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"CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?": A STUDY ON OPPRESSION

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Theatre Arts

by
Kathryn Marie Risinger
September 2009

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ABSTRACT

All people, regardless of creed, color, socio-economic status or race, feel and witness oppression. Augusto Boal believed that oppression is wrong in any form. Therefore, he created a theatrical technique called Forum Theatre whereby people can participate, not only intellectually, but emotionally in issues that effect their lives. Can You Hear Me Now?: A Study on Oppression is a project that delves into the development and application of this theatrical technique. It is my goal to answer the following research question: Will the devising, practicing and applying of Theatre of the Oppressed methods create a strong catalyst for individual and social change? Will the youth and young adults in California's Inland Empire respond positively to this problem-solving technique? As human beings we have many unconscious thoughts and feelings of which we are not always aware. It was Boal's contention that by including individuals in an interactive forum, where oppressive issues are presented, they become visible. In Boal's methods, participants have the opportunity to become physically and verbally interactive with the action being presented. Audiences are encouraged to help explore and create productive ways to deal with oppression. This

interaction includes the body and the mind. Theatre of the Oppressed is also a way that integrates methods that affect individual groups and different social areas of life. In utilizing these methods, a person is able to become aware of oppression in their daily life and of their social settings, even globally. Questions that are looked at are, "Do participants really make changes in their daily lives?" "What are the long term effects of participating in a Theatre of the Oppressed workshop?" Can You Hear Me Now?: A Study on Oppression is one way that proves this type of work can cultivate change for a better tomorrow.

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CHAPTER ONE

WHAT IS OPPRESSION?

Hearing the word oppression brings to mind pictures of affliction, dejection, and burdens. Synonyms such as persecution and despotism are associated with oppressive situations. Oppression is burdensome and depressing, stuffy and laborious, and troublesome.

One example of oppression might be a developmentally disabled young woman employed at a supermarket. She relies on public transportation to get to and from work. However, there is no transportation where she lives that runs on the weekends. Her boss tells her if she cannot work weekends, she is fired. This is an example of unjust use of authority or power. This is oppression! In this case, the problem is not that the woman cannot work weekends, but that she cannot go to work because she does not drive her own vehicle due to her disability. There are many ways this boss could problem solve with the young woman to find solutions to the problem, but instead he assumes an oppressive stand in the situation.

How about the gay student who tries out for the school football team? The other players know he is gay and harass

him with demeaning comments and words. The coach sees this treatment, yet chooses to look the other way. This is another example of oppression. Oppression, in this case, can directly affect the self-esteem, image, morale, and emotional being of the gay athlete. Depression, and even suicide, could be the outcome of a person struggling under the weight of oppressive attitudes.

One more example of what an oppressive situation might look like is a young woman who works at a local news station. She is in the running for the new morning anchor position. The boss informs her that she has three weeks to improve her appearance, suggesting she lose at least ten pounds. The woman wants the job but is afraid to compromise her integrity. The boss threatens to give the job to someone who is willing to make these changes. In this situation, the woman's opportunity to advance professionally is being based on her physical appearance. This is an example of oppression based on physical appearance rather than aptitude. This scenario illustrates objectification of women in the media, which is an oppressive act of power.

Webster defines the word oppression as, "to weigh heavily on the mind, spirits, or sense of worry, trouble;

to keep down by the cruel or unjust; use of power or authority; rule harshly; tyrannize over; to crush, trample down; to overpower or subdue" (Webster's New World College Dictionary 950).

If one combines what thoughts come to mind with these scenarios of oppression with the definitions of oppression, one can conclude that oppression is any act committed through acts of cruelty, severity, and/or excessive use of authority.

The topic of oppression is a serious one. It is one that has been relegated to criminal status. Throughout history there have been varying and interesting thoughts regarding oppression. According to Napoleon Bonaparte, an emperor and military leader, "Among those who dislike oppression are many who like to oppress" (Geyl 237). Simone De Beauvoir, a French philosopher and writer, states that, "All oppression creates a state of war" (Bair 29).

Journalists write about oppressive regimes in countries such as Egypt, China, Saudi Arabia and Iran. Writers speak out for the rights of women in Afghanistan, rejecting the oppression these women face in a country where rape and murder are everyday occurrences. In an article written on July 4, 2008, in Independence Day, Rady

Anada speaks out about a woman who faces oppression in the workplace due to her alcoholism and subsequent treatment in rehabilitation. While the law states that employers are legally not allowed to discriminate against their employees for such matters, being given bad performance reviews and having their work demeaned happens all too often (Independence Day 9).

Oppression in Youth

Oppression is not only found among adults but can also be found among our youth. Why focus on oppression of our youth? This paper examines oppression within our youth simply because our youth become adults. These adults may continue the cycle of oppression due to the pain they experienced when growing up. At the very least, these individuals could continue being depressed and may never reach their full potential. Our youth appear more vulnerable than adults, at least in the United States. The reason youth appear to be more vulnerable is because they do not have power over their oppressors. In a free society, the majority rules. Oppression tends to rear its ugly head in minority groups who are viewed as being different than societies' norm.

Oppression is nothing new. It has existed since the beginning of time and continues to happen today. Unless steps are taken to confront and empower our youth, it will continue to occur. In order for this to happen, and for change to take place, we need to teach our youth ways of dealing with biases. We need to help them learn how to reduce internalizing oppression, in any form, and to work to stop society's stereotypes. Stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, racism and sexism are just a few of the types of oppression our youth face. We must find ways to show them to respect religious, sexual and cultural diversity. We need to teach them what unity through diversity looks like. We need to teach them to recognize it and, in turn, to value all differences. Bigotry in our youth can lead to bullying, verbal abuse and even violence.

Oppressive situations occur among our youth when they live in situations such as domestic violence, fractured homes, physical or emotional abuse, divorce, neglect, bullying, peer pressure and abandonment to name a few. It occurs when they are gay or when they are of a different race. It occurs when they look different, act different or are different in any way, shape or form. When situations like these occur, our youth experience oppressive

situations. The result will oftentimes spur on feelings of loneliness, helplessness, frustration, anger, fear, and guilt. From these feelings, issues such as depression, teen pregnancy, and possibly suicide can occur.

Statistics show that "About 20% of teens will experience teen depression before they reach adulthood" (Teenage Depression Statistics, par. 2). Consider that "thirty four percent of young women will become pregnant at least once before they reach the age of 20, and 8 in 10 of these teen pregnancies are unintended. 79% are to unmarried teens" (Teen Pregnancy Stats./Facts, par.2). In January 2009, statistics state "California ranks first in the number of pregnancy among adolescents" (Teen Pregnancy and Parenting, par. 8). Even more disturbing is the fact that "one of the leading causes of death amongst teenagers is suicide. It is the third leading cause of death, behind accidents and homicide, of people aged 15 to 24" (Teen Suicide Overview, par.1).

Recent research shows that in the Southern California cities of Riverside and Ontario, the crime index is over the national average. San Bernardino's crime rate is two times the national average. The Inland Empire is one of the poorer metropolitan areas in the region. Only 18% of

adults, 25 or older, have B.A. degrees compared to over 30% for the rest of the nation. Median income for the Inland Empire is 33% less than other California counties. 35% of enrolled ninth graders do not graduate from high school. (Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, <http://www.trpi.org/update/publications.html>.)

According to the Riverside County Youth Commission, examples of issues facing youth throughout Southern California are illiteracy, few advancement opportunities towards a better education due to low income, substance abuse, homelessness, and neglect. All of these are examples of oppression and can spur on feelings of being ignored, overlooked, and utterly silenced. The individuals who might experience feelings like this are those who are viewed differently in society. Low-income individuals, those living with a mental illness, or those who have a different sexual orientation are all examples of targeted oppression. The youth among these populations experience oppression daily. They are discriminated against, teased, silenced, and ignored.

In the Inland Empire, there was a case involving two young gay ladies who attended a local high school. These girls were put up for expulsion because of their sexual

orientation. They attended a private Christian school in Riverside and were told they could not have a same sex relationship. A court appeal concluded that any private, religious schools are allowed to exclude students based on their sexual orientation (365 Gay, <http://www.365Gay.com/news>). The individuals involved filed an appeal on the basis of discrimination against their personal preferences and choices. They lost, and the end result was that they were expelled from this school. This is a blatant example of oppressive domination.

How are individuals, especially our youth suppose to stand up for themselves and to be heard if actions like this are taken against them?

If more actions are not taken to stop these oppressive issues, they will continue to exist. These statistics will remain the same as time passes by unless individuals are offered ways to change them. They need to be given tools to deal with oppressive people and situations.

The Riverside County Youth Commission has an appointed group of high school students from each school in the district. These students make up the Youth Advisory Council or YAC. YAC is an organization that is comprised of students who work together to address issues that

students and their peers are facing every day. The County Commission is dedicated to giving youth an opportunity to speak out against oppression as a collective group. They meet monthly to work towards ways of addressing these issues.

Theatre of the Oppressed: Forum Theatre

Oppression is multi-faceted and involves numerous issues. The ways of dealing with oppression are just as varied. I have chosen to discuss Theatre of the Oppressed. More specifically, a technique found in TO (Theatre of The Oppressed) called Forum Theatre is a way to offer our youth problem solving tools when faced with oppression.

There are active ways to stand up against oppression and the issues that are created by oppressive people in power. Having a voice and not being silenced is the ultimate objective when looking oppression in the face. Using problem solving techniques of Theatre of the Oppressed, created by social activist, Augusto Boal, is one method to help individuals problem solve against daily oppression.

Theatre of the Oppressed is an interactive theatrical method in which people explore positive approaches towards self-empowerment. According to Boal, "theatre could serve

as a forum for teaching people the strategies they needed to change their world." (SAVE Forum Actors: What Forum Theatre Is, par.1)

Theatre of the Oppressed, or TO, can teach problem solving skills through a vast array of games, activities, and exercises that directly deal with individual concerns, worries, or frustrations involving oppression. Boal's techniques allow individuals to identify issues on either a personal or global level. Individuals then recognize where the problem is stemming from and are able to explore solutions towards confronting the issue at its core. Finally, it allows individuals the opportunity to directly practice these new ideas by confrontation through interactive exercises. One of the ways to examine the above techniques is through a method called Forum Theatre. Forum Theatre works as a technique to address oppressive issues. It is a rehearsed improvisation in which an unresolved scene of oppression is presented. It is then replayed with the audience, who are invited to stop the action, replace the character they feel is lacking power, a.k.a., the oppressed, and improvise solutions to help deal with that oppression. Forum theatre was birthed from one of Boal's TO methods called simultaneous dramaturgy. In this

specific method, the audience members are allowed to stop a performance and offer suggestions to help with the oppression being represented. This method of using theatre to address oppression is an attempt to overthrow the "wall" that stands between audience and actor. However, this early version of Forum Theatre only allowed audience members to have limited participation.

When this type of work was birthed, there was a particular performance in which one of the audience members became extremely frustrated with the actor. The actor did not understand the directions being given to address the oppression. The audience member got up out of the audience and took that actor's place. Thus, the current model of Forum Theatre was born.

The process of Forum Theatre is used when a group of actors perform a play with a scripted core. A specific oppression that is relevant to the audience is shown. After the scripted conclusion, where the actors have failed to resolve the oppression that was presented, the play begins again. However, this time it is presented in a shortened version. During this second presentation an audience member, or spect-actor can, at any time, shout out "Stop" and the action stops. The audience member then

replaces the character that is being oppressed and takes their place on stage. This person can gain help from the actor who has been replaced or create a new suggestion to resolve the oppression. The action then starts again from the point of the "stop" and the spect-actor tries to overturn the oppression. If the spect-actor fails at stopping the oppression, the actor takes their place again, continuing on with the scripted piece, until another "stop" is called out and a different method is tried. This continues until the audience has overthrown the oppression.

Forum Theatre is a type of political theatre where active participation helps empower the individuals participating in the Forum model. Participants can imagine possibilities for change, practice those changes, and then reflect on whether or not those suggestions make for a realistic approach to social change.

Theatre of the Oppressed: Developmental Four Stages

Boal's plan for this transformation from spectator to actor is conducted through the use of four stages. The first stage is referred to as "Knowing The Body (Boal 126)." The spectator is taught to be aware of his/her body, which is later intended to become the tool used to

achieve the desired transformation. Without the spectator's knowledge of their body, they do not have the devices required to utilize it as their instrument of expression.

Second, the spectator learns how to use his/her body in an expressive manner. Current culture dictates that most forms of expression begin and end with verbal communication. This leaves the expressive abilities of the body itself untrained (Boal 130). This stage hopes to change that pattern for the time and purpose of the theatre.

Boal's third stage, referred to as "Theatre as Language," begins to close the gap between the spectator being an object and the spectator being a subject. This stage, divided into three phases, moves the actor through different levels of participation. The initial phase moves the spectator to intervene in the actions happening on the stage without their actual physical presence needed (Boal 132). The spectator is then advanced to the second phase, in which they are now physically involved but in a nonverbal format. Once this phase has been introduced, the third and final phase is conducted. This is when the

spectator is now fully participating in the intervention of activities occurring on stage.

The fourth stage in Boal's Poetics of the Oppressed looks at theatre as a form of discourse. At this point the spectator has finally been transformed into a true protagonist and now enters into a dialogue with the actors and characters on stage. The spectator begins to ask questions without being prompted and interrupts the actions taking place (Boal 142).

Boal's conclusion is that the word spectator should be considered a "bad word" (Boal 154). The spectator seen in modern people's theatre is no longer to assume the passive role of an object, but, instead to elevate him/herself to a position that is no longer the victim. Boal said it best when he stated, "The Poetics of the Oppressed is essentially the poetics of liberations: the spectator no longer delegates power to the characters to either think or act in his place" (Boal 155).

Building on these theories, social activist Augusto Boal eventually introduced his audience to Theatre of the Oppressed. Boal stated that, "all theatre is political, because all the activities of man are political and theatre is one of them" (Boal IX). He believed that theatre is a

weapon and it can therefore be an effective tool used for liberation.

Boal's History

Boal was interested in theatre at a very young age. After getting his degree, he began working in the theatre in Brazil. It was from this venue that he began experimenting with different types of theatre that addressed social and cultural issues. He was a cultural activist and centered his thoughts on oppression, which he felt was unjust. He believed that one experiences oppression not just intellectually but also emotionally and physically. Therefore, the struggle to overcome oppression must have a physical and emotional component. Boal's experimentation led to methods of theatre that would have a tremendous effect on traditional theatre practices. Over the course of a dozen years, he taught his methods to many centers and venues that focused on the many faces of oppression (Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed, <http://www.ptoweb.org>).

According to Boal, when theatre first came into existence, it consisted of people participating together, such as during a carnival or feast. The next occurrence in

the history of theatre was when the elite took over the theatre and divided the people into those who were actors and those who were spectators. He believed that this "wall" must be broken down and that people need to once again make theatre their own (Boal 119).

When he was living in Brazil, such thoughts or teachings drew the attention of military activists. This type of thinking was considered a threat to their culture because he was using social and political issues. He was encouraging people living in the slums of the city to stand up for their rights. He was kidnapped off the street in 1971 and thrown in jail. He was tortured and then exiled to Argentina. When released, he ended up in Europe. It was then that Boal wrote his first book titled, Theatre of the Oppressed.

Over the course of a dozen years, he taught his methods to many centers that focused on Theatre of the Oppressed. "From his work, Boal evolved various forms of theatre workshops and performances which aimed to meet the needs of all people for interaction, dialogue, action, critical thinking and fun. The performance modes of the Theatre of the Oppressed included Forum Theatre, Image Theatre, Cop-In-The Head Theatre, Invisible Theatre,

Rainbow of Desire and Legislative Theatre" (Theatre of the Oppressed, <http://www.theatreoftheoppressed.org>). It is from his Forum Theatre that this study is researched and the assumption that his methods led to great discoveries.

Theatre and Social Issues: Boal's Assumptions

Boal strongly believed in the power of the theatre to foster interactive communication about social issues. He stated that, "theatre is the most natural form of learning" (qtd. in Rao 3). He believed this because children grow up role playing, imitating their parents and other adults, singing, story telling, etc. He was an advocate that theatre possessed hidden agendas of teaching and felt that there were avenues whereby children learn the rules of society all the while learning oppression that are hidden in many ways. For example, anything that diminishes women's ability to do math and science or achievement gaps between minority and whites lie at the center of oppression. He believed that TO goes further than just revealing these oppressions. His ideas include having the participants participate with not only thought but with emotion. TO aims to come up with many discussions of oppression through the process of involvement in topics

that represent conflict. This empowers the participant, or as Boal said, spectators, to find ways to rise above said oppression (Boal 97).

People may have fears, feelings of low self- esteem or many other such thoughts that they are not even aware they have. Theatre of the Oppressed makes a person enter into another person's character while simultaneously bringing his/her own experiences to light. Individuals have the opportunity to see what it is like to be in someone else's shoes. Boal called this "symbolic transgression" (Boaler 79). This lets the spectators imagine different scenarios, which leads to freedom from the restraints of oppression. In this type of forum, the participant takes on a role that may be very different from their normal self and learns to see things from another perspective. It also helps to clarify to the participant the way he/she views the world and his/her surroundings. In doing this type of participatory theatre, one learns about oneself.

Purpose of the Study

This paper defines oppression and explores one particular methodology for dealing with oppressive issues in our youth. More specifically, it examines the devising

process for this type of theatre. It explains the implementation and revision processes. Lastly, it examines responses obtained from a marginalized youth population using this technique.

My purpose is to investigate and discover the following: Can the devising, practicing, and applying of Theatre of the Oppressed methods create a strong catalyst for personal and social change? Will the youth and young adults in California's Inland Empire respond positively to this problem-solving technique?

This study examines a new way of problem solving for our youth that will help empower them as individuals in society. Since everyone experiences oppression at some point in their lives, it is important to give individuals tools to help them deal with challenging issues and situations. Using problem-solving methods found in Theatre of the Oppressed can be extremely significant because they are unique methods we can use to stand up for ourselves in this world. So many lives are damaged, destroyed or lost due to oppression experienced in every day life. Conflict does not have to challenge us to a level of defeat. There are ways of constructively approaching these issues. One

effective way is with the execution of Boal's Forum Theatre.

Using Forum Theatre for educational purposes has been used by many other theatre outreach organizations throughout the world and has been very successful. These organizations, as later shown, use theatre as a tool towards social awareness and individual empowerment is a driving force among theatre organizations, such as Sojourn Theatre in Portland, Oregon, Bridgework Theatre in Goshen, Indiana, and Center For Applied Theatre in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

It is my goal to extend and introduce these methods to the Inland Empire, supporting other studies and workshops that have been successful. It is my hope that in presenting these workshops built upon the Boal techniques for marginalized populations, that the discovery of a realistic and effective Forum Theatre model will be created. It is also my desire that some of the issues revealed through the presentation/workshop will be identifiable to the individuals participating in these presentations. Ultimately, by utilizing these methods, from the devising process to the responses, I will be able to determine the initial efficacy that Boal's methods of

addressing oppression can potentially create among the participants.

There are major limitations to the study that might include not being able to produce an effective piece of theatre that will resonate among the audiences to whom it will be shown. Also, if the populations choose not to participate, the efficacy of these methods will not be conclusive. I will not be conducting a longitudinal study, which presents another limitation. I will not be able to assess the long-term effects of the study, so I will not have the chance to see its lasting effects, if any. Therefore, my goal is to see if the techniques in action seem to have an initial positive effect on the youth and young adults involved.

To effectively conduct my research, I will build upon Boal's theories from Aristotle, Brecht and Hegel that the oppressed can be empowered through participatory theatre. I will present the data gathered from my own presentation/workshops and the results that the participants divulge. I will provide the reader with research that shows that Theatre of the Oppressed does help individuals identify, problem solve and ultimately go into society empowered.

In order for the reader to fully understand Theatre of the Oppressed it is necessary to define the terminology used in this type of theatre.

Definition of Terms

1. Theatre of the Oppressed(TO)– a form of rehearsal theatre designed for people who want to learn ways of fighting back against oppression in their daily lives (Creative Arts Team, New York).
2. Forum Theatre – problem solving technique in which an unresolved scene of oppression is presented. It is then replayed with the audience where they are invited to stop the action, replace the character they feel is lacking power, aka, the oppressed, and improvise solutions to help deal with that oppression (Creative Arts Team, New York).
3. Joker/Facilitator– the individual called the Facilitator, or in Forum Theatre, is referred to as the Joker. He/She is essentially a drama workshop leader who is responsible for the process of the Forum, ensuring a safe environment for all involved (Creative Arts Team, New York).

4. Spect-actor- Those engaged in Forum Theater, or the audience. It refers to the dual role of both spectator and actor, as observer and creator of dramatic action seen throughout the Forum (Creative Arts Team, New York).
5. Main Oppressor- individual known as the antagonist, who is participating in ruining the objective of the oppressed (protagonist) and typically the root of the oppression (Creative Arts Team, New York).
6. Main Oppressed- individual known as the protagonist, who is trying to deal with oppression and failing because of the resistance of one or more obstacles (the antagonists) (Creative Arts Team, New York).
7. Allies- individuals or characters that offer possible help to the oppressed (protagonist), i.e. a friend (Creative Arts Team, New York).
8. Secondary Oppressors- individuals or characters who are a hindrance and who aid in the main oppressors objective towards the oppressed (protagonist), i.e. enemies (Creative Arts Team, New York).
9. Creative Arts Team (CAT)- an educational organization known as the international leader in Applied Theatre -

interactive drama for learning and change (Creative Arts Team, New York).

10. Oppression- to keep down by the cruel or unjust; use of power or authority; rule harshly (Webster Dictionary 950).
11. Forum- A public meeting or presentation involving a discussion usually among experts and often including audience participation
<<http://www.thefreedictionary.com>>.
12. Anti-Model- short scene based on one participant's story of oppression presented to a group of people struggling with similar oppression—in which the protagonist fails to exercise his or her will in relation to a socially sanctioned authority figure—the goal being to turn the anti-model (undesirable) into a model (desirable) <<http://www.acjournal.org>>.
13. Marginalized Population- to relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group; a body of persons or individuals having a quality or characteristic in common
<<http://www.Merriam-Webster.com>>.
14. Image Theatre- uses the human body as a tool of representing feelings, ideas, and relationships.

Through sculpting others or using our own body to demonstrate a body position, participants create anything from one-person to large-group image sculptures that reflect the sculptor's impression of a situation or oppression <<http://www.Wwcd.org>>.

15. Improvisation- an act of improvising

<<http://www.dictionary.com>>.

16. Tableaux- a representation of a picture, statue, scene, etc., by one or more persons suitably costumed and posed <<http://www.dictionary.com>>.

All of the above terms will be helpful in understanding the components that are involved in Theatre of the Oppressed. Within my methodology, I demonstrate the use of Image Theatre exercises. In conjunction with other techniques, several Theatre of the Oppressed concepts were adopted to fit the purposes of my study and in the creation of a forum anti-model. These terms and ideas are essential in understanding the process of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

There have not been many literature reviews involving Theatre of the Oppressed and its connection to societal oppression. However, what research that is available shows is promise to combat oppressive perspectives. It is essential to review some of the literature out there in order to defend the purpose of this study. Much of what has been published focuses on the impact Theatre of the Oppressed techniques have on adults. However, this study of developing a TO product has techniques in finding an avenue towards adolescents in the Inland Empire. The issues and content found within the final TO study and product, Can You Hear Me Now?, deal with universal issues that target our youth from adolescence to adulthood. To effectively approach these issues, it is imperative to examine specific research projects and studies where organizations have used interactive theatrical techniques, like TO, as a means toward addressing them. I will look at published works, theorists, selected articles and studies, and different theatre organizations from across the country. Each reference will examine Boal and his

technique of Theatre of the Oppressed being used as a positive problem-solving tool.

Underlying Theories

In order to substantiate his belief that theatre can have a profound effect on the audience, Boal builds upon the studies and tenants of Aristotle, Hegel and Brecht. Each defines tragedy in a unique way.

Aristotle defined art as the imitation of nature. However, his definition did not merely classify art as the copying of the whole created world but instead characterized it as, "the recreation of the principle of created things" (Boal 1). Nature, to Aristotle, was not the visible world that we see but actually the forward motion towards potential that is available in all creation. Looking even further into this definition, we find that, "imitation is not simply confined to the process of making a perfect or at least near perfect reproduction of a thing or idea. Rather it is the recreation of the internal movement of things towards their perfection" (Boal 8).

Boal believed that art is the avenue that can be utilized to correct nature, where nature has failed. Theatre, then, is one of the arts that can be utilized for

this purpose. According to Aristotle, "the principle aim of tragedy, as well as all other forms of theater, is to provoke catharsis" (Boal 25). From this belief, Aristotle went on to develop his coercive system of tragedy. This system has ways of helping people identify anything undesirable that prevents them from reaching their ultimate goal. Aristotle believed that the ultimate goal for everyone is happiness.

The system worked using tragedy, empathy and catastrophe in three stages as a means of connecting the spectators to the character roles being theatrically portrayed. The beginning of the process serves the purpose of initiating a vicarious link between the spectator and the character. After the spectator is able to form a bond with the character, they are then able to identify with the same process the character travels through. In Aristotle's system, "the character moves from the loss of happiness in the beginning due to an error on their part to the recognition of their error and finally suffering the consequences of their error" (Boal 37). What the spectator gets from this is the realization that they do not wish to endure the same consequences suffered by the character in the theatre and thus catharsis happens.

With the knowledge of Aristotle's perspective on theatre and his use of the coercive system of tragedy, Boal finds a foundation on which to build upon his belief that theatre has the potential to have an effect on an audience, known as the poetics of the oppressed. According to written work at the Hemispheric Institute, "it is reasonable to suppose that, in Theatre of the Oppressed, Aristotle's Poetics is stood in to represent not only the predominating theatrical values, but also the entire predominating culture that Boal seeks to transform. In this way, Boal firstly forces Aristotle's Poetics to stand in as a substitute for dominant Western culture, and, even more importantly, forces the Poetics to stand in as an enemy" (Connolly 1). Boal takes modern theatre, which places a division between the actors and spectators, and tears down the walls built to separate the two. He merges the isolated people in the audience once again with the Joker system, "a theatrical form developed by Boal and his collaborators at the Arena Stage in São Paulo between 1968 and 1971. The genre is characterized by the mixing of fact and fiction, the shifting of roles during the play so that all actors play all characters, separation of actor and character through Brechtian techniques, and the

introduction of the "joker" figure, both a narrator who addresses the audience directly and a "wild card" actor able to jump in and out of any role in the play" (Glossary of Terms from Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, <http://www.communityarts.net>). Boal's "Joker" system works to accomplish two things: "First, the spectator starts acting again; second, it is necessary to eliminate the private property of the characters by the individual actors" (Boal, 119).

In reference to Hegel and his use of tragedy, Boal concludes something. Boal asserts that, "for Hegel, true tragedy arise from two irreconcilable forces or values, not of good and bad, just or unjust, but each one deserving in itself" (Babbage 57). Boal looks at Brecht and compares the two. He sees Hegel as the idealist and Brecht as the materialist. Boal believed that the 'Marxist poetics' of Brecht are, "basically an answer and a counter proposal" (Babbage 58) to Hegels poetics. He combines several theories, including these to formulate his own type of theatre.

Boal believed that theatre is a weapon waiting to be harnessed by the spectator instead of remaining the sole property of the actors. He brings actor and audience

together. "Augusto Boal took Brecht's ideas much further and created a new form of theater that literally blurred the fourth wall, by allowing the audience to become actively involved in the play. His theater is based on the concept of mixing performers and the audience by creating the new category of the spect-actor. The Theater of the Oppressed usually gathers both professional and amateur actors" (Fracas 1).

Boal used the example of Estela Linares as a way to see this power being used in another form of art, mainly that of photography. Normal protocol when using photography as a form of communication dictates that the presenter takes a photo, shares it with the audience and discusses it. However, if the camera is given to the spectator, they then have the power to discuss and express themselves from their own perspective. This same concept is used in Boal's Poetics of the Oppressed. The first instrument of theatre is the human body, which puts it in the same category as the camera in the previous example (Boal 125).

Aristotle's suggestion was that the viewer should authorize power to the actor. This is so they may take action or give thought on their behalf to create a case of

catharsis. Boal's Poetics of the Oppressed takes it a step further. He chooses to not have the spectator simply commission the actor with a task, but to actually take the character's persona upon him/herself and physically act out that viewpoint. The body in its movements and production of sound is used by the spectator as a tool with the means to control the production in this form of theatre. Boal believed that theatre could be a weapon used by the spectator instead of remaining in the hands of just the actors. He brought actor and audience together in a very unique manner.

Theatre of the Oppressed Studies

According to the writer Arvind Singhal, "The Role of Participatory Theatre to engage and educate audiences in what is being commonly-called the entertainment-education strategy can be seen in the study done in KwaZulu-Natal" (Singhal 138).

Arvind Singhal is a professor and presidential research scholar in the School of Communication Studies at Ohio University. He is also author of The Children of Africa Confront Aids: From Vulnerability to Possibility.

In his study, Singhal describes the use of participatory theatre as a way to empower his audience. The goal was for the actors to empower the youth in Nalamdana, Africa, to change not only their own lives but to bring change to society regarding HIV. In this venue the actors put on workshops about diversified issues when dealing with HIV. They solicited feedback from the audience about the presentation. In this way, the scripts for the workshops are changing and being rewritten with input from the audience. An interesting side note is that not only did the audience benefit from this type of interaction; the actors were able to learn more about their audience. The interactive and constant communication with their audience keeps the acting innovative and new. It prevents actor burnout and empowers the actors to have a direct exchange with their audience.

At the time this research article was written, the Nalamdana actors had, over the past nine years, "estimated that their theater audiences total over a million people, mainly composed of audiences in urban and slum areas, with little formal education (those most in need of Nalamdana's HIV prevention message)" (Singhal 157).

An evaluation of these dramas says that they are particularly effective in correcting misconceptions about HIV/AIDS. For example, when the audience was asked whether a bug bite was a way to transmit AIDS, the rate of correct answers increased from 42% at pretest to 98% at posttest, after the performance (LaFrance and Shakrah 1).

Something not expected from the study was that when self-reporting, audience members reported that their attitudes towards people living with HIV improved. This shows that the drama presented decreased stigma in this area. Decreased stigma means possible decreased oppression.

A journal publication called The Illumination Study was published in 2001 by Deborah Evind, coordinator of the Women's Resource Center at Portland Community College, Claire Oliveros, coordinator of the Multicultural Center, and Jeannie LaFrance, founding director of ACT FOR ACTION, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the use of theater for education and social justice (LaFrance and Shakrah 2).

The Illumination Project was a yearlong academic theater that looked at issues of oppression through interactive class and community forums. Students wrote their own interactive performances depicting issues of oppression in their own lives.

Portland, Oregon is a city whose history shows that the majority of its population has traditionally been white Christians. However, in the past few years, both the religious and racial demographics in the city changed. "Between 1990 and 2000, the area's ethnic minority population increased 119%, a much higher rate of increase than that in the overall U.S. population during the same time" (LaFrance and Shakrah p.2).

The college serving this community had an increase of 25% of students of color and 60% of students whose families had never attended any school of higher learning. Many of these students were enrolled in English as a Second Language classes and were also from low-income families (LaFrance and Shakrah p.2).

The mission of this project was, and is, "...to provide education in an atmosphere that encourages the full realization of each individual's potential, by offering students of all ages, races, cultures, economic levels and previous educational experience opportunities for personal growth and attainment of their goals" (LaFrance and Shakrah p.4).

This goal cannot be achieved if teachers and students do not feel comfortable discussing issues of oppression or controversy.

For this project, twenty student educators were selected. These students took a three course class which covered issues such as race, sex, class, socio-economic status, religion, community building, conflict resolution and civic participation. Then they wrote, and subsequently performed, plays on these topics. These performances were based on the Theatre of Oppressed style. Students performed without any interruptions the first time around. For the second performance they asked the audience to stop the action when they saw any act of oppression. Then they were asked to substitute themselves for the actor and start the action again. The intent was to find a way to deal with the oppression in a positive way. Both the actors and the audience continued to rewrite the script as situations developed. What happened was there was a new understanding in the audience about how to recognize oppression and then to confront and resolve these situations when and as they occur.

Since its beginning, the project has involved, "more than 4,500 audience members, approximately 95% of whom felt

the performances prepared them to take action during difficult situations and to create a more inclusive academic community" (LaFrance and Shakrah p.3).

In another study done by Johnny Saldāna, fourth and fifth grade students participated in an experiment to see if Theatre of the Oppressed had any affect on their social interactions with peers.

In this project, three forms of Boal's TO techniques were utilized. These included games, tableaux and movement, and verbal improvisation. The issues addressed were the ones that the children themselves viewed as oppressive in their lives. The goal of the project was for the participants to learn conflict resolution strategies.

Saldana noted that the children really enjoyed the spontaneity, the intrigue of a puzzle to be solved and the recognition of their own issues in drama form.

The outcome of the study was positive. While "the artists may not have changed the world, we feel confident asserting that we took some of its young inhabitants through the first stage of social consciousness development." (Saldāna p.133)

Other works specifically dealing with adolescents can be found in the writings of Bagshaw and Halliday,

Banaszewski, Conrad, Rohd and Whybrow. The consensus in these studies, so eloquently stated by Doyle in his journal article, Raising Curtains on Eductaion: Drama as a Site for Critical Pedagogy, "Transformation usually comes in small doses and usually happens over time." (Doyle p.130)

Theatre Organizations Utilizing Theatre of the Oppressed

Michael Rohd, founding director of Sojourn Theatre in Portland, Oregon uses this method, among others. He wrote Theatre for the Community, Conflict and Dialogue, which focuses on the theories of Boal and centers on performance experiences that utilize participation and interactive theatre techniques, much like Forum Theatre. Other organizations utilizing TO are the Bridgework Theatre and the Center for Applied Theatre.

Bridgework Theatre is an American non-profit touring theater located in Goshen, Indiana. They address "real-life problems of young people, and model methods that empower youth to develop non-violent solutions to those problems" <<http://www.bridgework.org>>. Bridgework Theater is a contemporary theater for young audiences that create original plays. They tour these plays to children in schools in Indiana and ten other states throughout the U.S.

The content of their work deals with issues of conflict resolution, anger management, and respect and tolerance (Fumia, <http://www.bridgework.org>). A major driving force behind the work they did was creating plays that dealt with the issues of bullying. Bullying is an oppressive act and a prime example of an issue among youth. The Bridgework theatre has served over 2 million children through youth productions, classes, and touring shows. They are known for their bully prevention program and have a web-based game that helps teach kids how to confront issues of bullying <<http://www.bridgework.org>>. Bridgework Theater receives charitable donations and receives funding support from The National Endowment for the Arts, The National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, as well as grants from Indiana foundations. Their techniques confront issues and their target audiences are youth. They have successfully been in effect since 1979, serving Indiana and the Midwest with inspiring work and an approach to using theatre as an educational tool.

Another organization that uses theatre as a medium for confronting issues is The Center For Applied Theater located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They offer Boal-based workshops and programs to assist schools, advocacy groups

and communities in their goals of confronting issues and uncovering and solving problems. Their workshops include interactive theatre exercises that examine specific issues for exploring ways to rehearse change. Some of the workshops they offer are Team Building and Leadership Training, Problem Solving, and Performance Development.

The Team Building and Leadership Training workshop is described as follows:

With the use of Applied Theatre Techniques, 12 - 40 participants develop skills for internal community building and learn to use these tools in advocacy work in and outside the organization. Participants then practice the skills and explore strategies that lead to inclusive communication, empowerment and motivation. They learn about community needs and encourage team building (Center For Applied Theatre, <http://www.centerforappliedtheatre.org>).

One example of this workshop took place at a small college. It was held for a group of faculty members that felt isolated from their co-workers. The participants created images of the issues they were facing daily through the use of non-verbal exercises. They discovered,

...that dialogue between them had been suspended in favor of rapid messaging, that clock watching had replaced chatting, and that the division between full- and part-timers had created an isolated work force. Classroom teachers were walking away from, rather than with, their students. (Center For Applied Theatre, <http://www.centerforappliedtheatre.org>).

After this workshop, the results showed that they developed the skills to actively communicate with each other and their students.

The Problem Solving workshop offered is as follows:

Participants are guided to define common issues, to investigate problems, to build awareness and solidarity, and to rehearse community action. There are 12 - 40 participants who become empowered to raise their voices through creative interaction in an open and safe, challenging and fun, environment. Programs can be built around particular issues that the organization indicates are sources of internal conflict or conflict in the wider community, or can be tailored to lead to discovery of the core

of a problem. Applied theatre exercises will focus on: Open dialogue and participant agency, problem definition, determination of causes, recognizing emotional responses and developing active and empowering solutions (Center For Applied Theatre, <http://www.centerforappliedtheatre.org>).

An example of a group that used this workshop was a support group for GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender youth). The workshop was used to address concerns among the clients in the support group regarding the views and behaviors of family and peers outside of the safe walls of the support group. The workshop results revealed that,

...after exploring individual habits and coping participants formed story circles to share concerns others. Out of these came a sharing of images that helped participants acknowledge the emotional barriers to dialogue. During simulations group members and an audience of relatives and friends explored ways to deal with homophobia at school events and with family gatherings. Participants acted out strategies and faced, in a safe environment, likely consequences

(Center For Applied Theatre,
<http://www.centerforappliedtheatre.org>).

The Performance development workshop works to assist organizations wanting to create scripts for performances that have an educational message. Some examples of scripts that have been created are:

Amy's Addiction – about a teen who gets hooked on crack and Joey's Lunch Money Blues – about bullying, and Party Girl – about teen relationships and protecting yourself" (Center For Applied Theatre,
<http://www.centerforappliedtheatre.org>). A local educator and director of youth development said, "The program was entertaining, engaging, and educational. Wonderful program. (Center For Applied Theatre,
<http://www.centerforappliedtheatre.org>)

Both Bridgework Theatre and the Center For Applied Theatre are examples of organizations that use Boal's methods of utilizing theatre to address individual and social issues. They both exemplify successful work in reaching out into the community, looking at oppression, and then dealing with it in creative, empowering ways.

My study will further show how Theatre of the Oppressed, as presented in Forum Theatre to young adults, will join with others in this field to illustrate the possibility of positive social change.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY: DEVISING A FORUM THEATRE PRODUCT

Design of the Investigation

The thought behind a theatrical forum to address oppressive issues among youth is based on the idea that by becoming physically involved in a forum, individuals are empowered. They are empowered not only to imagine change, but also to practice that change and then become empowered to create social action.

The theoretical framework for this study is based upon tenants of Theatre of the Oppressed. Theatre of the Oppressed aims to address individual and social change. Through the theatre venue, individuals can confront a problem that previously locked them in conflict. When participating as an audience member, one might discover that there has been an inability to see another person's point of view. In many instances, people are blind to ways of dealing with conflict that they have not previously thought about before.

In my methodology, I examined specific Theatre of the Oppressed techniques and applied them within the creation of a theatrical piece. This piece was intended to have a

universally oppressive content that an audience of young individuals could identify with on some level.

Next, I implemented and devised a workshop and theatrical presentation in which oppressive issues were observed and addressed. This workshop addressed a specific oppressive situation and then gave the audience the opportunity to address the oppression through the use of Forum Theatre. The exploration of issues that were addressed in the theatrical piece were intended to be positive, with the goal of witnessing productive approaches towards ending oppression. This theatrical presentation/workshop was introduced to diverse youth populations within the Inland Empire. The goal was to supply the participants with the knowledge of new problem solving techniques in oppressive situations.

Certain objective questions were adhered to throughout the devising and implementation process. They are as follows: Is the process and content of the forum theatre presentation/workshop safe and easily understood? What negative and positive experiences does this type of problem solving provide for the participants? Is the forum theatre piece realistic to real life issues? Can the participants relate to the information, either personally or globally?

At the conclusion of my study, the goal was to see that these questions were answered truthfully and if they were helpful.

The project methodology used in this study involved three major components:

- 1) Creation of a Forum Theatre performance/workshop that was rehearsed, performed, and facilitated by adults for audiences of teenagers and young adults.
 - A) Devising and Rehearsal
 - B) Performance and Revising
- 2) Recording of anecdotal data based on audience participation (e.g., how they responded to various parts of the performance and what they contributed in the workshop);
- 3) Questionnaires requesting audience member participants to evaluate their experience and response to the Forum Theatre performance/workshop.

In order to investigate the efficacy of this study, I first had to devise a forum theatre anti-model. An anti-model Forum means that there is not one specific model that is utilized. It is referred to as an anti-model because the skeleton of the model constantly changes throughout the presentation. I used Chris Vine's (Artistic and Education

Director for Creative Arts Team, New York) guidelines for creating a forum theatre anti-model.

(See Appendix B)

In order to do this, I had to obtain a troupe of actors to help with the collaborative process of creating a Forum Theatre piece. The only criteria I used were to recruit individuals who were dedicated and passionate about having a positive effect on other people's lives. I posted flyers about my graduate project. The flyers gave a brief explanation about TO, supplied information about the objectives of the project, and encouraged participation for the purposes of helping the youth in the Inland Empire.

(See Appendix A) My email and phone number were posted on the flyers for those individuals interested in finding out more information. Once contacted by each individual, I held a personal informational meeting one-on-one with each prospective troupe member. I explained the process, expectations, and answered any questions they had. I informed these individuals that this project would require a rehearsal time of once a week for eight weeks, and then 1-2 times a week after that for another eight weeks. The entire project timeline included all preparation

rehearsals, preview performances, revision rehearsals, and scheduled performances. The schedule began at the end of October 2008 and concluded in five months.

During my informational meetings with each prospective troupe member, I explained what Theatre of the Oppressed was and informed them that this type of work did not require any theatrical training. I asked a series of questions to obtain information about the people who initially took an interest in participating in my project from the information presented on the flyer. Some of the questions I asked were: Do you have an interest in helping others? What types of issues do you think the youth of today might face? Do you think that through the use of theatre powerful messages, lessons, and ideas can be obtained? What types of messages do you think are important for our youth to hear? Do you like to have fun and be creative? Are you willing to be challenged outside your comfort levels? Are you willing to become part of a team where the goal will be dedicated to creating meaningful work that could have a positive influence in the lives of others?

After these informational meetings, I had a group of eight very motivated but slightly apprehensive individuals.

The reason for the apprehension was that most people had never heard of TO. I was confident that the individuals I recruited were passionate, responsible people. The troupe consisted of eight very different individuals. The age range was 18-37. There were six females and two males, all in different professions. The troupe consisted of a marketing executive, two prospective teachers, a college student, a college professor, and a prospective music psychologist. Some theatrical experience existed within the troupe; however, there was one individual who had none. With the assurance of an eclectic cast, I scheduled our first rehearsal.

At the first rehearsal, I handed out member contracts to be signed by the participating troupe members. (See Appendix A) Once these were signed, I/we began an extensive rehearsal process. I created an outline for each rehearsal that was designed to shape a forum theatre anti-model. I used games, exercises, and elements from Boal's Games for Actors and Non Actors. I also used some of the tools I learned while taking a TO class in New York through CAT (Creative Arts Team). Each rehearsal outline identifies all of the Forum Theatre variables and how they were executed. (See Appendix B)

Throughout the entire rehearsal process, over the period of eighteen weeks, the same model was used. Each rehearsal opened with a warm-up activity to get everyone focused. Then, announcements were made pertaining to what the rehearsal would entail. Next, there were other games, activities and exercises to help promote team building. After our activities came the devising process of our Forum Theatre presentation, involving either activities or informational discussions. Last, each rehearsal concluded with a closing activity, either a game or an overview of what was learned and achieved.

Weeks 1-3 involved an extensive ensemble building process. When doing the work of Theatre of the Oppressed, trust is a necessity. This is because of the intense personal content that goes into constructing meaningful work. In order to construct a trusting and safe environment, I had very individualized activities. These activities were personal, as well as impersonal. One activity that was fun and personal was when I had the troupe create a representational emblem of themselves on a piece of paper. This representation included words, pictures and symbols. This allowed the troupe members to get to know one another. Another very personal activity was

when each troupe member told a personal story of oppression they had experienced. Some of the activities that allowed the troupe to become comfortable with each other were ones that required creativity and laughter. One such example was when each troupe member got into one of two groups and had to use their bodies and voices to create a realistic and recognizable object. This involved movement and sound. The troupe members were instructed to create this image and to move across the entire room as their chosen object. They were required to remain a team and to stay physically connected. This exercise required creativity and teamwork. It was an extremely fun and engaging activity.

Weeks 4-7 were the weeks where we delved into the devising and creation process of our Forum Theatre presentation. The main objective for these weeks was to brainstorm ideas for a storyline. The storyline was intended to be a construction of detailed issues that youth audiences might have a connection to in terms of oppression. We gathered these ideas from our own personal stories shared in previous rehearsals. We had what I called a "graffiti board" where we would write down ideas, themes, incidents, and examples of oppression. We eventually devised a storyline by taking bits and pieces

from the individual stories, themes and ideas, with detailed character descriptions. (See Appendix B) While devising the characters, a skeleton description was made with basic information about them. They are identified with character names, but more specifically, as the main oppressor, main oppressed, allies, etc. Their specific objectives cannot be described in detail because the characters are created to fit into the roles of Forum Theatre characters. We assigned all of the characters to the troupe members and began rehearsing the storyline. The storyline we created was about a young girl named Sarah who experienced oppression in a number of ways. The main issues addressed were abandonment and peer pressure. The main character experienced these issues from parents, prospective stepparents, friends, and peers. The main character did not receive any positive attention from whom she needed it most and therefore, negative attention became her only option. The end result was fear, anger, and loneliness.

Weeks 8-10 of the rehearsal process involved the practicing and refining of our Forum Theatre script. At every rehearsal we rehearsed each individual scene, added set dialogue, props that would be used, and more details

about the characters. Discoveries were made, such as the storyline not having a steady flow of intensity. From these discoveries, revisions were made weekly to make the script fit into the successful Forum Theatre model, in which all of the elements are shaped to start at a point of happiness and end in a point of despair. The revising of the storyline and character development was ongoing and constantly changing, but resulted in a final script that fit the guidelines of creating a Forum Theatre piece. Several runs of the story were done to fine-tune the flow of the Forum piece.

In weeks 11-13, revising continued and the creation of the workshop activities was completed. We continued to tighten up the scripted storyline. Then, we rehearsed what the presentation would look like in front of an audience. Ideas were again brainstormed involving the approaches, ideas, and actions the audience, or spect-actors, might take during the presentation. We practiced these ideas by acting as audience members, pretending as if we were watching the presentation and utilizing the steps needed for the forum. It was clear that the person to be replaced by the spect-actors would be the main oppressed character. In our story, this character's name was Sarah. We yelled

out "stop" in appropriate places and practiced what each scenario brought to the table. I facilitated these interruptions and conducted myself as I would if in a live presentation. I asked the spect-actors, "Did you see something you did not agree with? Would you like to tell us how you might change this? Would you like to show us?" Once they began reworking the scenes and stepping in as the character of Sarah, I facilitated by asking more questions such as: "Do you feel you achieved anything? What was positive about what you did? Do you feel that "Sarah" is learning some positive approaches towards confronting her problem?" We rehearsed these attempts to overturn oppression until we felt that the main oppressed character possessed a stronger position. We needed to come to a positive conclusion that if Sarah took these ideas that were suggested, we might not see her end up back in the position of despair as represented in the original story. Once the troupe and I felt confident, we continued rehearsing what an audience might bring to the table. Other details, such as costumes and props were added in the latter part of these weeks. The costumes and props for our presentation were simple but pertinent to the story. (See Appendix C) We also prepared the workshop that was going

to accompany the presentation. With the troupe assisting, we utilized some of Boal's theatre games and exercises to help the participants of the forum get an idea of what oppression looked like. These activities were devised to get the audience comfortable with the events of the presentation/workshop. The activities were constructed to provide a safe, welcoming environment for all participants involved. Some examples of the activities used in the pre-show workshop were Sculptor/Clay exercises. Sculptor/Clay exercises are done using the body and forming images. There are at least two participants involved when doing these exercises. One portrays a sculptor and the other the clay. The sculptor physically positions their "clay" into an image that is given, either with a word or phrase. The clay is then "sculpted" without helping the sculptor. Typically, it is a silent exercise. These exercises showed images of oppression. With the troupe, we devised specific images of oppression by using a word. We assigned one troupe member to be the sculptor and one to be the clay. We showed these images of oppression in the workshop and had the audience identify the images and which characters might exemplify them, i.e., oppressed, oppressor, ally. An example of one round of images shown was with the words

lonely, helpful, and selfish. The participants were asked to then do this activity with a partner. Other activities within the body of the presentation/workshop were also completed. (See Appendix C)

In the remaining weeks, 12-16, we held our performances and continued holding rehearsals. We continued rehearsing the original story, brainstorming new ideas for the upcoming audience, and practicing those ideas. We would discuss at each rehearsal the responses from the audiences and create new ideas or changes to the storyline.

Following each individual rehearsal, I assessed the process, productivity, and advancement of the project. This assessment included four things: Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation. Within these assessments, the individual rehearsal outlines were embodied. These assessments were detailed to the events that happened during the rehearsal process. (See Appendix B)

Targeted Population

From these rehearsals and assessments, a script titled Can You Hear Me Now? was born. This script was the final scripted portion of the presentation used during the

forums. (See Appendix C) Additional workshop material was developed to lead the presentation successfully. These included activities and exercises for the participants to be involved with to help them get acquainted with TO techniques. It included the presentation of Can You Hear Me Now? and an outline for the facilitator to follow. (See Appendix C) In addition to these materials, I created other supplemental materials that were used for the promotional aspect of the project. Included in these materials was a flyer, a standing display used before the presentation, and an informational program that the participants could reference throughout the presentation/workshop. (See Appendix D) In conclusion to the devising process, an assessment survey/questionnaire was created for the participants to fill out after the presentation/workshop. It was created for gathering data about the efficacy of the forum. (See Appendix E) I created questions that would help me determine whether or not the presentation/workshop was easily understood, if the content was identifiable to the audience, and if the audience enjoyed this particular problem solving technique.

The targeted populations in the application of the presentation/workshop were diverse youth organizations

throughout the Inland Empire. The organizations are as follows:

Jefferson Transitional Programs (JTP): A Riverside-based non-profit peer support organization for young adults (ages 16-21) who have been diagnosed with a chronic mental illness. These individuals (male, and female) are functioning members of society who voluntarily attend JTP and participate in the organization's employment, arts, and social programming. It is necessary to note that there was a young adult (16-21) population that was the focus of my study, but that incidentally, the program was open to all JTP members, even adults.

Rainbow Pride Youth Alliance (RPYA): A San-Bernardino-based non-profit "drop-in center" and support organization for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersexes, queer, and questioning youth and their straight allies. Participants are ages 13-25 and are male, female, or in the process of changing their gender identity. Participants volunteer to partake of RPYA's social, advocacy, arts, health, and leadership programming.

Linfield Christian High School: A Temecula based Christian High school theatre class. Participants are ages 15-17 and are male and female and are all theatre students at

Linfield. These individuals voluntarily partake in the arts programs at Linfield and other activities that are presented towards furthering their education and knowledge of the arts.

Execution of the Study

In order to successfully execute the presentation/workshop of Can You Hear Me Now?, the traditional Forum Theatre presentation structure was used. This included the Joker/Facilitator leading the workshop activities, TO games and exercises, a scripted presentation, and the forum playback process. (See Appendix C) In addition to this, I executed the process through encouraging verbal responses during the presentation/workshop. The participants were encouraged to become actively involved in the goal of aiding the main oppressed characters. Several attempts, through a facilitation process, aimed at helping the participants to participate in the problem solving techniques. As the facilitator, I led the participants through the following process to help achieve overturning the oppression presented in the story. After the initial run of the presentation Can You Hear Me Now?, I asked them to identify

the roles of the characters, i.e., the main oppressed and oppressor. I also asked them to identify the oppression being presented in the story. The participants, in regards to the events happening in the story, shared their thoughts, concerns, and frustrations. The conclusion was that something needed to be done to stop these issues from happening to Sarah. Thus, we began the story from the beginning, and the participants became involved in helping out the main character, Sarah, become empowered. I then administered the questionnaires at the end of the workshop. From the responses, I was able to confirm that the active participation was a key element in understanding the process and purpose of this problem solving technique.

In order to collect concrete data at each presentation, the questionnaires were handed out to each participant at the end of the forum. Also, the participants were encouraged to do an interactive exercise that allowed them to address feelings or thoughts towards the characters in the presentation. In Forum Theatre, this is called the Lightning Round and is done at the end of the workshop. The characters in the story make a semi-circle in the playing space and stand there. During this exercise, participants are allowed to physically address the

characters in person. The participants were informed that the actors would not react to them, allowing the participants the opportunity to truly express a feeling, thought or reaction to some aspect of the presentation. In addition to this voluntary interactive exercise, I created another way for the participants to have a personal response towards the characters or the presentation/workshop as a whole. I passed out index cards and instructed them to write out personal responses to the characters and/or to the overall workshop and presentation. This allowed the participants to have a personal written response, whereas the Lightning Round was a personal and verbal response towards the forum. The surveys I handed out were designed to find out if the presentation was understood and if the outcomes showed that this was an effective problem solving technique. It also helped me to confirm whether or not the creation of this specific Forum Theatre piece was effective in relation to other Forum Theatre models. The index cards were specifically meant to give the participants an opportunity to express their experience. The surveys and index cards were collected at the end of the presentation.

I read all of the responses from each individual organization visited and tabulated the answers in order to verify and validate the efficacy of the issues presented in the TO forum. (See Appendix E)

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presentation of the Findings

Each venue that was visited exhibited similar responses. At each organization, individuals had a positive response to understanding the overall presentation/workshop. These responses were recorded from verbal interaction and feedback during the presentation/workshop and through writing on the index cards and questionnaire surveys. One participant said " Yes, I understood the process of self-empowerment with the hands-on practice of the audience to act out the different scenarios in doing so" (JTP workshop participant). Another positive response to understanding the process of the forum was "Absolutely! Presenting this as theatre gives it a distance emotionally that makes it safe. You can explore many options without any harmful consequences" (RPYA workshop participant). Lastly, a participant at Linfield Christian School said, "Yes, I understand the process and the message of not being oppressed." All three of these are examples showing that the overall presentation/workshop was understood. Along with the surveys,

participants expressed thoughts on individualized index cards and verbally throughout the workshop. The responses exemplify that the overall presentation/workshop was understood and the content of how the issues were being addressed was clearly admired and accepted by the participants.

However, it is interesting to note that there were also many differences in response to the forum, as well. Regarding the question of the positives that were experienced while participating in the workshop, someone said, "It was fun going up and interacting with the actors" (Linfield workshop participant). Another individual from the same organization said, "It gave me the thought of helping others more." Those are two positives; however, one seems to have a more positive response to the content of the story. At another organization, a participant also had a connection to a specific character and how this character had an impact on him. He connected to the character of Sarah. In a response card, he said, "Sarah: You motivate me to teach others to stand up for themselves. You gave me a sense of self-Empowerment" (JTP workshop participant). This individual connected and found

comparisons between him and the character of Sarah on a personal and global level.

More specifically, after visiting each venue, I assessed the responses of the participants in a more detailed light. I assessed the response from my own perspective, followed by an assessment after reading the responses from the participants involved in the study.

Discussion of the Findings

The response, prior to reading the surveys, on a personal level, allowed me to acknowledge that the presentation/workshop was a success at JTP (Jefferson Transitional Programs). The participants were very involved in the activities and the execution of the forum. Their willingness to participate was contagiously affirming. I gathered that the informational brochure/ programs deemed to be very useful to the audience, as they visibly and vocally referred to them throughout the entire workshop. Also, during the forum playback process, several positive attempts were made to overturn the oppressive issues in Can You Hear Me Now?

The participants at JTP volunteered quite a bit. They took on the role of Sarah, the main oppressed character,

and attempted to confront certain issues they believed to be relevant in ending the oppression. One participant, an African American young woman with a mental illness diagnosis, confronted the oppressive issue stemming from the character of Mom. Her oppression was feeling neglected, which stemmed from her parent's divorce, and which she also related to the six-month absence of Mom in Sarah's life. The participant stood up to this oppressive force by not allowing Mom to hang up on her, by making Mom listen to her concerns, and by voicing that she missed Mom and wanted some answers concerning the absence in her life. The character of Mom gave in at one point and started to listen to what Sarah had to say and agreed to visit her. This attempt was successful because the original character of Sarah allowed the character of Mom to walk all over her, to ignore her, and to allow this type of behavior to go unaddressed. It was successful in that the participant made it a point to say she felt very positive and was ready to take on the next issue. It was an exhilarating moment.

Another approach to address oppression was made by a young man who felt it was important to address the issues of peer pressure and drinking. During the playback process, the participant felt it necessary to yell "stop"

during the scene where Alicia, Sarah's friend, is pressuring her to forget her problems and come to the party with her and drink. This young man, an individual living with a mental illness diagnosis, did not agree with the ways that Alicia, her supposed friend, was showing her support. He intervened in the action and addressed the issue by saying,

Why are you pressuring me to do something I don't want to do? You know I don't drink, and besides you are not being very supportive. I need a friend right now and someone to listen to me. Maybe we could have the party here at my place without the drinking, or maybe you could just not go to the party and stay here with me ("Can You Hear Me Now?" Workshop, Anonymous).

This approach was fantastic. The participant addressed his feelings, expressed his needs, and offered a suggestion that would help him not feel pressured or alone. This is different from the original action because Sarah just let the friend leave, without ever speaking up for herself and addressing the issue. It was a wonderful attempt to help empower the oppressed character in this type of situation.

In conjunction with a personal assessment on how well the participants received the presentation/workshop, the

participants presented their findings by completing assessment surveys. One example of a personal response that allowed me to conclude that the workshop was effective was a statement made on an index card saying, "Can we develop the courage and the strength to stand up against the adversities in the effort to accomplish the problem and provide peace of mind? We Can!!!" (JTP workshop participant). Another response from one of the questionnaires showed that this audience understood the characters and the issues presented. The response was to a question in the questionnaire asking how the presentation had an effect on them, either positively or negatively. This response said, "The presentation was very true and it made me feel humbled" (JTP workshop participant). In addition to these responses, others can be found on the assessment questionnaires. (SEE APPENDIX F)

The participants at RPYA were equally positive. Much like the participants at JTP, they were extremely engaged throughout the presentation/workshop. Their positive attitudes, approaches, and enthusiasm were vastly convincing that the study was a success. They approached the oppressive situations in Can You Hear Me Now? without

hesitation, offering up positive approaches to ending the presented oppression.

During the playback portion of the forum, the number of volunteers that were willing to address the issues at hand was astounding. An example of an interactive approach at this organization was when one individual got up to confront the main oppressor character of Chuck/Dad. The participant was a young gay male who recognized that the character of Dad was not paying any attention to the needs of Sarah and was very self-involved. The participant had a personal connection because during the playback process he said "stop" and approached the stage with no hesitation. They addressed this neglectful behavior with more physical awareness. This was done by standing up and walking into Dad's personal space and making him listen. The character of Chuck was caught off guard by this strong behavior and the participant got Dad to listen to him about his day, the award won at school and reminded him about their dinner plans for the night. This was different from the first time around because the father ended up walking out and the character of Sarah was left alone and unheard. It was such an effective approach because everyone in the audience felt confident that the character of Sarah was empowered after I

asked them to show me by a raise of hands if they agreed. The individual who presented this approach also felt positive and happy about being able to share his feelings out loud in front of his peers.

Another individual spoke up against the issues that were presented in the scene that involved Dad once again, as well as Mindy, Chuck's girlfriend. The character of Sarah not only felt neglected by the absence of her mother but also was ignored by her dad. One reason for this is because of his new relationship with Mindy. Mindy has no interest in Sarah and, in a specific scene, implies her frustrations regarding Sarah's presence. One participant, a transgender young adult who identifies as a woman but is still biologically a male, stopped this action from reoccurring. She approached the stage with confidence. The scene was started over and as soon as the comment was made by Mindy, the participant stood up, approached Dad and Mindy and stated that she could hear them. She demanded that Mindy leave the room and that Chuck sit down and talk with her. She got Chuck to listen to her about the frustrations she felt at being ignored. She demanded that Mindy leave and that he spends time with her, as was originally planned. Mindy came back in the room and the

participant told her that her dad was going to stay home for the rest of the evening. She thanked Mindy for stopping by and pushed her out of the door. This approach was bold but so empowering. It was empowering for the individual who clearly felt the need to aggressively approach the situation. Everyone, including the other participants, stood up and cheered, confirming that this approach made the character of Sarah feel so much stronger. The original action again left Sarah alone. With this approach, the character of Sarah achieved some dignity and strength. The issues were addressed in a positive way towards self-empowerment and the participants walked away with a very positive feeling from the entire experience.

In conjunction to these interactive approaches, I felt that the written responses were equally effective in showing how well this presentation/workshop was received by this organization. An example of a positive written response collected from an index card had a comment made to Ms. D, Sarah's teacher and ally. It says, "TO Ms. D.: You were very supportive. It was quite inspiring" (RPYA workshop participant). Another response from a survey reads, "I loved the workshop! I felt it really hit home for me. My experience has helped me to see how far I have

come and how strong I am now" (PRYA workshop participant). At the close of the workshop, participants at RPYA did not seem finished with addressing the oppression in Can You Hear Me Now?. Discovering that some of the issues represented really resonated with some of the youth at RPYA, the staff suggested a "circle time" to continue their thought processing. Thus, an impromptu circle discussion ensued. An effective discussion took place that addressed personal issues with neglect, bullying, peer pressure, and sexual abuse from peers. These responses showed that the content of the workshop was identifiable to the audience of RPYA and that it was inspiring and helpful. More detail of their personal written responses was collected in the surveys. (See APPENDIX E)

The participants at Linfield were overall, on a personal level of assessment, the least enthusiastic of the venues visited. Their energy level was consistently low throughout the duration of the presentation. Due to their lack of enthusiasm, I gathered that they did not get as much out of the forum as the other venues did. Being that the demographic of this venue was a Christian school, I assumed that this type of problem solving technique that was being presented was not one that was very comfortable

or familiar to the participants. I have experienced situations that are similar to the "elephant in the middle of the room" concept. It is as if no one wants to talk about or really confront the real issues. That being said, it appeared as though these participants did not typically know how to deal with oppressive issues on a daily basis. Although I believe that oppressive issues do exist in their lives, they were uncomfortable with speaking out against them. There was a lot of silence when I asked about oppression and if they were able to identify with specific situations of oppression. However, with consistent encouragement on my part as the Joker, the end results were positive. They gradually became involved and appeared more comfortable during the playback process.

A young teenage female demonstrated an effective example. She noticed some issues that she was not comfortable with concerning the character of Dad. After watching the scene between Sarah and Dad, where Dad blows her off, forgets about their plans and leaves, this participant intervened. She approached the stage with a bit of hesitance and she started out quietly. Once Dad had interrupted her twice, she stood up from her seat. She decided to approach Dad with a tactic that fed his ego, but

allowed her to get noticed and heard. She told Dad that she knows he works so hard and congratulated him on his new business account. She told him how proud she was to be his daughter and that she'd like to celebrate with him along with her celebration. She even raised her voice at moments to make sure he understood that she was not going to be ignored. Once he was listening, she made it clear that she was hurt over the absence of interest he took in her. Also, she made it known that she didn't agree with his new engagement so soon after his divorce from her mother. She also voiced that she would really enjoy it if they could just spend some quality time together and that she needed him and she loved him.

This approach to dealing with the oppression from Dad was truly remarkable. It demonstrated strength, courage, humbleness and, most of all, kindness. This was the only participant that everyone agreed had an impact on helping out the character of Sarah.

The true assessment on what the Linfield participants received from the study was best collected from the surveys. It was clear after reading these that this audience loved this presentation. They found it moving, encouraging, and meaningful. Their responses on the index

cards and their answers to the questionnaires were detailed and powerful. For example, one comment that struck me was one made regarding the character of Justin. Someone said to him on a comment card, "Justin, SHAME ON YOU, SHAME ON YOU, SHAME ON YOU! HOW DARE YOU" (Linfield workshop participant). This allowed me to see that the audience identified with an oppressive character in a way that made them very upset. They did not like his actions and felt it was safe to comment about it. Another comment made on an index card was to several characters. It said,

Dad- you need to be a father to your daughter, it's not all about you. Mom- Grow up! Be the adult! Make sure you are a part of her life. Ms. D.- Thank you for being a real person! Alicia- be a friend, not a jerk. Help her believe in herself. Sarah- stand up for yourself, say what's on your mind" (Linfield workshop participant).

Lastly, I read one comment that was extremely powerful. It said, "To Chuck: I see myself becoming you and that terrifies me. My family and friends don't deserve it" (Linfield workshop participant). This was profound! Someone was brave enough to speak out as an oppressor. He

recognized that he shared behaviors that Chuck possessed. From this comment, for this particular young man, a new awareness was raised. This is one of the positive results of doing Theatre of the Oppressed workshops. From the questionnaires, one participant answered "the oppression workshop is way of shining a light on hurting people and finding a way to stop it" (Linfield workshop participant). Another Linfield participant stated that "it was sad to watch and difficult on the first run through, which I think was supposed to happen. It was all very positive and encouraging in the end. Participation was really encouraged." More detail of their personal written responses was collected in the surveys. (See Appendix E)

Other aspects that each venue responded well to were the warm-up activities, such as the Sculptor/Clay image exercise. They were very willing to engage themselves in the activity, especially after watching the troupe give examples of oppression through images. Collectively, the verbal response was equal regarding the exercise. Most enjoyed being the sculpted piece of clay. I asked each group of participants if being the clay or if being the sculptor was a harder task. Most responded with the sculptor as being harder because they didn't like having

that power over another human being. They did, however, enjoy going around to look at the other sculptures of clay because they got to witness other perspectives. To most, it was an enlightening way to visual issues of oppression.

Overall, the responses I obtained were collectively positive. Through the physical participation, the verbal and written responses showed that this presentation/workshop achieved several objectives. As the facilitator and director of this project, I had concerns that the overall content of the presentation/workshop of Can You Hear Me Now? would not resonate with all of the diverse organizations to which it was presented. However, after the creating, devising, and application process of this Forum Theatre model, I now find that the instrumentation was a success. Beginning with a troupe of performers who learned about TO and Forum Theatre, to the creation of a script, to rehearsing that script, and then to the application of it to audiences, the study was effective. All of the audiences connected to it either personally or impersonally, enjoyed this new technique of problem solving, and could understand why standing up to oppression is important. The presentation/workshop introduced a new problem solving technique to disparate audiences. In one

participant's words after the presentation/workshop, "I feel like oppression is really anything that takes away your voice. It can always be fought...It showed the effect it standing up myself had" (Linfield workshop participant).

A major limitation of my study was that it was a one-time program without any follow up measures. The presentation was delivered at only three locations. Ideally, as can be seen in the research presented in this paper, these workshops should be over an extended period of time. In that way, issues can be thoroughly addressed, as well as having the ability to provide ongoing assessments. I was limited as to how much I could measure after only one presentation. The questionnaires I had each participant fill out measured the efficacy of that particular presentation, but certainly did not give a global and societal extension of what was learned. In order to measure any goals I have beyond the ones met, I would need to do ongoing pre- and posttests regarding the material presented.

The interactive part of my program was what kept the audience engaged. The more people that participated, the more effective the interaction became. As more of the audience participated, the more problem solving techniques

emerged. The pre-workshop activities that the audience participated in, such as the Sculptor/Clay image activities, were not as engaging as the actual presentation itself. Although they enjoyed them, this portion of the workshop was merely for educational purposes. It allowed them the tools to identify the characters in oppressive situations and the oppressive situations themselves. Once the presentation of the story began to take shape, the audience became more engrossed. Their physical, verbal, and written responses were a testament to how effective this study was.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After each Can You Hear Me Now? presentation/workshop, my troupe and I met to review the responses from our audience. We would then brainstorm new ideas that might come up in the future presentations. This depended upon the population of the next venue. Being able to return to each venue would give these presentations new life. We could expand upon issues we had already addressed and have the audience present new issues, especially since they now were familiar with this type of problem solving technique. Also, more people would attend, which would introduce more individuals to Theatre of the Oppressed. Holding an open performance to the public might also be a way to introduce this concept of problem solving to neighborhoods in the Inland Empire.

The work of Boal could be used in so many areas of society. It is a way to actively address oppressive issues. One possible organization that could benefit from being introduced to these techniques would be the Riverside County Youth Commission. This organization is already established, with a purpose statement that says, "...they

shall work to anticipate the educational, recreational, and cultural needs of the youth of this county, and to work to ensure the coordination of community resources in order to improve the quality of life for all its youth" (Riverside County Youth Commission By-Laws, <http://www.rivcodistrict2.org/opencms/boards/yac/Bylaws>). This is a possible option for expanding the use of TO techniques within the Inland Empire.

The argument in favor of Theatre of the Oppressed is that in order to foster critical and creative citizens, a person must be actively involved in the process of discovering oppression in their daily lives. In order to do this, Boal contends that in a forum setting, individuals are presented with an alternative space to express themselves with their bodies and not just through words. Young people tend to learn on a more interactive level than previous generations. They become engaged in dialogue as opposed to monologue. It seems that they are interested and motivated for a fully engaging experience, with the opportunity to express themselves however they choose. In Theatre of the Oppressed, individuals are enabled to participate in issues and to engage in critical thinking about the issues they are observing. Theatre allows

participants to dissect myriad possibilities that come to life through the characters in the forum.

Unless an individual recognizes and deals with oppression in the singular, social change will not take place. For social change to take place, individuals must understand oppression not only on an intellectual level, but also on an emotional and kinesthetic level as well. Norms must be challenged. Individuals need to learn to go beyond what is seen and creatively come up with different possibilities to stop oppression. This needs to be implemented not only in their individual lives but also in society. Boal encourages participants to go from asking questions such as "What would you do if..?" to "You are..." (Boal 17). This requires the participant to respond to the character in the forum.

In the three venues that I selected, I found a great deal of consistency in data gathered from participants. All who attended exhibited eagerness, enlightenment, empowerment and awareness. I believe that this study had immediate, positive results on the participants involved. Due to the participants' powerful approaches towards addressing the oppression presented within Can You Hear Me Now?, it is safe to say that a positive impact was made.

The individuals who participated in facing these oppressive issues showed strength, dignity, pride, and confidence with their actions. Due to the positive responses and affirmation from other participants, it is also safe to conclude that the participants were supplied with hands-on tools for facing and standing up to daily oppression. They witnessed positive change with their own eyes from their peers. It would be useful to revisit these venues and conduct a one-day workshop with the participants to address new oppressive situations and/or revisit the issues in Can You Hear Me Now? The possibility of following up and obtaining stories from participants of this study would also show how positive and effective change has occurred and will continue to occur.

I have participated in theatre since I was three years old, and it is a huge part of my life and life's purpose. Throughout my theatrical life experiences, I have become more convinced that theatre has the potential to change lives. During the course of my graduate studies, I was required to do a presentation on a professional theatre outreach organization. I did the presentation on the organization named Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed. It was from this knowledge, that I developed an interest in

researching more on this theatrical technique, called "Theatre of the Oppressed." I was fortunate to be able to attend school in New York and take a class teaching me the techniques to devise and create a Forum Theatre model.

Theatre of the Oppressed is a rehearsal type of theatre. It is a technique that allows the use of knowledge to transform and to actively address any types of oppression. I specifically used Forum Theatre in my study to explore different ways of approaching oppression among youth.

Augusto Boal is the pioneer in the creation of this type of theatre. He believed that oppression of any kind is inexcusable. However, he felt that individuals could not be a catalyst for change on a social level if they were not able to engage in active participation on an individual level.

Theatre of the Oppressed, utilizing Forum Theatre specifically, addresses oppression of all kinds. Forum Theatre is powerful. Using audience interactive experiences has a profound effect on individuals. It was my goal for this study to answer the following question: Can the devising, practicing, and applying of Theatre of the Oppressed methods create a strong catalyst for personal and

social change? Will the youth and young adults in California's Inland Empire respond positively to this problem-solving technique?

I achieved this, first, by gathering a troupe of actors. Together, we created and wrote a forum theatre model. We had approximately 16-20 rehearsals in order to effectively create a realistic representation of oppressive issues we would present. During the rehearsal process, I created activities that would surround the presentation. We titled it Can You Hear Me Now? and I was able to secure three different venues to present this forum. At the end of each presentation, I had the participants fill out a survey sharing what they had learned, their opinion of the forum and how they felt this experience would effect change, either personally or globally, in their lives. I found that this type of forum was and is extremely effective. There is a huge amount of potential for using Theatre of the Oppressed techniques in addressing oppression and in speaking to young people. The energy of the participants was phenomenal. The participation of those attending was strong. Almost everyone in the audience became engaged with the actors and with the issues being discussed on stage.

The significance of this study is to show how Theatre of the Oppressed can be an effective catalyst to change, both on an individual and societal level. It demonstrates a way individuals can become aware of, and then address, oppression in their lives. Hopefully, the more aware people become with Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed techniques, the more studies will be done.

It is the contention of Boal, that people may not even recognize oppression in their lives. This forum helps to identify and clarify oppression for the participants. It then provides them a way to learn positive approaches and problem solving techniques associated with oppressive issues.

Can You Hear Me Now?: A Study On Oppression was not only a learning experience for me, but it spoke to my soul. I am strongly drawn to work with our youth in the forum modality of theatre. Seeing firsthand how much this type of theatre affected the individual participants was extremely moving. I believe that TO and its techniques will continue to expand due to the fact that it is extremely effective. Social change is needed. Oppression needs to stop on all levels of society, from the family unit to global units. This is one approach of doing so.

The biggest challenge that currently exists is that not enough people know about this type of work, let alone are using it. There are not enough individuals trained in this field of theatre. Without the knowledge, this type of work could possibly cease to exist. Even with the knowledge, this type of work creates challenges. For example, it is a lengthy process and might not be realistic to use in a typical school day. Or, there is the fear of educators, administrators, and parents. Their issues could be they are concerned or nervous about using these methods and the fear that they do not meet the standardized educational components. However, with every challenge, there can be success.

As more and more people become acquainted with Theatre of the Oppressed, there will be more data available for comparison, contrast and research statistics. When individuals take out into society that which has empowered them, large-scale changes may be seen.

Theatre has always been a way to evoke emotion in people. In this modality, it is used to channel that emotion to help people utilize problem-solving techniques. I strongly contend that nothing but positive outcomes will essentially be the result when using this type of work.

Anyone that desires to address personal or global issues and be a part of positive change in this world should experience the theatre methods of Boal. I firmly believe that this type of problem solving is a unique way to empower all individuals and especially our youth. It offers the opportunity for individual and social growth. Being involved in projects that have a global purpose such as Theatre of the Oppressed is a life changing experience. In my endeavor, I planted seeds. In doing so, my hope would be that they would take root, sprout, grow, and flourish!

APPENDIX A
PRE-REHEARSAL/PREP MATERIALS

ATTENTION CSUSB Theatre Dept. !!!

Wanted:

Actors for Graduate Thesis Project

WHAT:

Perform *and* help Inland Empire youth at the same time! Be part of the Theatre of The Oppressed (TO) project. You'll learn TO techniques and create and perform a theatrical piece designed to empower teenaged audience members.

You may even be able to earn academic units toward your degree!

WHEN:

Fall 2008 and Winter 2009 (You must be able to commit to both quarters.) Fall rehearsals will be held once a week; winter rehearsals will be held two days a week, with 3-6 touring performances.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Kathy Risinger-Grad Student and TO Project Director!
Please email me if you are interested!
Email: kitkat3831@gmail.com

*NOTE: I will be conducting one-on-one interviews to cast the T.O. project drama troupe, either by phone or in person. Check the call board for interview dates and times!
Thanks and I look forward to hearing from you!!!!

**CSUSB Thesis Graduate Project:
T.O. Drama Troupe Contract**

The T.O. Performance Troupe is the research, creative, and performance portion of Kathy Risinger's thesis graduate project that will explore Theatre of the Oppressed methodologies. Participants in the Performance Troupe will work with graduate students and other performing artists to create, rehearse, and perform material that explores issues that are relevant to teen oppression. The general goals for the project are:

- To provide participants with the opportunity to learn Theatre of the Oppressed methods and develop creative skills that apply to the specific project project;
- To create an environment in which participants can safely explore personal and social issues;
- To instill a strong sense of discipline: following schedules, maintaining a professional demeanor, and working as an ensemble;
- To allow participants to communicate and explore with other participants personal experiences of past oppressive issues as a teen, to create a Forum piece that directly involves these issues, and to, through art (Forum Theatre), spread a strong message to diverse youth communities a constructive and empowering approach to dealing with and stopping the oppression in their lives and the lives of others.

The Performance Troupe consists of a select group of people who demonstrate promise in one or more areas of the performing arts (i.e., acting, playwriting, music, dance, technical theatre), and who are willing and able to make a strict commitment to the schedule and responsibilities of the particular project, Nov. 08'-March 09'.

By signing this contract, you are agreeing to be a member of the T.O. Performance Troupe, and to following the guidelines listed below (please initial each):

- _____ I agree to attend all scheduled rehearsals and performances (see attached rehearsal schedules, performances TBA), except for in the case of a legitimate emergency or previously discussed excused absences.
- _____ I understand that I am expected to arrive on time (in theatre, on time means 15 minutes early) and be prepared to work at the start of rehearsal.
- _____ I know that I am expected to participate in all activities of the rehearsal for the duration - from beginning to end.
- _____ Should I need to be late to or miss a rehearsal, or need to leave a rehearsal early, I understand that I should call Kathy Risinger, facilitator of T.O. Project, at 909.418.8330 or email at kitkat3831@gmail.com as soon as possible (BEFORE the rehearsal begins).
- _____ I will come prepared to each rehearsal dressed appropriately (ready to easily move around), bringing with me each time, something to write with and water.
- _____ I will make every attempt to leave "drama" that will interfere with the creative process outside of the rehearsal hall; I will use the avenues provided to me within the rehearsal times to explore relevant issues.
- _____ I will respect fellow Performance Troupe members and leaders as human beings and artists. I understand that everyone has different abilities and comfort levels, and I will strive to do my part to create a safe space.
- _____ I am fully aware that my participation in this project means that I will be exploring issues that may be personal in nature, and that in performing before public audiences, I will be sharing personal aspects of my life.
- _____ I understand that some rehearsals and performances might be videotaped for research, archival, and educational purposes. I know that video footage that includes my face and voice will not be made public without my written permission.

Signature

Printed Name

Date

APPENDIX B
REHEARSAL PROCESS MATERIALS


The Paul A. Kaplan Center at the Creative Arts Team, the City University of New York
An Introduction to Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*.

Devising Guidelines for Creating a Forum Theatre Anti-Model

1. Decide what is the central idea. Clarify the nature of the oppression you are showing.
2. Develop the basic story and scene-by-scene scenario.
3. Who is the central oppressed person? What does s/he want?
4. Who is the main oppressor? What does s/he want that conflicts with the needs of the central character (main oppressed person)?
5. What actions occur to prevent the central character from achieving / getting what s/he wants?
6. Make sure the central character could do something other than s/he is shown doing in the original story. Are there other choices or possibilities?
7. Review those points where spect-actors will be able to intervene and do something different! Speculate on what they might want/try to do and how the forum actors will work with their efforts!
8. Make sure the model contains characters that offer the possibility of help (allies) or hindrance (secondary oppressors). What do *they* want? The *same* character might be either a friend or enemy according to the way they are approached, recruited, etc. But remember it is very hard to act/make changes alone!
9. Cast the model. Who will play the MAIN OPPRESSED, OPPRESSOR, the ALLIES, and the JOKER? The Joker should not be in the performance.
10. Improvise and theatricalize the whole scenario, adhering to the overall shape and dynamic of classical forum structure. (Note: time permitting it is possible to work with a writer or collectively script forum theatre, as with any other piece of theatre.)
11. Identify intervention strategies for (a) the oppressor(s) (b) the allies (c) the spect-actors who will intervene. Rehearse as many possibilities as can be identified!

© Chris Vine

Creative Arts Team, Theatre of the Oppressed Class, New York, June 2008.



Paul A. Kaplan Center for Educational Drama

Theatre of the Oppressed

C. Vine, Instructor

FUNCTIONS OF THE JOKER

1. To stimulate, enthuse, challenge and help the specators. A source of energy.
2. To focus the specators - collectively and individually. What do they want to change?
3. To control the interventions eg. to stop them if they are getting bogged down; to check that the interveners have had sufficient opportunity to try out their strategy.
4. To activate the debate in the audience by eliciting the different options about the interventions - Was there any sense/meaning in them? What have they achieved? Remember the forum is a collective enquiry.
5. To support and validate the efforts of the interveners but also to encourage them to be critical of their own actions:
6. To articulate the concrete achievements of the interventions if they have been missed, i.e. "This has now happened- what do you think about it?" Let the audience place the 'value' on it.
7. To stop the forum drifting. To make choices as to what should be explored when, in order to clarify, to discover further possibilities, to investigate consequences.
8. To help the audience distinguish the essence from what is circumstantial eg. a change of attitude from a change of action (-not that both may not be important).
9. To help the audience broaden its frame of reference; to make connections; to move from a contemplation of the specific phenomenon to an understanding of the general 'laws'. For example, this employer behaves like this because he/she feels this... wants this, etc... Employers will act in accordance with their class and financial interest.
10. To have a political position of their own, to emphasize the political nature of the forum enquiry but not to impose their political view.
11. To continually problematize; to reveal contradictions; not to offer solutions.
12. To support the actors. To make sure they know what it is we are exploring next; where we are starting, where we are pausing/finishing.
13. To assist the theatricality of the forum. The language of the forum is artistic and rational.

"Teachers and students (leadership and people) co-intent on reality, are both subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action (PRAXIS) they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators. In this way, the presence of the oppressed in the struggle for their liberation will be what it should be: not pseudo-participation but committed involvement." Paulo Freire

C.V.
1988

Creative Arts Team, Theatre Of The Oppressed Class, New York, June 2008.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 1 (11/2/08): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

In tonight's rehearsal, the goals were: 1) introduce and get to know other troupe member through team building activities/ exercises, 2) introduce Theatre of the Oppresses through handouts and discussion, 3) review the goals and objectives of the project, and 4) get contracts passed out and signed. My graduate project has officially been swung into action. Prior to our first rehearsal, I had been planning the whole process on how to get my project on its feet. It has been a tedious and stressful experience. Seeing as though I have only been around Theatre of the Oppressed techniques for one week, I was been nervous about starting. The one week I was around it though, I felt I gained enough knowledge to experiment on my own, with the help of a troupe of actors. So, the first goal was recruiting. Once that was done, I needed to carefully plan out the schedule of what we needed to do before this quarter is over in rehearsals. Here is an outline of the first rehearsal's activities:

I. Introduction

- A. Greet and welcome to the T.O. performance troupe!
- B..Pass out contracts/ rehearsal schedules- briefly explain

II.. Prologue-Opening Activities/Ice Breakers

- A. HOW ARE YOU FEELING RIGHT NOW? (physicalize)
 - 1. Everyone stands in a circle and turns away from the circle. Close your eyes and think about what you are feeling.
 - 2. On a go, turn around and create a still image of that feeling with your body, using no words or sound.
 - 3. Repeat and have half of the circle observe. Switch. Discuss what you saw.
- B. ANIMALS (physicalize)
 - 1. Everyone is handed a random card from facilitator. On it is written the name of an animal/ creature. Keep it a secret! Become that animal, with movement and sound, realistic or symbolic, but no words.
 - 2. Facilitator reveals you have another mate in the room. Find them. No words. Sit in the playing area with partners when you think you have succeeded- still using no words.
 - 3. Facilitator checks to see that everyone has a mate. Helps if they need to untangle a misunderstanding. Review all the animal pairs. Everyone now has a partner.(note-total number of participants was 8 i.e., 2x4=8)
- B. NAMES AND INTRODUCTIONS (vocalize)
 - 1. In twos (from above)- introduce yourself, as usual- LISTEN! Now reflect on your allows? History? Family? Culture? Ethnicity? Sexuality? Religion? Class? Values? Etc.
 - 2. With same partners, tackle this challenge. Talk for two minutes each, uninterrupted. Does your introduction change?
 - 3. Join another duo. Each person, in turn, introduces their original partners for 3 minutes each.

C. EMBLEMS (visualize)

1. On paper, create your personal identity 'emblem' or badge. Take 3-5 minutes to do
2. Find a partner that you were not originally with in the above exercise. Swap papers and study partners emblems for 1 minute.
3. Listen while your partner interprets what s/he sees. Only discuss after both emblems have been viewed and interpreted. Talk for about 1 minute.
4. Place emblems on wall and have everyone look at them. Discuss what is seen as unique.
5. Meet and greet in circle. See if anyone can name all names. Review names and say one thing you learned about one person in the circle.

III. Theatre of the Oppressed- background, goals for project

A. What is theatre of the oppressed?

1. Augusto Boal-brief description
2. community based education that uses theatre as a tool for transformation/awareness.

B. What is Forum Theatre? How will we be using it for our project?

1. Forum theatre- problem solving technique in which an unresolved scene of oppression is presented.
2. Discussion of creating a forum theatre piece that will address issues/oppression among teens.
3. Touring to diverse youth organizations with our piece and holding a performance/workshop.

IV. Team Building Activities: using Boal's 3 of 5 Categories- LEARNING TO: FEEL EVERYTHING WE TOUCH, LISTEN TO EVERYTHING WE HEAR, SEE EVERYTHING WE LOOK AT, USE OUR SEVERAL (COMBINED) SENSES, USE OUR SENSE MEMORY(Boal uses these exercises to: train the senses, build groups, develop 'languages'/means of communication other than words; free our bodies from physical oppression; explore oppression, freedom, power etc. through metaphor; develop theatre skills)

A. SPACE, STOP! (several senses)

1. Whole group- WALK in space: weave in and out; try to cover the whole floor surface-flow like an "oil slick or water"
2. STOP!
3. LOOK- around you. Where are the spaces unfilled by people?
4. MOVE! Take only one step, in any direction, to fill the space, and help spread the group more evenly across and around the floor area.
5. Once all of these steps have been established- repeat the entire sequence: WALK, STOP, LOOK, MOVE!
6. Then add in the last step- LINK! From the final position, after the one pace (MOVE!) link with as many people as possible (keeping one foot in its original place) in as many ways as possible, to create a huge web over the entire floor area.
7. Repeat the whole sequence once more.

B. Beat the carpet (Listen)

- a. Circle on the floor- on knees or lying flat, close to person next to you, with arms out, so you can raise and drop arms from the elbow.
 - b. Beat out a steady rhythm (facilitator can begin), round in the circle, always raising your arm together with the arm of the person next to you.
 - c. Develop the sequence: raise your arm with the person next to you (above)- then raise and drop both your arms together; then raise and drop your other arm with the person on the other side of you. For you, the sequence goes one arm with partner, two arms- just you-, then other arm with partner. Repeat several times trying to listen rather than look. Try it with eyes closed!
- C. Italian Rain (Listen)
1. IN a circle, everyone claps simultaneously with fingers of one hand against the palm of the other.
 2. Everyone chooses their own rhythm , but claps using 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 digits (fingers) progressively as indicated by the facilitator.
 3. Continue in descending order 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and fading out.
 4. The sequence is then repeated with eyes closed (i.e. no one conducts, everyone must listen and sense when to change the number of fingers used.)
- D. The Tangle (Feel)
1. Get in a large circle and hold hands.
 2. One pair creates an arch- person opposite in circle leads others under it- all hands remain linked.
 3. Starting from the first 'loop,' the group ties itself in a knot- over and under arms, etc.
 4. Untangle back to original circle
 5. Facilitator starts process again- and asks group, in silence, to tangle themselves again. Once tangled, untangle.
 6. Repeat with eyes closed.
- E. Writing Activity- Oppression Graffiti Board
1. What comes to mind when you hear the word oppression?
 - a. Use drawing board to write words, phrases, ideas that come to your mind that deals with oppression.
 2. What comes to mind when you hear the words teen oppression?
 - a. Same as above.
 3. Look at board and discuss what similarities there are. Discuss any interesting observations.
- F. Epilogue- Closing activity
1. HOW ARE YOU FEELING RIGHT NOW? (physicalize)
 - a. Everyone stands in a circle and turns away from the circle. Close your eyes and think about what you are feeling.
 - b. On a go, turn around and create a still image of that feeling with your body, using no words or sound.
 - c. Repeat and have half of the circle observe. Switch. Discuss what you saw.

Sunday was our first rehearsal. I had everything carefully laid out, a game plan. There was a sign in sheet, rehearsal schedules and contracts handed out and signed, and an introduction by my graduate advisor. This made me feel confident and safe to begin. Once we began, we dove directly into an activity that helped me see what my actors were feeling at the moment. We used an exercise that used our bodies as still images to represent our feelings. We stood in a circle and the response was very clear. Some of those responses were exhaustion, nervous, intimidated, curious, and happy. One person, Stacey, created an image that screamed uncomfortable and awkward. This stuck out to me. We all shared and then moved on to our introductions and getting to know each other exercise. I handed out pieces of paper with an animal on it, instructed them all to find their mates, using their bodies and sound, and then get to know them by listening. We swapped around and introduced our partners. In the end, we gathered back in a circle and reviewed names and one fact about someone in the circle. It was successful and appeared safe. Next, we created personality emblems, studied, shared, displayed, and discussed them. After this, I had them all take a seat while I went over a brief history on the what, who, and how's of T.O. and how we will be using it. I answered any questions they had. From here, we moved onto some team building activities that would begin our exploration of Boal's 5 categories: LEARNING TO: FEEL EVERYTHING WE TOUCH, LISTEN TO EVERYTHING WE HEAR, SEE EVERYTHING WE LOOK AT, USE OUR SEVERAL (COMBINED) SENSES, USE OUR SENSE MEMORY(Boal uses these exercises to: train the senses, build groups, develop 'languages'/means of communication other than words; free our bodies from physical oppression; explore oppression, freedom, power etc. through metaphor; develop theatre skills). We began with Space, STOP!, where we explored several senses of looking, listening, and seeing. It was very successful and the energy from the group was high as I led them through the exercise. Then we moved onto Beat the floor, where we used our listening skills. This was a bit of a challenge on the hard floor, but we did a pretty good job of it. Moving on in our team building, we made Italian Rain, where we had to use our listening skills again to make a collage of rain sounds with different levels of intensity, eyes closed, and no direction. It was calming and effective and everyone seemed to like what we did. Therese said it was hard at first, but once you tuned in, you could feel the energy around you and the direction of the exercise. We then tackled the Tangle knot exercise. With a small group, it was a lot simpler and they got in and out of their know within a minute. I was impressed. So, then I had them do it with their eyes closed and no speaking. They were quiet until it got complicated and then chatter began and they seemed more nervous. I observed more than one calm person, but the goal was to do the exercise and have them all be calm. We tried it a couple times and there was a moment where I needed to step in for safety purposes. But, overall, it was fun and successful and forced them to work together. GREAT Exercise! Last exercise before we wrapped it up was a writing exercise. I put up what I call the "graffiti" wall, which is a large post it pad, and had them write down words, phrases, images that came to mind when they heard the word oppression. Then we observed in silence. I had them once again, write down more words on another piece that directly looked at teen oppression. Once this was done, we

observed and discussed similarities and connections between the boards. We also discussed what stuck out to us. This exercise got everyone thinking about the direction we are headed as a team. It was really effective and people were quiet and thoughtful.

Finally, to wrap up the evening, we ended with the exercise we had done in the beginning. They all took new forms. Now we observed excited, proud, ready to move, warm, intrigued, and excited. Stacey's position changed drastically from the beginning. In the first round, she was uncomfortable and awkward and in this round, she was warm and comfortable. Overall, the evening was a success. I felt that everyone was nervous and didn't really know what to expect at the start of the rehearsal. But by the end, I felt there was a good sense of comfort, perhaps still some questions, but definite willingness to move forward to the next step. So, forward is the way we will move.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 2 (11/9/08): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

In tonight's rehearsal, the goals were: 1) continue building a safe environment thru team building exercises, 2) further the understanding of forum theatre and its purpose in this project, 3) apply some T.O. techniques through specific exercises that dealt with oppression, and 4) begin formulating our forum anti-model thru personal stories and exercises. Our goals for this evening were pretty extensive. The activities that were planned out were ones that required a detailed explanation and a sufficient amount of time to apply them.

As far as the activities are concerned, there were games and exercises that we used that were a continuation of Boal's 5 categories. In addition, we began to work with Image theatre, by observing still images of oppression and work shopping them, as well as creating our own images of teen/ youth oppression, which is what our forum will be based upon. Here is the outline of activities for the rehearsal:

A. Warm ups: More games and team building exercises using Boal's 5 categories (cont.)

1. Good Evening! Meet and greet: make physical contact and eye contact with everyone in the room and greet them by name.
2. Check-in and recall exercises from last rehearsal. Everyone sits in the "circle."
 - a. Introduce new members of troupe.
 - b. Discussion on highlights of last week's rehearsal.
3. "Sticky" Paper Pieces (feel)
 - a. Every participant has a small square of paper. Form pairs. Attach this paper to the other person (who will be doing the same to you) by pressure from a part of the body other than the hand!
 - b. Then, move without dropping the piece of paper all around the room. Be creative with your attachments. Stop, and try something else. Repeat.

- c. Join another pair, making a group of 4. Repeat above.
- d. In two groups, practice then compete to see which can move most quickly from one end of the room to the other- without dropping any paper!
- e. Finally, in two groups, try to move as a group in a creative/ aesthetically pleasing manner. i.e. sounds, images, unique figure. Share achievements with other groups while moving across the floor. Repeat one last time with everyone in one group.
- f. After the activity, discuss in the groups how the dynamic worked and the role each person played. Was it a role you were comfortable with? Was it your default position? i.e. leader, follower, etc. Would you like to change it? Were the roles of the other group members productive? If you want to change your behavior, you can. Don't rely on others to define you!

4. Exchange of Bouncing Balls (see)

- a. Create an imaginary ball- size, density, shape, bouncing pattern- use noises/sounds to help distinguish your ball.
- b. Play with it- get comfortable and familiar with your ball!
- c. Meet another person. Show them your ball and look at theirs. Learn how to use their ball, without talking!
- d. SWAP!
- e. Go play with this new ball.
- f. Meet another person, repeat above, swap!
- g. Continue playing with this last ball, even as you go in search of your original ball. Can everyone find their ball? Take your ball back as soon as you find it...make sure you keep using the last ball you had though until someone relieves you of it. When you are relieved, have a seat.

B. Overview of Forum Theatre- hand out packets

- 1. Discuss the process-What, Who, How?
 - a. What is oppression and forum theatre?
 - b. Who is involved in forum theatre? Characters?
 - c. How is Forum theatre done? Process?
- 2. Guidelines for a forum theatre model

3. Functions of the joker

4. Example of a forum theatre breakdown-scenario

C. More exercises- Image theatre: The Image of Transition

1. "Beast of Burden"-- A man and woman with a baby, fetching water and food in Tanzania

a. Introduction on this image of oppression found in a village in Tanzania. The image was created by a woman in a small village. From the image, a forum discussion took place.

b. Facilitator is to create the image with two people from the troupe, as others become the audience. Props are involved; a staff carried by the man, a bucket representing the water bucket on the woman's head (held by one hand), a satchel representing food carried by the woman, and a sling with what appears to be a baby, on the woman's back. The man is about 2 feet in front of the woman, staff in hand, while woman is behind, "burdened" by her many duties.

2. The Process

a. Look at the image. Can you identify oppression? Do you want to change it? (facilitator asks spectactors)

b. Change the 'oppressive' image to an 'ideal' image- in which the oppression is broken! Dialogue using the images, asking the spectactors if they see resolution, more ways to fix this image, inviting them to show their version. They get up and physically move image to look the way they want it to. We repeat and discuss this several times, recreating an image where the oppression is broken.

c. Which of the images of the broken oppression do we prefer? Agree on a choice to explore.

d. Now we will try to transform the image to an image of liberation. Create "images of transition" that show the moment and way change towards the broken oppression might begin. (these images come between the previous two images.)

e. Next, we move into an image theatre forum. In this, we explore some of the moments of transition by asking the actors to bring them to life- the oppressed person is trying to break the oppression and move towards the ideal image and the oppressor is free to act/respond as s/he thinks the real oppressor would. Ask questions. What happens? What obstacles do we encounter? What do we learn? Is there a chance for change? What strategies are effective?

f. At this next stage, the audience (spectactors) can replace the actor playing the oppressed and explore different ways of tackling the oppression-in action. We, as

the audience, must remain truthful to the real life situation as much as possible, as not to create 'magic' solutions that may not happen in real life. We find successive and effective ways to combat the oppression. We don't necessarily solve the problem, but we find alternative courses of action and moved closer to possible changes in other ways and raised awareness within the oppressor. Breaking the silence of this woman was the first step towards liberation. Maybe now she will feel confident to share with other women with real discussions.

D. Recall exercise- Graffiti Board

1. Everyone re-examines the graffiti board from last week.
 - a. Add to the board if you want to.
2. Discussion about the board. What do we feel, see, hear? What kinds of situations among youth/teens come to mind when we see the board?
 - a. Group discussion for a few minutes in circle.

E. Interactive/ Team Building: Tracking the oppression-from the real world (Part 1)

1. Cores/Embryos-This is the first step towards creating our forum theatre anti-model.
 - a. Everyone stands in the "circle" (aka safety circle). Individually, recall a personal story of oppression you experienced as a teen or in your youth. Make an individualized auto-image (frozen) that expresses the effect of that oppression. Using your body, on the joker's 3-2-1, action, display your image.
 - b. Look at the other images. Without dropping your arms or your pose, form groups by moving together with those that seem similar to yours (i.e. low to the ground, arm location, facial expression). In these groups, (we had 3 groups) find a place in the space to sit. Share your personal individual stories of oppression that was just represented form your image. Compare themes. Select a theme or focus that your group wants to work on to create an image of oppression. (10-20 minutes)
 - c. One group at a time, represent the main theme or themes with 1 synthesized image. The stories are our individual **cores**, the images our **embryos**. Be sure to represent a main oppressor, the main oppressed and potential allies (good or bad). Possible that one person's story stood out that could be used, or all the stories can be incorporated so that a synthesized image of personal themes is created. (it can't be wrong!) Decide on a word, slogan, or phrase that represents your image and/ or the central idea/ theme.

d. Share images with other groups. Can we identify an oppression? Are the images clear? Can we identify the main oppressed, oppressor, possible allies? Is the context or situation detectable? Or do the images need some more clarity? Discuss. (last section done at next rehearsal)

F. Closing Activity- "Circle" of safety.

1. Reflect on the evening. Did anything stand out to you tonight? Were any exercises helpful in understanding the process more clearly? Is the forward motion of this project understood? Did you feel in your groups there were "leaders?" Or was it more of a team effort?

From the first rehearsal and into the second, everyone has given nothing but positive reinforcement to the project. Everyone is willing to participate in the activities, even if they are apprehensive. This shows me that my team is willing, committed, and enthusiastic. They are a strong group. As far as positive response, for example, during our "safety" circle, participants are speaking out about what they learned and about what they are confused about. Therese, at the beginning of last night's rehearsal was still unclear on what T.O. and forum theatre was exactly. I passed out a handout I had made up of the process, characters involved, and explanation of forum theatre. We went over this as a group and the consensus afterward was positive. Therese could see a clearer picture of what it was that we were going to be doing. With that, we jumped into team building activities that involved trust and cooperation. The sticky paper exercise developed team building ability, creativity, and concentration. The goal was to not drop your paper. You had to depend on another person to work with you and move around the space in a creative way. When we got into bigger groups with this exercise, it involved more listening, cooperation, and teamwork. They all appeared to be having a lot of fun with this. There was laughter, smiles, serious faces, positive encouragement within the groups, and the results for the final creative sticky images were quite lovely. We ended up with an elephant, which made noises and movement, involving every part of the elephant's body, including the elephant butt (Angela). Our other group created an image of a waterfall, with flowing arms and rushing water sounds. There was positive affirmation given by both groups. With the bouncing ball game, there was way too much fun happening. At first, some participants seemed unfocused, but once I switched it up and told them they had to give their ball away, it got serious. This game involved trust, listening, observing, and concentration. The vast array of imaginary balls was spectacular. We had little, fast bouncing, ping sounding balls, and we had large, vibrant, space absorbing balls. Everyone seemed to really be careful when they handed off their ball to someone else. When I switched it up again, it got even more intense. In the end, we were left with two unclaimed balls. This is typical in this exercise, because if absolute detail and concentration of the ball you created or were borrowing was not adhered to, the result was a missing ball. Everyone had so much fun. They were smiling and were very cheerful. It was like they were recalling a day of their childhood. When we moved on to the image theatre, this is when I saw people really begin to understand. Once the "Beast of Burden" was

created, everyone's body posture changed in their seats. The energy appeared tense, and people quickly, without me having to fully explain the next step, were ready to jump up and start working. Jana literally jumped out of her seat as soon as I gave the okay to change the oppression happening in the image. The group was so involved in the action that it made it so easy for me to facilitate what was happening and the asking of the questions. Everyone participated, making physical changes or verbal suggestions. It was clear that they were really beginning to understand where this project was headed. It was truly exciting to watch them. When they became split into their own "image" groups thru the image exercise, they were ready to go to work. A need for detailed explanation was not needed, although I tried. They were already there, beginning to share and create. Everyone seems so trusting of each other and it is so amazing to see this much trust after two rehearsals. There are so many different personalities and ages that makes it so diverse. When they created their images, it was clear to me that they are starting to understand what it is we are aspiring to. Everyone works so well together and there is a true level of respect being created. In the final closing "safety" circle, nearly every person spoke about how much the image theatre exercise really helped paint a clearer picture of what we are going to be working towards. Tanae said in the weekly assessment questionnaire I handed out, "Even though we've only met twice, we're all pretty comfortable with each other. That's going to make everything easier later." Both Stacey and Therese commented on how effective the image was and how, even if there is no set solution to a presented problem, there is comfort and a sense of empowerment that is created just through observing, trying out options, and being heard. Overall, I think people are more excited at the end of rehearsals rather than the beginning. That is positive.

When I first began thinking about this project, I was really apprehensive. I'm not used to being in a leader position. I feel after two rehearsals, with the feedback and positive energy throughout the rehearsals, that I am succeeding in this leadership position. Stacey commented and said, "Your passion for this project is contagious and I'm so excited about it!" Being so passionate about this experiment was one thing, but with the group of people I have put together, I could not be more thrilled. They are working so well together, trusting one another, and willing to just jump in and take risks. I feel I have been responsible for laying down this foundation of safety and will continue to be, but it was up to them to leap. One thing I was successful in achieving this week was allowing the opportunity for a clearer image of the "big" picture for my project. With the help of my handouts and certain exercises, I can firmly say that my performance troupe knows where our path is leading us. One thing I can improve on is just letting go now, trusting myself, and allow myself to go with the flow. I am very prepared before the rehearsals, with everything planned out and open to the possibility that it could change. Being merely satisfied with the results thus far does not describe the true feelings I have. This is an experiment and with where our group is at the moment, I cannot see disappointment any time soon, if ever.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 3/4 (11/23/08): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

In tonight's rehearsal, the goals were: 1) to create safety thru team building exercises, 2) continue working towards formulating our forum anti-model thru personal stories, and 3) use Image Theatre to develop a scene sequence of a personal story as a group. We continued the process of the developing ideas and themes that we will be using for our Forum piece that will tour to the different youth organizations. It was an exciting rehearsal, as I got to sit back and watch things emerge from my troupe. I continued my role as facilitator, but the project is reaching the point where the creative ball is mostly in their court. I will continue to guide that ball, but now it is up to the group to create, with less direction from me. Here is an outline of the evening's activities:

Rehearsal 3/4- 11/23/08

I. Welcome- Opening activity/ Circle

A. ENEMY AND PROTECTOR (SEE)

1. Everyone in the group chooses, secretly, two other people. One is their 'enemy' and one is their 'protector.'
2. When the exercise begins, everyone tries to keep their protector between them and their enemy.
3. Countdown to zero- from 20. FREEZE! Who has managed this? Who is Safe? Raise your hands.

-VARIATION 1- choose 2 people, as above, one to as close to as possible, the other, to move as far away from as possible.

-VARIATION 2- choose 2 people as above. Try to keep at an equal distance from both. Can the whole group achieve this and come to a halt?

B. CIRCLE

- a. Review 2 weeks ago and where we are headed tonight.
- b. Discuss missing rehearsal date 11/30

II. Team Building Activities

A. Hand Hypnosis (Columbian hypnosis)

1. IN PAIRS. One leads. Presents hand in upright position. Partner focuses on it at 9'-12" distance and follows it, in same plane and at same distance.
2. Experiment, with care and respect, with movement, positions, etc.
3. Switch roles and repeat.
4. Repeat all of the above but in threes. Each in turn leads two people.
5. Same principle- but in a circle, around one person, as leader. Everyone chooses a point of focus on them and maintains that focus/relationship, however s/he moves.

B. Complimentary Activities

1. The group is the audience. Some one volunteers to jump 'on stage' and begin miming an activity that

would involve more than one person (e.g. playing baseball)

2. As others recognize it, they also some 'on stage' and add themselves into the activity, taking different roles (e.g. the pitcher, outfielders, the fans, manager, etc.)
3. As the scenario plays out, everyone leaves the stage, and someone begins a new activity.

III. Image Theatre Review/Activity and Forum Example work-thru

A. IMAGE discussion

1. Discuss images we saw at the last rehearsal.
2. Decide on one of the 3 to work on (vote)
3. Work an image as a group. Decide on a beginning image again that represents the oppression. Work on a middle and an ending position, demonstrating working toward breaking the oppression, as a group. Everyone is involved. The last image we should see is the broken oppression, an ideal solution to the first.
4. Try with words and set up transitions into the next images.

B. Classical Forum Anti-Model Demonstration- "Please Close the closet door."

1. Explain, discuss the Shape and Dynamic of a Forum Theatre model. (chart)
2. Act out printed out example, as actors in the scenes.
3. Rework storyline, trying to stop the oppression.
4. Act as joker and facilitate actions of the spectactors.

C. Circle Discussion

1. Talk about how effective it was, how successful...realistic?
2. Discuss my talk/interview with Citrus Hill Teens

IV. Reflection

A. CIRCLE

1. What was effective about tonight?
2. Do you understand the process better?
3. Are you comfortable creating your own forum model as a group?
4. What are you feeling right now? Out loud with words.

During this rehearsal, I really got a chance to see how well this group is working together. From the exercises, to the vulnerability, to the creative action, I am impressed at how the troupe is embracing the Theatre of the Oppressed concepts, and most importantly, each other. This type of work requires a trusting environment and their behaviors and responses to this process show that trust. In response to the first activity, the group loved it. This exercise got them motivated, energized, and ready to work. It is a high energy, physical exercise that got everyone laughing. We moved onto to the hand hypnosis exercise and everyone was immediately engaged. After we finished with this exercise, I asked them some questions. These

questions were: How did you feel during this exercise? What were some things you noticed that were difficult? Was it easier being the follower or the leader? Someone in the group said "this exercise took a lot of trust as the follower, because you had to do exactly what your leader wanted you to do. " Another said, "I felt so powerful as the leader, and at the same time very responsible for my followers, and after a while, I wanted to challenge them." The group felt it was more difficult as a follower when we got into groups of 3, and that the trust was heightened. They also made a reference that this exercise felt like creator vs. creation in the leader position. Also, they said it was interesting to see how as the follower, they were surprised at how well they wanted to perform for their leaders. When we did the variations, the group worked well as a whole, taken into careful consideration if they were the leader in the middle of the circle. Overall, they really enjoyed not having to think and just being hypnotized by a hand. We moved onto an activity where they had to create scenes using only their bodies, starting with one person and an idea. They responded well to this activity, and as each new scene was started, they got more and more creative. They said it was fun and silly and did not want to stop. The troupe thought it was an interesting challenge to have to think about completing the scene not just as a "person" in the scene, but perhaps an object. They were very willing and ideas and scenes kept coming. Some of the silent pictured scenes they created took place at a rock concert, the beach, the circus, on the subway, the playground, at an orchestra concert, a wedding, a funeral, and at the doctor's office. People became more and more creative as each scene was created, not just as animate, but the inanimate objects as well.

We then moved onto recalling our images from our previous rehearsal, and voted on one that we would work on to create an image theatre storyline. I instructed them to use this one image and expand on it, deciding on an initial image displaying the oppression, a middle image of a possible option of confronting that oppression, and then a final pose, where the oppression was overcome. I then allowed them to sit back and create as a team. There was a positive response to the creating process. They were responding well to each other's suggestions, and working thru the different options. I stepped in to help smooth out ideas, with encouragement and they felt comforted by my presence, or so it felt. The initial image they were going to work from was the "Help, I need somebody!" pose from a couple weeks ago, where what was represented was that we all feel alone even when it seems there are people there to help. It was developed into these three images:

- o First pose: Oppressed-Girlfriend sitting, Oppressors-boyfriend flirting with girl the flirtatious girl and wingman (friend) encouraging it, allies trying to help, but not succeeding, Oppressed still feels alone, overlooked, unwanted
- o Second pose: Girlfriend standing up for herself, literally, and others expressions are surprised and encouraging
- o Third pose: Girlfriend walking away, with a smile on her face, while oppressors are shocked and defeated/ hurt has turned on them, allies are proud from a distance.

The titles for each of these images were : Why are you doing this to me?, ENOUGH is enough, and YOU don't define me! We collaborated on these titles and they said they loved this process of dissecting and discovering how oppression can really be seen all around. I stepped in to play each role as to allow each of them to step and observe the images and make possible suggestions for change or confirmation. Their individual responses in the discussion circle at the close of rehearsal were that of surprise and "wows" as they saw the power in the image. It was a way for them to really grasp where we were headed.

Next, we moved on to the Forum anti-model demonstration. This got the group excited. We looked over the shape and dynamic of a forum anti-model. We got on our feet, as I facilitated our first forum example. We assigned roles of oppressor, oppressed, and allies. The troupe dove right in, listening clearly to all of my instruction as we went thru scene by scene. Then, I took them thru the forum part, where we played out a couple scenes as a facilitated them as spectators. They had great questions as we went along and were motivated and willing to learn his process. Time was running short, but overall, they finally could put a physical example down of their current knowledge. We ended the night with the circle with the Enemy and Protector game, per their request. It was a great way to end the evening.

Looking over what I have accomplished thus far gives me satisfaction. I feel as though our group was meant to work together on my project. It is an experiment every time we have a rehearsal because I never know what people will feel like or how they will respond to this. I am on track with where the project is headed and I am confident still that this is going to be a success in more ways than one. As a whole, my troupe is daring, courageous, trusting, creative, fun, and hard working. I feel my role as facilitator is being strengthened each week we meet, as they give me positive affirmation with their work. They understand what we are creating, which shows me I am doing my job. Now, it is time for the storyline devising for our Forum piece. I am most comfortable about this project when I am with my troupe. They encourage me to make it great. There are still tools I am learning as the Joker, but time and practice will help me grow. Overall, up to this point, I have not experienced anything I was not already prepared for. There have been a few people who had to drop out of my drama troupe, but I started with a certain number because I knew this would most likely happen. I feel I have been as prepared as I could be each week, and I will continue to prepare myself for the good and the bad. I am at this point, still confident, encouraged, and passionate about this project. It is well on its way.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 5 (11/30/08): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

In tonight's rehearsal, the goals were: 1) to continue building trust and creativity thru team building exercises, 2) further our understanding of devising our forum anti-model thru personal stories and handouts, and 3) use those stories and materials to devise a successful forum anti-model to build a central storyline, create specific scenes, and develop characters (main oppressor, main oppressed, allies.) This evening's rehearsal was a creative one. The troupe had a chance to finally dive into the meat of creating this

piece of theatre. Working on the project tonight was especially productive, as a new level of trust happened. We did exercises that involved leadership, where the leadership was assigned and then not assigned. Then, they got to explore teamwork as they developed and created together. Here is an outline of this evening's rehearsal:
Rehearsal 5- 11/30/08:

- I. Welcome/ Games and Team Building Exercises
 - A. All In a Line (see)
 1. Form Groups (two groups of 4 in our case)
 2. The leader chooses a physical way with movements, sound, etc. to lead the team around the room.
 3. The line follows, doing as the leader does.
 4. When the Joker calls "change", the leader runs to the back of the line and there is a new leader. (the person next in line)
 5. The new leader takes over with a new routine that all must copy and follow, and so on until every person has had a chance to lead.
*On the second and third rounds, the Joker calls "change" more quickly to encourage greater spontaneity.
 - B. Pair Walks (Feel)
 1. With a partner, move around the space in as many "unusual" ways as possible. Propose variations on your movements by doing them- DON'T Discuss!
 2. Join another pair and continue.
 3. Continue to move around the room and then join another group, until the entire group is moving together.
 - C. CIRCLE
 1. Review last weeks rehearsal
 - a. What are some things that stuck with you?
 - b. What did we do?
 - c. How effective was it?
 2. Discuss the rehearsal goal for the night.
 - a. Create a storyline and scenes for the Forum.
 - b. Create characters.
 - c. Write it out on graffiti board.
 - d. Begin working scenes.
 - e.
- II. Review of the Shape and Dynamic of a Forum Theatre Model
 1. Review Chart
 2. Review Devising Guidelines for Creating a Forum Theatre Anti- Model handout
- III. Forum Work
 - A. Create the Forum- Begin creating storyline and characters
 1. Have group share in a circle their stories from last week to everyone.
 2. Begin choosing a theme, from the graffiti board and the personal stories.
 3. Start thinking of a possible THEME/situation that we could represent in 5 scenes, beginning with the central conflict,

and ending in defeat in failure...the model on the board...(drawn out)

4. Vote on a theme and begin creating scenes, characters, etc.
5. Write it out on board. (like in example forum handout)
6. Get up on our feet.

IV. Reflection/ Closing Activity

A. Circle Discussion

1. What was effective about tonight?
2. Do you understand the process better?
3. Are you comfortable creating your own forum model as a group?
4. What are you feeling right now? Show with our body and out loud.

B. ENEMY AND PROTECTOR (SEE)

1. Everyone in the group chooses, secretly, two other people. One is their 'enemy' and one is their 'protector.'
2. When the exercise begins, everyone tries to keep their protector between them and their enemy.
3. Countdown to zero- from 20. FREEZE! Who has managed this? Who is Safe? Raise your hands.
*VARIATION 1- choose 2 people, as above, one to as close to as possible, the other, to move as far away from as possible.
*VARIATION 2- choose 2 people as above. Try to keep at an equal distance from both. Can the whole group achieve this and come to a halt?

During the beginning of the rehearsal, I felt a lack of energy from the entire troupe. It might have been the long holiday weekend, so I was determined to bring the group out of their slum. One troupe member in particular gave the group a boost by providing yummy snacks and words of encouragement. This act in itself made me so happy to see. Everyone was so thankful and smiling after this. Our first exercise got them thinking too. We played All in a Line, where we had a leader in the front of the line and followers behind moving around the room in a creative way. This exercise got them acting goofy and there was lots of laughter and interesting noises coming from the different groups. I saw them having a great time and taking chances. Some of them assessed that it was surprisingly easy to just follow along with the rest of the crowd, and when it was their turn to lead, they were caught off guard. They enjoyed that they didn't have to think for most of the time, but enjoyed the challenge to be a creative leader. Our next exercise was a bit different because there was no one leader assigned. As they got into pairs for the Pair Walk, they had to, without speaking, move around the space as creatively as possible. If they wanted to change what they were doing, they had to do it without speaking, forcing someone to be a leader at some point. It was interesting to see them work as a team. Because without knowing it, I saw them taking turns. This showed amazing teamwork, trust, leadership, and observation. When the group increased, their efforts increased because there was a larger group now. They said they just got to a point where they felt the group moving and didn't feel like

anyone was leading. WOW! This really impressed me. I was so proud of this.

Once we finished these exercises, we dove into our forum preparation. I passed out a handout they already had of the devising guidelines of a forum theatre anti-model to go over. It is basically a checklist for creating a successful forum piece. We also went over the diagram we looked over last time of the dynamic structure. Then, we dove into story telling, where they shared their original story from the image theatre exercise or shared a new one. As a whole group, everyone was very respectful and really listened to the stories. I asked them keep in mind striking themes or central conflicts that could tie all our stories together to create our piece. Once we were finished sharing, we got out the drawing board and began writing out similar themes. Some of the themes/ideas we thought resonated within the group and that could be used within our piece were bad domestic life, absence of a parent through death or divorce, acceptance, peer pressure, and self-destructive acts. These were the most prominent concepts the group decided to work with to begin building the storyline. Once they saw they had core issues to build a story around and personal stories to draw from, they jumped right into the creation of the storyline, scenes, and characters. I guided ideas, concepts and posed questions along the way to help keep within the guidelines of a successful forum model. The rehearsal came to a close sooner than we expected it to, so right when we were getting into the meat of the story building, our time was up. The group was really bummed about it, so they, on their own, said "we need to meet for coffee to finish this sometime this week." I was obviously on board this suggestion, as it wasn't in the plan to have time run out at our rehearsal. But, when stories, personal stories are being shared, it gets so intense that it is so hard to stop the flow. Everyone seemed so open and vulnerable, trusting us all with these details of their lives that I felt that it was necessary to allow them to each finish. I will say that I was so impressed by their willingness to complete this. So, we set a time and met on Tuesday of that week, December 2, 2008.

At this meeting, we all jumped right in where we left off and we tackled the storyline, scenes, and characters. This is what the group came up with:

Characters:

Sarah (Main Oppressed): A young high school student of 16, living in Southern California (Inland Empire) with her Dad, Chuck. Her parents are divorced and she feels the absence of her mother in her life through distance, both physically and emotionally since the divorce. She is a good student and daughter, very smart, and a nice girl who has lots of friends, but looking for continued acceptance and guidance.

Chuck/Dad (Main Oppressor): Father to Sarah and divorced man in his mid 30's. He is engaged to Mindy. He loves his daughter and her well-being, but more concerned with his own. Not a sensitive listener and quick to make decisions without thinking about the consequences. Ambitious, cocky and self-preserving, always unaware of his actions speaking louder than his words.

Mindy (Secondary Oppressor): Girlfriend/Fiance to Chuck. Very needy, manipulative and obnoxious, and has a way with men. Likes to get her own way. She likes Sarah, but more so, tolerates her.

Alicia (Allie): One of Sarah's closest friends. Very encouraging, kind, and supportive. But cautious because of her experiences. Has a wall up and thinks Sarah might need that too to protect herself.

Ms. Dunbar/D. (Secondary Allie) : One of Sarah's teachers. An encouraging woman. Funny and all the students like her. The "cool" teacher.

Justin and other Students/Friends: Classmates to Sarah. Fun, outgoing kids who may not always have the best answers to dealing with situations.

SCENE 1: All of the students and Sarah are in Ms. D's class. Ms. D has just announced Sarah as the student of the month and gives Sarah her invitation for a student/parent/teacher/ principal luncheon the following week. Class ends and the rest of the class talks about a party they are having that night and they can celebrate her award. Sarah says she has other plans with her dad. Everyone leaves except Sarah and Alicia who waits at the door. Sarah feel so proud and can't wait to tell her dad about it when they go out tonight for a dinner they had planned just the two of them. She is approached by Ms. D who asks if she thinks both parents will be there, Sarah says her mom lives in New York now, but confident dad will make the lunch.

SCENE 2: On their way out of class, Alicia approaches Sarah and is concerned Sarah's dad will flake out /forget dinner and will be let down again, like she has been in the past by her mom and dad. They argue. Sarah feels confident her dad won't let her down, and that he remembered. She says he even stated it that morning, that "tonight was going to be a great night."

SCENE 3: Sarah is home from school and ready to go out to dinner with her dad. He is in the bathroom getting ready and she begins talking about hurt feelings she has had since the divorce over her mom's absence and choosing her job over staying close to her. She is trying to talk about her feelings, and Chuck (dad) is pretending to listen, when really he is more preoccupied with getting ready for the night. He cuts her off at one point, saying he is going to propose to Mindy tonight at dinner. Sarah is left there, when her dad sees what time it is and leaves quickly to pick up Mindy. Without a chance to say anything, she is left with no support, guidance, and is forgotten.

SCENE 4: Sarah and Alicia, sitting in Sarah's living room, talking about her dad forgetting about their dinner plans. Alicia states she was right, and encourages Sarah to forget about it and just come to the party with her and have fun with people who do care about her. Sarah

says she wants to wait and see if her dad remembers, or that she might call him. Alicia tries to talk her out of this, but Sarah insists. Alicia leaves.

SCENE 5: In the living room, Sarah sits. Dad comes home with Mindy a few hours after he left. Sarah is hopeful he is alone so she can talk with him about missing dinner. They (Chuck and Mindy) walk in excited and Sarah wants to say something, but her dad looks so happy. Mindy is polite, but is rudely rushing them out of there, because they plan to continue their celebration at Mindy's place. Sarah is left still, upset, unheard, and now ANGRY.

SCENE 6: Sarah is at the party with her friends. She is upset and angry that her dad doesn't seem to care about her either, just like her mom. She hasn't even gotten to share her good news about her student of the month award, because her dad was too busy with his own life. She shows she doesn't care anymore, by starting to drink. Justin, a boy she knows has a crush on her, invites her/ pressures to drink some shots and get high. She does. And then we see them go off into a room to go have sex.

SCENE 7: We see Alicia, outside the bathroom, trying to get Sarah to come out, telling her it will be ok. We see Sarah, in the bathroom, on the floor, crying. She is at her lowest. She has her cell phone in her hand and she feels so alone, guilty for her behavior, and just wants to be noticed. She continues calling her dad over and over and over. Nothing. Just voice mail. She is alone and lost.

So, this is where we have ended our storyline. It is rough, and there is a lot more detail to be done, but everyone is really excited about it. They were getting energy at the character as we created them. It was interesting to see them connect, even it was something like they have never experienced. This gives me confidence knowing that is a story that a lot of young people can connect with. I am so proud of our story, and I cannot wait for the next step. I think this is going to provide helpful tools for the audiences we share it with.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 6 (12/17/08): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

In tonight's rehearsal, the goals were: 1) Recreating our previously formed safe environment thru team building exercises, 2) Review the details of our forum anti-model, 3) and begin the process of a run-thru our forum anti-model. Our goals for this evening were planned out accordingly so that we could begin to see this story on its feet. This evening's rehearsal was an intense, exciting experience that was full of new discoveries. Here is an outline of this evening's rehearsal process:

Rehearsal 6 Outline- 12/17/08

I. Welcome /Opening Exercise

A. Safety/ Trust CIRCLE

1. Everyone greets everyone and shares something good about the weekend.

B. Push to Win vs. Push to Challenge

1. In pairs, facing, hand to hand, braced to push- GO! (push) Try to push your partner over/away.
2. Try with different parts of the body- e.g., back to back, shoulder to shoulder. STOP/Discuss- WHO WINS MOST OFTEN?
3. SAME starting point- but this time your aim is to make your partner work harder against you, without ever winning or losing! It should be a constant struggle, regardless of size, weight, etc. THERE is NO winner in this round!

***Here is the metaphor for both the forum theatre process as a whole- make the audience fight back, struggle-and for the *individual forum actor* (particularly the oppressor). It is also a useful metaphor for an entire challenged- based, problem-solving educational process, that seeks to bring out the best in a student without ever overwhelming or making her/him feel a failure!

II. Forum Review

A. Review Guidelines

1. Look over story-answer questions on handout
2. Read thru forum anti-model
3. Review characters and descriptions

III. Forum Rehearsal- Run-thru and prep

A. Devise/ Rehearse- Up on our Feet!

1. Rough 1st run-thru of scenes
2. Use graffiti board to target each issue in individual scenes/ write them down.
3. Continue playing the model to practice the roles and functions. (Run-thru again and pose as spect-actors/ try to come up with realistic actions.)
4. Use graffiti board to write down possible effective solutions discovered.

IV. Closing Activity

A. Reflection Circle-past, present, and future

1. What was accomplished? What did you learn? Was this productive? Were there challenges that were unexpected?

In response to this evening's rehearsal, I felt very anxious when it was all over. I believe the rest of the troupe felt this way as well. We finally got a chance to dive into the meat of putting what we created as a troupe by getting up and doing it with action. It was a bit scary, but everyone was very excited. In the opening exercises, we just had fun. When we can have fun as a group, everyone seems to just flow right into a good mind set and ready to work. The tension exercise was a great metaphor for what the individual forum actor might come up against in a performance. I wanted to use an activity that created tension, but that had possibilities for releasing tension. Everyone really enjoyed it and thought that certain parts were harder to do. For example, Joee said the one round where they had to create

an even tension, where there was no winner was more difficult than just trying to push down their opponent. Some struggled more than others mentally, but aside from that, it was equal during this portion of the activity, even with the vast size difference. After the exercises, we read-thru the scenario and discussed what the finished product looked like. We reviewed the characters and the made a few changes to some of the scenes. Here are those changes:

SCENARIO/SCENES- Working Title

SCENE 1: All of the students and Sarah are in Ms. D's class. Ms. D has just announced Sarah as the student of the month and gives Sarah her invitation for a student/parent/teacher/ principal luncheon the following week. Class ends and the rest of the class talks about a party they are having that night and they can celebrate her award. Sarah says she has other plans with her dad. Everyone leaves except Sarah and Alicia who waits at the door. Sarah feels so proud and can't wait to tell her dad about it when they go out tonight for a dinner they had planned for just the two of them. She is approached by Ms. D who asks if she thinks both parents will be there. Sarah says her mom lives in New York now, but is confident dad will make the lunch.

SCENE 2: Outside of class, in the hallway, Alicia approaches Sarah and is concerned Sarah's dad will flake out /forget dinner and will be let down again, like she has been in the past by her mom and dad. They argue. Alicia brings up the point that Sarah should be careful and not get her hopes up because he is really close to Mindy and Sarah's mom abandoned her already. Sarah defends her mom and Alicia responds by asking when Sarah last talked to her mom. Sarah talks her way around it, by saying she feels confident her dad won't let her down, and that he remembered. She says he even stated it that morning, saying, "Tonight is going to be a great night."

SCENE 3: Sarah is home from school and ready to go out to dinner with her dad. He is in the bathroom getting ready and she begins talking about hurt feelings she has had since the divorce over her mom's absence and choosing Mark over staying close to her. She is trying to talk about her feelings, and Chuck (dad) is pretending to listen, when really he is more preoccupied with getting ready for the night. Chuck lets his true feelings slip out concerning being stuck with Sarah. Chuck is bitter towards Sarah's mom because she ran off with someone else and he got stuck with Sarah. Chuck does not even hear Sarah as she is trying to share. He cuts her off at one point, saying he is going to propose to Mindy tonight at dinner. Sarah is left there alone, when her dad sees what time it is and leaves quickly to pick up Mindy. Without a chance to say anything, she is left with no support, guidance, and is forgotten.

SCENE 4: Sarah and Alicia, sitting in Sarah's living room, talking about her dad forgetting about their dinner plans. Alicia states she was right, and encourages Sarah to forget about it and just come to the party with her and have fun with people who do care about her. Sarah says she wants to wait and see if her dad remembers, or that she might call him. Alicia tries to talk her out of this, but Sarah insists. Alicia leaves.

SCENE 5: In the living room, Sarah sits. Dad comes home with Mindy a few hours after he left. Sarah is hopeful he is alone so she can talk with him about missing dinner. They (Chuck and Mindy) walk in excited and are upset with Sarah being there to intrude on their celebration. They comment about how there is only two years until Sarah is off on her own. Sarah wants to say something, but her dad looks so happy. Mindy is polite, but is rudely rushing them out of there, because they plan to continue their celebration at Mindy's place. Sarah is left upset, unheard, and now ANGRY.

SCENE 6: Sarah is at the party with her friends. She is upset and angry that her dad doesn't seem to care about her either, just like her mom. She hasn't even gotten to share her good news about her student of the month award, because her dad was too busy with his own life. She shows she doesn't care anymore by starting to drink. Justin, a boy she knows has a crush on her, invites her/ pressures to drink some shots and get high. She does. And then we see them go off into a room to go have sex.

SCENE 7: We see Alicia, outside the bathroom, trying to get Sarah to come out, telling her it will be ok. We see Sarah, in the bathroom, on the floor, crying. She is at her lowest. She has her cell phone in her hand and she feels so alone, guilty about her behavior, and just wants to be noticed. She continues calling her dad over and over and over. Nothing. Just voice mail. She is alone and lost.

Then, we got on our feet and roughly ran thru each scene, improving as we went. This was very intimidating said some, such as Jonathan, who is playing the main oppressor. To his and our surprise, he was awesome. He took risks and just went with the flow. It was great. We tried not to stop very much. I just wanted to get thru it, so they could see the flow. After we ran thru it, we discussed some possibilities for setting specific lines, blocking, etc. Everyone was really impressed with how it all came together and made comments on how powerful it was, and this was just the first run. WOW! They are all ready to jump in even deeper.

The commitment and passion for this project never fails to be shown in my troupe. This is truly a group who could not be better suited to work together. There are so many different personalities, but we all mesh. Everyone is very positive, uplifting, encouraging, and motivated. Where there were once fears, now lies comfort in knowing that everyone is united within "this" project. I feel the project is well on its way. I will admit I am a bit nervous about doing the actual performances. I am apprehensive because I still do not consider myself a leader. But, given the successful family that has been established within this project, the confidence should be there. I struggle with the fact that it won't be ready in time, that I won't teach them something they might come up against, and that they will not feel prepared. But, these are all just fears and I need to trust. I need to trust this project, what it means, and what it has done for the people already involved. If I can keep this in mind, then the rest should be successful as well. I feel that the project is on schedule and is in a good place. I will admit though, this is the point of th project where my nerves tend to take over. It is not perfect yet and there is so much work to left to do to polish, so I am

ready to meet every day with the troupe to get it perfect now, not in time. But, alas, this is the process and within it, I feel successful.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 7/8 (1/11 & 1/19): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

The goals for these rehearsals were to: 1) Establish a fun, focused team building environment for the remainder of the rehearsal, 2) Rehearse the forum anti-model, scene by scene, while making revisions and adjustments, and 3) establish a more detailed storyline, build more detailed character history, decide on a title, set blocking and dialogue for specific scenes rehearsed, and work- thru them. This was more of a dual rehearsal, due to an emergency of a troupe member in a car accident right outside our rehearsal space on the 11th. With everyone still present though, we decided to spend our time reconnecting. During the first rehearsal, we only had time for games and discussion, where we reviewed the story and characters. During the second rehearsal, we spent a lot of time detailing the forum piece, by working thru specific scenes. We extended this rehearsal to four hours, due to the previous rehearsal emergency. Here is an outline for rehearsal 7/8:

Rehearsal 7/8 Outline 1/11/09 and 1/19/09

I. Welcome /Opening Exercises

A. Safety/ Trust CIRCLE

2. Everyone greets everyone and shares something good about the weekend.

B. Group Shaping

1. Without using words, as a group, create a selection of shapes, numbers, and letters.
2. First, create the shape of a square.
3. Second, create the letters "P" and "S" (this will force the group to make two groups, but the challenge is to see how they work together?)
4. Now, create again, but form the numbers "3," "5," and "1."
5. Last, create these to shapes: 1) a heart and 2) a house.
6. DISCUSS.

C. Character Musical Chairs

1. Everyone circles around the chairs, ready to start moving.
2. When the music begins, group moves around the circle, portraying with their body and movement the mood of the music.
3. When the music stops, they have to grab an available seat.
4. Repeat until only two characters remain.

II. Forum Theatre Practice

A. Forum Review

1. Re-read thru forum anti-model
 - a. Review storyline, characters and descriptions
 - b. Revise- add onto character history, storyline, and decide on a title

- B. Devise/ Rehearse- Up on our Feet!
 - a. Work-thru forum piece (scenes 1, 2)
 - a. Scene by scene, adding dialogue and blocking. Discuss.
 - 2. Use graffiti board to target each issue in individual scenes/ write them down.
 - 3. Continue playing the model to practice the roles and functions.
 - 4. Use graffiti board to write down possible effective solutions discovered, i.e. lines, blocking
- V. Closing Activity- Reflection and Circle of Appreciation
 - A. Reflection Circle-past, present, and future
 - 1. What was accomplished? What did you learn? Was this productive? Were there challenges that were unexpected?
 - B. Circle of Appreciation.
 - 1. In turn, everyone says one thing they have appreciated about the group in this rehearsal.

This rehearsal was one of the most productive rehearsals we have had yet. Everyone was so eager and had something to contribute to the building of our piece. During our exercises, it was all about teamwork. While they were creating shapes without speaking, there were some very clear roles established. There was a definite leader and some definite followers. Joe said he felt it was easier to be led, whereas Jonathan felt it necessary to just step into the leader role. It was an interesting exercise and I observed teamwork and creativity. When we played musical chairs in a variety of ways, it was interesting to see how reactive they were to the idea of even playing. It appeared as though it was the most exciting thing they had done in a while. Challenges on this exercise were expressed as feelings of doubt. Some were not sure how others might look at them portraying their character in the show thru this exercise. More specifically, Jonathan, who plays Chuck, the Main Oppressor in our piece was very concerned with how well he portrayed Chuck. He wanted so eagerly to please everyone with his portrayal that he never jumped into his character deeply during the entire exercise. This resulted in him winning the first round and coming in second the second time around up against Angela, who plays Sarah, our Main Oppressed in the piece. It was interesting to see their character contrasts. Chuck was paranoid, yet cocky. Sarah appeared hopeful, yet sad. It was a strong exercise and challenging in a few ways they said. Therese, who plays Ms. D. in our piece, said she was so focused on creating an image with her body as her character to the sound of the music that was playing, that she forgot there was a task at hand in playing musical chairs.

We moved onto to developing our piece by deciding on a title, revising character descriptions, and then developing the first two scenes of the Forum piece in more detail. We developed scene blocking, stage set-ups, dialogue, and a specific sequence. It was a very collaborative process and a wonderful step forward. Here is the title, revised character descriptions, and scene structures of scenes one and two:

TITLE-Can You Hear Me Now? ! ?

CHARACTERS-

Sarah (Main Oppressed): A young high school student of 16, living in Southern California (Inland Empire) with her Dad, Chuck. Her parents are divorced and the absence of her mother in her life has been both physically and emotionally stressful since the divorce. She is a good student, with lots of friends. Sarah is very smart, sweet, and hopeful. Although she is optimistic, her current circumstances have left her feeling weak, lonely, afraid of rejection, and above all, a girl who just wants guidance, recognition, acceptance, and love from those closest to her.

Chuck/Dad (Main Oppressor): Father to Sarah and divorced man in his late 30's. Chuck is the owner of a small construction company. He is a good provider in practical ways, but not in the ways of a confused teenage daughter. Although he loves his daughter and is concerned with her well-being, he shows it poorly. He is not a sensitive listener, is ambitious, cocky, self-preserving, and completely unaware of how his actions affect others, especially Sarah. He is engaged to Mindy and is quick to make decisions without thinking about the consequences. His past hurts and failures have turned into frustrations, and so, in turn, Sarah has become the target of his pain. His focus is on his "new" life with Mindy, not his "inconvenient," "old" one, where Sarah is still present and is his responsibility.

Sarah's Mom (Secondary Oppresor): Sarah's mom is not in the picture at all. Her and Chuck had different plans for their future, so she left 3 months ago to pursue her new career, as she said was her priority now, not a family. Sarah's mom was once a good mother and loved Sarah very much, but since the divorce, has not been there for her. Her guilt got to her, and Chuck eventually finds out that she lied to him and Sarah. She currently resides in a small New England town, with her new husband and a child on the way.

Mindy (Secondary Oppressor): Girlfriend/Fiancee to Chuck. Mindy is very needy, manipulative, free-spirited and obnoxious. She has a way with men and likes to get her own way. She is a trust fund baby, so she has money that is not her own, allowing her to travel whenever she wants. Mindy is an event coordinator, sort of as a hobby, but ultimately, just wants to be "taken care of." She likes Chuck because he can be this "provider" and she does not want children. She likes Sarah, but more so, is tolerating her until she can have Chuck to herself in two years.

Alicia (Ally): One of Sarah's closest childhood friends. She is very encouraging, kind, strong-willed, opinionated, and supportive. Alicia is a caretaker at home with 5 younger siblings, so she is cautious and levelheaded because of her experiences. She tends to always have a wall up, but not with Sarah. Alicia tries to create balance for Sarah and helps hr be logical, but thinks Sarah needs to sometimes put up a wall too in order to protect herself.

Ms. Dunbar/D. (Secondary Ally): An English teacher at Sarah's school. Mrs. D. is an encouraging woman, who is highly concerned with her students' welfare. She is the chairman and founder of the drama club on campus. Mrs. D is quirky, colorful, funny, laid back, and all the students like her. She is the "cool" teacher.

Justin: Classmate to Sarah and Alicia. He is the heartthrob of the school. Justin is stylish, funny, class-clown, is spontaneous, and friendly with the ladies. He comes from a well-to-do family, so is quite confident and sure of himself, which is how he gets what he wants from girls. Sarah is his latest conquest.

Students/Friends: Classmates to Sarah. Fun, outgoing kids who may not always make the most positive choices. They tend to be a negative influence on other students who are down on their luck, like Sarah.

SCENARIO/SCENES-

SCENE 1: All of the students and Sarah are in Ms. D's English class. Ms. D has just announced Sarah as the student of the month and gives Sarah her invitation for a student/parent/ principal luncheon the following week. Class ends and the rest of the class talks about a party they are having that night, where they can celebrate her award. Sarah says she can't because she has other plans with her dad. They give her a hard time, pressuring her, but the bell rings and everyone starts to leave. Mrs. D. asks to speak with Sarah and Alicia says she will meet her at lunch. Mrs. D. congratulates Sarah once again and ask discusses the luncheon further. She gives words of encouragement about the divorce and says she is always there for her if she needs to talk. Sarah feels so proud and can't wait to tell her dad about it when they go out tonight for a dinner they had planned for just the two of them. Mrs. D congratulates her again and reminds her she can call anytime.

Blocking/ Stage set-up:

4 chairs set up on stage rt., counter facing audience (2x2), Front Row- Sarah and Alicia, Back Row- Justin, other classmate (Bailey), Mrs. D's desk- upstage left

Props:

Backpacks, cell phones, pen, notebooks, Laptop for Mrs. D.

Scene Sequence w/ set dialogue:

-Begin with classroom background noise, students messing around

-Ms. D tries to get there attention twice, then follows with:

Ms. D: Hey, ho, (clap clap)

Students: Sshhh!

-Ms. D. announces student of the month, invites Sarah up to the front of class, talks about award (luncheon, etc.), has everyone congratulate Sarah again.

-Students makes sarcastic comments, in attempts to congratulate her, i.e. NERD! And Sarah can be my tutor any day!

Ms. D: Okay, you can go ahead and pack up, the bell's gonna ring in a few minutes.

-Students pack up and begin talking

Justin: Party at Baileys tonight!

-Bailey explains her parents are out of town, so they should all come over for her party

Alicia: Yeah, we can celebrate your award.

Sarah: I don't think so guys. My dad would freak if he found out.

Alicia: Since when does your dad notice anything you do Sarah?

-The students harass her and encourage her to come party and forget her dad.

Sarah: Guys, I can't. But thanks. And besides, I have plans with my dad...he is taking me out to dinner tonight.

-They tell her to come afterward. She insists she can't once again. Tells them to have fun. React to the bell, the bells rings and they all walk out.

- Sarah is stopped by Ms. D. , Alicia says she will see her at lunch.

- Ms. D. congratulates her again and recognizes all her hard work, especially since all she has been going thru with the divorce.

-Sarah thanks her for being so encouraging and for just being there , that it's meant a lot.

-Ms. D tells Sarah she can come to her anytime, night or day. She understands divorce and knows how hard it can be, then starts discussing the luncheon and making sure her dad will be able to make it, since she knows her mom is not around anymore.

-Sarah says she is going to tell him tonight at dinner.

Sarah: My dad wont let me down.

-Ms. D. says she hopes so and that she is proud of her again. Reminds her to call if she needs anything.

-Sarah and Ms. D hug as she walks Sarah out of the class.

SCENE 2: At the lunch table, Alicia congratulates her friend on her award again. Sarah says again how excited she is to tell her dad at dinner tonight at Benihana, her favorite place. Alicia questions why she wasn't told about these dinner plans and Sarah tells her it's because she didn't wan to hear her say that her dad was going to flake like he always does. Alicia approaches Sarah about this and reminds her of all the times he has flaked out on her before, giving very recent examples. They argue. Sarah explains to Alicia that he is not going to let her down, that it's been planned for over a week. Alicia brings up the point that Sarah should be careful and not get her hopes up because of her mom and dad's broken promises. Sarah defends her mom and Alicia questions the last time she talked to her. Sarah avoids answering and says that her dad is not her mom. She feels confident her dad won't let her down, that he is not her mom and will remember, and that he loves her. She says he even stated it that morning that "Tonight is going to be a great night."

Blocking/ Stage Set-up:

Small table center stage with two chairs on the sides. Sarah on stage rt., Alicia on stage left.

Props:

Sack lunches, sandwiches, water bottles

Scene sequence w/ Dialogue:

-Alicia and Sarah eating lunch

-Alicia congratulates Sarah on her award...Sarah thanks her

-Sarah says she is excited and can't wait to tell her dad about her award tonight at BENIHANA

-Alicia confronts Sarah and asks why she didn't tell her about her dinner plans

Alicia: Why didn't you tell me about it? I'm only your best friend.

Sarah: Uh, because I knew you'd react like you just did and tell me my dad would flake out again, and, I don't know, I just didn't want to deal with it. So , I just didn't say anything. Look, I'm sorry.

-Sarah tries to convince her that I' different this time, not to worry, that its to make up for her birthday she thinks.

-Alicia reacts as if she is irritated with those statements, but it's more like she is in a protective mode.

Alicia: Oh, right like the time he promised to take you to Disneyland for your birthday a couple weeks ago and we waited like all day for him, and he slept til 2, like that day? Or what about last weekend when he was suppose to bring you over to my house cuz you had no ride, and he instead went out with what's her face, Mindy or whatever and left you at home, not even telling you he forgot...like that time?

-Sarah argues back that it's been planned for over a week, that he won't let her down.

-Alicia tells her not to get her hopes up and reminds her of all the times she got her hopes up with her mom and her dad and all their broken promises to be there for her.

-Sarah reacts forcefully in defense of her mom.

Sarah: Hey, I know my mom loves me and she'd be proud of me...talks about her mom, hes not her, not a liar,

Alicia: I know she would Sarah, but let's be honest, when's the last time you even talked to her?

-Sarah ignores her answer and defends her dad.

Sarah: Well, he is not her! He is NOT a liar, he is NOT going to walk out on me, and I know he cares about me...

Alicia: Hey,Sarah, calm down, calm down...I know they love you, I just don't want to see you keep on getting hurt. Which is why I think you should just come to the party tonight...Justin will be there and we can have a few drinks...blow him off for once...

-Sarah thanks her friend for trying to care for her, but she really can't come.

Sarah: Besides, my dad even said this morning to me that "tonight was going to be a great night!"

The cast list is as follows:

Sarah-	Angela Sanicola
Chuck-	Jonathan Murtaugh
Mindy-	Stacey Porterfield
Sarah's Mom-	Therese Cools
Alicia-	Jana Pitts
Ms. D.	Therese Cools
Justin-	Joe Dipadova
Other Students-	Therese Cools, Stacey Porterfield

This portion of the rehearsal was so helpful. It really gave a new light to the characters and a real depth to where this piece is headed. We discovered that there are options for suggesting change for scene two. Scene one is more of a set-up scene, where the

introduction of something positive is the central idea. The troupe was very responsive and vocal to my suggestions and stopped the process to vocalize things they didn't like. As much as it is my project, it is theirs now too. I am the leader, but they have become co-leaders without really knowing it. It feels comforting to know that I have a strong, confident group of individuals who really believe in what this project can accomplish. At the end of the rehearsal, we shared a positive moment from the rehearsal in our safety circle. It's nice to open and close our rehearsals this way because it gives us a chance to express a challenge or something negative we came in with from our week, giving us the opportunity to leave it in the circle. When we end the rehearsal, we come back to the circle, bringing a positive experience with us to put there. It sort of replaces that bad thing, or at least that's the goal. We are such a tight knit group, that it feels we can trust each other with the good and the bad.

For the above reasons I am grateful, confident, and continually excited about this project. There are several aspects and details I am figuring out daily and it is a huge challenge, but well worth it. All of the venues are set in stone for our performances, except for one. As of now, we begin our performances on February 20th, 2009 and end on March 20th, 2009. Our performances all take place on Friday evenings, at different youth organizations. The venues in order are: CSUSB, for a practice/preview performance, Linfield High School, JTP (Jefferson Transitional Programs) for their TAY kids (transitional age youth,) RPYA (Rainbow Pride Youth Alliance,) and San Bernadino Juvenile Hall. It is an intense process, but it is so rewarding to see it all molding into a beautiful piece of art that has a purpose behind it. I still have a long road ahead, but it is worth the travel, I can assure myself of that. My project is well on its way to success, I hope.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 9 (1/25/09): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

The goals for this rehearsal was to: 1) Establish a fun, focused team building environment for the rehearsal with a photo session for advertising our project and other activities, 2) Rehearse the previously worked scenes, 3) establish a more detailed storyline for the remaining scenes, set blocking and dialogue for specific scenes rehearsed, work-thru them, and 4) run the whole thing from the beginning at least once. During this rehearsal, we got a lot accomplished. We did some character exercises, worked thru three more scenes of our forum piece, and had a chance to run thru it. It was great to see the detail starting to come together. Here is an outline of tonight's rehearsal:

Rehearsal 9 Outline- 1/25/09

I. Welcome/ Opening Exercises

A. Image Creation- "Can You Hear Me Now?"

1. As a group, create a universal image of our Forum Theatre Piece
 - a. Create 1st image of oppression
 - b. Create 2nd image of broken oppression
 - c. Take photos of images

B. Safety/ Trust CIRCLE

- a. Everyone greets everyone in the circle and shares something positive and something negative about their weekend.
- C. Character Sharing
 1. Within the same circle, everyone takes a moment to close their eyes and become their character in "Can You Hear Me Now?"
 2. When they open their eyes, they are to take on their characters, physically and mentally.
 3. One by one, everyone greets each other in the circle and shares something positive and something negative about their weekend with the rest of the group.
 4. The goal here is to "be" their character in this exercise, thinking of things that could realistically happen to them and share.

II. Forum Theatre Practice

A. Forum Review

4. Review scenes 1 and 2- Read thru revised sequence, characters, dialogue

C. Devise/ Rehearse- Up on our Feet!

5. Run-thru scenes 1 and 2
 - a. Use graffiti board to target each issue in individual scenes/ write them down.
 - b. Continue playing the model to practice the roles and functions of the forum process.
 - c. Use graffiti board to write down possible effective solutions discovered.
6. Work-thru forum - scenes 3,4, 5
 1. Scene by scene, add dialogue, props and blocking. Discuss and revise.
 2. Use graffiti board to target each issue in individual scenes/ write them down.
 3. Continue playing the model to practice the roles and functions of the forum process.
 4. Use graffiti board to write down possible effective solutions discovered

III. Closing Activity- Reflection and Circle of Appreciation

C. Reflection Circle-past, present, and future

2. What was accomplished? What did you learn? Was this productive? Were there challenges that were unexpected?
 - a. Answer as yourself and as your character.

The first thing we did tonight was a photo shoot for advertising purposes of my project. I had all of the characters come in all black, with their one "item" that will represent their character throughout the presentation. Last week I came up with the simple costume arrangement of all black, with each character using a central piece that can be easily replaced by a "spect-actor" during a presentation. Here is the costume breakdown for each character:

Costumes- Can You Hear Me Now?

Sarah- Black top and bottom, earth tone scarf as central piece

Chuck- Black top and bottom, tie as central piece

Mindy- Black top and bottom, hand clutch purse as central piece

Alicia- Black top and bottom, duffel bag as central piece

Ms. D.- Black top and bottom, glasses as central piece

Justin- Black top and bottom, vest as central piece

Other students, mom- Black top and bottom

So, with the costumes and central pieces in place, we took individual photos first of each character. The purpose of this was to get an idea of the characters in single poses. I felt I needed to direct then a bit, but once I gave them that direction, their characters came to life in the photos. Next, I had them create a group image that represented the title of our forum piece, "Can You Hear Me Now?" The guidelines were to create an image that represented the oppression in our story, with the roles of oppressed, oppressor (s) and allies displayed. They worked really well together, with my direction to create a successful image. After the photo session, we gathered in our safety circle and shared our positive and negative experiences from the weekend. In addition to this, we shared as our characters. This was interesting to see, as it was not hard for them at all to share about themselves, but as their characters, it took a few minutes. It was emotional, but effective. It gave them a chance to get into character for the rest of the rehearsal.

Next, we reviewed what we had done last week and ran thru scenes one and two. It was a rough run thru, but helpful and productive. It helped us all remember where we had been and where we were headed this rehearsal. I stressed how important this rehearsal was as far as our focus. Everyone was right there with me. Then, we dove into the next three scenes. We continued developing the next portion of the Forum piece in more detail. We developed scene blocking, stage set-ups, dialogue, and a specific sequence. It again, like last week, was a very collaborative process and a wonderful step forward. Here are those scenes revised:

SCENE 3: Sarah is home from school and ready to go out to dinner with her dad. He is in the bathroom getting ready and she begins talking to him about some feelings she has had since the divorce and over her mom's absence. She is trying to talk about her feelings and Chuck (dad) is pretending to listen, when really he is more preoccupied with getting ready for the night. Sarah attempts to bring up her feelings a few times and every time she is interrupted by her dad. Chuck lets his true feelings slip out concerning Sarah's mom, letting Sarah find out he feels stuck with her and that her mom is pregnant, after she said she was done raising a family before she left them. He continues to try and cover up her attempts to reach out, by keeping the focus on him. He cuts her off again at one point, saying he is going to propose to Mindy tonight at dinner, when it was her who he was suppose to be taking to dinner. Sarah is crushed and humiliated. She is left there alone, when her dad quickly sees the time and rushes out the door.

Blocking/Stage setup:

2 chairs center stage, with small table stage right. Flowers on chairs. Cologne, brush, tie on small table. Chuck is on front of the mirror, Sarah sitting on chairs

Props:

Small table (sink for Chuck), Brush/comb, Cologne, Flowers , 2 chairs (act as a bench for Sarah), tie

Scene Sequence w/ set dialogue:

-Sarah enters stage left, Chuck is getting ready stage rt.
-Sarah comments on him looking nice, asking him how his day was. They exchange small talk.
-Sarah notices flowers, thinking they are for her for dinner tonight.
Sarah: Nice flowers!!!!
Chuck: Yeah? You like em' ?
-Sarah holds the flowers as she begins talking to dad about being upset.
-She brings up Alicia and her talking about mom earlier at school and asks if she can talk to him about it. He ignores her.
-Dad interrupts, talks about the new account he landed at work.
-Sarah congratulates him, trying to get back on the topic of her mom. Chuck hears her, and comments on her mom, and once again, interrupts her and asks for his tie.
Chuck: Careful of the flowers, Sarah.
-He puts on his tie.
Sarah: Anyway, today was a big day, and I was really missing mom and wishing she was around...it's been hard..
Chuck: Let me tell you something Sarah, you're not the only one she ran out on, you know? I mean, she is the one who wanted the new life with her new career and Mark, and not the responsibility of raising a family, and then I got left with that responsibility...so, don't tell me about being hurt...and then what is it, six months later, and she's knocked? Oh, shoot, you weren't supposed to know that...anyway, let's focus on something besides her, like tonight.
-Sarah agrees that might be a good idea. She tries to ignore that she has just been completely ignored.
-Chuck crosses to her and she stand. She is still holding the flowers.
Chuck: I mean, I was going to wait to talk to you about this, but since we are talking about positive things, I'm going to tell you..
-Chuck tells Sarah that tonight he is taking Mindy out to dinner to propose.
Sarah: Tonight?
Chuck: Yeah, tonight..
-Chuck pulls out the ring and shows Sarah.
-Sarah is in shock, and once again has realizes she has been forgotten.
-Chuck notices the time, says let's talk later about mom, asks her to wish him luck, and rushes out.
-He forgets the flowers. SO, he comes back and grabs them from her.
Chuck: Oops, I almost forgot these. See you later honey.
-Sarah stands there in utter shock.

SCENE 4: Sarah and Alicia, sitting in Sarah's living room. Sarah expresses she is so upset about her dad forgetting again, on top of the information about her mom Alicia states she was right, and encourages Sarah to forget about it and just come to the party with her and have fun with people who do care about her. Sarah says she doesn't feel like going anywhere and thinks maybe her dad will remember and come back, and while she is waiting she is going to call her mom to congratulate her. Alicia tries to talk her out of this, but Sarah insists. Alicia expresses that she thinks what Sarah is doing is stupid, but knows she can't convince her. She gives up and leaves. Sarah tries calling her mom. Mom picks up and blows her off after Sarah brings up the pregnant issue. So, she then calls Ms. D. to talk. She is upset and Mrs. D. asks her if she has talked to her dad yet about the lunch. Sarah says she is afraid to now, and Ms. D. says she will talk to him. Just as soon as she says this, Sarah hears her dad and Mindy coming in the door. She quickly gets off the phone, thanking her for wanting to help, but says to just forget about it, that it doesn't matter. Ms. D tries to argue back, but Sarah hangs up on her before she finishes her thought.

Blocking/Stage setup:

3 chairs/blocks (as a couch) center stage, one chair upstage rt. (for Mrs. D./Mom)

Props:

3 chairs/blocks (as a couch), Cell Phone, 1 chair, magazine

Scene Sequence w/ set dialogue:

-Sarah tells Alicia she is really upset. She cannot believe her dad did this again. She was sure he was going to remember.

-Sarah then brings up her mom and that her dad blurted out to her that she was pregnant, the engagement, size of the ring. She doesn't understand why her parents just don't care. She doesn't ever feel they are proud of her, even when she tries her hardest. They never notice what she needs.

-Alicia tells her she knew this was going to happen

Alicia: I hate to say this, but I told you this was going to happen.

-Alicia tells Sarah she thinks she should just come to the party, go be with people who do care about her.

Sarah: No, I don't want to go to the party. I don't want to be around people right now. I just want to be alone. I mean, maybe he will remember and come back for me. Whatever, I think I will just wait here and maybe call my mom...I should congratulate her.

-Alicia gets frustrated with her friend and tells her she is being stupid, that she should just forget about them. They are never going to change.

- Sarah says she just wants someone to understand, and sorry she even bothered her with it. She expresses again how she is just so upset and doesn't think she can handle this alone.

- Alicia tells her she doesn't know how to help her, that she has tried to get her to just forget about them and come to the party.

Alicia: Sarah, if you are just going to sit here and feel sorry for yourself, I can't help you, so I'm gonna go to the party, and if you change your mind, you know where I will be.

-Alicia leaves. Sarah is once again alone.

-Sarah is so confused, she calls her mom, hoping for kind words. She is calling to congratulate her mom on the baby, when really she is just reachign out again.

-Mom answeres and asks her how she got the number. Sarah said from dad. Mom gets angry.

-Sarah tries congratulating her, but Mom gets even more angry, tells Sarah she can't talk, and hangs up on her.

-Sarah calls Ms. D. Ms. D. answers and they talk about Sarah being upset. She tells Ms. D. her dad flaked on her, doesn't care about her, her mom wants nothing to do with her, and is afaraid to bring up the fact that she won an award at school.

Sarah: I just don't think I could handle if he forgot something again. I just feel so alone.

-Ms. D. tries to talk Sarah out of giving back the award, saying she will call and talk to her dad, asking him to come in for a parent/ teacher conference. She reassures Sarah that it is all going to be okay.

- Sarah hears her Dad coming home and says she has to go. Ms. D. asks if she could just talk to him now. Sarah says she doesn't think it's a good idea and hangs up on her before she has a chance to say anything else.

SCENE 5: In the living room, Sarah sits. Dad comes home with Mindy a few hours after he had left. Sarah is hopeful he might be alone so she can talk with him about missing dinner. He is not alone. They (Chuck and Mindy), stumble in excited, but then become surprised at Sarah's presence and Mindy clearly is upset. They say hello to Sarah, and then Chuck quietly comments to Mindy about how there is only two years until he is rid of Sarah. Sarah over hears this, and Mindy rushes off to the bathroom, after suggesting they just go back to her place. Chuck says he will talk to Sarah. Sarah wants to say something, but doesn't because she is afraid. She tries anyway. Chuck brushes it off and says he needs to pack a bag for Mindy's. He leaves. As Mindy comes back into the room, the phone rings. It's Ms. D. Mindy gets Ms. D. off the phone quickly, as she has her own agenda, which doesn't involve Chuck being on the phone with Sarah's teacher. She sits next to Sarah, striking up an awkward conversation, as to be nice, when Chuck enters the room, and they rush out of there. Sarah is left upset, ignored, unheard, and now she is ANGRY.

Blocking/Stage setup:

3 chairs/blocks (as a couch) center stage, one chair upstagee rt. (for Ms. D.) and small table downstage left for Mindy, with house phone on it

Props:

3 chairs/blocks (as a couch), Cell Phone, 1 chair, magazine, house phone

Scene Sequence w/ set dialogue:

-Sarah is sitting on couch, reading a magazine, as to not look upset

-Chuck and Mindy walk in and see Sarah

-They exchange words about going back to Mindy's place.

Mindy: I thought you said she wasn't going to be here.
Chuck: I know, just a couple more years though and it will just be us, I promise.
- Mindy goes to the restroom
-Chuck sits to talk to Sarah. Sarah is upset, but tries to bring up her feelings again.
-Chuck avoids it, and leaves to go pack a bag.
- Mindy walks back in, and the phone rings. Mindy picks it up.
Mindy: Nelson residence.
-It's Ms. D on the phone asking for Mr. Nelson. That it is urgent.
-Mindy says he is not available and hangs up.
-Mindy awkwardly approaches Sarah on the couch.
Mindy: So, Sarah, I was thinking about the colors for the wedding..
Sarah: Whatever you want Mindy, it's your wedding.
Mindy: So, how's school?
Sarah: Um, school is good. I...
-Chuck walks back in and Mindy gets up, ignoring Sarah's response
Chuck: Are you ready future Mrs. Nelson???
Mindy: I am ready, Mr. Nelson. Oh Sarah, isn't he so cute?
-Chuck and Mindy start to leave, and Chuck says he will see her later, and they can talk, tomorrow, he promises.
- Sarah is once again, left unheard.

Once we finished reworking these scenes, we were exhausted. Everyone was very emotional and wiped out. The process of creating a piece like this takes a lot out of you, mentally and physically. I believe everyone was satisfied with what we, as a team had accomplished in the rehearsal. Jonathan (Chuck) said he could see the purpose behind all of the detailed work now and realized the importance behind the focus to be open with suggestions. He said, "It helped me with my character growth to hear all of the positive feedback and constructive comments from everyone." Jonathan has struggled and has had a hard time with feeling like he was not "in the loop" of theatre people while doing this project, so positive affirmation has been a huge must in this group. It never seems to be a problem, as the whole group is like a family. We are very uplifting, encouraging, and embrace ideas and thoughts. After this rehearsal, we really got an insight into who Chuck is and everyone in the group feels like Jonathan is doing such a wonderful job. We don't like him, yet we feel sorry for him, which was the goal for the character of Chuck. He is so quick on his feet and is a great oppressor. Actually, a lot of the characters have really been brought to life. It just seems so natural, when dealing with real life situations, it becomes easier to not "act" so much, but to react to the situation. It is a powerful story.

In conclusion, we have one last rehearsal, where the last two scenes will be worked. Then, it is time to add the Joker, who will be played by me, where then we will begin devising scenarios as "spect-actors." This project is becoming more of a reality as each week passes. We have our first official preview presentation scheduled and advertised at Cal State San Bernadino for Feb. 20 at 5 pm. I have lots of research, interviewing, creating of the actual presentation/workshop and what I will say, and then more revising. Although scary, these goals are not out of reach. This process has not been easy. Actually, I'm not sure when you are so passionate about something that it is suppose to be. There are expectations I have put

on myself and this project, making it all the more gratifying to literally see all the pieces falling into place, to have venues to perform at, and to have a troupe of actors that are so dedicated to this project. The clock is ticking. It is almost show time.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 10 (2/1/09): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

The goals for this rehearsal was to: 1) Establish a focused team building environment for the rehearsal with a character development activity 2) Rehearse the previously worked scenes, 3) establish a more detailed storyline for the remaining scenes, while setting blocking and dialogue for those specific scenes, work-thru them, and 4) run thru all of the scenes at least once. During this rehearsal, we put on the finishing touches. We did a character exercises, worked thru the last two scenes of our forum piece, and had a chance to run thru it the entire thing from, start to finish. It was an emotionally satisfying rehearsal. Here is an outline of today's rehearsal:

Rehearsal 10 Outline- 2/1/09

I. Welcome/ Opening Exercises

A. Safety/ Trust CIRCLE

- a. Everyone greets everyone in the circle and shares something positive and something negative about their weekend.

B. Character Sharing

- i. Within the same circle, everyone takes a moment to close their eyes and become their character in "Can You Hear Me Now?"
- b. When they open their eyes, they are to take on their characters, physically and mentally.
- c. One by one, everyone greets each other in the circle and shares something positive and something negative about their weekend with the rest of the group.
- d. The goal here is to "be" their character in this exercise, thinking of things that could realistically happen to them and share.

II. Forum Theatre Practice

A. Forum Review

- i. Review scenes 1- 5: Read thru revised sequence, characters, dialogue

B. Devise/ Rehearse- Up on our Feet!

1. Run-thru scenes 1-5

- a. Use graffiti board to target each issue in individual scenes/ write them down.
- b. Continue playing the model to practice the roles and functions of the forum process.
- c. Use graffiti board to write down possible effective solutions discovered.

2. Work-thru: - scenes 6-7

- a. Scene by scene, add dialogue, props and blocking. Discuss and revise.

- b. Use graffiti board to target each issue in individual scenes/ write them down.
- c. Continue playing the model to practice the roles and functions of the forum process.
- d. Use graffiti board to write down possible effective solutions discovered

3. RUN- THRU???

III. Closing Activity- Reflection and Circle of Appreciation

A. Reflection Circle-past, present, and future

- a. What was accomplished? What did you learn? Was this productive? Were there challenges that were unexpected?
 - a. Answer as yourself and as your character.

Today's rehearsal was successful in two ways. First, we finished blocking and working thru the remaining scenes of our Forum. Second, we were able to really enjoy watching the story unveil as we ran thru it. During our character sharing, it was noted by me and others that all of the characters lives were intertwined. Facts from the story were shared, as well as made up facts that might actually happen to the characters in the story were shared. The troupe played off of one another's stories very well, keeping in mind that they were suppose to stay in character. They did great. Once we were in character, it was time to rehearse. The working thru of the remaining scenes was very powerful for everyone. Here are the revisions of our final two scenes:

SCENE 6: Sarah is now at the party with her friends. She has clearly been drinking and is telling Alicia how she is angry that her dad doesn't seem to care about her either, just like her mom. She tells Alicia she was right. Alicia influences this thinking by agreeing with her. It is clear Sarah thinks no one else cares what she does, so why should she anymore. Alicia gets Sarah to notice Justin on the other side of the room, who is eying her and ignoring the girl he is with. Alicia tells her Justin has been asking about her all night. Sarah decides to go sit next to him. Justin has his own agenda. Sarah knows this but doesn't care as she gives in to his flirting. He invites her/ pressures to drink some shots. She does. Then, we see him pulling her off the couch and take lead her to another room. Alicia and the others girls just watch and smile.

Blocking/Stage setup:

Small table stage left, with red cups on it, shot glasses
 2 chairs act as couch stage rt., Sarah is by table with Alicia with drinks, and Justin is on couch with a drink in his hand. Bailey is next to him.

Props:

Red Cups, 2 chairs, small table, shot glasses

Scene Sequence w/ dialogue:

-Justin and Bailey are flirting (silently) but Justin keeps eying Sarah
 -Sarah is talking with friends, saying that Alicia was right and parents are stupid and suck "Bad Dad"

Sarah: I'm so glad I came to the party...you were so right Alicia! My parents just don't care...I have a "Bad Dad.!"

-Alicia agrees and tells her she is glad she came to the party.

Alicia: Parents suck!

-Alicia mentions that Justin has been asking about her all night.

-Sarah denies it and says Bailey is with him and he doesn't care about her, just like her parents...why would he pay attention to me?

-Sarah needs a refill for her drink

-Alicia says Bailey is just a filler, and that he does like her..

- Other friend (Therese) agrees with Alicia and tells Sarah to watch as she calls Bailey over to the group of friends, and commenting on how Justin won't even care if she leaves his side..

-Friend call s Bailey over and she comes because she is tired of not having Justin's attention

-Justin beckons Sarah over to the couch and friends encourage Sarah to go over

-Justin puts his arm around her

-Justin comments on how hot she looks tonight, I've been waiting for you to come all night

Justin: You look really hot tonight! Here, have a seat next to me.

-Sarah thinks that the room is spinning

-Justin says Sarah hasn't made a dent in her drink and suggests that Sarah chug the rest of her drink

-Sarah chugs here drink

-Justin mentions taking this party upstairs.

Justin: Hey, why don't we take this party upstairs, lay down for a bit...I'll take care of you!

-Sarah hesitates, but then agrees because she doesn't feel so good.

-Justin grabs her hand and starts to leave.

-Sarah looks back at friends for guidance

-Friends encourage her to go off with Justin

-Sarah and Justin exit stage left.

END SCENE

SCENE 7: We see Alicia, outside the bathroom, trying to get Sarah to come out, telling her it will be fine and it's no big deal, that Justin really likes her. She continues trying to get her come out. We see Sarah, in the bathroom, on the floor, crying. She is at her lowest. She has her cell phone in her hand and she feels so alone, guilty about her behavior, and just wants to be noticed. She continues calling her dad over and over and over. Nothing. Just voice mail. She leaves a message finally, calling out for help. She is alone and lost.

Blocking/Stage setup:

Block, chair is center stage, Sarah is on the floor by the toilet with cell phone in her hands. Alicia is stage left of her, outside of bathroom.

Props:

Chair/block (act as toilet), cell phone

Scene Sequence w/ dialogue:

-Sarah is at the toilet throwing up, struggling with decisions she's made and the emotions she's feeling

-Alicia is outside the door trying to talk to Sarah and trying to get her to come out. **Alicia:** Sarah, are you in there? I know you are in there. Hey, what's wrong? Are you okay? Listen, I think Justin

really likes you, he just said so..Hello, Sarah! Okay, well everything will be all right, ok? I will come back later to check on you.

-Sarah calls Chuck's cell phone twice but only gets voicemail

-We hear Chuck start his message and Sarah hangs up phone, and redials.

-Sarah calls one last time and leaves him a message. She is alone and scared, and crying out to her dad for help.

Sarah: Dad, I need you, please help me...

END SCENE

During this portion of our rehearsal, we had to stop several times because of the emotions that everyone was feeling. Trying to stay focused on the story was difficult at times, due to the heavy subject matter that was being played out. The characters were so real. No one was acting, rather reacting to the story, the subject, and the issue. It was so rewarding for me, as the facilitator of this whole thing to see how beautiful the story has molded together. Angela, who plays Sarah, blew me away with her reactions. I was in tears as the story was coming to a close. I felt her pain and wanted to run on stage and hug her. The amazing part of this process is that the story came from the group. The feelings came from sharing. The outcome came from the reactions to the story. Hence, the effect was very emotionally disturbing, leaving all of us in the room, just itching to change something. This was the goal of creating this. To feel this compelled to stand up for something, to speak out, to change something, and to allow ourselves to be moved at the end of our story is what Forum Theatre is about. I finally got a glimpse today of how effective I believe our story will be for some.

The troupe members felt that it was so powerful and meaningful. Jonathan, who plays Chuck, the main oppressor, had to leave the room, as it had a huge emotional effect on him. He said, "Wow, this is too much...but in a good way. I know this is going to have a powerful effect on some people!" The rest of us just stood there in tears and there was a sense of understanding. There was an understanding of what we have been doing all of this up to this point. It was silently understood that all of our work has paid off. It all makes sense to now. To see the story come to life was amazing. The journey has been great, but to know where we still have to travel is even more exciting. The journey is far from over.

My project has far exceeded my expectations. The funny part is, we haven't even gotten to share it with anyone yet. It's insane to me to think that this could possibly get any more rewarding. But, I know it can and it will. When we take this story to the youth organizations, I know it will speak to the audiences. In my opinion, if it speaks to just one, then we have achieved our goal of opening up the possibilities for self-empowerment and positive individual growth.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 10 (2/1/09): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

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1. Run-thru scenes 1-5

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3. RUN- THRU???

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A. Reflection Circle-past, present, and future

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a. Answer as yourself and as your character.

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-Justin mentions taking this party upstairs.
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Sarah: Dad, I need you, please help me...

END SCENE

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Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 12/13 (2/13 & 2/15/09): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

The goals for these rehearsals was to: 1) Establish a focused team building environment for the rehearsal with a character development activity 2) Run-thru the Forum piece several times, 3) rehearse the positive approaches/ changes to the storyline as a spectator might, 4) work on the scene changes with props, and 5) work on the introduction to the presentation. During these rehearsals, we accomplished a lot. We had some community time together as a troupe, worked thru our forum piece several times to get comfortable with the storyline, worked thru possible changes to the storyline by running each individual scene with each approach, rehearsed the set changes I made, and we had an opportunity to begin working thru the introduction to our entire presentation. This was a very productive rehearsal that solidified a lot. Here is an outline of these rehearsals:

Rehearsal 12/13 Outline- 2/13/09 & 2/15/09

I. Welcome/ Opening Exercises

A. Character Sharing

1. Within the same circle, everyone takes a moment to close their eyes and become their character in "Can You Hear Me Now?"
2. When they open their eyes, they are to take on their characters, physically and mentally.
3. One by one, everyone greets each other in the circle and shares something positive and something negative about their weekend with the rest of the group.

4. The goal here is to "be" their character in this exercise, thinking of things that could realistically happen to them and share.

II. Forum Practice

A. Run-thru- Can You Hear Me Now?

1. Run-thru piece two times
2. Run-thru piece with forum process, adding spect-actors, scenario changes previously discussed
3. Add in Joker (me) to approach these changes
4. Write down options for successful attempts and other possible options
5. Run-thru piece once more, without the changes
6. Begin working thru introduction to presentation

IV. Closing Activity- Reflection and Circle of Appreciation

A. Reflection Circle-past, present, and future

1. What was accomplished? What did you learn? Was this productive? Were there challenges that were unexpected?
 - a. Answer as yourself and as your character.

During this rehearsal, the troupe and I got a solid feeling about how this thing is going to run. With each added element, we all became more confident. We added props, set changes, and full costumes. Prior to starting these rehearsals, I made it a point to have some community time and just enjoyed one another's company before we dove in to the rehearsal. I think that doing this really confirmed how tight our group is. There has never once, during this entire time that there has been an issue between anyone. There have been worries that I have had concerning being on time and other small things, but not once has there been a conflict of personalities or ideas. The interesting thing is that we all are so different, but it works. I cannot stress enough how much I love this group. During these rehearsals, the response to my instruction was amazing. Everyone jumped right in and looked at their scene changing assignments, and then we went right to work on it. We worked out any kinks and it was done, just like that. When we tackled approaching the storyline changes, everyone took part. I encouraged everyone to "stop" the action and step in as the oppressed character. We discussed and came to successful conclusions before we moved on to the next part of the story. Everyone was really getting into the action of the story, as if they didn't know it already. It was intense. Angela, who plays Sarah the oppressed character in our story jumped in as a spect-actor at moments and it was powerful. She said that she had a hard time resorting back to the "oppressive" state Sarah is mostly in when we returned to the original storyline. She said she felt empowered and didn't want to back off. I even stepped in and created some situations where Jonathan, who played Chuck, could barely speak. He had a hard time dealing with everyone coming at him, but he amazed all of us with his skill to improvise and continue on with the goal of the oppressor, even when it was emotionally hard for him. The entire troupe rose to a new level of understanding during these rehearsals because they got to change gears and become the spect-actors. Up until now, it has all been one straight, depressing story. But with the opportunity to confront, approach, deal, and

empower the character of Sarah, they had a chance to feel what it might be like for the people we will be presenting to. To say the least, this was yet another emotional, but satisfying rehearsal. They all agreed that it was a challenge, but were grateful for the time to rehearse and prepare for the unknown.

As we come to our final rehearsal before we do this for an audience, I am confident that the group is prepared. I feel that my preparation of materials, open lines of communication, constant encouragement, and leadership skills have helped the process in a huge way. But, I still feel that a lot of why this process has become so successful has been because of the six people in my troupe. Jonathan, Angela, Stacey, Therese, Jana, and Joe are the magic behind this work. They have embraced this project as much as I have. I am proud of who they have allowed themselves to be in this process. I am grateful and pleased that they even want to be a part of it. Their dedication to this project astounds me. My heart and soul is in this thing, now and always. We, as a group have developed a bond that will not be broken. We have become an unstoppable force. Mostly, we have become a little family. For this, I am humbled and am honored to be a part of something so beautiful. I am anxious, excited, and encouraged by our creation, what it can achieve, and will.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 14 (2/19/09): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

The goals for these rehearsals was to: 1) Establish a focused team building environment for the rehearsal through sharing the goals for the night, 2) finish working thru the introduction of the presentation, and 3) rehearse the entire presentation, start to finish as many times as possible. This rehearsal was short, but very productive. It was our final rehearsal before our preview presentation at CSUSB. It solidified the entire process we have been working on for the last three months. This was our final preparation rehearsal where we accomplished feeling very prepared and confident for the preview presentation. Here is an outline of the rehearsal:

Rehearsal 14 Outline- 2/19/09 *Final Dress before Preview*

I. Welcome/ Opening Exercises

A. Intro Practice

1. Finish intro rehearsal
 - a. Rehearse character intros
 - b. Set images by memory for intro exercises
2. Run-thru Intro twice
3. Set up for full run-thru

II. Forum Practice

A. Run-thru- Can You Hear Me Now? w/ Intro

1. Run-thru piece twice
 - a. Costumes
 - b. Props
 - c. Set pieces
 - d. JOKER

III. Closing Activity- Reflection, Reminders, and Circle of Appreciation

- A. Reflection Circle-past, present, and future
 - 1. What are you most concerned about for the preview presentation and how can you best mentally prepare yourself?
- B. Prep for performance #2
 - 1. Reminders
 - a. Directions
 - b. Call time- 4pm
 - c. Costumes-all black w/ character pieces
 - d. Good attitude
- C. Circle of Appreciation
 - 1. Thank troupe for all of their hard work
 - 2. Share what has been accomplished and what you are thankful for.

During this rehearsal, everything just came together. Finally, we all had the opportunity to see everything mesh. It was a testament to how well we all have worked together, as we all felt very prepared and confident at the end of the night. During the start of the rehearsal, I had them practice their character introductions to get into character and also to receive feedback. Each of them got a chance to rehearse it in front of everyone and listen to comments on how to improve it possibly. It was a positive experience, as everyone was very open to constructive criticism from their peers. Jonathan got a chance to see how uncomfortable "acting" can be. He was very self-conscious of what he was doing and for the first time realized that there would be an audience. He asked for feedback and with what he received, he immediately improved. He continues to blow me away with his ability as an actor. It's as though he has done this forever because he is so natural and believable. When we were finished with this exercise, everyone felt comfortable with how they would first represent their characters before the forum piece "Can You Hear Me Now?" From here, we ran thru the rest of the introduction and practiced the ice breaker activities of sculptor/ clay images, group images of oppression, and how we would be interactive with the audience. Everyone was pretty comfortable with their involvement. I made it a point to explain how important it was that they help me create that safe environment with verbal affirmation and encouragement to our audiences. If this was achieved, then hopefully our audience would be comfortable later on working with the actors during the forum. Since they all are such joyful individuals anyway, this was not a hard point to get across. The more I get excited, the more they get excited. It's a very contagious environment. From here, we then ran thru the entire presentation, start to finish. Props, costumes, set pieces and I as the Joker were all included in this portion. After we ran it, we discussed details: call time, directions, costume reminders, and attitude. We also discussed what to expect and what we were concerned for. We had a clear idea of what some of our obstacles might be our first time thru, but were prepared for the fact that revisions will most likely come into play. Overall, we were ready.

Assessing the rehearsal in its entirety, there were a few concerns. Our first concern was that our run thru, start to finish, without the audience involvement was about 2 hours. I am sure it will need to be shortened, but I am glad to know I might have too much, rather than too little. I want to make sure that everyone gets a clear picture of what the evening is going to entail, what they are going to learn, and what I hope they can take away at the end of it. I believe what we have constructed will accomplish these three things. Another concern is the level of audience involvement. I believe I have constructed a format that will help with the safe and comfortable environment, thru useful activities, helpful attitudes, and a clear objective to teach them about T.O. Lastly, I am concerned that it will get a negative response overall. I believe so much in this problem solving technique, so I am hoping the way we present it receives positive response. I am hoping that people will walk away with a clearer understanding of what oppression is, how to recognize it, deal with it in a constructive way, and apply it towards future events. This is the goal. Overall, I feel very confident about our position going in to the preview presentation. I will admit I am nervous to facilitate, but I am confident that I have the support I need, the passion to execute it, and the perseverance for success. It's officially show time.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Rehearsal/Workshop # 16 (3/12/09) and Performance #1 JTP (3/6/09): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

The goals for this rehearsal were to: 1) Establish a focused team building environment for the rehearsal through discussing the goals for the night, 2) review presentation #1 audience responses, 3) create revisions for presentation #2 from the responses, 4) rehearse the revisions, and 5) run the presentation, start to finish, with revisions for our next performance at RPYA. A lot of processing and creating happened in this rehearsal, as we made changes in order to improve the overall presentation/ workshop. Here is an outline of the rehearsal:
Rehearsal 16 Outline 3/12/09

I. Welcome/ Opening Exercises

A. Reflection

1. Thoughts/ Feelings- share out loud
2. Share audience responses

B. Revision

1. Discuss changes to story/ dialogue
2. Discuss cutting length of forum- decide where cuts can be made
3. Brainstorm storyline ideas for upcoming performance venue- RPYA

II. Forum Practice

A. Run-thru- Can You Hear Me Now?

1. Intro Activities
2. Forum
3. Closing Activities

- III. Closing Activity- Reflection, Prep, and Circle of Appreciation
- A. Reflection Circle-past, present, and future
 - 1. What are you most concerned about for the upcoming presentation and how can you best mentally prepare yourself?
 - B. Prep for performance #2
 - 1. Reminders
 - a. Directions to RPYA
 - b. Call time- 5pm
 - c. Costumes-all black w/ character pieces
 - d. Good attitude
 - C. Circle of Appreciation
 - 1. Thank troupe for all of their hard work
 - 2. Share what has been accomplished and what you are thankful for.

For this rehearsal, in order to prepare for our next performance we had to review the audience responses from performance #1 at JTP (Jefferson Transitional Programs). Then, we could rehearse.

The response we received from JTP was great. They loved it! The new materials that we decided to use were a success. The informational brochure/ programs were very useful to the audience, as they referred to them throughout the entire workshop in order to understand something better such as what oppression was, some examples, and the character types involved in forum theatre. I would say that they were very useful and more eye - catching than what I originally produced. Also, participation consent forms and debriefing statements were added to the audience participation materials. Prior to the start of the workshop, consent forms were passed out and signed, collected and put away. The troupe and I walked around and answered any questions about the programs, the consent forms, and the evening in general and that they should expect. This gave a very comfortable feeling for the audience members because they got to interact with us prior to the workshop. I feel that this helped us begin to establish that safe environment we want for the entire presentation. Also, I decided to make a playlist of music for pre and post workshop. It helped create a welcoming tone to the workshop. The pre workshop music was centered on feeling alone, having problems, needing help, etc. The post workshop music was based on feelings of encouragement, empowerment, and a positive attitude towards life. I specifically chose a song called "Beautiful Disaster" by Jon McLaughlin to be played during the lightning round of our workshop. This made a safer environment as well for the spect-actors as they approached the actors one on one. The music was loud enough that they could escape in to their own world, without feeling worried that someone might hear them. In addition to the safe environment being established, the index card idea worked wonderfully too. There were several responses to the presentation in general and towards the characters. Overall, safety did not seem like an issue.

During the course of the workshop, the audience/ spect-actors were very involved. They enjoyed the ice -breaker

activities and joined right in. They enjoyed the emotional sculpting exercise and commented on the different roles of sculptor and clay. It was about half and half as far as comfort level as each role. Someone specifically commented on how they thought it would be easier to be the clay, but found it was harder, as they tend to be someone who takes a lot of initiative in life. Some of them wanted to go back and change or alter their clay sculptures after doing the museum walk thru of the other interpretations. It was interesting to see how excited they were to do these exercises. During the group image exercise, where we showed an image of oppression, everyone was quick to identify the oppression and the characters. They were ready to break the oppressive image with their own ideas. It was exciting to see how many people had the courage and willingness to explore. There were several approaches and several great approaches to making our image of bullying into an image where the main oppressed character appeared empowered. We explored realistic options and ended with a realistic approach that everyone agreed upon.

Next we moved on to the actual forum piece "Can You Hear Me Now?" This was a huge success. The same enthusiasm, motivation, and courage was presented in this part of the workshop. We ended with the character is Sarah was stronger, capable, and empowered. After the forum, then came the lightning round, which I felt had a huge impact. With the addition to the music in the background this time around, it appeared as though people felt more comfortable approaching the characters in our forum piece. Several tears were shed and hugs took place. It was a powerful statement just sitting back and watching people directly confront the oppression we presented on a more personal level. Whether it was something they directly or indirectly identified with, it was a moving experience. In addition, the index cards were filled out and the surveys completed. Overall, the experience here at JTP was a positive one. There were a few people who seemed to not get much out of it and their comments remained short and vague, which made it hard to see how they felt. I will be paying close attention at the next presentation for any negative responses.

For our next rehearsal, we dove directly into the responses of the JTP presentation. We were all happy to see how well the presentation was received. We addressed that the duration of the workshop was still a bit long, but concluded that each workshop will vary, depending on participation. Given the participation at JTP, the evening ran over 2 hours again. But with the cuts, it should have brought it down at least 30- 40 minutes. During this rehearsal, we discussed the next audience and practiced the forum with new ideas.

As far as revising anything, I will again try to cut down my talking. I cut down what I say in between the scenes significantly, and we cut down the duration of the activities. I feel that we have a solid flow with the workshop. If the audience is engaged, I will go with the feel. I believe that it is essential to the overall success of each individual presentation. We are feeling comfortable and prepared. We cannot wait and see how this audience responds.

Weekly T.O. Project Assessment

Performance #2 RPYA (3/13/09), Rehearsal/Workshop # 17 (3/19/09) and Performance #3 Linfield (3/20/09): Goals, Activities, Response, and Evaluation

The goals for this rehearsal were to: 1) Establish a focused team building environment for the rehearsal through discussing the goals for the night, 2) review presentation #2 audience responses, 3) create revisions for presentation #3 from the responses, 4) rehearse the revisions, and 5) run the presentation, start to finish, with revisions for our next performance at Linfield Christian School. Here is an outline of the rehearsal:

Rehearsal 17 Outline 3/19/09

- I. Welcome/ Opening Exercises
 - A. Reflection
 1. Thoughts/ Feelings- share out loud
 2. Share audience responses
 - B. Revision
 1. Discuss changes to story/ dialogue
 2. Discuss cutting length of forum- decide where cuts can be made
 3. Brainstorm storyline ideas for upcoming performance venue- Linfield
- II. Forum Practice
 - A. Run-thru- Can You Hear Me Now?
 1. Intro Activities
 2. Forum
 3. Closing Activities
- III. Closing Activities- Reflection, Prep, and Circle of Appreciation
 - A. Reflection Circle-past, present, and future
 1. What are you most concerned about for the upcoming presentation and how can you best mentally prepare yourself?
 - B. Prep for performance #3
 1. Reminders
 - a. Directions to venue
 - b. Call time- 5pm
 - c. Costumes-all black w/ character pieces
 - d. Good attitude
 - C. Circle of Appreciation
 1. Thank troupe for all of their hard work
 2. Share what has been accomplished and what you are thankful for.

For this rehearsal, in order to prepare for our next performance we had to review the audience responses from performance #2 at RPYA (Rainbow Pride Youth Alliance). Then, we could rehearse.

While reviewing the responses we received from RPYA, we all were in awe of how much the presentation and workshop had on some of the youth there. It was an incredible realization and an inspiring moment in this project for me personally. The elements that we had prepared for the previous presentation at JTP also served well in this setting.

The programs, surveys, index response cards, and music were a huge comfort element in this specific demographic. Although the overall feeling was a very positive one, there were challenges we faced.

Some of the challenges I faced personally was the volume of the group. They were very engaged, but very loud too. This prompted me to try to take control the best way I knew how. I literally took a stand on a chair, above the crowd at one point in order to establish the leadership position and to ensure that everyone could see and hear me. This was done during the audience participation sculpting activity. The volume of the group made it hard for me to talk at times, leaving me at moments yelling. As this posed an uncomfortable moment, there were definitely positive moments too.

For me the positive moments were the exact opposite of the negative. The group became more engaged as the presentation got into the core. When this happened, it was very quiet. I could tell that they were into what was happening. Then, once we began the Forum, there were so many hands raised to come up and participate, that it made it easy to explore solutions with the spect-actors and made my job as the Joker so easy and comfortable. I also tried doing the entire process this time around without my project notebook. This posed to be a success as well, as I felt more comfortable and at ease. I felt I was more natural to the audience, more realistic, and more welcoming without the "official" notebook of the Joker. It flowed very well.

The troupe discovered some challenges. The audience we were presenting to is a very close knit community, support group, peer accepting crowd. This made them already comfortable with their surroundings. They were surrounded by friends and support, so the idea of stepping in to the action was not as hard for them. For the troupe though, the approaches were very strong and assuring. These individuals were not afraid to stand up to these oppressive characters. The troupe had to think twice as hard on their feet. These were strong willed individuals and it was proven by their participation. Also, the lightning round for the troupe was very emotional this time around. As they appeared to stay strong, it was clear that their hearts were filled with emotion from the interaction with the spect-actors.

The positives they experienced were that of the high emotional responses from the spect-actors. These individuals brought vulnerability and reality to the stage and to our presentation, making it a strong example of self-empowerment. The troupe loved the urgency of the spect-actors because it energized them as actors and motivated them to respond in ways that in return helped the spect-actors feel successful.

In the end, it was decided to add another element to the night. There was a circle discussion/ response time afterwards to the presentation. This was very powerful, emotional, encouraging, and helpful to experience as the leader of this project. To see how it made people feel was very touching and gave me great affirmation that this type of work really does give a positive result.

Overall, this experience at RYPA was a fantastic example of how different demographics, audiences, and individuals can have a positive experience thru our presentation "Can You Hear Me Now?" They were able to recognize the oppression, identify where it was stemming from, and approach it willingly. We received several response cards, filled with words to us as a troupe, encouraging quotes, and strong reactions to

the characters. They all proved thru their participation and excitement that this project was a success.

When we had the next rehearsal, we prepared for our next performance at Linfield Christian School. The outline above is what we followed in this rehearsal. By now, it felt like we had a good grip on the flow of the presentation/ workshop. We reviewed the responses and then rehearsed for the next performance. It was an easy night. The only revision we really made was confirming that if necessary, we would do a circle discussion like we had done at RPYA.

The performance at Linfield was successful, much as the others have been. Like the others, there were positives and negatives. There was a huge scare at first. It was 6pm, the time the presentation was suppose to start and there was only one person there. So, we all said a little silent prayer for people to come, and literally, not even 5 minutes later about 15-20 individuals walked thru the little theatre doors. This was a huge positive of the night. Anything that happened from here was going to be positive, no matter what it was.

The spect-actors were a bit quieter than our others. At first, I saw this as a negative. But then I realized that we were dealing with a demographic that typically does "not" stand up to issues like the ones in our story. We were at a Christian school, a setting that normally is supposed to have it all together, or so society thinks. The non-verbal feedback, body language, and facial expressions led me to believe that they were not taking things seriously. I did realize though that perhaps this was a coping mechanism, and quickly went over in my head how I might approach the idea of no participation when the time came in our presentation. I decided that I would be as encouraging, positive, and supportive of the idea that this might be uncomfortable, but also emphasize that this might be a good way to help "others." I took in to account that most of these kids probably do not speak up against oppression in their daily lives on a personal level. Perhaps they do it in a more global setting, but personally, I got the feeling this might not be the case. It was interesting to see their expressions. It was clear that they did not like what was going on in the story and that they were easily identifying the oppression happening. However, they did not seem to feel comfortable getting up and stopping it. Perhaps it was because it hit close to home for some of them or it was just something they are not use to dealing with. The fact is though, is that this story is a reality, and I think they finally realized that, once someone said "STOP!" I encouraged their attempt, by helping them see the positives to standing up to these oppressions and not staying silent.

Although the entire time I felt as though I was pulling teeth to get them to participate, I tried to stay focused on the fact that they were processing and acting on it a bit slower was all. Their ideas and approaches were wonderful, leaving the main oppressed character empowered and not silenced. This was the positive. Another positive was that they did participate in the most vulnerable exercise. They participated in the lightning round. It was moving.

It was interesting to see how at first, these individuals who happen to be theatre students, participated in the activities leading up to the forum with no hesitation. It was not until after the forum started that they became hesitant. But in the end, it was successful. They got the idea and walked away with positive feedback. I feel that the true response from this crowd came from the surveys and response

cards. It was in these documents that truly confirmed that this was a successful experience and a positive example of the impact of the project.

APPENDIX C

"CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?" FINAL PRESENTATION/WORKSHOP
MATERIALS

Can You Hear Me Now?

A Forum Theatre Piece on being
heard in times of *need*...



Directed and Joked by Kathy
Risinger

Created with and performed by:

Angela Sanicola

Jana Pitts

Joe DiPadova

Jonathan Murtaugh

Stacey Porterfield

Therese Cools

CAST

Joker/ Facilitator.	Kathy Risinger
Sarah	Angela Sanicola
Alicia	Jana Pitts
Justin	Joe DiPadova
Chuck	Jonathan Murtaugh
Ms. D./Mom/Friend	Therese Cools
Mindy/Bailey.	Stacey Porterfield

CHARACTERS

Sarah (Main Oppressed): A young high school student of 16, living in Southern California (Inland Empire) with her Dad, Chuck. Her parents are divorced and the absence of her mother in her life has been both physically and emotionally stressful since the divorce. She is a good student, with lots of friends. Sarah is very smart, sweet, and hopeful. Although she is optimistic, her current circumstances have left her feeling weak, lonely, afraid of rejection, and above all, a girl who just wants guidance, recognition, acceptance, and love from those closest to her.

Chuck/Dad (Main Oppressor): Father to Sarah and divorced man in his late 30's. Chuck is the owner of a small construction company. He is a good provider in practical ways, but not in the ways of a confused teenage daughter. Although he loves his daughter and is concerned with her well-being, he shows it poorly. He is not a sensitive listener, is ambitious, cocky, self-preserving, and completely unaware of how his actions affect others, especially Sarah. He is engaged to Mindy and is quick to make decisions without thinking about the consequences. His past hurts and failures have turned into frustrations, and so, in turn, Sarah has become the target of his pain. His focus is on his "new" life with Mindy, not his "inconvenient," "old" one, where Sarah is still present and is his responsibility.

Mindy (Secondary Oppressor): Girlfriend/Fiancee to Chuck. Mindy is very needy, manipulative, free-spirited and obnoxious. She has a way with men and likes to get her own way. She is a trust fund baby, so she has money that is not her own, allowing her to travel whenever she wants. Mindy is an event coordinator, sort of as a hobby, but ultimately, just wants to be "taken care of." She likes Chuck because he can be this "provider" and she does not want children. She likes Sarah, but more so, is tolerating her until she can have Chuck to herself in two years.

Sarah's Mom (Secondary Oppressor): Sarah's mom is not in the picture at all. Her and Chuck had different plans for their future, so she left 3 months ago to pursue her new career, as she said was her priority now, not a family. Sarah's mom was once a good mother and loved Sarah very

much, but since the divorce, has not been there for her. Her guilt got to her, and Chuck eventually finds out that she lied to him and Sarah. She currently resides in a small New England town, with her new husband and a child on the way.

Alicia (Ally): One of Sarah's closest childhood friends. She is very encouraging, kind, strong-willed, opinionated, and supportive. Alicia is the caregiver at home, due to parental issues, so she is cautious and levelheaded because of her experiences of broken promises. She tends to always have a wall up, but not with Sarah. Alicia tries to create balance for Sarah and helps her be realistic, but thinks Sarah needs to put up a wall too in order to protect herself.

Ms. Dunbar/D. (Secondary Ally): An English teacher at Sarah's school. Mrs. D. is an encouraging woman, who is highly concerned with her students' welfare. She is the chairman and founder of the drama club on campus. Mrs. D is quirky, colorful, funny, laid back, and all the students like her. She is the "cool" teacher.

Justin: Classmate to Sarah and Alicia. He is the heartthrob of the school. Justin is stylish, funny, class-clown, is spontaneous, and friendly with the ladies. He comes from a well-to-do family, so is quite confident and sure of himself, which is how he gets what he wants from girls. Sarah is his latest conquest.

Students/Friends: Classmates to Sarah. Fun, outgoing kids who may not always make the most positive choices. They tend to be a negative influence on other students who are down on their luck, like Sarah.

Costumes- Can You Hear Me Now?

Sarah- Black top and bottom, green scarf as central piece

Chuck- Black top and bottom, colored tie as central piece

Mindy- Black top and bottom, clutch purse as central piece

Alicia- Black top and bottom, shoulder bag as central piece

Ms. D.- Black top and bottom, eyeglasses as central piece

Justin- Black top and bottom, vest or hoodie as central piece

Other students, mom- black top and bottom

Prop List- Can You Hear Me Now?

Scene 1

4 chairs

Backpacks

Cell phones

Pens, markers

Small Table (Ms. D's Desk)
couch)

Laptop

Student of the month award

Scene 2

Small Table (Lunch table)

Sack lunches

Water bottles

Backpacks

Trays for lunches

Scene 3

Small table (sink for Chuck)

Brush/comb

Cologne

Flowers

2 chairs (act as a bench for Sarah)

Scene 4

3 chairs/blocks
(as a couch)

Cell Phone

Scene 5

3 chairs /blocks (as a

Small Table

Chair

Magazine

Scene 6

Red cups (drinks)

Small Table

Shot glasses

Scene 7

Chair/block (act as
toilet)

Cell Phone

Red cup

SCENARIO/SCENES

SCENE 1: All of the students and Sarah are in Ms. D's English class. Ms. D has just announced Sarah as the student of the month and gives Sarah her invitation for a student/parent/ principal luncheon the following week. Class ends and the rest of the class talks about a party they are having that night, where they can celebrate her award. Sarah says she can't because she has other plans with her dad. They give her a hard time, pressuring her, but the bell rings and everyone starts to leave. Mrs. D. asks to speak with Sarah and Alicia says she will meet her at lunch. Mrs. D. congratulates Sarah once again and ask discusses the luncheon further. She gives words of encouragement about the divorce and says she is always there for her if she needs to talk. Sarah feels so proud and can't wait to tell her dad about it when they go out tonight for a dinner they had planned for just the two of them. Mrs. D congratulates her again and reminds her she can call anytime.

Blocking/ Stage set-up:

4 chairs set up on stage rt., counter facing audience (2x2), Front Row- Sarah and Alicia, Back Row- Justin, other classmate (Bailey), Mrs. D's desk- upstage left

Props:

Backpacks, cell phones, pen, notebooks, Laptop for Mrs. D.

Scene Sequence w/ dialogue:

-Begin with classroom background noise, students messing around

-Ms. D tries to get their attention twice, and then follows with:

Ms. D: Hey, ho, (clap clap)

Students: Sshhh!

-Ms. D. announces student of the month, invites Sarah up to the front of class, talks about award (luncheon, etc.), has everyone congratulate Sarah again.

-Students make sarcastic comments, in attempts to congratulate her, i.e. NERD! And Sarah can be my tutor any day!

Ms. D: Okay, you can go ahead and pack up, the bell's gonna ring in a few minutes.

-Students pack up and begin talking

Justin: Party at Baileys tonight!

-Bailey explains her parents are out of town, so they should all come over for her party

Alicia: Yeah, we can celebrate your award.

Sarah: I don't think so guys. My dad would freak if he found out.

Alicia: Since when does your dad notice anything you do Sarah?

-The students harass her and encourage her to come party and forget her dad.

Sarah: Guys, I can't. But thanks. And besides, I have plans with my dad...he is taking me out to dinner tonight.

-They tell her to come afterward. She insists she can't once again. Tells them to have fun. React to the bell, the bells rings and they all walk out.

- Sarah is stopped by Ms. D. Alicia says she will see her at lunch.

- Ms. D congratulates her again and recognizes all her hard work, especially since all she has been going thru with the divorce.

-Sarah thanks her for being so encouraging and for just being there; that it's meant a lot.

-Ms. D tells Sarah she can come to her anytime, night or day. She understands divorce and knows how hard it can be, then starts discussing the luncheon and making sure her dad will be able to make it, since she knows her mom is not around anymore.

-Sarah says she is going to tell him tonight at dinner.

Sarah: My dad wont let me down.

-Ms. D. says she hopes so and that she is proud of her again. Reminds her to call if she needs anything.

-Sarah and Ms. D hug as she walks Sarah out of the class.

END SCENE

SCENE 2: At the lunch table, Alicia congratulates her friend on her award again. Sarah says again how excited she is to tell her dad at dinner tonight at Benihana, her favorite place. Alicia questions why she wasn't told about these dinner plans and Sarah tells her it's because she didn't wan to hear her say that her dad was going to flake like he always does. Alicia approaches Sarah about this and reminds her of all the times he has flaked out on her before, giving very recent examples. They argue. Sarah explains to Alicia that he is not going to let her down, that it's been planned for over a week. Alicia brings up the point that Sarah should be careful and not get her

hopes up because of her mom and dad's broken promises. Sarah defends her mom and Alicia questions the last time she talked to her. Sarah avoids answering and says that her dad is not her mom. She feels confident her dad won't let her down, that he is not her mom and will remember, and that he loves her. She says he even stated it that morning that "Tonight is going to be a great night."

Blocking/ Stage Set-up:

Small table center stage with two chairs on the sides. Sarah on stage rt., Alicia on stage left.

Props:

Sack lunches, sandwiches, water bottles

Scene sequence w/ dialogue:

-Alicia and Sarah eating lunch

-Alicia congratulates Sarah on her award...Sarah thanks her

-Sarah says she is excited and can't wait to tell her dad about her award tonight at BENIHANA

-Alicia confronts Sarah and asks why she didn't tell her about her dinner plans

Alicia: Why didn't you tell me about it? I'm only your best friend.

Sarah: Uh, because I knew you'd react like you just did and tell me my dad would flake out again, and, I don't know, I just didn't want to deal with it. So, I just didn't say anything. Look, I'm sorry.

-Sarah tries to convince her that it would be different this time, not to worry, that it's to make up for her birthday she thinks.

-Alicia reacts as if she is irritated with those statements, but it's more like she is in a protective mode.

Alicia: Oh, right like the time he promised to take you to Disneyland for your birthday a couple weeks ago and we waited like all day for him, and he slept til 2, like that day? Or what about last weekend when he was suppose to bring you over to my house cuz you had no ride, and he instead went out with what's her face, Mindy or whatever and left you at home, not even telling you he forgot...like that time?

-Sarah argues back that it's been planned for over a week; that he won't let her down.

-Alicia tells her not to get her hopes up and reminds her of all the times she got her hopes up with her mom and her

dad and all their broken promises to be there for her, especially your mom.

Sarah: Hey, I know my mom loves me and she'd be proud of me...talks about her mom, he's not her, he is not a liar.

Alicia: I know she would Sarah, but let's be honest, when's the last time you even talked to her?

-Sarah ignores her answer and defends her dad.

Sarah: Well, he is not her! He is NOT a liar, he is NOT going to walk out on me, and I know he cares about me...

Alicia: Hey, Sarah, calm down, calm down...I know they love you, I just don't want to see you keep on getting hurt.

Which is why I think you should just come to the party tonight...Justin will be there and we can have a few drinks...blow him off for once...

-Sarah thanks her friend for trying to care for her, but she really can't come.

Sarah: Besides, my dad even said this morning to me that "tonight was going to be a great night!"

END SCENE

SCENE 3: Sarah is home from school and ready to go out to dinner with her dad. He is in the bathroom getting ready and she begins talking to him about some feelings she has had since the divorce and over her mom's absence. She is trying to talk about her feelings and Chuck (dad) is pretending to listen, when really he is more preoccupied with getting ready for the night. Sarah attempts to bring up her feelings a few times and every time she is interrupted by her dad. Chuck lets his true feelings slip out concerning Sarah's mom, letting Sarah find out he feels stuck with her and that her mom is pregnant, after she said she was done raising a family before she left them. He continues to try and cover up her attempts to reach out, by keeping the focus on him. He cuts her off again at one point, saying he is going to propose to Mindy tonight at dinner, when it was her who he was suppose to be taking to dinner. Sarah is crushed and humiliated. She is left there alone, when her dad quickly sees the time and rushes out the door.

Blocking/Stage setup:

2 chairs center stage, with small table stage right.

Flowers on chairs. Cologne, brush, tie on small table.

Chuck is on front of the mirror, Sarah sitting on chairs

Props:

Small table (sink for Chuck), Brush/comb, Cologne, Flowers , 2 chairs (act as a bench for Sarah), tie

Scene Sequence w/ dialogue:

-Sarah enters stage left, Chuck is getting ready stage rt.

-Sarah comments on him looking nice, asking him how his day was. They exchange small talk.

-Sarah notices flowers, thinking they are for her for dinner tonight.

Sarah: Nice flowers!!!!

Chuck: Yeah? You like em'?

-Sarah holds the flowers as she begins talking to dad about being upset.

-She brings up Alicia and her talking about mom earlier at school and asks if she can talk to him about it. He ignores her.

-Dad interrupts, talks about the new account he landed at work.

-Sarah congratulates him, trying to get back on the topic of her mom.

Chuck hears her, and comments on her mom, and once again, interrupts her and asks for his tie.

Chuck: Careful of the flowers, Sarah.

-He puts on his tie.

Sarah: Anyway, today was a big day, and I was really missing mom and wishing she was around...it's been hard..

Chuck: Let me tell you something Sarah, you're not the only one she ran out on, you know? I mean, she is the one who wanted the new life with her new career and Mark, and not the responsibility of raising a family, and then I got left with that responsibility...so, don't tell me about being hurt...and then what is it, six months later, and she's knocked? Oh, shoot, you weren't supposed to know that...anyway, let's focus on something besides her, like tonight.

-Sarah agrees that might be a good idea. She tries to ignore that she has just been completely ignored.

-Chuck crosses to her and she stands. She is still holding the flowers.

Chuck: I mean, I was going to wait to talk to you about this, but since we are talking about positive things, I'm going to tell you...

-Chuck tells Sarah that tonight he is taking Mindy out to dinner to propose.

Sarah: Tonight?

Chuck: Yeah, tonight...

-Chuck pulls out the ring and shows Sarah.
-Sarah is in shock, and once again has realizes she has been forgotten.
-Chuck notices the time, says let's talk later about mom, asks her to wish him luck, and rushes out.
-He forgets the flowers. SO, he comes back and grabs them from her.
Chuck: Oops, I almost forgot these. See you later honey.
-Sarah stands there in utter shock.

END SCENE

SCENE 4: Sarah and Alicia, sitting in Sarah's living room. Sarah expresses she is so upset about her dad forgetting again, on top of the information about her mom Alicia states she was right, and encourages Sarah to forget about it and just come to the party with her and have fun with people who do care about her. Sarah says she doesn't feel like going anywhere and thinks maybe her dad will remember and come back, and while she is waiting she is going to call her mom to congratulate her. Alicia tries to talk her out of this, but Sarah insists. Alicia expresses that she thinks what Sarah is doing is stupid, but knows she can't convince her. She gives up and leaves. Sarah tries calling her mom. Mom picks up and blows her off after Sarah brings up the pregnant issue. So, she then calls Ms. D. to talk. She is upset and Mrs. D. asks her if she has talked to her dad yet about the lunch. Sarah says she is afraid to now, and Ms. D. says she will to talk to him. Just as soon as she says this, Sarah hears her dad and Mindy coming in the door. She quickly gets off the phone, thanking her for wanting to help, but says to just forget about it, that it doesn't matter. Ms. D tries to argue back, but Sarah hangs up on her before she finishes her thought.

Blocking/Stage setup:

3 chairs/blocks (as a couch) center stage, one chair upstage rt. (for Mrs. D./Mom)

Props:

3 chairs/blocks (as a couch), Cell Phone, 1 chair, magazine

Scene Sequence w/ dialogue:

-Sarah tells Alicia she is really upset. She cannot believe her dad did this again. She was sure he was going to remember.

-Sarah then brings up her mom and that her dad blurted out to her that she was pregnant, the engagement, size of the ring. She doesn't understand why her parents just don't care. She doesn't ever feel they are proud of her, even when she tries her hardest. They never notice what she needs.

-Alicia tells her she knew this was going to happen

Alicia: I hate to say this, but I told you this was going to happen.

-Alicia tells Sarah she thinks she should just come to the party, go be with people who do care about her.

Sarah: No, I don't want to go to the party. I don't want to be around people right now. I just want to be alone. I mean, maybe he will remember and come back for me.

Whatever, I think I will just wait here and maybe call my mom...I should congratulate her.

-Alicia gets frustrated with her friend and tells her she is being stupid, that she should just forget about them. They are never going change.

- Sarah says she just wants someone to understand, and sorry she even bothered her with it. She expresses again how she is just so upset and doesn't think she can handle this alone.

- Alicia tells her she doesn't know how to help her, and that she has tried to get her to just forget about them and come to the party.

Alicia: Sarah, if you are just going to sit here and feel sorry for yourself, I can't help you, so I'm gonna go to the party, and if you change your mind, you know where I will be.

-Alicia leaves. Sarah is once again alone.

-Sarah is so confused and she calls her mom, hoping for kind words. She is calling to congratulate her mom on the baby, when really she is just reaching out again.

-Mom answers and asks her how she got the number. Sarah said from dad. Mom gets angry.

-Sarah tries congratulating her, but Mom gets even angrier, and tells Sarah she can't talk. She hangs up on her.

-Sarah calls Ms. D. Ms. D. answers and they talk about Sarah being upset. She tells Ms. D. her dad flaked on her, doesn't care about her, her mom wants nothing to do with her, and is afraid to bring up the fact that she won an award at school.

Sarah: I just don't think I could handle if he forgot something again. I just feel so alone.

-Ms. D. tries to talk Sarah out of giving back the award, saying she will call and talk to her dad, asking him to come in for a parent/ teacher conference. She reassures Sarah that it is all going to be okay.

- Sarah hears her Dad coming home and says she has to go. Ms. D. asks if she could just talk to him now. Sarah says she doesn't think it's a good idea and hangs up on her before she has a chance to say anything else.

END SCENE

SCENE 5: In the living room, Sarah sits. Dad comes home with Mindy a few hours after he had left. Sarah is hopeful he might be alone so she can talk with him about missing dinner. He is not alone. They (Chuck and Mindy), stumble in excited, but then become surprised at Sarah's presence and Mindy clearly is upset. They say hello to Sarah, and then have a quiet conversation away from Sarah. Sarah overhears them and Mindy rushes off to the bathroom, after suggesting they just go back to her place. Chuck says he will talk to Sarah. Sarah wants to say something, so tries. Chuck brushes it off and says he needs to pack a bag for Mindy's. He leaves. As Mindy comes back into the room, the phone rings. It's Ms. D. Mindy gets Ms. D. off the phone quickly, as she has her own agenda, which doesn't involve Chuck being on the phone with Sarah's teacher. She sits next to Sarah, striking up an awkward conversation, as to be nice, when Chuck enters the room, and they rush out of there. Sarah is left upset, ignored, unheard, and now she is ANGRY.

Blocking/Stage setup:

3 chairs/blocks (as a couch) center stage, one chair upstage rt. (for Ms. D.) and small table downstage left for Mindy, with house phone on it

Props:

3 chairs/blocks (as a couch), Cell Phone, 1 chair, magazine, house phone

Scene Sequence w/ dialogue:

-Sarah is sitting on couch, reading a magazine, as to not look upset, but she is.

-Chuck and Mindy enter and see Sarah. Surprised, they say hello and exchange words about going back to Mindy's place.

Mindy: I thought you said she wasn't going to be here.

Chuck: I know, just a couple more years though and it will just be us, I promise.

- Mindy goes to the restroom.
-Chuck sits to talk to Sarah. Sarah is upset, but tries to bring up her feelings again.
-Chuck avoids it, and leaves to go pack a bag.
- Mindy walks back in, and the phone rings. Mindy picks it up.
Mindy: Nelson residence.
-It's Ms. D on the phone asking for Mr. Nelson. That it is urgent.
-Mindy says he is not available and hangs up.
-Mindy awkwardly approaches Sarah on the couch.
Mindy: So, Sarah, I was thinking about the colors for the wedding..
Sarah: Whatever you want Mindy, it's your wedding.
Mindy: So, how's school?
Sarah: Um, school is good. I..
-Chuck walks back in and Mindy gets up, ignoring Sarah's response.
Chuck: Are you ready future Mrs. Nelson???
Mindy: I am ready, Mr. Nelson. Oh Sarah, isn't he so cute?
-Chuck and Mindy start to leave, and Chuck says he will see her later, and they can talk,.
- Sarah is once again, left unheard.
END SCENE

SCENE 6: Sarah is now at the party with her friends. She has clearly been drinking and is telling Alicia how she is angry that her dad doesn't seem to care about her either, just like her mom. She tells Alicia she was right. Alicia influences this thinking by agreeing with her. It is clear Sarah thinks no one else cares what she does, so why should she anymore. Alicia gets Sarah to notice Justin on the other side of the room, who is eyeing her and ignoring the girl he is with. Alicia tells her Justin has been asking about her all night. Sarah decides to go sit next to him. Justin has his own agenda. Sarah knows this but doesn't care as she gives in to his flirting. He invites her/ pressures to drink some shots. She does. Then, we see him pulling her off the couch and take lead her to another room. Alicia and the others girls just watch and smile.

Blocking/Stage setup:

Small table stage left, with red cups on it, shot glasses
2 chairs act as couch stage rt. , Sarah is by table with Alicia with drinks, Justin is on couch with a drink in his hand. Bailey is next to him.

Props:

Red Cups, 2 chairs, small table, shot glasses

Scene Sequence w/ dialogue:

-Justin and Bailey are flirting (silently) but Justin keeps eying Sarah

-Sarah is talking with friends, saying that Alicia was right and parents are stupid and suck "Bad Dad"

Sarah: I'm so glad I came to the party...you were so right Alicia! My parents just don't care...I have a "Bad Dad.!"

-Alicia agrees and tells her she is glad she came to the party.

Alicia: Parents suck!

-Alicia mentions that Justin has been asking about her all night.

-Sarah denies it and says Bailey is with him and he doesn't care about her, just like her parents...why would he pay attention to me?

-Sarah needs a refill for her drink

-Alicia says Bailey is just a filler, and that he does like her...

- Other friend (Therese) agrees with Alicia and tells Sarah to watch as she calls Bailey over to the group of friends, and commenting on how Justin won't even care if she leaves his side...

-Friend call s Bailey over and she comes because she is tired of not having Justin's attention

-Justin beckons Sarah over to the couch and friends encourage Sarah to go over

-Justin puts his arm around her

-Justin comments on how hot she looks tonight, I've been waiting for you to come all night

Justin: You look really hot tonight! Here, have a seat next to me.

-Sarah thinks that the room is spinning

-Justin says Sarah hasn't made a dent in her drink and suggests that Sarah chug the rest of her drink

-Sarah chugs here drink

-Justin mentions taking this party upstairs.

Justin: Hey, why don't we take this party upstairs, lay down for a bit...I'll take care of you!

-Sarah hesitates, but then agrees because she doesn't feel so good.

-Justin grabs her hand and starts to leave.

-Sarah looks back at friends for guidance

-Friends encourage her to go off with Justin
-Sarah and Justin exit stage left.

END SCENE

SCENE 7: We see Alicia, outside the bathroom, trying to get Sarah to come out, telling her it will be fine and it's no big deal, that Justin really likes her. She continues trying to get her come out. We see Sarah, in the bathroom, on the floor, crying. She is at her lowest. She has her cell phone in her hand and she feels so alone, guilty about her behavior, and just wants to be noticed. She continues calling her dad over and over and over. Nothing. Just voice mail. She leaves a message finally, calling out for help. She is alone and lost.

Blocking/Stage setup:

Block, chair is center stage, Sarah is on the floor by the toilet with cell phone in her hands. Alicia is stage left of her, outside of bathroom.

Props:

Chair/block (act as toilet), cell phone

Scene Sequence w/ dialogue:

-Sarah is at the toilet throwing up, struggling with decisions she's made and the emotions she's feeling
-Alicia is outside the door trying to talk to Sarah and trying to get her to come out. **Alicia:** Sarah, are you in there? I know you are in there. Hey, what's wrong? Are you okay? Listen, I think Justin really likes you, he just said so...Hello, Sarah! Okay, well everything will be all right, ok? I will come back later to check on you.
-Sarah calls Chuck's cell phone twice but only gets voicemail
-We hear Chuck start his message and Sarah hangs up phone, and redials.
-Sarah calls one last time and leaves him a message. She is alone and scared, and crying out to her dad for help.
Sarah: Dad, I need you, please help me...

END SCENE

"Can You Hear Me Now?" Presentation/ Workshop Outline

I. Introduction to Forum

A. Attention Getter- Emotional Sculpting

1. Joker calls out troupe to the center of space, not addressing the audience.
2. Joker instructs them on exercise.
 - a. Troupe gets in partners (Angela/ Jonathan, Therese/ Jana, Stacey, Joee)
 - b. Angela, Therese, and Stacey are sculptors; Jonathan, Jana, and Joee are clay.
3. Joker takes them thru exercise.
 - a. Emotion #1: LONELY.
 - i. Mold, Observe, Erase
 - b. Switch roles with partner.
 - c. Emotion #2: SELFISH.
 - i. Mold, Observe, Erase
 - d. Switch roles with partner.
 - e. Emotion #3: HELPFUL.
 - i. Mold, Observe, Erase
4. Joker has troupe relax.

*EMOTIONS REPRESENT T.O. characters:

- Oppressed: Lonely
- Oppressor: Selfish
- Allys: Helpful

B. Intro to Presentation/ Workshop- Welcome, Goals

1. Welcome audience
2. Introduce myself.
 - * Well, Hello to everyone. Welcome to our Theatre of the Oppressed presentation and workshop. We are so glad you are here. My name is Kathy and I will be the Joker in this evening's activities. In T.O., Joker is a fancy way of saying facilitator.
3. Introduce Troupe.
 - * These other lovely individuals are my drama troupe. This is Angela, Jonathan, Therese, Jana, Stacey, and Joee. They will be very involved with the activities of the night.
4. Introduce presentation/workshop.

- * Tonight we will be taking you all on a journey of exploration of approaching oppression in your daily lives. First, you will do activities to get acquainted with some details about T.O. Next, you will observe a presentation of a young girl named Sarah who is struggling with certain unbearable issues. Last, you will get to help us confront some of the issues Sarah seems to be having. Along this journey, we are going to learn 4 things:
 - 1) what oppression is
 - 2) how to recognize it
 - 3) how to effectively explore positive approaches towards stopping oppression
 - 4) why it is important to confront oppression

*But, the most important thing to remember tonight is that we, my troupe and I *cannot* do this without *YOUR* help, so for example, when I say at certain points tonight, "let's help them out," we will all say together "3,2,1, ACTION." Can we try that? All together, 3,2,1 Action!

C. T.O. Basics 4 W's- What, Who, Where, Why

- * I'd like you all to refer to the info brochure you received when you came in. Let's review the What's and Who's.

1. WHAT'S

- a. T.O.

- b. Oppression

- i. Definition/Examples

- *ask if anyone has ever felt weighed down?

- ii. WHAT IS OPPRESSION TO YOU?

- *take answers

- c. Forum Theatre

2. WHO'S

- a. Characters

- * Joker, Spect-actors, Main Oppressed, Main Oppressor, Allies, Secondary Oppressors

*That's all we need to go over right now.
We will get to the where and why in a bit.
Let's do some exercises to help us apply
what we learned

3. Activites- 4 W's (What, Who, Where)

a. T.O. Character Recognition (Who)

*Let's recall the images we saw in the beginning. I'm going to need the help of my troupe. Joker calls up troupe for exercise.

- i. Spect-Actor Interaction: Recall Emotional Sculpting Images- Lonely, Selfish, Helpful
*Angela sculpts Jonathan- LONELY, Jana sculpts Therese- SELFISH, Stacey sculpts Joee- HELPFUL

- ii. Identify Forum Characters: Oppressed, Oppresor, and Ally?

*Now, it's your turn.

b. Spect-actor Emotional Sculpting (Who)

- i. Find a Partner

*If you don't feel comfortable doing this, that's okay. Just observe. If you can't find a partner, raise your hand and a troupe member will work with you. Make sure you find your own space in the room.

- ii. Decide on roles- Sculptor/ Clay

- iii. Instructions- Molding, Observing, Erasing

- iv. EMOTION #1: FEAR (Oppression)

i. mold, observe, erase

- v. EMOTION #2: HOPEFUL (Broken Oppression)

- vi. Identify what character/s might feel these two feelings. (oppressed, ally)

- vii. Discuss observations and then have them take a seat.

c. Group Image Sculpting (Who, Where)

- i. Troupe comes out. Therese/ Angela are the sculptors, the rest are the clay.

*Now that we have been able to recognize the characters in oppressive images, let's see if we can identify the oppression and the characters in the following sculpted scene. Let's

help the troupe out with a 3, 2, 1,
Action. Ready? 3,2,1, action!

- ii. Sculpt TEASING locker room scene.
- iii. Identify the Oppression? Discuss.
- iv. Identify the Characters? Discuss.
- v. Create an ideal image towards breaking the oppression.
- vi. Spect-actors help reshape image to make ideal.
*Discuss the outcome.

4. WHERE'S

- a. Discuss oppressive situations

*What are some other situations where we might see oppression taking place? Refer to brochure and discuss.

5. WHY'S

- a. Discuss the why's

* Why should we confront oppression?
Discuss and introduce the FORUM as the way we are going to confront an oppression.

*Okay, so now that we have an idea of the 4 W's of T.O.(What, Who, Where, and Why), let's move on to the main event of the evening, our original forum piece *Can You Hear Me Now?*

II. FORUM- *Can You Hear Me Now?*

A. Introduction/ Explanation of Forum

- 1. Participation is very important to the success of the next portion of tonight. Let's review what we will be doing.
- 2. Steps of Forum:
 - a. We will perform a series of scenes about a young girl having difficulty speaking up for herself out the story of the young girl.
 - b. When finished, we will begin again, inviting you to the stage to explore alternative behaviors and approaches as the main character with the other actors improvising with you.
- 3. Character Intros

- a. Invite actors to stage.
- b. Introductions- Sarah, Chuck, Mindy, Sarah's Mom, Alicia, Ms. Dunbar (Ms. D.), Justin, Bailey and other Friend.

* Try to identify the following as we go along;

1. what the oppression is
2. where the oppression coming from
3. why we need to stop the oppression
4. how to approach stopping the oppression

Refer to your brochure for help.

B. First Run/ Scene Sequence of Forum

1. Begin scene one description.
2. 3,2,1, ACTION..
3. Repeat for remaining scenes, dialoging in between each scene about paying attention to what Sarah is doing, not doing, could be doing, and does not feel she can do.

C. Identify the 4 things: Discuss.

1. what the oppression is
 2. where the oppression coming from
 3. why we need to stop the oppression
 4. how to approach stopping the oppression
- *Ideas?- Great, then let's begin again.

D. Forum Playback

1. Joker explains the playback process.
 - a. At any point during this second performance, any spect-actor (audience member) may call out "stop!" and take the place of the actor portraying the oppressed individual by approaching the situation as they see fit to break an oppression (this actor stays on stage but to the side, giving suggestions to the spect-actor who has replaced him/her if they cant think of something). These suggestions must be realistic and not a fairy tale ending, positive and helpful.
 - b. The spect-actor then attempts to overturn the oppression using some method unused by the actors, while the actors portraying the oppressors improvise to attempt to

- bring the production to its original, scripted ending.
- c. The joker facilitates and helps run the scenes with getting the audience involved with the 3,2, 1 Action method.
 - d. During the course of the changes, Joker asks questions to assess if the spect-actor has achieved what they wanted to, or at least got it going in a direction of possible positive results as an outcome. These approaches are not suppose to change the outcome, but more so prevent it from ever happening.
 - e. If the audience believes that the spect-actor's actions are too unrealistic to be utilized in reality, they may call out "stop!", and either replace or suggest the current the spect-actors actions be modified accordingly. If this spect-actor fails in overthrowing the oppression, the Joker will stop the action and the actor resumes his/her character, and continues the production until another spect-actor calls out "stop!" and attempts a different method.
 - f. Continue on with the scenes until we have exhausted attempts as the oppressed character and when the Joker can assess that this character now has tools to stand up to the oppression.

D. Forum Closing/ Lightning Round

1. Concluding statement toward approaches
 - a. Do you feel that Sarah learned some helpful tools if she would ever happen to be confronted with a situation like this again?
 - b. Assess with comments to Forum.
2. Joker invites Troupe to make a semi-circle in the space.
3. Joker addresses the audience
 - a. Think about the experiences of the characters in *Can You Hear Me Now?* Think about anything in the story that they

connected with or understood personally or globally.

- b. Joker invites them up to address one or all of the characters with a statement, question, or comment, or feeling. They are instructed to make a line and to go thru the line of characters, stopping at who ever they would like to address. They can whisper if they don't want any one to hear.
- c. The Joker informs them that the characters will have no response, and will just stand there.
- d. Spect-actors form a line, with comments or statements. Lightning round continues until all are seated again.

4. Index card Repsonse

- a. Pass out index cards
- b. Instruct them to make comments on them if they were not comfortable doing it in person. They are anonymous and will not be reads by any other parties.
- c. They can do this in addition to other comments also.
- d. Drop them in the response box on their way out when they turn in the surveys at the end.

III. Closing Statement/ Activity

A. Conclusion statement-

1. Well, we all have things in our life that sometimes seem impossible to deal with. But, we are not alone. We can overcome oppression in our daily lives, and hopefully thru the story we showed you today, you can take away some helpful, positive, empowering approaches to standing up against oppression. Maybe you, someone you know, or may not know has been thru something similar to Sarah in our story. If so, there are ways to not be silenced. Please feel free to come talk to any of us up here if you have a concern or a question, visit our blog that is on the back of your brochures, take a guidance resource handout located near the response drop box. But, find an ally in a friend, a teacher, counselor or someone; someone who can help you make positive

choices like we helped Sarah do today. We have the power and the right to not be "weighed down" by anyone or anything.

2. How are you feeling right now Activity?
 - a. Joker leads them in this activity right where they are.
 - b. with your body, on my 3,2, 1, action, express how you are feeling right now!
 - c. 3,2,1, ACTION!

B. Closing Activity- Comments, Questionnaire and debriefing

1. Questionnaire and debriefing statement
 - a. Pass out to everyone
 - b. Collect on their way out by response box
 - c. They keep debriefing statement
 - d. We collect response index cards and surveys
2. Comments
3. Thank you again and goodnight!

APPENDIX D
SUPPLEMENTAL PRESENTATION/WORKSHOP MATERIALS


THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED
 PRESENTATION/ WORKSHOP




PRESENTED BY THEATRE ARTS GRAD STUDENT: KATHY RISINGER
 &

INTRODUCING THE T.O. DRAMA TROUPE:
 ANGELA SANICOLA as Sarah
 JANA PITTS as Alicia
 JOEE DIPADOVA as Justin
 JONATHAN MURTAUGH as Chuck
 STACEY PORTERFIELD as Mindy/ Friend
 THERESE COOLS as Ms. D/ Mom


PRESENTATION/WORKSHOP INFO:
WHAT: Thesis Project Presentation/ Workshop in T.O. (Theatre of the Oppressed)
HOW: Presented in an interactive audience experience, using the T.O. technique of Forum Theatre, we will present a piece that will address oppressive teen issues and will allow the exploration for suggestive change and self-empowerment.
WHY: To Empower the Youth of the Inland Empire with useful tools for finding their voice in hard times.
WHO: Anyone interested in learning more about self-empowerment through the use of Forum Theatre.




SARAH




CHUCK




ALICIA



MINDY



JUSTIN



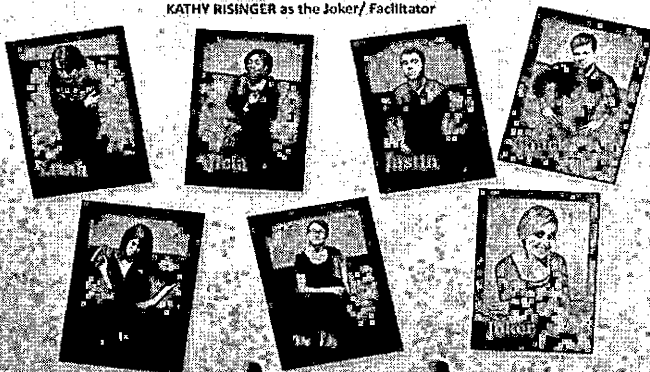
MS. D

Theatre of The Oppressed
Presentation/ Workshop



Introducing the T.O. Drama Troupe

ANGELA SANICOLA as Sarah
JANA PITTS as Alicia
JOEE DIPADOVA as Justin
JONATHAN MURTAUGH as Chuck
STACEY PORTERFIELD as Mindy/ Friend
THERESE COOLS as Ms. D./ Mom/ Friend
&
KATHY RISINGER as the Joker/ Facilitator



THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

PRESENTATION/ WORKSHOP



A Forum Theatre Piece on being heard in times of
NEED...

Directed and Facilitated by Kathy Risinger

Created with and performed by:

Angela Sanicola

Jana Pitts

Joe DiPadova

Jonathan Murtaugh

Stacey Porterfield

Therese Cools

Theatre of the Oppressed:
The 4 "W's" - What, Who, Where & Why?

WHAT's

What is T.O. (Theatre of the Oppressed)?

- Theatre of the Oppressed, established in the early 1970s by Brazilian director and political activist Augusto Boal, is a form of "rehearsal" theater designed for people who want to learn ways of fighting back against *oppression* in their daily lives.

What is Oppression?

- Oppression is the act of using power to empower and/or privilege a group or individual at the expense of disempowering, silencing or subordinating another group or individual. The term itself derives from the feeling of being "weighed down" by an opposing force.

What are some feelings associated with oppression and being "weighed down"?

- Oppression can cause several emotions, such as feeling:

-LONELY	-CONCERNED
-ANGRY	-FRUSTRATED
-ARROGANT	-SELFISH
-HELPLESS	-UNHEARD
-HELPFUL	-IGNORED

What is a problem solving technique that can confront oppression in our daily lives?

-Oppression can be confronted with a problem solving technique known as *forum theatre*.

What is FORUM THEATRE?

- Forum Theatre is a problem solving technique in which an unresolved scene of oppression is presented. It is then replayed with the audience (spect-actors), where they are invited to stop the action, replace the *character* they feel is "lacking power", aka the oppressed, and improvise solutions to help deal with that oppression.

WHO's

Who are the characters in Forum Theatre?

Characters we see in Forum Theatre are:

1. **Joker/Facilitator:** This individual is usually called the Facilitator, or in Forum Theatre, is referred to as the Joker. Basically, a drama workshop leader responsible for the process of the Forum, who ensures a safe environment for all involved.
2. **Spect-actor:** Those engaged in Forum Theater, or the audience. It refers to the dual role of both spectator and actor, as observer and creator of dramatic action seen throughout the Forum.
3. **Main Oppressor:** Known as the antagonist, who is participating in ruining the objective of the oppressed (protagonist) and typically the root of the oppression.
4. **Main Oppressed:** Known as the protagonist, who is trying to deal with oppression and failing because of the resistance of one or more obstacles (the antagonists).
5. **Allies:** characters that offer possible help to the oppressed (protagonist), i.e. a friend.
6. **Secondary Oppressors:** characters who are a hindrance and aide in the main oppressors objective towards the oppressed (protagonist), i.e. enemies.

WHERE's

Where can oppression or a feeling of being "weighted down" stem from?

- Oppression can be seen in areas such as:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| -PEER PRESSURE | -ABANDONMENT |
| -T.V./ MEDIA- Self Image | - NEGLECT |
| -DOMESTIC SITUATIONS (Homelife) | - BULLYING |

WHY's

Why use Forum Theatre to confront oppression?

-Oppression can be confronted in several ways. Forum Theatre is just one way to practice the following:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| -SELF EXPLORATION | -PROBLEM SOLVING |
| -AWARENESS (of issues) | -COPING |
| -SELF EMPOWERMENT | -HELPING OTHERS |

Online Presence

To further your experience of "Can You Hear Me Now?" please fill out a response card and drop it in the response collection box. Then visit us at our blog *do not be silenced.wordpress.com* to take part in an anonymous discussion forum and possibly see your written response along with others just like it.

Below is an example of what a filled out response card could look like after being completed:

To Chuck/Dad:
I forgive you & I love you...don't forget me!

To Sarah:
You are not alone! Be strong! You will get through this!!

Thank you for taking part in this presentation with us. We appreciate your participation in our project and hope you walk away today with a better understanding what oppression is, how to recognize it and how to stop it from happening.

-Kathy Risinger

APPENDIX E
PRESENTATION/WORKSHOP ASSESSMENT SURVEYS

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Can You Hear Me Now?"
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain.

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form? Explain

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain. Yes. Opened my eyes to my real life

Family

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop? Sara reminds me of my own grand

Daughter

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

my step daughter. it will help me deal with her problems with her carter

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form? Explain true to life. eye opening

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain.

Yes, I understood the process of self-empowerment w/ the hands-on practice of the audience to act out the different scenarios.

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

Positive: I saw how I will not allow myself to be talked down to, or ignored by another person.

Negative: I did not like the feeling of reliving "oppression" like Sarah did, because something like this did happen to me in the past.

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

Sarah. To motivate me to, to teach others how to stand up for themselves. Self-empowerment.

4. What is your personal definition of "oppression" after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form? Explain

Yes to kids & to women who are being abused.

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain.

I understood and I applauded your efforts - great job! 😊

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

I felt that I touched the young actress "Sara" and I wanted her to stand up for herself. Her performance was brilliant/disturbing.

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

Allisha - I saw how negative she was to her friend and it made me think of my friendships and how I want to be treated.

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form?

Explain I didn't understand that this was oppression. The relationship of her dad & her + makes me think about my relationship with my dad and how I'm oppressed by him.

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives: Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 (10)

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain.

I felt safe and in a good environment. I understood the safe process and the performance

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

I thought the presentation was very true which made me think

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

I identify with parents and peer pressure

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form? Explain

I believe oppression is something 'othering' you and I feel I could be speaking against it.

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 (10)

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain.

Yes I hit home my father was like that Buisy all the time.

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

negative the girl was that was the friend wanted to party.

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

The father buisy all the time.

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form? Explain

Oppression is like depression against it

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain.

yes. when the Audience helped Sarah the situation got much better

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

It opened my eyes to the crap that happens in other homes.

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

I had a connections with most of the characters & it showed me I should open my eyes more.

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form? Explain

yes, it upsets me that this happens in other homes when it shouldn't

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain.

Absolutely! Presenting this as theatre gives it a distance, emotionally, that makes it safe. You can explore many options without any harmful consequences.

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

Positive I was inspired by the re-worked scenes showing an empowered Sarah.

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

Yes, I'm a rape advocate, I'm the next person Sara would have met after her scene of being sick + hurt.

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form?

*Explain
Oppression is anything that keeps someone down, silent & separate.
Yes, I will speak against it*

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain. *I felt utterly and completely safe surrounded by friends who would support me in any situation. I appreciate that they showed us what to do if we were ever in a similar situation*

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop? *It brought back some painful memories about friends who didn't act the way you could have and should have*

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

Yes, Alicia reminded me of a friend I once had who acted in a similar fashion

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form?

Explain *Being held back in any way. Yes and I have I have been treated similarly and I made sure it didn't happen again*

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain. I loved the workshop! I felt that it really hit home for me.

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop? The fact that Sarah was pretty much me at 16, really was positive and negative for me.

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how? Replaying my experience has helped me to see how far I have come and how strong I am now.

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form? Explain. Oppression to me is any negative pressure put onto someone. Every time I see oppression I take a stand even if it is against friends or family.

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

~~10~~ ~~1000000~~ ++++++
like 1 million!

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain. *Yes, I feel like this was a secure place for people to voice their emotions.*

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

I felt really bad for Sarah, but hope this was a turning point in her life where she realized she could rely on herself.

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

When I was younger, I was also like Sarah with my friends. It's hard to speak up! But once you do, it's hard to be silent.

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form?

Explain *Same as it was before- as defined in the pamphlet.*

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **8** 9 10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain.

Yes,
I understood the process, and the message of not being oppressed.

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

It was fun going up and interacting with the actors.

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

I have seen the person being oppressed & tried to get help. This reminded me of the importance of that.

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form? Explain

Oppression is the same as being bullied! I already spoke against it & this reassured me that I'm doing the right thing

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain.

yes, I thought it was Great! I think that it has helped the idea of standing up for oneself.

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

Knowledge → gave the thought of helping people more often

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

Sarah I don't tell people what I really think all the time

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form?

Explain The oppression workshop is a way of shining a light on hurting people and finding a way to stop it.

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain.

Yes. The brochure helped explain the process.

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

I realized how I have ~~been~~ been and facilitated some of the negative feelings towards others.

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

Yes. Yes they had an impact because I don't like my behavior sometimes that is similar to the allies, oppressed or the oppressor.

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form? Explain

Anyone being hurt or unable to stand up for themselves. It might take courage and could it ~~not~~ form but maybe not all

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain.

Yes I do feel like it was a safe environment. It was made clear that we were allowed to express our own thoughts. I do understand ~~the~~ what was explained.

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

Well, it was sad to work and difficult on the first runthrough which I think was supposed to happen. It was all very positive and encouraging in the end. Participation was really encouraged.

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

Well, the character Sarah of course because there has been times when I have felt hurt. It showed the effect standing up for myself had.

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form?

Explain

After this workshop I feel like oppression is really anything that takes away your voice? it can always be fought.

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Theatre of The Oppressed Presentation/ Workshop
"Spect-Actor" Assessment Survey

1. As a whole, do you feel like a safe environment was created throughout the duration of the presentation/ workshop? Did you understand the process? Explain. *yes. the process could, and probably has helped people who have found themselves in that position already. It could help them to learn how to stand up for themselves*

2. Name something positive, negative, or both that you experienced during the presentation/ workshop?

well. Negitively - there was everyone around her that didnt help her at all. she needs to surround herself with more positive, and I'm glad we turned Sarah into a person who totally stands up for herself and doesnt take peoples crap. :)

3. Were there characters that you identified with in the presentation/ workshop? If so, did they have an impact on you and how?

I could totally identify with Sarah because I have a crappy dad too. It impacted me because I realized that I handled it in a way that I normally would, and apparantly it worked

4. What is your personal definition of oppression after this workshop? And would you feel more comfortable speaking out now against it, in any form?

Explain my personal definition is kind of Sarah's. but I've kind of learned how to speak out already. I feel like this helped others though

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not at all helpful and 10 being very helpful, rate how you successful this presentation/ workshop was in providing positive tools towards approaching oppression in our daily lives. Circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

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