Select ONLY one response ...

DO YOU BELIEVE YOU

__________ HAVE ACCOMPLISHED YOUR MISSION

__________ ARE STILL ACCOMPLISHING YOUR MISSION

__________ HAVE LOST SIGHT OF YOUR MISSION

THANK YOU. Please turn in this **DATA SHEET** and the **CONSENT DOCUMENT** to the RESEARCHER before the session begins.

Appendix J: Teacher Exit Survey

NOW THAT YOU HAVE WATCHED AND PARTICIPATED IN THE PRESENTATION, PLEASE ANSWER HONESTLY THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY CHECKING THE BOX THAT MOST CLOSELY REVEALS YOUR FEELING ON THE STATEMENT.

STATEMENT	***STRONGLY DISAGREE***	***DISAGREE***	***NEUTRAL***	***AGREE***	***STRONGLY AGREE***
I have experienced much of what I heard on stage today.					
Today's session made me assess my role as a Teacher.					
I have been teaching professionally for less than 5 years.					
I have been teaching professionally for 6 years or more.					
Most days, I go home exhausted rather than elated.					
I have experienced Euphoria as a Teacher					
I believe in the power of a Teacher to change lives					
I believe I am less effective now than when I began Teaching.					
I am discouraged by the current state of the Teaching profession					
I feel respected as a Teacher					
I am proud to be a Teacher					
The question I get most from non-teachers is along the lines of, "Oh, how to you do that?"					
Most days I LOVE my job.					
I have experienced stress, depression, or anxiety related to my job.					
I believe I will make it to the standard 30 years of teaching service.					

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