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STAGING THE CROSS:
A STUDY OF CHRISTIAN THEATRICAL
PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Television, Radio, Film, and Theatre

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Emily Catherine Howard

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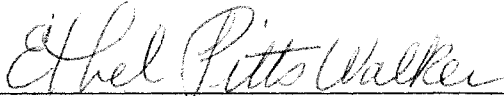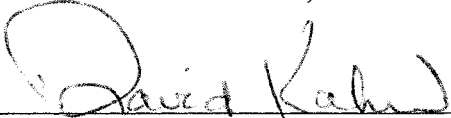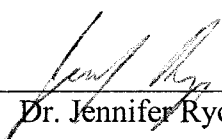
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STAGING THE CROSS:
A STUDY OF CHRISTIAN THEATRICAL
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by
Emily Catherine Howard

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ABSTRACT

STAGING THE CROSS:
A STUDY OF CHRISTIAN THEATRICAL
PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

by Emily Catherine Howard

This thesis focuses on Christian theatrical performance programs for youth at

Assemblies of God (AG) churches in California's Central Valley. It analyzes common

features of programs for youths in grades six through twelve, and it examines how the

programs are organized, how they function, and more specifically, what types of

performances are presented and how often they are presented.

The researcher produces a narrative of survey information and analyzes similarities

and differences of ten AG performance programs. Results of this research generated

correlations to California Arts Education sources, such as California's Visual and

Performing Arts standards, California Department of Education's <u>Visual and Performing</u>

<u>Arts Framework</u>, and the Educational Theatre Association. These correlations suggest

churches are inadvertently validating the standards, thus providing scholarship

another evidential corroboration to justify additional reform in theatre education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to theatre education institutions that they may benefit from its results in order to further reform in theatre education. I also dedicate my efforts to all churches that currently have, or strive to create, theatrical performance programs for youth that they take advantage of this research and the experiences of the ten participating churches.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Theatre opens doors of perception and understanding by capturing nuance when telling a story of any time or place. It may come alive to showcase cultures never experienced by audiences before, or it may hold up a mirror to the crowd, allowing a view that had not yet been exposed. Although one currently cannot receive a theatre teaching credential in California and some other states, this has not stopped theatre from being taught at various schools across the United States. As reflected in the Literature Review, there is ample available information on the subject of theatre programs in public schools and secular theatre programs. Theatre programs for youth in a church setting, however, are a different story. Many churches use theatre as a teaching tool, and in some churches, theatre plays a large role in youth programs. Theatre may set the mood for the sermon; it may create a jovial atmosphere to soften the pastor's message, or it could present a situation and illustrate it better than a pastor's verbal description. Unfortunately, little scholarly information exists regarding youth theatre performance programs in a church setting.

This thesis will focus on the theatrical performance programs, specifically those at Assemblies of God churches in California's Central Valley. It will analyze common features of programs for youths in grades six through twelve, and it will examine how the programs are organized, how they function, and more specifically, what types of performances are presented and how often they are presented.

The goals of this thesis are many: first, to seek information regarding current sources for creating a performance program for youth. There is a chasm in scholarly writing where theatre, youth, and Christian drama overlap. This thesis strives to forge that connection and inspire new avenues of study. Second, the goal is to analyze the surveyed material to find common trends among theatre performance programs. Hopefully these findings and materials may be useful to others. Finally, a third goal is to aid in my own development of a Worship Arts Ministry at my church. When I first began my ministry, I looked for literature to guide the development of an arts program that involved planning, rehearsing, script ideas, and spiritual guidance for junior high to high school aged youths. I found much information for planning a public school performance program, however, I was unable to find current information about how Christian theatre performance programs are structured and function. I decided to devise a thesis in which a narrow field of churches' theatrical performance programs for youth could be studied. The results of this thesis will give clear examples of how current Assemblies of God churches run theatrical performance programs for youth. These results are helpful to me, as well as anyone desiring to begin a performance program at his church, as one may examine the results and emulate any of the studied performance programs.

A. Significance

This is a significant time to research church drama for adolescents, as the youth

drama phenomenon is a current one and there is a lack of scholarship on the subject. The

evidence of youth drama's rising place in today's world is seen in the membership

statistics in professional organizations such as the Educational Theatre Association

(EdTA). EdTA offers junior high and high school theatre troupes, professionals, and

college theatre students tools to strengthen their programs ("How to Join EdTA or ITS,"

page 1, www.EdTA.org).

When EdTA (formerly International Thespian Society) formed in 1929,

rudimentary pen and paper records of membership were kept but have not been

categorized or counted by the current staff at EdTA. In addition, records of troupes were

lost in a fire that occurred in 1984, and other records were fully or partially water

damaged (Benz). Therefore, EdTA's annual reports only reflect its activity since 2001.

The information EdTA provides shows growth in most membership, therefore illustrating

an increase in interest in theatre for youth, which enhances the relevancy of studying

performance programs for youth. EdTA's membership since 2001 shows the increase of

membership in both troupes designed for junior high and high school students. This

implies a growing interest in theatre for youth and the want and need of these troupes for

the tools EdTA provides.

According to EdTA's records, they have 1,062 continuously active troupes since

2001 (Benz, "ITS Troupes Chartered Since 8-1-2002 All Status"). Thousands of

additional troupes have been members of EdTA, however, they have been "withdrawn"

due to not paying the annual membership dues, or "resigned," meaning a representative

from their troupe contacted EdTA and stated they were letting their membership lapse

(Benz). The inflow and outflow of school memberships change annually. I researched

each school whose name alluded to Christian ideals and created a spreadsheet of

institutions that aligned with the definition of Christianity as explained in the terminology

section of this thesis. Of these consistent 1,062 schools, 89 of them operate under

Christian ideology. The memberships of these schools have seen growth since 2001,

showing an additional area of interest in theatre for youth in a Christian setting. Table 1

depicts the number of Christian ideologically based schools that have been continuous

members of EdTA from 2001 to 2007. The numbers indicate how many troupes joined in

the corresponding year.

Table 1 – Christian School Membership of EdTA

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Number of Christian ideologically based schools as continuous members of EdTA since 2001	2	11	7	11	11	21	13

Only two Christian organizations joined EdTA in 2001. This number goes up

550% to 11 schools in 2002. This jump illustrates an increase of interest in theatre for

youth. Continuous membership from Christian organizations plateaus from 2002-2005

and spikes up again in 2006 to 21, which almost doubled from the prior year. Despite the fall in membership of Christian organizations from 2006 to 2007, it is clear that since EdTA's records in 2001, there has been a significant rise in interest in theatre for youth, representing an increase in interest in educational theatre for both secular and Christian schools, thus proving this thesis' relevant and timely study for theater performance programs for youth.

This study will benefit theatre by providing new avenues for scholarship in theatre's cultural realm. There is plentiful research of theatre's beginnings: its effect on society, theatre as a cultural mirror, historical events as recorded directly and indirectly by theatre, benefits of theatre, etc. There is also sufficient study on Christian drama, the Morality Play, and the emergence of ritual theatre. This study hopes to blaze a new trail by examining an additional component of theatre in light of the contemporary Christian drama phenomenon: the construction of the theatrical performance program for youth. By discovering sources for theatrical performance programs for youth, this thesis may open doors for studies of structure, theme, character development, plot arc, or crises seen in medieval morality plays in comparison to contemporary morality plays. This will also benefit theatre by providing an alternate cultural perspective. This study creates a snapshot of what some of the Assemblies of God programs look like at this point in time. They are a reflection of the needs of the youth congregations.

This research will add to the fields of both theatre and religion by examining contemporary youth drama that is specially written for adolescents and identifying common features of contemporary youth drama produced by Protestant Evangelical

churches in California's Central Valley. The results of this study may assist churches in assessing their strategies for utilizing drama in worship. Prospective churches may use these results as a blueprint for beginning a performance program for youth.

Definitions are provided in the areas of theatre and religion. These terms are used throughout this thesis in examining the organization of Christian theatrical programs for youth.

B. Terminology

Assemblies of God (AG): Assemblies of God is the largest denomination under Pentecostalism. AG believes in four cardinal doctrines (which are emphasized in the 16 Fundamental Truths of Pentecostalism): salvation through Jesus Christ, divine healing, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the second coming of Christ ("16 Fundamental Truths," page 1, www.ag.org).

Christianity: Encyclopedia of Religion and Society, which has twelve scholarly editors and 109 scholarly contributors, recognizes Christianity as a religion with three approaches of understanding. Contributor Edward I. Bailey describes Christianity first as a *belief system:* "as (n the New Testament phrase) 'Jesus is Lord,' or, in the theological formulations of the Councils of Nicea, Constantinople, that the Divinity is a unity with three particular faces (Father, Son and Spirit), and that Jesus is 'God Incarnate' (both fully divine and fully human)" (Bailey, "Christianity"). As an *ethical ideal*, Bailey describes Christianity as "the practical recognition that (in Jesus's words, in the four Gospels) 'the Kingdom [of God, or of heaven] has come [or, is here, in the midst],' meaning, in *him*,

and in the attempt to extend its boundaries, in the life of the disciple and of the world"

("Christianity"). Finally, Bailey describes Christianity as a *social institution*, "by the

dominical sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist as well as by the spiritual and

organizational 'fellowship' ("Christianity"). For the purposes of this study, the definition

involving "Christianity" as a *belief system* will be used in this research.

Human Video: According to www.ChristianSkitScripts.com, the term *human video* is

used to describe the practice of a drama team acting out to a prerecorded song ("Human

Videos" par. 1).

Illustrated Sermon: A scene performed for a church congregation that accompanies the

pastor's sermon. "In theatrical style, costumed actors present biblical truths in dramatic

scenes ("Illustrated Sermon," page 1, paragraph 1, www.phenixcityfirst.org).

Ministry: The term "ministry" is restricted in this study to adults who carry forward the

mission of the Christian Church and the ministry of Jesus Christ to adolescents unless

otherwise noted. Therefore, *youth ministry* falls under the umbrella of ministry, and it

has its own style, context, and qualities that make it applicable and appealing to young

people (Canales 204).

Pentecostalism: David Yamane, contributor to <u>Encyclopedia of Religion and Society,</u>

states Pentecostalism is a religious movement within the conservative "evangelical" wing

of Protestantism. There are 16 Fundamental Truths in Pentecostalism: the scriptures are

inspired by God, there is only one true God, the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the fall of

man, the salvation of man, ordinances of the church, baptism of the Holy Spirit, initial

physical evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, sanctification, the church and its

mission, the ministry, divine healing, the Blessed Hope (of Christ's return), the millennial

reign of Christ, the final judgment, and the new heavens and new earth (Menzies and

Horton).

Protestant: *New American Webster Handy College Dictionary* defines Protestant as

"pertaining to a Christian church not Roman or Orthodox Catholic" (540). In addition,

Peter Staples, a contributor to <u>Encyclopedia of Religion and Society</u>, defines the tenets of

Protestantism as "(1) *sola gratia* (by grace alone), (2) *sola fide* (justification by faith

alone), and (3) *sola scriptura* (by scripture alone)" ("Protestantism, Protestants").

Skit: Theatre on a Shoestring's Web site contains a glossary of theatre terms that

describes *skit* as "a short dramatic sketch, usually humorous" ("Glossary of Theatre

Terms: S" par. 45, www.upstagereview.org).

Worship: In the Old and New Testament the term *worship* can be conveyed through

various words, each with a different emphasis, helping us to understand the entire

meaning of the term. Meanings include "to bow down," "to prostrate oneself out of

respect," "to serve," "praise," "adoration," and *laurueo*, meaning the worshipful serving

of God in heart and by life (Vukich and Vandegriff 389).

Youth: For the purposes of this thesis, youth "extends to an age bracket that can be

roughly identified as: pre-adolescence (9-13 yrs)" and "adolescence (14-19 yrs)" (Kiura,

226-227).

C. Methodology

My initial attempts to conduct this survey of Christian theatrical performance

programs for youth on United States' top ten churches according to attendance or San

Francisco's Bay Area churches did not provide fruitful samples of Christian youth drama

performed for junior high to high school audiences. Six of the United States' top ten

Protestant churches according to attendance did not respond to my inquiries. Three

churches stated they do not incorporate drama, and one church replied positively and

included the scripts of their most recently performed drama. Bay Area Protestant

churches that responded to my inquiries stated their incorporation of film and media in

place of drama. Because these first attempts were unsuccessful, and in an effort to focus

narrowly and easily administer quantitative surveys, I chose to survey California's

Central Valley, as I am familiar with its AG churches and have read and seen the dramas

they produce.

To identify common features of theatrical performance programs for youth at

Protestant Evangelical churches in California's Central Valley, I conducted a survey and

asked participating Protestant Evangelical churches questions about their dramatic

performance programs for grades six through twelve. For the purposes of this study, I

only looked at theatrical performance programs; I omitted film and media programs, as

drama may be only one facet of churches' creative arts programs. For the purposes of

narrowing my study and for my own purposes of developing a Worship Arts Ministry at

my Assemblies of God church, I surveyed Assemblies of God churches in the Central

Valley of California, which encompasses the area north of Merced, south of Chico, east

of the Altamont Pass, and west of the Sierra Nevada mountains. I included my own

church as a participant in this study and located additional churches by the Northern

California Nevada Assemblies of God directory. The directory listed churches

alphabetically by city and contained phone numbers, addresses, and names of the senior

pastors of each church. If the directory listed a Web site for the church, I went on-line to

see if the church had a youth pastor, a person in charge of theatre for youth, or an e-mail

address. If I was able to obtain an e-mail address from the Web site, I contacted the

pastors via e-mail requesting permission to include them in this study. If the church did

not list a Web site, I mailed each pastor a letter requesting the same information. The

churches were initially sent a permission letter stating my purpose and interest in

conducting this study and included directions on how to respond so I may be granted

permission. The interviews were conducted as desired by the participating organization:

phone interview, e-mail, or mailed correspondence.

I formulated a list of questions that would provide a skeleton of how Christian

theatrical performance programs for youth are built and how they function, including

rehearsal and performance frequency, scope of theatrical programs, number of involved

youths, and sources of dramatic material. The survey is located in Appendix E, and the

results and analysis of the survey data is located in Chapter 3. I numbered my questions

and assigned each questionnaire a number to organize the data. I selected the

participating organizations at random and assigned them a number to correlate with the

numbered questionnaire. To maintain anonymity the churches will be referred to by the

number they were assigned (Church #1, etc.). I created a spreadsheet to organize the

collected data. I presented the survey results for each individual church.

After finding areas in the survey results to be developed further, I contacted each church to obtain supplemental questions about church statistics and information regarding whether the person leading their performance program was paid or a volunteer. Additional inquiries were e-mailed or telephoned to the pastors of the ten churches concerning their knowledge or implementation of secular education resources currently being applied in various California junior high and high schools, their annual budget, a description of large evangelical events (if produced), the reason for not using special light or sound effects and certain forms of drama, and a request to attach by e-mail, mail, or fax, a script of a recent performance. The answers are addressed in the Narrative of Survey Results in Chapter 3.

Also in Chapter 3, I identified six common trends found in the churches' performance programs in comparison to each other and made valid conclusions based on my analyses. I drew conclusions as the researcher, traced my journey on this thesis, and acknowledged study that remains to be done if someone continued this research.

Before research began I completed a literature review to survey the field of secular and Christian performance programs for youth from scholarly sources to public school manuals. In an effort to blaze new ground with this research, this review of literature in Chapter 2 will reveal how much information regarding Christian performance programs for youth is accessible, how vacant it is in current research, what similarities arise between secular sources and Christian-based texts, and how useful all texts are for building a performance program. After this foundation is laid, I will present

the churches' survey questions and responses to provide a skeleton of how their theatre performance programs are organized. In an analysis, I will look at each church individually and make side-by-side comparisons to evaluate similarities and differences. The apex of this thesis will be the found churches' unknowing connections to secular theatre education standards and discovering the sources the church programs use to create their theatrical programs.

The challenges of this methodology lie in the process of formulating a survey from which the answers would aptly provide a blueprint of how participating churches organize their performance programs. Also, in researching sources that discuss constructing a performance program, it may be challenging to decipher if and how they are applicable to both secular and Christian performance programs.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. California Educational Standards for Youth Performance Programs

The California Department of Education published the <u>Visual and Performing</u>

<u>Arts Framework</u>, (hereafter <u>The Framework</u>), for California Public Schools, kindergarten

through twelfth grade. <u>The Framework</u> was created by the Visual and Performing Arts

Curriculum Framework and Criteria Committee (CFCC), and according to the California

Alliance for Arts Education Web site, <u>The Framework</u> was adopted by the State Board of

Education in January, 2001. Though a separate document, California's Visual and

Performing Arts (VAPA) standards are included in <u>The Framework</u>. "The Standards

describe the skills, knowledge, and abilities in dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts

that all students should be able to master at specific grade levels, pre-kindergarten

through grade twelve, in California public schools" ("California Alliance for Arts

Education," page 1, paragraph 4, www.artsed411.org). Whereas VAPA's standards

convey grade-level requirements for the arts, <u>The Framework</u> is a suggested

implementation of the VAPA standards. As its mission states, <u>The Framework</u>:

> provides guidelines for planning, delivering, and assessing a
> comprehensive arts education program for all students pre-K-12. It speaks
> to the teacher as it provides guidance for instruction of an arts discipline.
> Use of the Framework encourages uniform classroom instruction of the
> Visual and Performing Arts content Standards throughout the state.
>   The Framework provides connections between the arts and other
> core subjects to create an integrated curriculum. There are clear links
> between the works of arts of a specific artist, style, or technique and the
> history, the cultural context, or other related core topics.
>   The Framework outlines what students should know in the arts. It

reminds educators of the essential ideas of arts education. It explains the value of arts education. It presents criteria for evaluating instruction resources. It recommends the implementation of professional development programs at the school and district levels. It recognizes the arts role in the California economy. ("Educate Yourself and Others; Visual and Performing Arts Framework" par. 3, www.artsed411.org)

The Framework highlights each grade and the standards for that grade. This literature review will look at VAPA's key content standards (C.S.) for grades six through twelve, as some junior high schools teach sixth though eighth grades. The Framework's established principles state, "Definition of a balanced, comprehensive arts program is one in which the arts are studied as discrete disciplines related to each other and, when appropriate, to other subject areas in the curriculum" (The Framework 3). Therefore, each VAPA content standard is connected to a different discipline or strand. C.S. 1 Artistic Perception refers to processing and analyzing information through the language of the art. C.S. 2 Creative Expression involves "creating a work, performing, and participating in the arts disciplines" (3). C.S. 3 Historical and Cultural Context concerns the cultural and historical background for the art being studied. C.S. 4 Aesthetic Valuing teaches students how to analyze and critique works of visual art. C.S. 5 Connections, Relationships, and Applications involve connecting and applying what is learned in one arts discipline and comparing it to learning in other subject areas (The Framework 3). These theatre content standards for grades six through twelve illustrate the mission of arts in public junior high and high schools.

VAPA key content standards connect with all four of the strands in junior high and high school. The main focus of the component strands in junior high school is to encourage theatrical skills, to express and explore individuality and how that creatively

translates to the stage, and learning the role arts plays in people's lives (The Framework 72; 80; 88). The use of effective vocal expression, gesture, facial expression, and timing to create character, writing and performing with a range of character types connect with Creative Expression. The cultural differences of theatre traditions throughout the world are studied for Historical and Cultural Contexts. The seventh grade vocabulary associated with Artistic Perception is playwright, rehearsal, dress rehearsal, run-through, and cold reading. For Creative Expression, students are to "maintain a rehearsal script or notebook to record directions or blocking" (82).

High school students increase their ability to write, design, produce, and perform. At this point in their education, they "grasp the power of theatre to present and explore complex ideas and issues" in comedy and tragedy (110). They also analyze the impact of nontraditional theatre and film on societies. High school students understand the value of theatre skills as they relate to careers in theatre and other occupations. The component strand Creative Expression is utilized by high school students by applying processes and skills in acting, directing, designing, and scriptwriting to create formal and informal theatre, film/videos, electronic media productions, and to perform in them (112). The proficient student will make choices using script analysis, character research and reflection during the rehearsal process. Creatively, they will write scripts using basic dramatic structure, and design and produce scenes from a variety of periods and styles. In the advanced classes, students create characters from classical, contemporary, realistic, and nonrealistic dramatic texts. They will improvise or write dialogues with complex characters with unique dialogue. They will also collaboratively meet directorial goals as

designers, producers, or actors (112). Advanced students will perform, design, or direct theatre of specific styles, and compare and contrast forms of world theatre. The component strand for Connections, Relationships, and Applications emphasizes the students' theatre knowledge in connection with theatre as a career and other careers that benefit from skills learned in theatre. Advanced students will "demonstrate the ability to create rehearsal schedules, set deadlines, organize priorities, and identify needs when participating in a play or scene" (115). Advanced students will be able to communicate directorial choices to ensemble members using leadership skills. Advanced classes will also develop advanced or entry-level competencies for a career in an artistic or technical field in the theatrical arts (115). Although this description of The Framework is detailed, it will correspond with the church programs surveyed in this thesis and the responsibilities delegated to junior high and high school youths.

The California Educational Theatre Association (CETA) is officially California's professional theatre organization representing educators in pre-kindergarten through university, according to CETA's Web site, www.cetoweb.org. The CETA Position Paper was written to aid others in determining the acceptable content of theatre arts programs for kindergarten through the twelfth grade ("Welcome to the Official Web Site of the California Educational Theatre Association" par. 6, www.cetoweb.org). The position paper was written by former CETA presidents, Carolyn Elder, Carol Hovey, and Gai Jones and was unanimously approved by CETA Board of Directors in September 2007. This association also includes courses that meet the state requirements for entry into a State college or university. The paper states that CETA exists to "develop and promote

the highest standards in teaching, learning, networking, curriculum, [...] and accreditation criteria from kindergarten through entry to university level theatre education" (2). CETA strives to "strengthen" administrative support for theatre's implementation in the classroom. The position paper discusses the value of theatre education, quality theatre education and quality theatre educators. For the purposes of this study, the information regarding quality theatre education will serve in learning what CETA believes to be the most important aspects in performance programs for junior high and high school.

CETA provides an outline of aspects that a middle school and high school level theatre program should include. A comparison of the outlines for middle school and high school showed few differences. They both contained:

- A commitment to artistic excellence
- Positive, energetic teachers, directors, staff, and students
- Properly certified teachers
- Educators and directors who implement innovations from readings, workshops, professional associations, and conferences
- Opportunities for students to be involved in all aspects of theatre— including acting, designing, technical theatre, theatre management, writing, and directing
- Occasions for all faculty members of the visual and performing arts department to work with theatre students
- Co-curricular activities for those who are in theatre classes and those who are not, with scheduling that allows students to participate in play production activities
- Experience in performing for various audiences using material from various playwrights, genres, styles, and different media
- Participation in theatre festivals for professional adjunction
- Adequate equipment, materials, storage, and facilities for both classes and productions
- Theatre space under the control of the theatre teacher, with guaranteed availability
- Appropriate class size of 20-25 or less

- Programs accessible to handicapped participants and audience members
- Video capabilities for student self-evaluation
- Resources for attending state and college theatre activities, teacher conferences, and other activities outside the local area. (28)

Junior high aspects included the foundation of a "sequential Pre-K through 8 program" by trained teachers, sequential standards in grades six through eight, a curriculum guide for each course, information about scholarships and professional opportunities, textbooks, scripts and recording devices for student use, and the opportunity to attend performances by community theatre, colleges, and other schools (26). CETA believes that middle schools should produce two theatre productions a year: one classic play and one musical comedy (26). At the high school level, however, CETA states that students should be given the opportunity to work in at least three productions a year (28). There are just two other specifications for high school: having a children's theatre production produced annually and having information about vocational and avocational opportunities in theatre (28). These sources identify aspects of junior high and high school theatre programs of which the California Department of Education has approved.

CETA frequently cites VAPA's key content standards in its discussion of theatre arts programs' needs for "well-planned and executed standards-based instruction" (Position 24). In addition to CETA's critical recommendation for theatre to be a choice as an elective in every middle school, the emphasis during middle school should be on the "process of creating theatre" rather than on formal productions (Position 25). They describe an "excellent" middle school theatre arts program as needing to integrate rigor,

while incorporating the responsibility for aesthetic choices (25). Just like VAPA's content standards' explanation of sixth through eighth grade's need for individuality, CETA believes students should "be encouraged to express their individuality, while increasing their self-confidence" (25). Middle school theatre students "should be expected" to meet VAPA's standards of Artistic Perception and Creative Expression "as they use such terms as vocal projection and subtext as they describe their theatre experiences" (The Framework 25, 74, 25). They will also begin to "show more confidence in evaluating theatrical experiences" by using their knowledge of make-up, stage lighting, scenery, props, and costuming, which falls into the Aesthetic Valuing standard (25, The Framework 82). VAPA's Creative Expression content standard for eighth grade includes student application of directing, acting, designing, and scriptwriting (92). CETA concurs and states that students will "demonstrate directorial abilities" and "improve their acting skills" (26). CETA is not as specific for high school recommendations. The Position Paper simply refers back to VAPA's five content standards for proficiency in high school theatre. CETA states that a year of visual or performing arts should achieve knowledge of theatre arts that may be applied in various areas of students' future life, participation in theatre arts courses, preparation for advanced theatre study, and the ability to become "appreciative, discriminating audience members" (27).

There are few limitations for church directors to implement these educational sources. VAPA's standards are helpful to church administrators in that they show what theatrical skills youths should be able to master at their age level. The Framework

supplies readers with activities and suggestions to implement the standards. Church

directors may use these ideas to provide their youth ministry with age appropriate games

to challenge the youth and grow their experience and education in the subject of theatre.

VAPA's standards and The Framework are helpful in citing activities for youths;

however, they only focus on the student's education and lack information regarding the

construction of a performance program. CETA's position paper contains a variety of

guidelines with which to build a theatrical program. Some helpful items suggested by

CETA that would be suitable for use in constructing a church theatrical performance

program are a commitment to artistic excellence, experience performing for various

audiences with texts from different backgrounds, genres, styles and media, opportunities

for students to be involved in all aspects of theatre, and participation in theatre festivals.

CETA posits items that are specific to an educational theatre program that may not prove

to be as useful to a church program, such as properly certified teachers, items involving

other faculty members, appropriate class size, and resources for furthering a collegiate

education. An additional difference between CETA's recommendations and a church

performance program, (and some educational facilities), is the suggested use of adequate

equipment, theatre space under the control of the theatre teacher, and video capabilities.

Theatre space at some churches may be shared with the pastor and/or musicians. Some

churches, as well as schools, face a budget issue that makes the obtaining of adequate

equipment or video cameras impossible. While CETA's paper is useful in establishing

certain ideals, it does not aid in constructing a complete theatrical performance program

for youth at a church setting. All three resources are useful for either determining what

expectations are acceptable for junior high and high school students or performance programs, however, they do not speak to the spiritual needs of church performance programs.

B. Additional Secular Sources for Theatre Performance Programs for Youth

Secular sources regarding performance programs for youth stress the importance of organization and delegation as well as artistic content. Some aspects of these sources may be beneficial for starting a theatre performance program in a church setting. A current source for teaching or directing a theatre programs is EdTA. The EdTA Web site states that it was originally focused on theatre in high school, but in recent years has widened the scope of its mission "to embrace the concept of theatre as an instrument of lifelong learning and has expanded its membership to include students and teachers in middle schools, and college students preparing for careers in theatre education" ("About Us: The Education Theatre Association" par. 1, www.EdTA.org). EdTA publishes *Dramatics*, a monthly magazine for theatre students and teachers, and *Teaching Theatre*, a quarterly journal for educators. EdTA sponsors the annual International Thespian Festival, the premiere showcase for high school theatre, chapter conferences and festivals throughout the United States and Canada, and Junior Thespian Festivals for middle school students and their teachers. The International Thespian Society is the honorary society for high school theatre students. EdTA reports that there are International Thespian Society members in more than 3,400 North American schools and has inducted more than two million members since its founding in 1929 ("About Us: The Education

Theatre Association" par. 3, www.EdTA.org). Junior Thespians are the middle school

branches of the Thespian Society. EdTA publishes two sources for teachers, theatre

directors, and other interested parties and provides teaching and performance resources.

There are benefits for each of the four areas of membership (International Thespian

Society Membership, Professional Membership, Pre-professional Membership, and

Emeritus Membership): member rates for purchasing materials from the EdTA Web site,

member rates for EdTA events, a nine-month subscription to Dramatics magazine, a

subscription for the quarterly journal Teaching Theatre, access to members-only content

on the EdTA Web site, and access to network-building opportunities, including the EdTA

on-line membership directory ("How to Join EdTA/ITS: Membership Benefits" par 9,

www.EdTA.org). The EdTA Web site is a helpful tool for those in church ministry in

that its sources discuss current trends in theatre and performance. Although becoming a

member may be costly, church directors would have access to implements that may

improve their performance programs. Church directors may also utilize their teaching

resources although lacking in information regarding spiritual leadership.

The scholarly world is replete with information regarding theatre and the arts as

tools for personal development, however, for the purposes of this thesis, Elliot Eisner's

text will be used as a representative of the vast sources available on the subject. Eisner is

a scholar in the area of education evaluation and has made great contributions to the

theories of incorporating the arts into the educational curriculum (Smith). Eisner's

theories of art as a personal development tool are valuable to this thesis in that they prove

theatre's relevance in the classroom and churches. Those in church drama ministries may

find Eisner's theories helpful in their performance programs, as Eisner shows a

connection between the arts and human development, which is lacking in Christian

theatre resources. Learning of these cognitive connections may aid in the development of

the drama ministry just as they would a secular arts program. Eisner begins his book The

Arts, Human Development, and Education by explaining that bringing arts educational

change will require more than the annual concert or the lone exhibition, which are not

"adequate expressions of the type of climate and program that children should have

access to" (vi). Eisner sees children's concerts and other visible achievements as only the

beginning of quality arts education: "too often their major function is to placate rather

than to serve as a step toward significant educational change" (vi). With this theory,

church directors should take into account that there is more to a performance program

than producing plays. There is the human experience of creation, the conveying of ideas

within the art, and the journey into the imagination:

> To play with images, ideas, and feelings, to be able to recognize and
> construct the multiple meanings of events, to perceive and conceive of
> thinking from various perspectives, to be able to be a clown, a dreamer, a
> taker of risks—these are some of the personal inclinations that the arts
> require, both for their appreciation and creation. (vii)

Eisner's requirements for arts to flourish in schools may also be applied to drama

ministries. In teaching theatre, there needs to be a secure environment where students

feel the freedom to take risks in their characters. The characters that are portrayed,

whether for a youth audience at a church or for a high school assembly, should be given

the same attention to allow for maximum audience identification. Churches would

especially benefit from Eisner's text in that their goals to evangelize through drama

highly depend on the audience's identification with the characters on stage, thus the need

to encourage the creative side of producing believable characters and writing realistic

scripts. Eisner believes that arts activities are the keys that open the "wellspring of

human creativity" as he states, "Because creative thinking is supposed to emanate from

the deeper levels of human mentation [...], it was reasonable to assume that through art

human creativity could be unlocked" (7). Drama ministries can take this idea of creative

thinking developing from a "deeper" level and apply it to their programs by associating

this deeper level with being spiritually inspired in the creative process. Developing the

students' creativity in areas of performance, such as acting or directing, aids the

formulation and expression of ideas, which Eisner describes as the value of the arts in

human development. "It is though the process of working with materials that these ideas,

images, and feelings are not only formulated, but clarified and shared" (8). The process

of trying new ideas and sharing creativity produces an atmosphere that cannot be

reproduced elsewhere; it is in the creative experience where the arts impact human

development.

Eisner discusses four stages of human development and how the works of art

created in each stage are evaluated, not the art piece itself, but the "visual and kinesthetic

stimulation emanating from the use of materials" (9). This study is focusing on theatre

performance programs for junior high and high school students, therefore this Literature

Review will concentrate on Eisner's writings on the fourth stage of development that

begins in early adolescence. Eisner highlights the aesthetic and expressive aspects of the

work that is done. Adolescents convey feelings they are interested in articulating, though

technique is not emphasized, as "this stage gets to the heart of artistic expression" (10).

This idea of expressing individuality is also seen in The Framework's description of

junior high theatre standards, where it states, "By deepening their knowledge of content

and practicing their skills, they learn to express themselves as individuals within the

group" (80). Expressing individuality is important in both church and secular settings.

The significance in the creation of art, as Eisner posits, is "the ability to create forms that,

in fact, express in nonverbal ways what cannot be conveyed in any other way" (10).

Eisner produces a responsibility for theatre directors to challenge students and create a

performance program that provides space for expression and encourages creativity.

Church directors may benefit from this source by seeing their performance program as an

opportunity, not merely for Christian purposes, but additionally as a forum for exploring

theatre and its value in human development.

Charlotte Kay Motter's Theatre in High School: Planning, Teaching, Directing

begins by answering questions about why theatre in the high school curriculum is

important. Although written in 1970, Motter's book is beneficial in meeting CETA's

suggestions and The Framework's content standards. Motter, a pioneer in theatre

education for secondary schools, cites benefits of theatre, such as meeting student's

needs, long-term effects, and making a reality of the dream of being an actor (iv). Like

CETA's suggestion, Motter defines the qualifications of the drama teacher as having

talent and training in the field and having an ethical responsibility to acquire knowledge

that fully qualifies him to do the job well (8). The Framework's key content standards

mimic Motter's units of study; Motter highlights the relationship of the drama department

to the school and the community, and suggests units of study such as dramatic literature, theatre history, evaluation of performance, pantomime and movement, voice, diction, oral interpretation, and classroom scenes (64). Motter also discusses schedule, short plays, full-length plays, publishers, and reference material for teachers. This source would be beneficial for those involved in an arts ministry because it covers many values of teaching theatre including the teacher's ethical responsibility to be knowledgeable about the subject being taught and the relationship among theatre, youth, and community, which is an important concept in theatre in a church setting; as seen in the survey results, many churches' goals are to reach the community and make a long-lasting connection. As with EdTA, there is no mention of running a theatre program with a spiritual purpose.

Richard A. Tinapp's "Secondary School Theatre Management" discusses secondary schools' responsibilities to attract an audience to a theatre and to guarantee the audience's safety. Tinapp recommends establishing and controlling an operating budget as the most significant aspect of theatre management. He also covers four broad areas of importance, which are publicity and advertising, box office and operation, house management, budget and budget control. Tinapp's information was helpful for constructing a well-functioning theatre on the managerial end, and church ministries can benefit from his perspectives on controlling budgets and managing. James R. Opelt, in his more recently published book Organizing and Managing the High School Theatre Program, delves into an encompassing look at high school theatre. He covers planning a season, including checking into dates, considering scripts, and publicity themes. Opelt's chapter on building an audience addresses preplanning, reserved seating, press releases

and having the student body as an audience. He also discusses collaboration between directors and technical supervision. Unlike Motter and Tinapp, Opelt includes adult director/designer job descriptions. "Each staff member must know what the other one is doing and what is expected of him or her. Each individual must know where his or her duties begin and end" (25). Keeping these descriptions in mind, Opelt insists that the director has the final say (26). Opelt includes suggestions on auditions, rehearsing the play, rehearsal schedules, audition forms, and he emphasizes individual character analysis. "You, as the director must look at rehearsals as being important and not just another after-school duty assignment. Let students know by your actions and word that directing is as important to you as your classroom work. This will then influence the students" (33). Opelt also wrote chapters about costumes and choreographing the high school musicals. He suggests plays and musicals, as Motter does, and recommends supply companies. If churches have a budget with which to work, Tinapp's look at logistically sound structured programs could be helpful to churches. Opelt's focus on audience building may not be helpful for churches that have open seating, as most churches do not require or need reserved seating arrangements. Advertising is not generally practiced for a church program's typical theatrical performance; however, if a church produces a larger evangelical event, advertising is beneficial in that youth from the community, other than the usual attendees, may be present, thus widening the audience to achieve any evangelical goal the church may have. In this manner, Opelt's information on advertising is helpful for church programs utilizing advertisements. Opelt also suggests heightened communication between directors and technical supervision.

Some churches may face difficulties in communication or division between different ministries. Because there is a need for cohesion in theatre, whether in a church setting or high school, Opelt's guidance is helpful to bridge any gap that may be present between director and technical support.

John Wray Young's <u>Play Directing for the High School Theatre</u> is written to provide organization details and suggestions specifically for the director of high school theatre. His writing is geared toward the first-time director, and he begins by asking, "What do you like in Art?" (15). Once a reader identifies his passion or view for art, he is able to employ his artistic vision in his play. Young describes how to select a play, which involves consideration for pleasing the audience (36), the school authorities (37), and the students (39). He also suggests making the play "something you want" (39) to keep the director's interest alive. Young also explores discovering student potential, the rehearsal plan, the impact of blocking, better speech for actors, and concepts of characterization. Young's focus on the audience may be of some help for churches as they attempt to fully gain the audience's attention. Young advises to select a play to please the audience, however, the survey results of this study show the churches' play selection is aptly intended to challenge the audience.

Whereas Young's book is for the first-time director, Roy A. Beck's <u>Play Production Today!</u>, published in 1983, is a student guide to theatre, stagecraft, acting, costumes, and make-up. Beck and Opelt are more recent sources, as Motter published in 1970 and Opelt in 1991. Although dated, Motter's contribution to the educational theatre rivals Beck and Opelt, for Motter's defense of theatre's relevancy in the classroom and

the implications she makes between educational theatre and the community are still

significant. Beck introduces the role of the director and provides an understanding of the

director's job description. As Beck states, the director's role "is to interpret the play,

create its mode of production, and prepare it for performance" (12). As if to prepare the

reader for interaction with a director, Beck continues, "The director divides his other

work into two distinct segments: pre-rehearsal preparation and rehearsals. The director

will examine [the script] for type, style, theme, structure, and the manner in which the

playwright treats characters and dialogue" (15). To aid readers in understanding the

process of auditioning, Beck wrote the chapter "Philosophy of Casting," where he states,

"directors constantly review the most significant requirements of each role; and, evaluate

the skills and abilities of those who are trying out" (252). Like Motter and Opelt, Beck

includes an alphabetical list of play suggestions. Beck provides instructions for the role

of the director that may be appropriate for church directors. Beck gives light to

additional details of the director's responsibilities that church programs may not have

utilized. His "Philosophy of Casting" may be helpful for churches with large

performance programs where there is much competition for acting roles.

Teaching Artist at Work, by Barbara McKean, discusses the responsibility of the

teacher for teaching children's theatre. She suggests building a framework for teaching.

"At the very least, the teacher is viewed as a skilled artisan or craftsperson, who builds a

repertoire of skilled actions that is called on both in preparing in teaching and in the

spontaneity of the teaching moment" (12). McKean believes the children's theatre

teacher needs to have content knowledge, which is "unique understanding of content the

artist brings to the classroom or educational setting" (12), and pedagogical knowledge: "knowledge of child psychology and learning theories, the organization of curriculum and methods of instruction, classroom management, and the philosophical and social aims of education" (16). McKean's insights regarding qualities of children's theatre teachers are relevant to implementing a theatrical program; however, this source does not aid in this study of how theatre programs are organized. This source may not be helpful for churches implementing a performance program focused on junior high and high school youths.

Michael Flemming's book Starting Drama Teaching gives a complete description of the field of teaching drama. He discusses the value of performance, the place of text, the importance of continuity and progression, and the development of competence in drama. Flemming places drama's value "both across the curriculum and as a separate subject" (7). He suggests planning for drama, which preserves an element of intermediate drama, play production, stagecraft, selection of plays, Shakespeare in the high school, play reading, play viewing, play analysis, directing, and producing plays. The appendices contain suggested reading for students, rehearsal and production flexibility and "sensitivity to particular contexts, while at the same time providing enough structure so that the inexperienced teacher is not left foundering" (8). Flemming suggests purposeful use of games and exercises, and he explores the practical implications of conceptual differences between concepts like "drama" and "dramatic play (8). Flemming also includes instructional information about drama techniques for the inexperienced theatre teacher. Flemming examines drama in relation to play text, poetry and prose, and

he looks at the place of performance in the lesson as well as in the context of the wider

culture of the school. "Methodology of performance drama should be seen as an

invaluable way of facilitating meaningful performance work" (9). Flemming considers

the problems involved in describing progression in drama and emphasizes the need to

describe achievement in ways, which does not reduce the subject to a "mechanistic

acquisition of skills" (8). Although void of spiritual contexts, Flemming's detail of the

value of drama may be of use to church programs in their conception of drama as a

teaching tool. Church directors may also find Flemming's book helpful for planning

curriculum in teaching all aspects of drama.

Dramatic texts and Web sites will be useful in defining terms that may be present

in the results of this study. Everything About Theatre! by Robert L. Lee is a self-

proclaimed "guidebook of theatre fundamentals" (i). In addition to touching upon acting

and elementary stagecraft, Lee introduces his readers to types of plays that give a brief

description of theatre's genres, such as comedy and drama, which may be helpful in this

study. He also mentions that some plays "just don't seem to fit into any category" (57).

Whereas Lee discusses many aspects of theatre on a general scale, Chris Baldwin's Stage

Directing covers more information regarding organization and practical skills of directing

theatre, however this study will utilize his Glossary of Terms, which will serve useful in

explaining features that may be present in performance programs. S. Lorain Hull's

Strasberg's Method is a source that serves as a practical guide for acting and directing.

This study will use the glossary in Strasberg's Method that will aid in defining results

collected in this study. For the purposes of this thesis, these sources will primarily be

used for their glossaries to define specific terminology; these texts provide in-depth approaches to acting and directing techniques, however, they are not written for the purpose of organizing youth performance programs. Additional sources will be utilized in researching the organization of youth performance programs.

These sources are useful for setting the stage for performance programs for youth in the secular world. Standards, suggestions, and numerous theatre books are available containing information regarding starting theatrical programs in communities and schools. Although a church may be part of a community, these sources lack information on how to begin a performance program specifically for a church setting. It will be helpful to investigate the scholarly and religious world to see what texts are available involving performance programs in a Christian atmosphere and to examine similarities in performance program sources between secular and sacred realms.

C. The Scholarly World and Christian Drama

A thorough search for scholarly articles on several databases, (using the search terms "youth," adolescent," and "teen" in conjunction with "theatre," theater," and "drama"), produced little current information regarding theatre and the adolescent in the United States. Articles included information about children's theatre and theatre in middle schools and high schools, but were not specifically focused on the organization or function of performance programs or the content of the plays performed. Jenny Hughes and Karen Wilson wrote, "Playing a Part: the Impact of Youth Theatre on Young People's Personal and Social Development," which researches functions of theatre for young

people and theatre's positive contributions to their social and personal development. "Effective youth theatres employ a delivery style, method and process that can make an important contribution to young people's transitions to adulthood in the current climate" (57). Here the authors explain how theatre functions as a positive contribution into youths' lives. These articles discuss aspects of adolescence and theatre and reflect the scholarly world's lack of information, thus enhancing the importance of this study on theatrical performance programs for youth.

John Dillenberger compares theologians and their views on Christian visual arts in his article "Contemporary Theologians and the Visual Arts." Dillenberger discusses George Lindbeck, who holds high regard for arts used in Christianity. In examining the ever-changing idiosyncrasies of the English language as recorded in Christian dramas, (a form of visual arts), over the centuries, Lindbeck points out that these evolving dramatic scripts, though consistent in doctrine, are an integral part of learning about mankind's humanity: "The result is that the arts are taken as seriously as the metaphysical, that they are not an adjunct to the verbal, but provide, as do other modalities, fundamental clues to what we are and are becoming, facets which belong to the theological domain" (609). Langdon Gilkey, American Christian scholar, concurs with Lindbeck regarding the relationship between art and Christianity. According to the University of Chicago News Office, Gilkey was "one of the most influential American Christian theologians of the 20th century" ("Langdon Gilkey, 1919-2004" par.1, www.news.uchicago.edu). As Dillenberger quotes from Gilkey's "Can Art Fill the Vacuum?", "The arts must contribute to theology, not by illustration of what we already know, but by what they themselves

uniquely do" (189). Gilkey continues, "Art opens up the truth hidden behind and within the ordinary; it provides a new entrance into reality and pushes us through that entrance" (190). Guiding the audience through the "entrance" of reality in efforts to draw youths to a closer relationship with Christ is the Christian drama: an art form that has since evolved from medieval morality plays, which approaches audiences with ideas and feelings directly, and the mystery play's "circumspect" approach (Grainger 92). These sources identify the relevance of utilizing theatre in a church setting.

There is a wealth of information about religious or liturgical drama, as well as drama's beginning and progression into ritual theater; however, there is a lack of scholarly information regarding contemporary youth drama performed in a church setting. Peter Senkbiel discusses the history and growth of contemporary drama in his article "Why Christian Theatre is Exploding." Senkbiel traces North America's Christian subculture through the 1960s and 1970s and presents a political and social framework from which Christian drama became popular. Senkbiel attributes three major factors to the United States' acceptance and rebirth of religious drama. First, Senkbiel notes, "the number of colleges and universities offering theatre training has increased significantly since the 1960s" (6), thus presenting an opportunity for college students to bring their academic experience into their churches. Once trained, they are now better equipped to prepare, perform, direct or produce. Second, the 1960s and 1970s encouraged special interest groups and fostered theatres such as political theatres, women's theatres, and theatres run by African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans. Senkbiel includes Christian theatre as a special interest group due to its lack of popularity and minimal

opportunity for mainstream acceptance (6). Senkbiel continues, "the gospel became big box office during the 1970s and early 1980s" with musicals such as <u>Jesus Christ Superstar</u> and <u>Godspell</u>. (6). On a more detailed level, Fred W. Beuttler, author of "Revivalism in Suburbia; 'Son City' and the origins of Willow Creek Church, 1972-1980," reviews the beginnings of contemporary church worship styles, including theatre, since the late 1700s. Beuttler outlines phases of the social and political factors that played a role in transforming church congregations from decade to decade on a national scale and then narrows the scope of his study of the 1970s and 1980s specifically to the suburban Chicago area. "Rather than professional evangelistic crusades, the Son City movement [a spurt in the growth of Protestant Evangelical churches in Chicago's suburbs] was itself the primary outreach, with everything designed to make the seeker feel comfortable" (6). These scholars laid the foundation for contemporary worship styles as seen in the Protestant Evangelical churches involved in this research. These bodies of works also provide a framework from which current performance programs may have been built.

A portion of this study will discuss sources of scripts that are being performed in dramatic performance programs for youth. It will be helpful to examine the scholarly world's opinion on Christian drama, though certainly lacking in abundance. A recent search through scholarly databases using the search terms "theatre," "theatre," or "drama" in conjunction with "Christian" or "religious" produced few results.

Ugo Betti's article "Religion and the Theatre" contained clear criticism of theatre performed with religious content. Betti specifically criticizes dramas performed in a

Christian church. The UXL Encyclopedia of World Biography claims Betti, an Italian

playwright, was one of the major figures in Italian theatre in the 20th Century ("Ugo

Betti" page 1, www.bnet.com). He was seen as predominately pessimistic and concerned

with man's moral responsibility, guilt, and forgiveness ("Betti, Ugo" page 1,

www.bartelby.com). Though published in The Tulane Drama Review in 1960, Betti's

article bears relevance in identifying the reasons as to why the contemporary art world

sees Christian drama as inferior. Betti recognizes the authenticity of religious plays:

"They are born, ultimately of the ineradicable need of modern man to feel reassured by

certain hopes [i.e., the promise of heaven if one accepts Jesus]" (4), however, he feels

they are "contaminated" with motives that "end by overwhelming" the play (4). He

describes one contamination of a play as "religiosity," or having characteristics of a

religion that, in his opinion, is no longer a necessity of the world (4). This is seen in plots

containing the "either/or, the clear-cut boundaries between good and evil" (5). Another

contamination is that of evoked emotion. A play's ability to nurture conviction in the

audience aids in his concept of overwhelming motives in that the emotion evoked is

"cherished" as "self-gratification," where, for a brief period of time, the audience is in

direct connection with that sin of which they are being convicted. Betti believes that the

audience's emotional reaction, though real, is wasted and will not change their day-to-day

lives as he describes his experience as an audience member during a religious play: "Thus

the tears that flowed down the cheeks of the lady at my side left me with the suspicion

that they would have very little influence on what she would do once she was back home.

Those tears did not change that woman" (8).

Betti's disappointment in religious plays is due to "reasons of pure dramatics" (7). Predictability and providing anticipated action, character, or plot is a major attribute to poorly written Christian drama, according to Betti. If the audience member knows at the onset of the play what the outcome will be, there will be less manifestation of change in an individual's life. Betti recalls a dissatisfying Christian theatre experience: "No matter how cleverly or ingenuously the author had shuffled his cards, everything happened exactly as it had been arranged and also, unfortunately, as it had been foreseen" (8). Betti regretfully writes "unfortunately," as he dislikes the audience's missed opportunity for experiencing unknown circumstances. Betti continues addressing the main fault of religious theatre as predictability:

> from the very beginning every passion and every character appeared already labeled and defined, or (if the author had ably managed to deceive us) they had been labeled and defined in the author's own mind. They entered into the plays, then, already judged and without hope, judged a *priori* and not brought in to struggle with real alternatives of victory and defeat, but to run through a fixed (and, therefore, habitual) trajectory, measured by a yardstick which allows no error. (8)

The lack of "real alternatives" for characters creates a disconnection with the audience; they are not identifying with the character's hypothetical possible choices, instead they are waiting for the predetermined plot to unfold. Thus, the repercussion of not having believable characters leads to portraying unrealistic life situations on stage.

As posited by Betti, Christian drama lacks realistic language, believable characters, and in most cases, focuses almost entirely on plot. These issues yield Christian drama's perceived neglect of other qualities, such as character narrative arc or language that reflects contemporary vernacular. Scholars and experts discuss challenges

in creating contemporary Christian drama in their writings. Dorothy Lee Sayers discusses Christian drama's challenge to be well-written and realistic in her article, "Types of Christian Drama: With Some Notes on Production." She states, "The church in this country has been making a determined—though somewhat confused and uncoordinated—effort to grapple with the problems and opportunities presented by Christian drama" (85). Sayers states that because of drama's unique form of both audio and visual stimulation, the pictures presented on stage will remain embedded in the audience for better or worse: "a thing shown in action affects the imagination and sticks in the mind more intensely than any amount of verbal instruction or argument. And this is the whole case for Christian drama—and also the whole case against bad religious drama" (91). There may be other non-scholarly sources regarding negative aspects of Christian drama, however this thesis is only reviewing scholarly writings on the subject.

In her article "Spiritual Formation Through Drama," Fredericka Berger discusses the importance of using drama in teaching theological issues. Berger argues the strength of drama is, not only the dialogue of the characters, it is the listening of the audience. "The greatest strength of drama as a tool for instruction is that it is a distillation of existence" (35). Her main objectives are to identify and discuss religious issues in specific contemporary dramas, to prepare students to use play readings and discussion as part of a religious education program in the local church, and to develop criteria for making judgments about the quality of play scripts (37). The objectives she states here are also the objectives of Christian drama designed for adolescents. Although Berger focuses on the analysis of drama in a college seminary class setting rather than a church

youth group, her objectives are applicable and relevant to this study of drama performed for adolescents. Although some scholars point out problems in Christian theater (e.g., undeveloped characters and plot), some experts in the field have written books suggesting how to create quality dramas.

The Skit Guys are a duo of Christian actors, writers, and directors who came together at a young age to perform sketches. As pastors today, both men head a youth drama camp and are drama pastors at their home churches. Their theatre experience comes from performing in their youth, but they do not hold degrees in theatre. Eddie James and Tommy Woodard wrote <u>Instant Skits: Using Improv to Create Memorable Moments in Ministry</u> and <u>Skits that Teach: Lactose Free For Those Who Can't Stand Cheesy Skits</u>. In their books they discuss the factors making up "cheesy" scenes based on their experiences and the opinions of youths with whom they have worked. Regarding dialogue, they sarcastically state, "We've done our best to avoid phrases, sayings or clichés that either make you sound totally gnarly or drastically affect your coolness factor" (9). They also encourage the reader to make changes in the dialogue in order to "keep it real" (9). Skit Guys examples are located in the appendix. Roger Grainger's book <u>Presenting Drama in Church</u> touches on improving church drama's content. He suggests prioritizing content above form: "The content and form are interdependent. If the content, the story that is, is really true, really evocative in its ability to reach out to minds and hearts to become part of our experience, the form will somehow emerge" (3). This differs from theatre educators' view of scriptwriting at the high school age. VAPA's descriptions of content standards are more strategic in writing with a focus.

Students are to write to a variety of periods and styles and improvise realistic scripts with

unique dialogue (The Framework 112).

These resources all contain helpful information to build a theatrical performance

program for youth. These texts are helpful for church directors by providing a historical

and social context from which current church programs are constructed, and as separate

sources, they each present helpful morsels, such as scriptwriting suggestions and caution

of avoiding dated material in an effort to fully engage the audience, however, they do not

contain a complete foundation for creating a performance program. A detailed literature

review of theatre ministry sources will aid in viewing how professionals in the field of

Christian drama suggest constructing such theatre programs.

D. Drama Ministry Sources

Whereas secular sources are focused on organization of the program, Christian

texts regarding performance programs for youth stress reaching youth and engaging them

for a spiritual purpose. In looking at performance programs in an evangelical church

setting, it will be helpful to look at books written purposefully for initiating a church

drama ministry to learn exactly what the perceived criteria are for a "successful" drama

ministry in a Protestant Evangelical church. Paul M. Miller's Developing the Church

Drama Ministry is a guide for developing a church drama team that addresses a ministry's

accountability and its relationship to culture. "It is in the interaction between the Church

and the culture where drama ministries may speak appealingly or prophetically in ways

the secular mind can hear, while yet maintaining a deep and authentic commitment to the

mission and the message of the Church" (22). Miller describes drama as a form of ministry and worship as he quotes his former pastor and the New Testament in the Bible. The apostle Paul, in a letter to the Romans, illustrates the church as a Body of Christ. "Everyone who is in that body is involved in a ministry" (14). Miller recalls his pastor encouraging the church to serve in ministry according to their talents, thus Miller defines his drama ministry as worship, as it is edifying the church. Whereas Miller focuses his attention outwardly on drama ministry's effect on congregations, Grainger concentrates on the inner workings of the drama ministry itself. In his introduction he states, "Always remember that the possibilities of drama as a medium for human understanding, feeling and experience are immense" (xi). He believes that religious theatre is a theatre of sharing "not only of the final product, the play that is shared with the audience in the actual performance, but the actual making of the play, in all its details, belongs to the group and reflects the life of the group" (2). Discussions of the pastimes of ensemble building and group cohesiveness are found in the secular world as well. The Framework states that theatre "unifies groups" and "reinforces group values" (146). In reference to middle school aged students at this point in their development, The Framework affirms adolescents have become "competent group members" and as they "identify with a group in meeting common goals, they develop a strong sense of camaraderie" (150). Grainger discusses practicalities of religious theatre, such as group dynamics, the ministry inside the drama ministry, and the differences between working on new plays, others' plays, and new works. Miller's criteria for beginning a drama ministry are realizing the church is ready for drama ministry, recognizing the benefits of meeting

between productions, accountability for its mission, and the responsibility to tell the story, persuade, warn, and entertain through drama. They are more focused than public schools on the spiritual connection between the group members and the responsibility of the members to live a life worthy of imitation, although some public schools may have behavioral or academic criteria which the students must meet in order to maintain involvement. Grainger maintains that Christian drama is most successful or "works best" when it "uses the approach taken by Jesus himself" in parables (94). He states the "'theatre of parable' is the theatre of recognition rather than indoctrination. It sets out to intrigue rather than to inform, - but because it makes us do the work of interpreting and understanding for ourselves, it ends up imparting the kind of information we simply can't forget" (94). These texts have a ministerial point of view where the focus is not just on the organization and product being produced. These books provide guidelines for understanding drama ministries at Protestant Evangelical churches in which the surveys for this study will be administered.

Guidelines for religious drama are also found in books and articles written for youth pastors who emphasize the need for redefining youth ministries to meet the needs of the ever-changing youth; in some cases, this includes utilizing a performance program to incorporate youth drama into the sermon or as a form of worship. Timeless Youth Ministry, by Lee Vukich and Steve Vandegriff, focuses on making youth's worship experience relevant and meaningful to them. This means providing them with worship styles with which they can identify. Vukich and Vandegriff state that the church has two options: it can adopt principles and techniques to contemporary youth culture, or it can

hold onto a traditional approach (26). The authors cite many successful Christian organizations that have chosen the first option and maintain that leaders of these organizations state they are still committed to conservative doctrine although their methodology has constantly changed (27). One of the contemporary methods, the authors suggest, is the demonstrated or drama method. "All things considered, demonstration can become the most effective means of communication to the teenager" (347). Jim Hampton and Rick Edwards, authors of Worship-Centered Teaching, agree with Vukich and Vandergrift that there needs to be an understanding of the culture in which these youths are immersed. "We can also use what our students are familiar with to communicate the truths they need to hear. We can use clips from videos, pop music, or current events to open the discussion of a topic from a Christian perspective" (90). Hampton and Edwards also recommend role-play or dramas as a method of teaching. Arthur David Canales, author of "Models of Adolescent Ministry: Exploring Eight Ecumenical Examples," believes, just as Vukich and Vandegriff, that youth ministers will have to adopt reading strategies that allow biblical narratives to "speak" to adolescent issues and concerns (23). One reading strategy that may intrigue youth, as Grainger noted, is reading and performing contemporary Christian youth drama (92). These sources provide insight into today's youth culture and illustrate the need for an alternative teaching method and the importance in using dramatic performance programs for youth in a Christian setting.

E. Summary

These sources reflect the field of adolescent theatre programs, both in a secular and Christian realm. This literature review also shows the great amount of information available for secular programs for youth; the texts for organizing such a program are abundant. The secular sources for building a performance program, such as The Framework, are mainly focused on structure, being theatre-literate, and posing skills that build on top of each other from year to year. This differs greatly from the Christian sources for initiating a drama ministry. The Christian sources concentrate on the dynamics inside the ministry, providing spiritual guidance, and reminders that the purpose of the drama ministry is to glorify God through using gifts (such as acting or directing), as opposed to the secular texts' goals of the actor's development and education.

Since the Christian performance program is a current phenomenon, and there is a lack of scholarly information about it, this study hopes to fill the gap by studying Christian performance programs for youth. The results taken from the survey of Christian theatrical performance programs for youth in Chapter 3 will provide the information currently lacking from the scholarly world.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS – REPORT OF SURVEY RESULTS

A. Random Order of Participating Churches

In an effort to narrow this study, and for the purposes of structuring my own

Worship Arts Ministry at my Assemblies of God church, only Assemblies of God

churches in California's Central Valley were asked to participate. Assemblies of God

Fellowship was formed at the General Council in Hot Springs, Arkansas in 1914. All AG

churches function under the same doctrine, however, they are unique in that they are

sovereign in all other areas of operation; there is not a denominational leader making

decisions for them, thus, they are able to construct a drama ministry according to their

own youth congregations' needs.

In the beginning stages of this study, all 136 AG churches in California's Central

Valley were contacted to participate. They were sent letters, e-mails, and they received

multiple follow-up calls. Unfortunately, only eleven pastors of these 136 churches

granted permission to be participants for this study, one of which did not have a youth

ministry, and therefore is not a participant. Of the remaining 125 churches, 7 pastors

expressed interest but did not follow through on completing the participating organization

permission letter and subsequently did not return e-mails or phone calls; three said they

did not have a youth ministry, and three responded saying they were not interested in

being a part of this study.

Table 2 is a comparative grid of basic information of the ten participating churches. They were randomly selected and assigned a number, which will correspond with the Categorical Survey Results. The churches were asked where they are located, how many weekly attendees they have on average (congregation), number of church members (people who have gone through an application process and have voting abilities), and if their program directors are paid or volunteer.

B. Categorical Survey Results

The responses of the participating churches were placed in a comparative grid. In this manner, one may easily perform an analysis of the churches' performance programs in terms of similarities and differences. Table 3 depicts categorical survey results. This spreadsheet horizontally lists participating churches by their randomly selected number. The survey questions will be listed numerically and vertically.

Table 2 – Participating Churches Comparative Grid

Church Information	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
Location	Modesto	Antioch	Grass Valley	Lincoln	Modesto	Stockton	Sacramento	Roseville	Tracy	Escalon
Congregation Size	110	100	100-150	150	500	250	150-180	400	550	145
Number of Members	60	71	250	80	250	300	111	137	212	95
Performance Program Director: Paid or Volunteer (P or V)?	P	P	V	P	V	P	V	V	V	V

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
1. How often does your program meet?	1/week	whenever there are rehearsals	5-6/ month	1/week	1/month	1/week	2/week	2-3/week	1/week	2-3/year
2. How often does your program rehearse?	3 times/ week to 1/week when perform-ing	10/month	[partici-pant did not answer]	1/week	1-2/month	1/week	1/week	1/week	1/week	whenever there is a perfor-mance
3. How often does your program perform theatre for youth?	1/year	3/year	1-2/month	1/1-2 months	1/month	2/month	1/week	2/year	2/month	2-3/year
4. How far ahead does your program plan for performing?	3 months	5 months	a couple of days	1 week	3-6 weeks	skit- 1 week, bigger production-2 months	[partici-pant did not answer]	1 year	2-3 weeks	6 weeks

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results (cont.)

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
5. Who directs your theatrical performances?	senior pastor	pastor, student input	youth leaders	youth pastor	adult volunteer	youth pastor	adult volunteer/ creative communications director	adult volunteers	adult volunteer	youth pastor, adult volunteers
6. Who organizes and schedules meetings or rehearsals?	senior pastor	church intern	youth leaders	youth pastor	adult volunteer	youth pastor	adult volunteer/ creative communications director	adult volunteers	adult volunteer	youth pastor, adult volunteers
7. Are the program leaders trained in theatre or have theatre degrees?	degree in music, college level theatre	no degrees, just experience	no	college theatre courses	no	AA Fine Arts, Theatre	no degrees, experience and training	adults have degrees in theatre and dance and experience	MA in Theatre Arts in progress	no
8. Does your program use scripts from books?	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes, rarely	yes	yes

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results (cont.)

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
9. If so, from what books or libraries are you using dramatic material?	Willow Creek, Lillenas	n/a	yes	n/a	Youth Special-ties Internet source	n/a	[participant did not answer]	Willow Creek	Skit Guys	Master's Commis-sion skits
10. Does your program use originally-written material?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
11. If so, who writes the material?	senior pastor	pastor writes, team shapes	youth leaders	AG District	youth pastor and volunteer collabor-ation	Conan O'Brien, Late Night TV, Saturday Night Live	creative communi-cations director, youth pastor, students	adult volun-teers	youth, youth pastor, adult volunteer	n/a

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results (cont.)

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
12. Does your program design its performances around the youth pastor's sermon?	yes	no, design sermon around performance	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
13. Does your program do: comedies?	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
__times per__	n/a	1/year	2-3/month	n/a	intermittent	1/week	frequently	n/a	2-3/month	2-3/year

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results (cont.)

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
14. dramas?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
__times per__	1/year	[partic-ipant did not answer]	1/year	[partic-ipant did not answer]	Inter-mittent	2/month	sparse	2/year	3/year	2-3/year
15. monologues?	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
__times per__	1/year	Inter-mittent	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	not often, but we use them	2/year	1/few months	2-3/year

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results (cont.)

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
16. other forms?	human videos	human videos	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	human videos	human videos
__times per__	1/year	intermittent /missions trips	1/year	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2/year	2/year	2-3/year
17. sound effects?	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
__times per__	seasonal	3/year	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2/year	1/few months	2-3/year

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results (cont.)

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
18. light effects?	yes	yes, rudimentary	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
___times per___	seasonal	3/year	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1/week	2/year	1/year	2-3/year
19. smoke machines?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
___times per___	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2/year	2/year	2-3/year

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results (cont.)

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
20. When did your performance program begin?	April, 2000	2002	2004	April, 2008	2004-2007	August, 2005	January, 2008	1998	October, 2007	1990
21. Approximate number of involved people when program first began?	10-15	10	1 or 2	3	7-10	4	4	7	10-15	24
22. Approximate number of involved people currently in program?	15-20	40	3 or 4	3	0	6	6	40	10	6-10

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results (cont.)

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
23. Do you plan performances for larger evangelical events?	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
24. If so, where and how often?	n/a	at our church, 1/year	n/a	n/a	n/a	public school assembly	at our church, 4/year	at church, parks, open air, 3-5/year	1/year	n/a
25. Do these performances differ from performing for your own youth group?	n/a	yes	n/a	n/a	n/a	yes	yes	yes	yes	n/a

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results (cont.)

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
26. If so, how?	n/a	evangelistic tones	n/a	n/a	n/a	students take them more seriously	more time is spent in preparing, practice and planning	no drama at youth group	human videos	n/a
27. Approximate attendance for larger evangelical event?	n/a	250-300	n/a	n/a	n/a	70-90	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
28. Approximate attendance for youth service?	15	120	25	6-10	50	40	10-15	500	100	25

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results (cont.)

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
29. Does your performance program pray together?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
__times per__	when meeting	every practice	1-2/ month	2/week	1/week	1/week	2/week	2-3/week	1/week	when meeting

Survey Questions	Church #1	Church #2	Church #3	Church #4	Church #5	Church #6	Church #7	Church #8	Church #9	Church #10
30. What is your program's goal?	To be another vehicle of proclaiming the message, trying to introduce folks to Jesus. Benefits are development of individual spiritual gifts and skills to use in other areas, theatre is another means to tell our story	to develop young people in creative gifting, to be a tool, to be a demonstration of God's love and mercy	to facilitate student complete understanding of what the pastor is speaking, to reinforce theme or message	to make a point more tangible, to make a point more practical, to grab interest	Primarily let students have ownership of what happens Wednesday night. Second, present material in a relatable way, to get the message across	to provide students an opportunity to make a worldwide impact	to enhance our weekly gathering event utilizing different media/performance, to involve students in the work of the ministry, and giving them ownership over areas of ministry. To give students a chance to use their skills in drama/arts for God. To reach unbelievers	to bring glory to the Lord through drama, and dance, to have another extension of worship. To have a modern method to communicate passion, method of communicating with God	to assist students in glorifying God by using their gifts	To disciple young folks, get them studying the word, to reach out to high school communities, missions and outreach

Table 3 – Categorical Survey Results (cont.)

C. Narrative of Survey Results

This section of the chapter will examine the churches in the random numeric order generated at the beginning of this study. The survey results from the ten participating churches will serve as a blueprint for how each performance program operates. Each aspect of the survey will be addressed. This chapter will not offer an analysis; it will present an overview of Table 3, as in-depth comparisons will be made in the following chapters.

The objective in this study is to focus on the structure of performance programs, however, in an effort to circumvent redundancy in each church's description, it is relevant to discuss the churches' responses to utilizing prayer in their performance programs at the start of this examination. All ten participating churches believe that communing with God in prayer aids in unification of the shared goal. In addition to collectively expressing their thanksgivings, they also use prayer time to voice their requests to God. This brings them closer together as a group and presents an opportunity for follow-up conversations regarding difficult situations through which any of the involved individuals may be struggling. All churches participating in this survey integrate prayer into their routine.

D. Subjectivity and Clarification

This study did not implement a qualitative tool of measurement to determine if the churches are meeting their goals as performance programs, however, the churches were asked how they know they are succeeding as programs. The rate of their success is subjective, and therefore the churches' responses about how they measure their success will stand as direct quotations from the individuals who were interviewed.

The term "involved" in the following narrative indicates all parties working inside all areas of the drama ministry, both youth and adults. "Youth" refers to adolescents in junior high and high school.

There are many aspects of theatre performance programs that are not reflected in the survey. For the purposes of this study, details of performance programs were omitted to maintain a narrow scope of examination. For example, the research did not include questions regarding how rehearsals are handled or when the dramas and sermons are scheduled in the youth service.

E. Church #1

When the program first began in April, 2002, they had 10-15 people involved. Currently the numbers range from 15-20 people involved. Church #1 performs programs for youth about once a year for their youth service, which has an approximate attendance of 15. When rehearsing for a performance, they will meet and rehearse one to three times a week, and they will plan three months ahead for their performance. In creating their dramas, they design their performance around the youth pastor's sermon. Their annual

youth performances include dramas, monologues and human videos; they do not typically use comedies or improvisation simply because they have not tried it. For seasonal productions, such as a Christmas show, they have used light and sound effects. Using special effects for worship, such as smoke machines, does not fit with their vision/ministry style, so they do not use them on a weekly basis, although they did not specify what their vision/ministry style is. This church only plans dramas for their own youth group; they do not plan performances for larger evangelical events (Church Survey).

This church's theatrical performance program's responsibility falls mostly on the senior pastor's shoulders, and the budget for the program varies depending upon the project. He has a degree in music and has experience in college-level theatre and directs performances, organizes and schedules meetings and rehearsals. He writes original material and also uses external sources, such as Lillenas Publishing Company and the Willow Creek Association for play and musical scripts. Lillenas primarily focuses as a worship source for the "mid and small church" providing downloadable scripts, drama tips, and a drama networking forum, which would be helpful for anyone starting a drama ministry ("Who Uses Lillenas Products?" par. 6, www.lillenas.com). The Willow Creek Association offers sources for several aspects of ministry: teacher and bible study curriculum, music, video, message, and drama. They have clips of dramas such as "Coming Back," a humorous scene about a man's spiritual journey and his relationship with his wife and her friends, available to watch and purchase, as well as scenes

categorized by title, subject, author, and popularity ("Resources" page 1,

www.willowcreek.com; Church Survey).

The senior pastor is not affiliated with, nor does he utilize sources from CETA,

EdTA, or VAPA's content standards.

Church #1's participants pray together each time they meet, and their program's

goal is to be "a vehicle of proclaiming the message, we are trying to introduce folks to

Jesus" (Church Survey). Church #1 uses drama to convey the messages found in the

bible in an effort to initiate a relationship with others and the truth of Jesus Christ

(Church Survey).

In response to questions regarding evidence of achieving goals as a performance

program and attributes to his program's increase or decrease of involved people, he

answered "N/A," therefore, it is unclear whether his performance program is meeting

their goals or why the performance program began with 10-15 participants and now has

15-20 (Church Survey). The pastor did not provide documents of material recently

performed for youth.

F. Church #2

Church #2's performance program began in 2002 with approximately 10 people

and has grown to about 40. They attribute their growth in numbers to the enjoyable act of

using the youths' gifts, such as acting, writing, and directing, to glorify God (Church

Survey).

The group performs three times per year for their youth, the attendance at which is roughly 120 with a budget of $1,500 a year. When rehearsing for a performance, they meet about ten times a month, and they plan about five months in advance for performing. Responsibility for running the program is spread out among several people: the senior pastor directs theatrical performances, regularly welcomes student input, and a church intern organizes and schedules meetings and rehearsals. The involved parties are experienced in theatre, however, they do not have degrees in theatre, nor did they expand upon the details of their experience in the survey. They also do not implement, nor are they familiar with, VAPA's content standards, EdTA, or CETA (Church Survey).

Church #2 has individuals working together to write all of their material. The senior pastor writes the basic structure and idea of the piece, and a team of people shapes the script. Together, they design the sermon around the performances, which may include comedies roughly once and dramas twice a year, as they find more value in drama. They write monologues occasionally and use human videos intermittently and on mission trips, where they reach out to other communities. Unfortunately, at the time of this writing, the pastor's computer was stolen, so he was not able to provide this study with examples of recently performed material. Whereas they use sound effects and rudimentary light effects about three times per year, they do not use smoke machines because they do not have a need for them (Church Survey).

The pastor and his team plan performances for larger evangelical events held at the church once a year. These performances differ from productions for their own youth group in that they have more evangelistic tones. They have taken their drama team to

New Orleans and performed dramas on the streets to audiences as large as 300 people in an effort to affect passersby with an evangelism message (Church Survey).

Church #2's program prays together at every practice in order to come together as a group and present their requests before God. Their program's goal is to develop a young person in creative gifting, which means helping youths discover how to use their talents to glorify God. They also strive to be a "tool" in teaching youths about Jesus, and to be a demonstration of God's love and mercy by providing youths with a loving, accepting environment. They know they are meeting their goals by seeing youths improve their acting skills. They stated, "We are doing our best to track this" (Church Survey).

G. Church #3

After a telephone interview asking the survey questions was completed with the youth pastor at Church #3, a month later, an e-mail was received containing the answers to the survey questions. The same youth pastor who originally answered the questions over the telephone filled out this e-mail. The answers differed slightly. In an effort to present this church's performance program correctly, the following results reflect the answers of both the telephone interview and the e-mail.

Church #3's performance program began in 2004 with one or two involved people and has grown to three or four people at the time of this study. This church's program performs one to two times a month for their youth, and they meet and rehearse five to six times a month, however, they plan only a few days ahead of their performance date.

Their youth group has about 25 attendees and they encourage youth leadership; seniors in

high school are youth leaders who organize and schedule meetings or rehearsals, and who

sometimes direct performances for youth; there is a pastor who oversees the program.

Since these youth leaders are still in high school, they do not have degrees in theatre.

Church #3 does not use pre-written material from outside sources, as the youth pastor and

youth leaders write their own material for performing. They collaboratively write the

scripts to accompany the youth pastor's sermon. They use multiple forms of drama, such

as comedies two to three times per month and dramas, and human videos about once a

month. They do not use monologues, sound effects, light effects, or smoke machines

(Church Survey).

Church #3's program prays together each time they meet. Their goal is to teach

the students what it means to have oneness with Christ, which is to be in accordance with

His will for their lives, accepting Him into their hearts, with complete conformity to the

image of Jesus. They also desire to facilitate the students' complete understanding of

what the pastor is teaching and to reinforce the theme or message (Church Survey).

H. Church #4

Starting in April 2008, Church #4's performance program began with and

currently has three people involved. The pastor attributes leadership to the stability of

their involved people for appointing responsible leaders who will maintain momentum.

They meet and rehearse once a week. Performances are held once or twice a month.

They generally plan one week ahead for each performance for their youth group of six to

ten. They plan their performances around the youth pastor's sermon, and the youth

pastor directs the theatrical performances as well as organizes meetings and rehearsals.

He does not have a theatre degree, but he has completed college theatre courses. The

pastor is not affiliated with CETA, EdTA, nor does he implement the VAPA's standards,

as he was unaware of The Framework's existence. They perform dramas as needed,

however, they do not perform comedies, monologues, or other forms of drama on a

regular basis because there are too few youths involved. They do not implement sound or

light effects or smoke machines due to their budget, which varies based on fundraising.

Church #4 does not plan performances for larger evangelical events (Church Survey).

They do not use scripts from books, but they do use resources from the

Assemblies of God, Northern California Nevada District's Web site for student

ministries. The Student Ministries Web site contains drama resources by multiple writers

and links to various Web sites containing drama collections and "Tool Boxes" for

constructing a drama ministry ("Resources: Drama Resources" par. 9, www.ncnsm.com).

In addition to boasting links for multilingual scripts, it also includes "Fine Arts

Resources" for human video drama training (Church Survey).

Church #4's performance group prays together twice a week, even when they are

not rehearsing. Their goals are to support the pastor's sermon by presenting dramas that

make his point more tangible or practical and to use drama to grab the audience's interest.

The pastor stated that they look at "student reactions" in the audience to determine if they

are meeting their goals as a program (Church Survey). These reactions may be laughter

if they are performing a comedy, silence if the content of the performance was serious or

thought provoking, or possibly the affirmative answer of accepting Christ into the audience's hearts (Church Survey).

Church #4 did not provide this study with a sample of a recent script. They responded, "We only use drama as illustrations for sermons," however, it is unclear why they would still be unable to provide an example (Church Survey).

I. Church #5

Church #5's performance program ran from 2004 to 2007 involving seven to ten people, although it varied throughout the year depending on school or sports activities. As of this writing, their adult volunteer leader for the program is no longer there, however, the youth pastor completed this survey to incorporate the functionality of their performance program for youth for this study. Church #5's construction is still helpful for this study of how Christian theatrical performance programs operate, though as of this writing they are not in operation.

Church #5 met one to two times a month in preparation for their monthly performance for their youth group, which had approximately 50 attendees at the time this program was running. They planned three to six weeks in advance for performances and had an annual budget of $500. Church #5 had an adult volunteer, who was not trained in theatre nor did she have a theatre degree. She directed theatrical performances and organized meetings and rehearsals. The current pastor has no knowledge of CETA, the VAPA standards, or EdTA, and did not state whether the former adult volunteer was knowledgeable to these sources (Church Survey).

Church #5 used scripts from books, although the pastor was not able to identify specific books that were used in the performance program; Youth Specialties Internet site serves as their main outside resource. Youth Specialties has a large selection of books, videos, and other materials to help form a youth ministry as well as a drama ministry. They offer skit books, such as <u>Ideas: Dramas, Skits, and Sketches</u> by Youth Specialties, books by The Skit guys (as previously mentioned), and hundreds of articles written for each stage of ministry: "rookies," "veterans," "volunteers," "academics," "parents," and "students" ("Just for You" page 1, www.youthspecialties.com). None of their books regarding theatre are secular or are tied to the secular sources previously reviewed in this study. They describe themselves as having "resources for training and equipping Christian youth workers to minister through seminars and congregations, creative resources, world-wide job listings" and more ("Youth Specialties" page 1, www.youthspecialties.com). The youth pastor and other volunteers also collaborated on writing original material to perform. When preparing original material, Church #5 designed its performances around the youth pastor's sermon. Unfortunately, the pastor did not have a sample script of a drama that was performed for his youth service. They performed comedies, dramas, and human videos intermittently, but they did not use monologues, sound and lighting effects, or smoke machines. They did not plan theatre performances for larger evangelical events, and the pastor did not state the reason for not using these aspects of theatre (Church Survey).

They pray together once a week, and their goal is to "Primarily, let the students have ownership of what happens Wednesday night" (Church Survey). In this way,

students have involvement in the service, thus becoming more attached to it and having more personally and spiritually invested. This increases the possibility of youths returning and promoting the youth service. Second, Church #5 presents material "in a relatable way to get the message across" (Church Survey). As they adjoin the drama to the pastor's sermon, they present it in a manner in which students may easily comprehend the concept.

The pastor knew the performance program was achieving its goals by the youth audience's responses to the message and accompanying drama. These reactions would be similar to Church #4: laugher, silence, or a positive answer to the challenge to accept Jesus into their hearts (Church Survey).

The pastor mentioned that they are looking for new leadership to continue the ministry.

J. Church #6

Church #6's program meets and rehearses once a week, however their schedule varies depending on the type of performance: if they are planning a skit, they will plan ahead one week from performance; if they are planning and rehearsing for a larger production or seasonal production, they plan two months ahead. They perform programs for youth about two times per month. The youth pastor, who earned an Associate of Arts Degree in Fine Arts and Theatre, directs theatrical performances and organizes and schedules meetings or rehearsals. He is not affiliated with, nor does he implement

standards from VAPA, The Framework, CETA guidelines, or EdTA suggestions (Church Survey).

The group does not use scripts from books; they primarily perform secular comedy sketches. The youth pastor and students write original material and find comedy sketches from comedic late-night television shows. Church #6 uses material from Conan O'Brien and Saturday Night Live. They use opening monologues from Saturday Night Live, recurring scenes from the sketch The Chris Farley Show, and scenes such as Family Dinner Argument (http://snltranscripts.jt.org; see appendix). Church #6 states, "We want these scripts not to have any theological themes whatsoever. We want the skits/sketches to be funny to any type of audience. Our target audience is the non-churched teen" (Church Survey). In this context, the pastor refers to "non-churched" teens as those who were not raised in a Christian environment but are currently attending his youth service. These skits are not meant to provoke life-questioning thoughts; presenting youth with comedies that are not Christian is purely for entertainment purposes. The secular skits draw the non-churched youth in by creating a light atmosphere, as Church #6's dramas do not "beat the students over the head with poorly written Christian content" in the comedy sketches (Church Survey). Although the skits do not contain Christian messages, associations from the secular skits are made in the pastor's sermon, thus making the Christian connections for the un-churched youths. Church #6 performs comedies once a week and dramas intermittently, however, they do not use monologues, other forms of drama, sound or lighting effects, or smoke machines. They dim the lights to create a "production atmosphere," but they do not use the other effects because they have no need

for them in their program (Church Survey). They did not respond as to why they do not incorporate human videos into their program. They predominately use sketch comedies to reach the non-churched youths attending the service. Their budget is around $500 for promotions (Church Survey).

They plan sketch comedy performances for larger evangelical events at public school assemblies which include musical guests between the skits patterned after Saturday Night Live; the pastor did not provide examples of the guests. These performances differ from their weekly performances for Church# 6's youth group because the involved students take it more seriously. The approximate attendance for the larger evangelical event is 70-90, and the attendance for Church #6's youth group is about 40 (Church Survey).

The group prays together once a week and their goal is to "provide students the opportunity to make a world-wide impact," which means they value the impact performing life-questioning theatre has, and they strive to give youth the opportunity to change others' lives (Church Survey). They also strive to bring students who "normally do not come to church, come and see what our church has to offer" (Church Survey). They see this goal met by having the audience members from the larger evangelical event come to their weekly services. Church #6 believes their talents are from God, and the youths should be using their talents for Him by becoming involved. They see this goal manifest itself by having new students become part of the drama team; it began in August 2005 with four people involved and has grown to six (Church Survey).

K. Church #7

Church #7 has a Creative Communications Director who takes on much of this performance program's responsibility. The Creative Communications Director and adult volunteers organize and schedule meetings and rehearsals and are not affiliated with CETA, EdTA, nor do they implement standards from VAPA. They do not have degrees, but they claim experience and training, although they did not specify to what extent. The Creative Communications Director and adult volunteers direct theatrical performances and write original material for youth productions, along with the youth pastor and students. Their program has no budget. Church #7 stated that they use scripts from books, but they did not answer the question regarding where they obtain their external material. Church #7's program meets twice a week and rehearses and performs theatre for youth once a week, but they did not state how far in advance they plan for performing (Church Survey).

This relatively young program began in January 2008, with four people, and they now have six who perform for the youth group of ten to 15 attendees. The growth of their program is attributed to their leadership team for dramas and the students spreading excitement. They design their performances around the youth pastor's sermon and use comedies, dramas, and other forms of drama frequently. They have incorporated monologues in the past, but they do not use them often. They also use lighting and sound effects, however, they do not use smoke machines, as they have no use for them in their productions (Church Survey).

The program plans performances for larger evangelical events for audiences of 100-140 at their church about four times per year. These performances differ from their regular youth group performances in that more time is spent in preparation, practice, and planning (Church Survey).

The involved people in this program pray together twice a week and their goal is "to enhance our weekly gathering, even utilizing different media/performances, to involve students in the work of the ministry, and giving them ownership over areas of ministry, to give students a chance to use their skills in drama/arts for God, and to reach unbelievers" (Church Survey). This multi-layered goal shows that Church #7 wants to keep youths' attention by using various media such as theatre, and like Church #5, they encourage the youths' involvement to attain "ownership" over certain aspects of the ministry, which will give the youths a personal attachment to the performance program. They also strive to give students the opportunity to use their "skills" in drama and the arts for God. In this context, "skills" include feeling comfortable speaking in front of an audience, acting, directing or the ability to memorize lines. The "unbelievers" whom Church #7 refers to are people who do not know Jesus Christ as their savior. Church #7 ministers to "unbelievers" at their larger, evangelical events or their own youth group. They are using drama to teach unbelievers about the truths in Christianity and God's love for them. They know they are meeting their goals as a program because they see student involvement growth in dramas and productions successfully completed with those involved using their gifts for God (Church Survey).

L. Church #8

Church #8's intricate performance program began in 1998. Their program is a

Creative Arts program in which drama is one facet, and they have a budget of $14,000

annually. There were approximately seven people involved when it first began, and it has

now grown to 40. They attribute their growth to clearly stating their vision, objectives

and goals, along with their "growing reputation for excellence and fearless creativity."

Church #8's Web site states their vision:

> Our vision is to build services and ministries upon creative art's
> expressions. Ultimately, we believe the Lord has called us to establish a
> Fine Arts Academy. Currently our campus houses a Creative
> Room/Dance Studio and the Creative Arts CORE Leadership team offers
> opportunities in Dance (multiple styles), Drama, Tech/Computer, Media,
> Music, Worship Band, Set Design, Art's Missions trips, fine arts training
> and development. (Church Survey)

They do not perform drama for their youth group; rather they emphasize

performances for larger evangelical events in which youth participate. They perform

three to five times a year at their church, parks, and other open-air facilities for an

audience of about 500. They meet two to three times a week, rehearse one time per

week, and plan one year in advance for their productions. Experienced adult volunteers

with degrees in theatre and dance direct theatrical performances and organize and

schedule rehearsals and meetings. They write most of their own material and rarely use

scripts from books. If they do use an outside source, they turn to Willow Creek

Association, as described in Church #1. They did not submit any examples or titles of

performed material to this study. The involved adults are not affiliated with or members

of CETA and EdTA, however, they are knowledgeable of VAPA and The Framework and implement them with their advanced groups.

They do not design their performances around the youth pastor's sermon, nor do they perform comedies. They perform dramas, monologues, and other forms of drama about twice a year and use sound effects, lighting effects, and smoke machines (Church Survey).

The group prays together two to three times per week. They desire to "bring glory to the Lord through drama" by using their skills in acting to teach others about the love of God (Church Survey). Church #8 also strives to have another extension of worship, which means to have another area of ministry wherein people are able to worship God through their talents, which may be acting or directing. Their drive to have a "modern method to communicate passion" means they utilize drama to convey their passion for God. Using theatre as another method of "communing with God," or to feel in close spiritual contact with God, is also a goal of Church #8 (Church Survey).

To determine if they are meeting their goals, they "create measureables…then assess and adjust accordingly" (Church Survey). The researcher contacted the pastor for clarification; however, he was not able to provide examples of the measureables used in assessing their success. For large events where they invite local Christian artists, they know it is successful by the number of attendees and participants. For the youth involved in the Creative Arts ministry, they have a written covenant which the students sign and agree. The covenant is not only a contract stating the student's commitment to make all the rehearsals and performances; it also serves as a contract for holding the youths

accountable in upholding Christian values. Church #8 sees that they are meeting their

goals by the participating youths maintaining their end of the covenant (Church Survey).

M. Church #9

Church #9 began their program in October 2007. They do not have an annual

allowance, however they are able to request funds from the church if needed. They

began with, and still have, ten to 15 people involved. They meet and rehearse once a

week in preparation for performances about five times a year and prepare one month in

advance. An adult volunteer organizes meetings, rehearsals and directs the theatrical

performances. She is currently working on her Master of Arts Degree in Theatre Arts.

Other adult volunteers have some college education in theatre, but mostly have years of

church theatre experience. The youth, youth pastor, and adult volunteers write original

material, and they use sketches from the Skit Guys (as previously mentioned in the

Literature Review) and Saturday Night Live. Saturday Night Live scripts include

Wolverines from October 11, 1975 and Fashion Show from October 25, 1975

(http://snltranscripts.jt.org; see appendix). Skit Guys scenes include Piece of a Peace and

The Psychic? (see appendix). None of the participating individuals are affiliated or

members of CETA or EdTA. The director is knowledgeable concerning VAPA's

standards and implements them opportunely (Church Survey).

This performance program produces theatre for the weekly youth group of about

100 and larger evangelical events of about 300 attendees. The group performs comedies

and dramas about once a month and uses sound effects once every few months, and the

productions are designed around the youth pastor's sermon. They produce a larger

evangelical event once a year, which is non-denominational and involves several other

churches in the community. Because this event is a collaboration of churches, it is called

Tracy Youth Christian Outreach (hereafter TYCO). During these large events, they

perform originally written material with multiple themes (see TYCO in appendix). For

these events, they also produce human videos, dramas, monologues, and they utilize light

and sound effects as well as smoke machines. These larger events differ from weekly

youth performances in that they produce human videos and more special effects are used.

They also have musical guests and intermittent, short sermons, and their budget is based

on fundraising.

Church #9 prays together each time they meet. Their goal is "to assist students in

glorifying God by using their gifts," which include acting and writing (Church Survey).

They assist the youth by providing scripts, direction, a venue, and guidance in living a

life worthy of imitation; they view the involved youths as leaders in the youth group, thus

incorporating the importance of living a life that incorporates Christian values into the

teachings of the performance program (Church Survey).

Church #9 sees results and evidence that they are meeting their goals as a

performance program. The level of commitment of the involved youths has heightened

and there has been greater youth involvement in theatre and other areas of ministry since

the program's beginning. Seeing peers involved in the theatre program inspired them to

use their gifts in other areas to glorify God, such as musical youths joining the worship

team as guitarists and drummers, outgoing people becoming greeters, or helpful students

setting up and tearing down scenery and other production elements before and after the service. The program's performance success is also noted by the reactions of the audience: positivity, approval, and inviting friends to watch the next performance (Church Survey).

N. Church #10

Church #10's program began in 1990 with about 24 involved people. Now, with six to ten people, they perform two to three times per year for their youth of about 25 attendees. They did not address/explain to the program's decrease in numbers. They also meet two to three times per year and more frequently when they are planning for a performance. They plan up to six weeks in advance for their performances and the youth pastor and adult volunteers direct performances and schedule meetings and rehearsals. The youth pastor and adult volunteers are not trained in theatre, nor are they affiliated with or are members of CETA or EdTA. They are not familiar with VAPA's standards, nor do they implement them. They do not write their own material; they use published scripts from Master's Commission, an intense discipleship-training program for youths just graduating high school. They work with a small budget where funds are provided as needed. Unfortunately, they were unable to provide this study with examples of recently performed material.

This program writes its performances around the youth pastor's sermon. They perform comedies, dramas, use monologues, human videos, utilize light and sound

effects and smoke machines two to three times per year. Church #10 does not plan theatre for larger evangelical events.

The group prays together whenever they are together, and their desire is to "disciple young folks to get them studying the word" because it is important for the youth to have a firm understanding of God's word so they, in turn, are able to disciple others in the teachings of Jesus Christ (Church Survey). Church #10 reaches out to high school communities though missions and outreach for purposes of evangelization and to be an example of God's love. They know they are meeting their goals as a performance program by receiving praise from observers and audience members (Church Survey).

O. Trends and Common Identifying Features

After establishing a comparative grid and analyzing each church's program individually, one may now identify common, as well as unique or different, features of these ten Christian theatrical performance programs for youth. The following are six trends that represent the current phenomenon of Christian theatrical performance programs for youth as seen in AG churches in California's Central Valley: 1) types of drama, 2) frequency of performances and meetings, 3) youth involvement, 4) material, 5) longevity of programs, and 6) programs' goals.

P. Types of Drama

The ten churches responded to four questions regarding what kind of drama they present to their youths: drama, comedy, monologues, and other forms. Every church (10/10) answered positively to using dramas for their youth. As dramas are defined as being "serious plays about serious subjects," it is clear the utilization of drama theatrically for youth is to provide a mirror of youths' lives in order to enhance or induce a catharsis or change and is highly favored by youth pastors as compared to the other forms of drama, such as comedy or improvisation (Lee 58). The representation of realistic situations on stage offer the youth pastor an opportunity to easily segue from, for example, a scene involving an abusive home life to accepting the love God has for the individual and His divine purpose for their lives, giving the youths who may be identifying with the abusive home life depicted on stage the discovery of self-worth in Christ. Five of these ten churches use dramas one to three times per year, while Churches #5 and #7 replied they use dramas on an "intermittent" or "sparse" basis respectively (Church Survey).

There was more division in the use of the other forms of drama. Seven of ten churches use comedy, and their frequency of usage varies from one time per week to one time a year (Church #6, Church #2). Comedy's lighthearted nature could reflect the youth pastors' need for keeping the youths' attention or making them feel relaxed in finding humor in a church setting. Another reason to implement comedy would be to counteract any negative connotations "church" would have (i.e., boring) and to provide entertainment. An even smaller number of churches use monologues. Six of ten

churches use them but on very rare occasions in comparison to their normal

performances, as seen in Church #7's response, "not often, but we use them." Churches

#3, #4, #5, and #6 share commonalties in that they perform regularly for their youth once

or twice a month, and they do not use monologues (Church Survey).

Survey question number 16 regarding using other forms of drama was left open

for churches to describe any other types of drama they present that is not considered

comedy, drama or monologue, such as human videos or improvisation. Four of the ten

churches reported they use human videos. In regards to the frequency in which they are

performed, all four churches responded with yearly or intermittent usage. It seems the

use of human videos is not a form of drama that is as effective if performed on a monthly

or weekly basis. Human videos typically contain strong, convicting messages and may

lose their shock value if performed frequently. In concurrence, two other churches

responded positively to using other forms of drama, however, they did not specify what

other form of drama they use, and in addition, they reported their frequency of using

these other forms of drama once or twice a year (Church #3, Church #8). Churches #4,

#5, #6, and #7 do not use other types of drama. Churches #5 and #6 only use comedies

and dramas for their youth, and Church #4 merely uses dramas, whereas Church #2 and

Church #10 incorporate every form of drama for their productions. It is also noted that

Church #2 and Church #10 have productions three times per year and two to three times

per year, respectively. This could imply that some performance programs are able to

incorporate more forms of drama if they are preparing for only two or three productions a

year (Church Survey).

Q. Frequency of Performances and Meetings

The discovery of the possibility that some theatrical performance programs for youth are able to incorporate more forms of drama in performances if they are scheduled two to three times per year yields a direct connection between Church #2's and Church #10's performance programs and CETA's suggested frequency of performances. CETA recommends two plays (one classical and one musical) per year for middle school grades six through eight, and "at lease three productions a year for high school aged youth" (26; 28). Half of the churches (5/10) perform on a monthly basis for their youth, on average one to two times per month. Church #7 performs most frequently: one time per week. The majority of churches (6/10) report they meet on a weekly basis. The frequency of meeting is not in proportion to how often each performance program produces theatre. Church #7 meets twice a week and performs brief scenes that accompany the pastor's sermon one time a week, whereas Church #8 meets two to three times a week and performs two times per year, and Church #1 meets one time per week and performs about one time per year. Church #2 performs three times per year, and Church #10 performs from two to three times per year. Both of these programs choose not to meet on a regular basis; they have meetings and rehearsals "whenever there is a performance" (Church Survey).

R. Youth Involvement

VAPA's Creative Expression component strand provides recommendations of appropriate youth involvement in several aspects of the process of developing theatre. There are correlations between The Framework's suggestions and the areas of youth involvement as seen in the survey results of the ten participating churches. The Framework states that seventh graders are to "maintain a rehearsal script or notebook to record directions or blocking" (82), which gives them a touch of individual responsibility that will progress with each year. The Framework does not speak to youth involvement of direction, scriptwriting or organizational responsibilities until students reach high school.

Only two of the ten churches were knowledgeable of VAPA content standards. Church #8 and #9, though not affiliated with CETA or EdTA, implement the standards for performance programs. Church #8 utilizes them for their advanced groups, whereas Church #9 implements them with their group as a whole but on an opportune basis. This may be due to their differing size; Church #8 has 40 participating individuals while Church #9 has 10-15. Perhaps if Church #9 had a large group with which to work, they would divide the students according to ability and use the standards methodically. Church #8's utilization of The Framework may be a productive step in their goal of eventually establishing a fine arts academy at their church (Church Survey).

Churches #2 and #3 are the only churches that have student input or youth leaders involved in directing their theatrical performances. The vast majority (8/10) churches have a designated adult or adults directing their performances. For example, Church #7

has an adult volunteer and a Creative Communications Director directing their shows. Because the ages of the involved youths are unclear, this is somewhat in congruent with The Framework. The Framework does not suggest student directing for sixth, seventh, or eighth grades; it supports student directing only in high school. The component strand Creative Expression states that high school students should be applying skills in directing, and Aesthetic Valuing shows high school youths should be able to identify intent, structure, and quality of work that would accompany directing (Church Survey; The Framework 112; 114).

The Framework states that the proficient high school student will write scripts using basic dramatic structure and improvise or write dialogues with complex characters with unique dialogue (112). Half of the churches (5/10) in some way incorporate youth involvement in script writing. Whether they are fully responsible for writing the scripts, (Church #3 and Church #9), or are involved in the shaping process, (Churches #2, #5, and #7), the churches reflect The Framework's suggestions of challenging the youth to create the scripts used for their performance programs (Church Survey).

Under the component strand Connections, Relationships, and Applications, The Framework states high school student demonstrate ability to "create rehearsal schedules, set deadlines, organize priorities, and identify needs" (115). Only one of the ten churches uses youth to take on further responsibility in the performance programs. Church #3 has youth leaders who organize and schedule meetings or rehearsals. Church #2 answered ambiguously to the survey question regarding who organizes and schedules meetings or rehearsals. Their answer, "church intern" poses no age identification; this intern could be

youth or adult, and therefore cannot be added to the calculation of churches that use

youth in managerial roles (Church Survey).

Church #3 is the only church that challenges youth in all three aspects of

involvement in this survey: managing, writing, and directing. If "church intern" is a

middle or high school aged youth, Church #2 also conforms to The Framework

guidelines of appropriate responsibilities for youth.

S. Material

A large part of writing this thesis was to discover where theatrical performance

programs for youth received their material. The vast majority of churches (9/10) stated

they use originally written material or material that is not published in a book. Church

#6's purely secular sources of originally written material come from "late-night

television" such as Conan O'Brien and Saturday Night Live (Church Survey). The

representative from Church #6 commented that his youth group of approximately 40

youths is new to Christianity, and he did not want to scare them away from youth group

with religion–heavy theatre. His method of using secular drama in his services is for

entertainment purposes, although he answered positively to the performances coinciding

with his sermons. He stated that he is always able to apply ideas from his skits to his

message (Church Survey). Aside from Church #6, adult volunteers and pastors are most

likely to write the material. Half (5/10) the surveyed churches use both scripts from

books and originally written material. Half of the churches also use either scripts from

books or written material. Four of these churches (#2, #3, #4, and #6) only write their

own material and do not use external sources for their programs. Church #10 only uses

Master's Commission published skits for their program. For their individual reasons (of

which this study did not ask), these churches have found a method that works well for

their programs (Church Survey). This illustrates the congregational autonomy AG

churches have; each leader has the liberty to utilize material that is best suited for his

performance program and its audience.

The outside sources this thesis discovered are Willow Creek Association, Youth

Specialties, Lillenas, and Master's Commission skits. Willow Creek Association does

not allude to a specific branch of Christianity on their Web site; they state their vision and

mission: "Our vision is that each church would reach its full redemptive potential. Our

mission is to envision, equip, and encourage Christian leaders to build prevailing local

churches" ("About Us" page 1, www.willowcreek.com). The Youth Specialties Web site

did not specify the branch of Christianity of which it identifies. It does, however, list

nine principles:

> 1. Youth Specialties will be a good steward of what God has entrusted to us, recognizing that this company is a gift from Him.
> 2. Youth Specialties wants to do more than serve the church; we want to change the church, calling it to be more like Jesus.
> 3. Youth Specialties wants to be known as an organization that takes risks, and is bold, creative, courageous, fresh, and above all honors God.
> 4. Youth workers deserve the best. This will be reflected in the quality of our staff, services, and resources.
> 5. Every product, every event, every marketing piece, every word on our website will tell the truth. We will strive to be the most trusted youth ministry organization worldwide.
> 6. New projects and opportunities will be evaluated according to the following questions:
>> Is it an appropriate use of our efforts, creativity, and resources?
>> Are we the best organization to do this?
>> Do we have a passion for it?

7. Our customers will know that Youth Specialties can be counted on to go beyond service, to servanthood.
8. Youth Specialties will be a company that knows how to have fun, to play, and not take ourselves too seriously.
9. At every level of our company, Youth Specialties will encourage and affirm youth workers and our staff. We will treat them as brothers and sisters in Christ. ("About Us: Our Principles" page 1, www.youthspecialties.com)

Lillenas states their recourses are for the "local church," but they do not identify themselves with a particular theology ("Who Uses Lillenas Products?" par. 6, www.lillenas.com). Master's Commission is not specific to a certain denomination and can be built into any church. Some chapters of Master's Commission publish the scripts they write for the use of churches not affiliated with Master's Commission; other churches also might borrow ideas from viewing Master's Commission performances. This research has produced no tangible source for Master's Commission scripts, however, numerous performances can be viewed on self-publishing Web sites such as www.youtube.com by using the search terms "Master's Commission."

After a review of these sources' Web sites, literature, and on-line videos of performances, the aforementioned organizations have materials with modern language, assistance for experienced and new youth leaders, and are mostly geared to meet the needs of today's youth.

T. Longevity of Programs

Another trend that stood out was how recently these performance programs began. A vast majority (8/10) churches have had a program since 2000, and 6/10 churches have been running since 2004. This possibly reflects the media and Internet

expansion since the turn of the 21st century. Youth pastors may have recognized a need for mixed media in their youth services to capture youths' attention (Church Survey).

Church #8's program began 10 years ago in 1998 and Church #10's program started 18 years ago in 1990. One interesting difference between these two programs is the number of people involved; both churches' numbers have seen large changes over the years but in opposite directions. Church #8 began in 1998 with seven involved and currently has 40. On the other end of the spectrum, Church #10 began with 24 and now has six-ten involved people. The only other church that made that large of a jump was Church # 2, which had ten people in its beginning in 2002 and boasts 40 people currently involved (Church Survey).

U. Programs' Goals

As stated in the Literature Review, The Framework and CETA's goals are centered on providing educators a comprehensive arts program, which gives the students knowledge of the roles theatre has in the community, history, and the realities of professional theatre. The Framework also gives students practical tools to use in other areas of life. Conversely, the goals of these performance programs range from evangelizing, or leading others to Christ, to "demonstrating God's love and mercy" (Churches #1, #7, and #10; Church #2). Using gifts, such as acting, to glorify God was the second most common answer (5/10 churches). Eight out of ten churches share the goal of using drama to emphasize the youth pastor's philosophical message. Providing a

diverse youth service seems to be the most important aspect in the utilization of drama as another "vehicle of proclaiming the message" (Church Survey).

Most churches (6/10) had multiple goals; some churches focused on theatre's effect on the audience while others are focused on the involved youth. Church #3 goal suggests they use drama solely for the impact it has on their audience as they state they strive to "facilitate student complete understanding of what the pastor is speaking, to reinforce theme or message" (Church Survey). Church #4's goal also leans toward the audience: "to make a point more tangible, to make a point more practical, to grab interest" (Church Survey). Churches # 6 and #9 are designed to highlight the involved youths. Church #6 states their goal is to "provide students an opportunity to make a world-wide impact," and Church #9 strives to "assist students in glorifying God by using their gifts" (Church Survey).

A few other aspects of churches' goals stood out. Church #1 responded with developing "individual and spiritual gifts and skills to use in other areas," implying that the skills learned in drama ministry may be applied elsewhere, which corresponds to The Framework's premise of teaching theatre (Church Survey). "High school students understand the value of theatre skills as they relate to careers in theatre and other occupations" (The Framework 110). Under the component strand Connections, Relationships, and Applications, The Framework emphasizes "students' theatre knowledge in connection with theatre as a career and other careers that benefit from skills learned in theatre" (115).

"Hav[ing] a modern method to communicate passion" is one of the goals of Church #8 (Church Survey). One may surmise that the performer is the one communicating passion, however, it is unclear what "passion" is intended to mean in this statement. Is it passion for theatre, passion for glorifying God, a modern method to show how to be passionate in worship, or Christ's passion? This study will assume that "passion" in this context is referring to the excitement for using one's gifts to glorify God. Another interesting choice of words came from Church #7, as one of their goals is to "involve students in the work of the ministry." This indicates Church #7 is getting their youths' feet wet in the world of ministry and all of its qualities. It is "work" as Church #7 states, and for most of those in drama ministry, (according to this study), the rewards are seen in meeting shared goals as opposed to financial gains. In further connection with the Literature Review, Grainger maintains the importance of ministry inside the ministry and the inner workings of drama ministry itself (Church Survey). Both CETA and The Framework suggest particular activities and efforts to expose students to the realities of theatre as a profession.

V. Summary

These six trends represent the common identifying features of the ten participating churches' performance programs for youth. These trends and comparisons shed light on how each church has organized their performance program to meet their needs. All churches incorporate drama in their performance programs, thus showing an emphasis the church directors have on maintaining a serious atmosphere for a portion of

their performances. While they see drama as an extra component to their service, they

are aware of its powerful ability to convict and influence self-introspection as seen in

their prayerful meetings. Although they all agreed on using drama, the majority also

perform comedies to lighten the subject matter. Incorporating both drama and comedy,

the program directors recognize a time for solemnity and laughter, and they provide

breathing room and an opportunity to laugh at human nature. Specifically in Church #6's

program, comedies are used as an outreach tool to provide a comfortable setting for youth

who are not accustomed to church services. Only two of the participating churches

correspond with CETA's suggested frequency of performances of one to two a year.

These churches take advantage of the time they have prior to performing. In this manner,

they are able to pay attention to detail and produce theatre that is well-rehearsed and

polished. It seems important to these churches that they produce a quality performance

where they view each aspect (i.e., writing, blocking, lighting or sound effects) as

pertinent to reaching their goals as a program. The other eight churches perform more

frequently; five of them perform on a monthly basis. Although the emphasis of these

performances may be in the content rather than in the quality of performance, this does

not insinuate that they are not meeting their goals as a program; an improved scene may

initiate the youth pastor's desired response, thus meeting his goals. In congruence with

The Framework's suggestions of high school students writing plays, half of the surveyed

churches involve students in the development of scripts. The delegation of youth

responsibility is an important facet to ministry. The churches train youths to become

leaders in hopes of strengthening their relationship with God and guiding them to

continue their Christian path post high school. Youth involvement is demonstrated in the survey results as nine of the ten churches use originally written material with student contributions. A fascinating finding is the relatively recent establishment of the performance programs in this survey. The majority of the programs began at the start of the 21st century, which demands inquiries as to why the increase during these years was so great. It could possibly have been the desire to meet the needs of today's media-centered youth. Eight of the ten participating churches' goals are to use theatre to emphasize the youth pastor's message. This indicates the youth pastors' knowledge of the functionality of theatre and how to utilize it to meet their goals as pastors.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

A. Benefits for Theatre Practitioners

I produced a narrative of survey information and analyzed similarities and differences of ten AG performance programs, focusing on six trends and identifying features. The results of this thesis will benefit theatre scholars and practitioners by providing research results that validate the necessity for further reform in theatre education. The growth in membership of EdTA indicates a growing interest in theatre for youth, thus emphasizing the need for more scholarly research on the subject. Two of the participating churches know of and utilize VAPA's standards in their theatre training. Four other churches implement the standards unintentionally and have found success in their programs. If churches are unknowingly organizing performance programs that parallel VAPA's standards and suggestions, as seen in CETA's position paper and The Framework, they are inadvertently validating the standards, thus providing scholarship another evidential corroboration to justify additional reform in theatre education.

A student may be proficient in theatre arts upon graduation of high school if they attended an institution that utilized the VAPA standards and the guidelines found in CETA's position paper and The Framework. The same may be said for a student who is a member of a church performance program that implements the aforementioned sources. If they are gaining similar skills and knowledge, they theoretically would be able to apply their skills as they enter into their community, whether they are pursuing theatre as a

profession or seeking involvement in community theatre. One should not discount a theatre education that has been gained in a church setting that implements the standards; a student in a church performance program is still learning a specific trade in addition to the incorporated Christian values. A student leaving a church performance program who is capable of applying the skills he has learned would also be a testament to the need for increased study on the subject of theatre arts.

B. Future Study

This thesis was limited to performance programs in AG churches in California's Central Valley. There are numerous paths to continue this research. One might widen the sample, focus on a different denomination, or study drama performed at non-denominational churches. Another path of personal interest is an examination of the dramas performed for youth. It would be interesting to document recurring themes, characters, and portrayed situations. For example, if churches are portraying situations that emulate an abusive relationship, what are the common features of the scene or characters presented? By simply being involved in these productions, are these youths' backgrounds being exemplified in their performances, demeanor, vernacular, physical choices, clothes, and their self-written scenes, and are they a direct reflection of the society of which they are products?

A study on the beginnings and current phenomenon of human videos would be a new trail to blaze, as it is absent from drama scholarly writing. Human videos can be performed to every type of song available: fast, slow, Christian or secular. What are the

main themes used in human videos? How often is a Jesus character portrayed? In addition, human videos can range from literal to metaphorical, so selecting examples and examining their semiotics and verisimilitude would be intriguing.

Another area of study that would complement this thesis would be an observation of the youth audience's reaction to the dramas performed. Since most of the churches in this study use drama as a way to draw more youths to Christ, a survey of the number of youths who accept Jesus as a result of experiencing drama at church in comparison to a service devoid of drama would be a significant testimony of drama's impact.

C. Personal Observations

I began this study with a commitment to the youth pastor at my church to begin a Worship Arts Ministry, the first performance program for youth. Having no knowledge of how to construct a performance program, I began my program blindly, meeting with youth once a week and writing scenes for upcoming sermons. One of my goals, in addition to encouraging the students' use of gifts for God, was to direct scenes that were meaningful and demanded a reaction from a youth audience. I did not know where to turn or whom to ask since my only experience with church drama consisted of visiting Christian-based Web sites soliciting free dramatic texts that were poorly written and lacked believable characters. In completing my master's degree in Theatre, I wanted to gain as much from the experience as possible. Through a deliberation of whether to study the construction of performance programs the dramas themselves, which would have involved traveling to different churches and to postponing writing until a sufficient

number of dramas were viewed, I chose the former. In starting a program, I found it was beneficial to first have a successfully constructed foundation before seeking quality dramas.

Completing the Literature Review for this study opened many doors to learning how to operate a performance program for both secular and church environments. In the duration of my studies in the Theatre Department at San Jose State University, I have worked closely with professionals in the theatre education field, some of whom are closely affiliated with CETA, EdTA, VAPA's standards, and The Framework. Despite my knowledge of my professors' and California's standards, I did not use these resources when beginning my program. I had been following the content standards, though it was completely unintentional. I learned that even though I was starting a program in a church setting, secular sources are still relevant and useful. They were helpful in learning what is appropriate for the junior high to high school-aged students, what level of responsibility is suitable, and what kind of role adults needs to have in the program. Conversely, there are aspects of Christian drama books that are applicable in starting a secular program; they emphasize group dynamics and highlight the importance of emotional connection to what is portrayed on stage. Emotional connection is also seen in the performance programs as each participating church affirms the use of prayer in its program. Prayer is a tool in strengthening the group dynamic; we learn of each other's needs and we petition God as a group. We become sensitive as we learn more about each other, building relationships as a result.

The nature of the journey of this thesis had a major impact on my own performance program. Throughout the writing process I discovered new ways of organization, and I began implementing changes to find what worked best for my program's needs. As the survey results showed, every church is different and their construction reflects the groups' requirements. As of this writing, I have yet to find the ideal organization for my church's program, however, I am much closer than I was prior to this study. Instead of rehearsing one or two times before performing light comedies for the youth on almost a weekly basis, I have created longer dramas that provoke challenges for the youth and encourage spiritual introspection. I have begun to design larger events that focus on the drama itself and end with a short sermon by the youth pastor. These larger dramatic representations have been fruitful in that the audience is identifying more with the characters, and we have had much positive feedback.

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APPENDIX A

PERMISSION MAILER/E-MAIL

January 27, 2008

Dear Pastor _____,

I am the coordinator for the youth Worship Arts Ministry at Tracy Community Church in Tracy, California under the guidance of Pastor Brian Richardson. I am hoping to include your church in my survey of Central Valley AG churches and their performance programs, whether your church currently has one or not.

I am currently enrolled in the Master's program at San Jose State University. During my research, I have found a lack of information regarding Christian youth drama. For my thesis project, entitled Staging the Cross: Identifying Common Features of Christian Performance Programs for Youth, I intend to study the current phenomenon of Christian youth drama. My results will assist churches like yours in assessing their strategies for utilizing drama in worship.

In order to include your church in my survey, I first need you to grant me permission as a participating organization. Permission from participating institutions must be on **your letterhead** and needs to include:

1. **A statement granting Emily Howard permission to include your church in her survey.**
2. **The title of the study (Staging the Cross: Identifying Common Features of Christian Performance Programs for Youth)**
3. **The inclusive dates for which the permission is granted (2/08-12/08)**
4. **The typewritten name and title of the individual with the authority to grant such permission, in addition to his/her signature.**

This permission may also be an e-mailed response in lieu of your letterhead and signature. The above information may be entered into the body of the e-mail.

Your participation and timely response would be greatly appreciated! These results may provide a building block for future studies of Christian drama and its youth audiences. If you have any questions regarding the process of replying, please feel free to call or e-mail me.

Sincerely,

Emily Howard

APPENDIX B

2ND ATTEMPT E-MAIL

Dear Pastor _____,

I wanted to touch base with you about an e-mail I sent last week. I am hoping to include your church in my survey of Central Valley AG churches and their performance programs, even if you do not presently have one.

My results will assist churches like yours in assessing their strategies for utilizing drama in worship.

In order to include your church in my survey, I first need you to grant me permission as a participating organization. Permission from participating institutions must be on your letterhead and needs to include:

1. A statement granting Emily Howard permission to include your church in her survey.
2. The title of the study (Staging the Cross: Identifying Common Features of Christian Performance Programs for Youth)
3. The inclusive dates for which the permission is granted (2/08-12/08)
4. The typewritten name and title of the individual with the authority to grant such permission, in addition to his/her signature.

This permission may also be an e-mailed response in lieu of your letterhead and signature. The above information may be entered into the body of the e-mail.

For your convenience, I have attached a document that may be completed and printed on your church's letterhead.

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, please call or e-mail me.

APPENDIX C

2ND ATTEMPT E-MAIL ATTACHMENT

To Whom It May Concern:

We hereby grant Emily Howard permission to include our church, **[YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE]**, for her study, "Staging the Cross: Identifying Common Features of Christian Performance Programs for Youth."

The inclusive dates for the study are February 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008.

Permission is hereby granted by **[YOUR NAME HERE]**.

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM

Agreement to Participate in Research

Responsible Investigator(s): Emily Howard
Title of Protocol: Staging the Cross: Identifying Common Features in
Christian Theatrical Performance Programs for Youth

1. You have been asked to participate in a research study investigating common features of Christian performance programs for youth to categorize and analyze similarities and differences in churches' programs.

2. You will be asked to complete a questionnaire of 35 questions. It may be administered in person, over the telephone, or via e-mail.

3. There are no risks anticipated.

4. The results of this study will benefit the scholarly world as there is a lack of information regarding Christian youth performance programs. It may serve as a building block for future studies on Christian youth theatre. The results of this study may assist churches in assessing their strategies for utilizing theatre in worship.

5. Although the results of this study may be published, no information that could identify you will be included. The name of your organization will be named.

6. There is no compensation for participation.

7. Questions about this research may be addressed to Emily Howard
Complaints about the research may be presented to Mike Adams, (408) 924-4530.
Questions about a research subjects' rights, or research-related injury may be presented to Pamela Stacks, Ph.D., Associate Vice President, Graduate Studies and Research, at (408) 924-2480.

8. No service of any kind, to which you are otherwise entitled, will be lost or jeopardized if you choose to "not participate" in the study.

9. Your consent is being given voluntarily. You may refuse to participate in the entire study or in any part of the study. You have the right to not answer questions you do not wish to answer. If you decide to participate in the study, you are free to withdraw at any time without any negative effect on your relations

with San Jose State University or with any other participating institutions or agencies.

10. At the time that you sign this consent form, you will receive a copy of it for your records, signed and dated by the investigator.

The signature of a subject on this document indicates agreement to participate in the study.

The signature of a researcher on this document indicates agreement to include the above named subject in the research and attestation that the subject has been fully informed of his or her rights.

_____   _____
Signature   Date

_____   _____
Investigator's Signature   Date

APPENDIX E

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Survey Questions
1. How often does your program meet?
2. How often does your program rehearse?
3. How often does your program perform theatre for youth?
4. How far ahead does your program plan for performing?
5. Who directs your theatrical performances?
6. Who organizes and schedules meetings or rehearsals?
7. Are the program leaders trained in theatre or have theatre degrees?
8. Does your program use scripts from books?
9. If so, from what books or libraries are you using dramatic material?
10. Does your program use originally-written material?
11. If so, who writes the material?
12. Does your program design its performances around the youth pastor's sermon?
Does your program do: 13. comedies?
__times per__
14. dramas?
__times per__
15. monologues?
__times per__
16. other forms?
__times per__
17. sound effects?
__times per__
18. light effects?
__times per__
19. smoke machines?
__times per__
20. When did your performance program begin?
21. Approximate number of involved people when program first began?
22. Approximate number of involved people currently in program?
23. Do you plan performances for larger evangelical events?
24. If so, where and how often?
25. Do these performances differ from performing for your own youth group?
26. If so, how?
27. Approximate attendance for larger evangelical event?
28. Approximate attendance for youth service?
29. Does your program pray together?
__times per__
30. What is your program's goal?

APPENDIX F

SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE SCRIPT EXAMPLE: <u>Wolverines</u>

[Open to a small room with two men sitting in chairs]

Professor: Let us begin. Repeat after me.[European Immigrant in tight-mouthed concentration, nods]

Professor: I would like.....

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] I would like....

Professor: ....to feed your fingertips....

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] ....to feed yur fingerteeps....

Professor: ...to the wolverines.

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] ....to de wolver-eenes.

Professor: Next, I am afraid....

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] I em afred...

Professor: ...we are out...

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] ...we are out...

Professor: ...of badgers.

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] ...of badjurs.

Professor: Would you accept...

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] Would you accept...

Professor: ...a wolverine...

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] ...a wolver-eene...

Professor: ...in its place?

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] ...een es place.

Professor: Next, "Hey," Ned exclaimed...

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] "Hey," Ned asclaimed...

Professor: "let's boil...

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] "let's boil...

Professor: ...the wolverines."

European Immigrant: [in thick accent] ...the wolver-eenes."

Professor: Next...[The Professor suddenly gasps, clutches his chest, and falls off his chair to the floor, obviously stricken with a heart attack. The Immigrant looks puzzled for a moment, then repeats the Professors gasp, clutches his chest, and throws himself on the floor.

APPENDIX G

SKIT GUYS SCRIPT EXAMPLE: <u>Piece of a Peace</u>
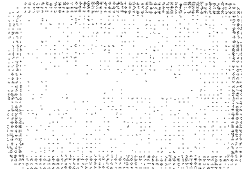
"PIECE OF A PEACE"
BY EDDIE JAMES & TOMMY WOODARD WITH JOHNNY BAKER

WHAT:	As this skit illustrates, everybody longs for peace in his life. As each character searches for peace, they learn there's really only one way to find it. (Themes: peace, hope)
WHO:	Barry, Larry, Teri, Jerry
WHEN:	Present day
WHY:	Psalm 4:8, 29:11; John 8:12; Philippians 4:7
WEAR: (COSTUMES AND PROPS)	Three chairs, duffel bag, battery-powered flashlight
HOW:	Play this skit with a lot of energy and maintain a good rhythm. Think of these characters as Jerry, Elaine, George, and Kramer from *Seinfeld* to give the performance its comedic edge.

Barry enters carrying a duffel bag. (Note: Fill duffel bag with clothes and pack around a flashlight so that when the bag is opened, the light will shine on his face.) **Larry** *enters and sits next to* **Barry.** *They may know each other, but not well.*

Larry:	(*i.e., George Costanza*) Hey, what's up?
Barry:	(*i.e., Jerry Seinfeld*) Not much. You?
Larry:	Nothin'. Hey, what's in the bag?
Barry:	The bag?
Larry:	Yeah, the bag.
Barry:	Peace.

Larry: A piece of what?

Barry: Not "piece," peace. (*He holds up fingers in a peace sign. This should be done every time the word "peace" is said*)

Larry: Peace! You got peace in that bag?

Barry: Oh yeah. It's great.

Larry: Well, could I see peace?

Barry: Uh, sure, yeah.

Barry opens bag. Light shines on their faces.

Larry: Whoa, could I have a piece of that peace?

Barry: No, you can't have a piece of my peace. It's *my* peace.

Larry: Okay, well, how about a chunk of that peace?

Barry: A chunk of peace is the same thing as a piece of peace.

*Teri (i.e., Elaine) enters and sits on the other side of **Barry**.*

Teri: Hey guys, what's up?

Larry: Not much...Hey, guess what?

Teri: What?

Larry: Barry has peace in the bag.

Teri: Really? Could I see?

Barry: Sure.

Barry opens bag. Again light shines on their faces.

Larry: He said I couldn't have a piece or even a chunk of that peace.

Teri: What about a slice of the peace?

Barry: No. Asking for a slice is just like asking for a chunk, which is just like asking for a piece. I'm not giving you any.

Jerry (i.e., Kramer) enters.

Jerry: Hi guys. Teri. What's going on?

Teri: We're just talking about what Barry has in his bag.

Jerry: What's he got?

Larry: Peace.

Jerry: A piece? A piece? Man, stay away. I don't want any trouble! *(He starts to get hysterical)* Put the bag down! Put the bag down, man. I was just on my way to visit my old Aunt Edna...

Teri: With the mustache?

Jerry and Teri both make disgusted faces.

Barry: You've got it all backward. The peace I have won't harm or hurt you.

Jerry: *(Stops crying suddenly)* It won't?

Larry: Apparently, it's not that kind of piece.

Barry: It's not that kind of piece. *(Opens bag)*

Jerry: Gimme. I want. I want. I need it. I need that peace. Gimme a piece of that peace.

Larry: Just a chunk.

Teri: A slice. Gimme a slice!

Barry: Would you look at yourselves? You can't have a piece, chunk, slice, morsel, tidbit...

Jerry:	A smidgeon?
Barry:	Not even a smidgeon of my peace. It's my peace. It was given to me.
Larry:	*Given* to you?
Jerry:	By whom?
Barry:	I know a guy.
Teri:	You have a guy?
Larry:	You have a peace guy?
Barry:	You could call him a friend for life.
Teri:	What do we have to do to get this peace?
Barry:	Nothing.
All:	Nothing?
Larry:	Then give us some of that peace! You're hoarding the peace, Barry. You are a peace hoarder.
Barry:	Why should you be happy with only a chunk, slice, or smidgeon of peace? You can get your own. After all, real peace is free.
Teri:	I want real peace.
Jerry:	Oh yeah. I'm in.
Larry:	Why don't you take us to your peace guy?
Barry:	Right this way.

They all start to exit. As they are going off...

Larry:	*(Pointing to the bag)* Can I hold the peace?
Barry:	No.

Larry:	Please?
Barry:	No.
Larry:	Please?
Barry:	No.
Larry:	You're still hoarding the peace, Barry.
Barry:	No, Larry. It's called keeping the peace. *(They exit)*

THE END.

APPENDIX H

CHURCH #9 SCRIPT EXAMPLE: <u>TYCO</u>

Opening School Scene:

(all stage and front stage lights are up) Students begin walking around stage like a normal day of school. Hanging out, talking. From around the back there are gun shots being fired and screaming. *(spot picks up side of room where students come out from behind)* A few students come running out from around the walls in middle of audience, followed by two students dressed in all black with guns. They fire a few shots into the audience. *(on stage)* One girl, Cassie, is grabbed by one of them and thrown to the ground. *(all lights need to fade here except for the spotlight, which needs to turn red)*
Dylan: Look what we have here, Cassie Bernall.

Dylan grabs her by the hair and pulls her up to her knees and puts the gun to her head. At this time as all stage lights are off except red spot, Satan comes walking into the background and looks on.

Eric: Come on Dylan, we have to go! *(very nervous, looking around)*

Satan: *(with laughter)* Patience, Eric. *(looks at Dylan and draws close)* Dylan, my little puppet. *(looks at Cassie)* Where's your God at now, Cassie? *(pause)* What a waste! *(in a soft voice, getting louder and louder, begins to speak to Dylan)* Do it. *(pause)* Do it. Shoot her. Pull the trigger! What are you waiting for?

Eric: Come on Dylan, we have to go! *(very nervous, looking around)*

Dylan: Shut up man! *(looks at Cassie)* Where's your God at now?

Satan: There is no God, Dylan! Shoot her. She deserves to die just like all the rest.

Dylan: Where's your God at now, Cassie. Do you really think he is here? Is he going to help you out of this one? *(long pause, looking at her intensely)* Do you believe in God now?

Cassie: *(looks up at Dylan)* Yes! *(spot needs to fade immediately - once lights are out a final gun fire)*

(spot picks up Pastor Sam on stage)

Pastor Sam: *(sermon)*

Scene 2 – Image:

(spotlight picks up on Patrick, enter stage left)

Patrick: America today, it's all about how we look. There's constantly new shows that "fix" people who aren't good enough. What happened to people being okay with who they are?

(spotlight to scene, left - David and Jesse with clothes and stuff are yelling at Tyler to buy what they are selling – spotlight off, pick up on Patrick.)

Patrick: It seems the world is just screaming at us to buy the latest and greatest fads. It's like we can never get away from what the world says we need.

(spotlight to scene, right – two well-dressed girls walk by a not-so-well dressed girl, Eileen)

Brooke: Oh my gosh, look at what she's wearing.

Tricia: Who would wear that?!

(Brooke and Tricia freeze, spotlight off – pick up on Patrick)

Patrick: Our minds have been warped into thinking that you need to have a certain style to fit in or be "cool."

(spotlight to scene, middle – mother with report card in hand, daughter sitting with head down)

Alyssa: How stupid are you? Do you see these grades? You're not even trying.

(Jessica looks down with her head in her hands, crying – spot off scene, everyone exits – spot on Patrick)

Patrick: (sermon)

Scene 3 – Depression:

(scene opens with father sitting down with a beer in his hand, drunk – son comes walking in)

Tommy: Hi dad. Sorry I'm late. I was. . .

Dad: *(interrupting Tommy)* Where have you been? I've been waiting for you for an hour. You said you would be home at 5.

Tommy: Sorry. I know I told you that, but my coach asked me to stay after practice to work on something for the big game tomorrow night. You know it's for the league championship.

Dad: Why would the coach waste his time on you? You almost blew the game yesterday for your team. He should just cut you for how bad you played. You were an embarrassment.

Tommy: How would you know, you weren't even there? You were doing the same thing you're doing now. Wasting your life drinking.

Dad: Shut up! You don't get it. Your life is nothing but a waste. You were a mistake anyway.

Tommy: What do you mean, I was a mistake?

Dad: Exactly that. You were a mistake. Me and your mom didn't want you in the first place. *(pause)* Why don't you get out of here? We would be a lot better off without you. You don't do anything around here anyway. You're nothing but a waste of space.

Tommy: Maybe I will just get out of here. I'll go live with mom.

Dad: You need to get out of here. The problem is that your mom doesn't want you either.

Tommy: I hate you! *(walks over to the left side of stage)*

(lights fade on right side of stage and stay on – on the left side as Tommy walks over into his room – Tommy begins his monologue)

Tommy: Man, I hate my dad. He's such a jerk. He's nothing but a drunk anyway.

(Satan comes walking onto the scene)

Satan: Tommy. Poor little Tommy. You know something, Tommy? Your dad is right. Things would have been better if you were never born. It wasn't until you came that your mom and dad didn't get along.

Tommy: Maybe he's right. Maybe things would be better if I just wasn't around.

Satan: That's right, Tommy. It's all your fault.

Tommy: If I was never born, my parents would probably still be together and happy. My dad probably never would have started drinking. Maybe I was just a big mistake.

Satan: Things would have been so much better Tommy, if you would have never been born. You might as well just kill yourself and make everyone else's life better. Most of the people probably wouldn't even realize you were gone.

Tommy: I've thought about taking my life so many times. Maybe I should just end it.

Satan: Yes, Tommy, just end it.

Tommy: I wouldn't have to go through any of this anymore. *(pause)* I don't know. I just wish that I knew what the purpose of my life was.

Satan: You have no purpose. Remember, you were an accident. A mistake.

Tommy: I wish I knew why my parents got a divorce. Is it really my fault? Why do I have to go through this? Things would just be a lot simpler if I were dead. *(puts his head down in shame and lights all fade)*

(spot picks up speaker on right side of stage)

Talk about a purpose for our lives and setting up how Satan attempts to make us feel unworthy of forgiveness.

Scene 4 – Unworthy:

Monologue

Guy/Girl: *(very frustrated)* Man, I did it again. Why can't I just stop doing that? Every single time I get around that stuff, I slip and I mess up. *(pause)* Maybe, maybe I'm just never going to get over it. Maybe I'm just not good enough.

(Satan comes walking into the scene)

Satan: That's right. You're just not good enough. You might as well just give up. You're never going to be good enough.

Guy/Girl: Why can't I just stop? I tell myself every time that I will not do it, but every time I just do it again. I'm sick of feeling this way.

Satan: You can't stop. You know how good it feels. You know you just want to keep doing it.

Guy/Girl: I want to stop, but everyone is doing it. There's no way God would forgive me.

Satan: You're right! That's it. There's no way God would forgive you.

Guy/Girl: God, why would you forgive me, when I'll probably just turn around and do it again tomorrow. *(pause)* My pastor is always saying that God will forgive me no matter how bad things are.

Satan: No!

Guy/Girl: That I can always turn to him.

Satan: No! That's a lie. He won't forgive you. You're not worthy enough to be forgiven.

Guy/Girl: I'm just not worthy enough to be forgiven.

Satan: That's right. No more about God forgiving you. You're simply not worthy enough.

Guy/Girl: Could God really forgive me this time? Is it true that He loves me that much?

Satan: No! Don't believe that.

Guy/Girl: Jesus, *(looking up)* did you really come and die for me?

Satan: NO!!!!!

(lights fade and pick up the crucifixion scene from Passion of the Christ)
Closing Scene:

Sermon - message about hope and salvation and power in Christ's death. Also talk about believing in God forgiving us of our sins.

Final lie from the enemy. What you just did (Salvation) isn't real. It is fake.

After talk, Satan enters with all the demons around him and takes his place on the throne.

Satan takes his throne and addresses the crowd. – Salvation is a lie.

Loud thundering sounds and Christ comes in and destroys Satan and the final dance scene takes place.

Altar call.