

MODELS FOR DRAMA/THEATRE EDUCATION
IN THE SECNDARY SCHCOLS OF ERITISH COLUMBIA

by

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We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

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September 1982

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ABSTRACT

Supervisor: Professor Barbara M. McIntyre

This thesis describes seven models for educational drama that may be found in secondary school drama programmes in British Columbia. Each model has been named after its most famous practitioner, except for the School Play which is not strongly associated with any one person. A chapter devoted to each model describes its background and its distinguishing features, and summarizes its practice and effects in today's schools. The models described in this way are:


1. The Ward Model - rehearsals for unscripted plays based on stories provided by the teacher.
2. The Slade Model - free form play under the benign guidance of a sympathetic leader.
3. The Way Model - whole group exercises designed to develop empathetic sensitivity.
4. The Spolin Model - exercises and theatre games designed to develop theatrical acting skills.
5. The School Play - an imitation of adult forms of theatre.
6. The Moffett Model - diverse dramatic activity to develop increased personal response to literature and improved communications skills.


7. The Heathcote Model - diverse dramatic activity as a social method for intellectual and intuitive learning.

Since the models have been chosen because of their particular importance to educational drama in British Columbia, the final chapters contain an overview of the history of school drama in this province. Topics include the first school plays, early administrators of school and community drama, the rise of provincial festivals and teacher organizations, and successive authorized drama curricula. Since personality plays a major role in drama teaching, there is also some biographical information on some of the pioneers in the promotion of drama in our schools.

Examiners:


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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

One way of charting the development of educational drama in British Columbia is through enrollment figures. The Department of Education first reported drama enrollment at the secondary level in the school year 1950-51. Despite a healthy growth in the school population from 1951 to 1962, drama enrollment remained fairly constant, never deviating more than 150 from the annual average of 1158 during that period. However, in the succeeding fifteen years, from 1962 to 1977, enrollment in secondary drama courses increased at an astonishing rate. In this period, the average annual increase in drama enrollment was 25%, climbing from 1034 to 23979 province-wide. While secondary school population increased by a factor of less than one, drama enrollment increased by a factor of more than twenty.¹

Since 1977, new curriculum guides written by and for practising drama teachers in British Columbia's secondary schools have given further impetus to junior secondary drama programmes in particular, while a provincial organization of drama teachers has gained recognition within school district administration, within the teaching profession, and within

¹ A table of drama enrollment compared to student population, by year, is given in Appendix E.

the Ministry of Education. While the secondary school population declined by a total of 8% between 1977 and 1980, drama enrollment declined less than one-half of 1%. Germinated and nurtured by a handful of devoted drama educators for half a century, secondary school drama grew with the implacability of an idea whose time had come, and now flourishes in the classrooms of British Columbia.

While drama courses have become an accepted feature of school life, there has been little explicit agreement as to what goals and activities constitute a drama class. There are three obvious causes for this confusion: lack of curriculum, lack of teacher training, and lack of communication.

- Until some recent curriculum revisions, the secondary drama curriculum was considered long outdated. This was particularly true of the curriculum guide for junior secondary drama courses.
- Ministry of Education statistics show that between 1970 and 1976, less than half of this province's drama specialist teachers had received recognized training in drama. The figure has remained at about 50% since then, while comparable figures for science, music, and languages are all over 80%, as shown in Table 1 over.
- The overwhelming majority of the province's secondary schools have at most a single drama teacher. Until the recent emergence of a strong provincial drama teachers' association, there was no established channel for these individual drama teachers to exchange ideas.

Thus, there has been a tendency for each drama teacher to develop his programme in isolation, with little direction from the government, little background from the universities, and little help from his colleagues.

TABLE 1

Teacher Qualification in Some Specialist Areas

<u>Subject</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1980</u>
Chemistry	74%	82%	91%
English	80	85	85
Music	75	81	87
Phys.Ed.	74	81	87
Theatre	42	46	52

Source: Min.Ed.pubn.5-04-974 (1980), graphs pp.17-19.

This postulated isolation is supported by observing the tremendous disparity in emphasis that may be found in different drama programmes in British Columbia. Large-scale productions for public performance monopolize the resources for drama in many schools, recreational forms of drama prevail in some, while improvisation can become a kind of springboard to personal development in still others. Methods embraced by one drama teacher may be disparaged by the next. Educational drama can thus acquire different meanings even for different teachers of drama, let alone for the other teachers, administrators, parents, and students involved

in or exposed to their programmes. Ultimately, while drama teachers may have more in common with each other than with their other colleagues, there exists no clear agreement (and oddly, very little debate) as to what should constitute the aims of a secondary drama programme. Perhaps this lack of congruent goals, along with the isolation of the drama specialist, are the two most important factors in contributing to the impression that, more than any other area of the secondary curriculum, drama teaching seems entirely dependent upon the personality and resources of the individual teacher.

A fundamental assumption of this thesis is that, for these reasons, early influences on a teacher's concept of educational drama tend to become fixed, in absence of direct influence from other sources. As in the parable of the blind men and the elephant, the teacher interprets the form and purpose of educational drama in terms of whatever information is accessible, whether or not that information is comprehensive. Unprepared to perceive more than a fraction of the whole complex issue at once, British Columbia's beginning drama teacher (or arguably, any drama teacher) first relies on models of drama teaching which he has read about, observed, or experienced; he then integrates his interpretation of these models with his own goals and priorities, with the philosophies of his colleagues and supervisors, with the physical circumstances in which he works, and

with the goals and abilities of his students. From these beginnings, he creates a unique drama programme for his school.

Based on these assumptions, we will define a set of models for drama teaching in British Columbia. They are those movements and philosophies in the field of educational drama, usually incorporating broader educational and social issues, upon which drama teachers have drawn, in whole or in part, in creating their own unique programmes. Drama teachers may use many such models, often several in the same course or even in the same class period. However, the drama programme in a given school often seems dominated by a small selection of such models, or even by a single one. An analysis of the models being employed by a drama teacher can often reveal more about the philosophy and objectives of his programme than could be articulated even by that teacher.

This thesis is by no means the first attempt to categorize types of drama teaching. As American educator R. Baird Shuman points out, "...drama involves an enormous number and variety of activities and can lead to a great diversity of outcomes."² While Shuman categorizes classroom dramatic activity in terms of its external form (reader's theatre, role-playing, and so on), a recent publication of the Inner London Educational Authority recognizes the need

² "The Place of Drama in Today's High Schools," in Educational Drama for Today's Schools, ed. R. Baird Shuman (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1978), p.157.

to examine categories of purpose:

Drama in education has altered greatly during the last twenty-five years, and is still changing. There has been a shift in direction from an interest in the personal development of the individual pupil through the acquiring of theatrical and improvisational skills, to the recognition of drama as a unique teaching tool, vital in language development, and invaluable as a method in the exploration of other subject areas.³

Influential British drama educator Dorothy Heathcote describes four faces of dramatic activity as follows:

1. Making plays for audiences
2. Knowing the craft, history and place of theatre in our lives
3. Learning through making plays
4. Using the conventions of 'as if it were' to motivate study⁴

Heathcote's long-time colleague Gavin Bolton categorizes educational drama in yet another way:

- Type A: Exercise
- Type B: Dramatic Flaying
- Type C: Theatre
- Type D: Drama for Understanding⁵

³ Cecily C'Neill et al., Drama Guidelines (London: Heinemann, 1976), p.7.

⁴ Dorothy Heathcote, "From the Particular to the Universal," in Exploring Theatre and Education, ed. Ken Robinson (London: Heinemann, 1980), pp.11-12.

⁵ Gavin Bolton, Towards a Theory of Drama in Education (London: Longman, 1979), p.11.

With categorizations already available from such highly regarded sources, this new one may seem redundant at first glance, or even presumptuous. However, there are several aspects to this thesis which I feel give it an unprecedented perspective on drama education. First, the other classifications have been made as prefatory comments to other arguments. The resulting analyses have tended to be perfunctory, and imbalanced toward the point which most interests the author: for example, Bolton describes Types A, B, and C drama in a succinct ten pages, after which he lingers over Type D for more than 120 pages. By contrast, the purpose of this thesis is not to promote one model over another, but rather to distinguish one model from another.

A second reason why previous categorizations have proven inadequate is that they tend to classify by the form of the activity rather than by the purpose, as for example in Shuman's categories cited above and an earlier Heathcote classification of "improvisation, role-playing, dance-drama, socio-drama, and so on."⁶ The analysis of models in the following chapters demonstrates that virtually identical activities may occur in different models with entirely different intents. For example, the "blind" exercise described as fundamental to the Way Model for developing empathy with those less fortunate might also be used in the Ward Model to

⁶ "Drama and Education: Subject or System?" in Drama and Theatre in Education, ed. Nigel Dodd and Winifred Hickson (London: Heinemann, 1971), p.42.

tell a story, in the Slade Model to release physical expressiveness, or in the Mcffett Model to exercise verbal skills. In fact, similar "blind" activities are thoroughly documented in both the Spolin Model and the Heathcote Model; in each of these latter cases the purpose of the activities are distinct and clearly understood by the teacher-leader, although by their form the activities are almost indistinguishable.⁷ It is futile to categorize the form of educational drama without its purpose; or as another notable drama educator puts it, we need to consider "the Why before the What?"⁸

Finally, this thesis concentrates on those kinds of educational drama which may be found in Canada, particularly in British Columbia. The story of Canadian theatre, as one might expect in a nation of immigrants, is an endless assimilation of ideas and aesthetics from other countries. Earlier in this century, for instance, major influences have come from the United States, England, France, and Ireland, through such great men of Canadian theatre as Roy Mitchell,

⁷ See Viola Spolin, Improvisation for the Theater (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1963), pp. 171-4; and Betty Jane Wagner, Dorothy Heathcote: Drama as a Learning Medium (Washington: National Education Association, 1976), pp. 215-7.

⁸ Richard Courtney, The Dramatic Curriculum (London, Ont.: University of Western Ontario, 1980), p. 70.

Lord Bessborough, Michel St. Denis, and Sir Tyrone Guthrie.⁹ We have no need to apologize for the influence of foreign models in Canadian classrooms, nor to invent an indigenous educational drama where none exists. The tradition of drama in our English-speaking schools is strong now, and getting stronger. The sources of this new tradition, mainly from Britain and the United States, are being assimilated into something new and Canadian. At this point in time, between theirs that was and ours that will be, lies an irresistible opportunity to examine where our educational drama has come from, and where it is likely to go.

⁹ Mitchell was the first director of Toronto's East House Theatre; Bessborough, during his tenure as Governor-General, founded the Dominion Drama Festival; St. Denis adjudicated the DDF finals several times, and was instrumental in the founding of Canada's National Theatre School; and of course Guthrie gambled his international reputation by accepting the position of Artistic Director for the first Stratford Festival. Our peculiarly eclectic nationalism is exemplified by the Welshman Emrys Jones, educated at an American university on a Rockefeller fellowship, who founded the first theatre department at a Canadian university.

Chapter II

DEFINITION OF TERMS

2.1 MODELS

A model is an archetype, a powerful and agreed-upon image. Where possible, the models described in this thesis have been named after their most famous practitioners, in order to make the model more immediately recognizable and thus more useful as an archetype. Three of them have been named after British educators and three after American educators; a seventh model, the School Play, is not strongly associated with any one personality and may be found anywhere in the history of western education. Except for the School Play, each model is also associated with a single publication which most fully delineates the model's form and purpose.

A chapter is devoted to each model, which contains sections on the background to the model, a description of the model, and a summary of its practice and effects on today's schools. The models described in this way are:

1. The Ward Model - rehearsals for unscripted plays based on stories provided by the teacher.
Publication: Playmaking with Children (1947).

2. The Slade Model - free form play under the benign guidance of a sympathetic leader.
Publication: Child Drama (1954).
3. The Way Model - whole group exercises designed to develop empathetic sensitivity.
Publication: Development through Drama (1967).
4. The Spolin Model - exercises and theatre games designed to develop theatrical acting skills.
Publication: Improvisation for the Theater (1963).
5. The School Play - an imitation of adult forms of theatre.
6. The Mcffett Model - diverse dramatic activity to develop increased personal response to literature and improved communications skills.
Publication: A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, K-13 (1968).
7. The Heathcote Model - diverse dramatic activity as a social method for intellectual and intuitive learning. Publication: Dorothy Heathcote: Drama as a Learning Medium (1976).

A tabular summary of the distinguishing features of each model is given in Appendix A.

There exist other models for educational drama which have not been considered in this thesis, for a variety of reasons. These models, and the reasons for their exclusion, are:

1. Play as Release. Although an implicit ancillary feature of the Slade Model ("playing out evil in a legal framework"¹), it is not necessarily relevant to dramatic play, or to drama in schools. It should be noted, however, that the modern theatre and the concept of play as release have a common ancestor in Dionysian revels and Aristotle's view of the value of emotional catharsis.
2. The theatrical training school. Either professional or pre-professional, this is the dominant model for theatre departments in Canadian universities and colleges, but is not commonly used in public schools. Where it does occur, it has been accused of misleading students as to their expectations of success in university and professional theatres. There has been no agreement as to whether this model might be legitimized in a "High School of the Performing Arts," of which there are a few examples in the United States.
3. The School of Speech. An American adaptation of classical ideals, this model is antecedent to most university theatre departments in the United States. Although it has never made much of an impact in Canada, it does persist in speech arts classes of our system of music festivals, and has been adapted for

¹ Peter Slade, Child Drama (London: University of London Press, 1954), p.73.

courses in communication and oral expression that seem closer to the Moffett Model than to the School of Speech.²

4. Drama as Therapy. This involves the use of drama as therapy to treat pathological problems such as speech defects or emotional disturbances. Since it requires specialized psychological or other training in addition to drama training, it is more appropriate to clinics than to schools. Furthermore, depending on the activities and the way they are conducted, this model can usually be viewed as a variant of one of the seven models dealt with in this thesis.
5. Theatre for Children. Also called "Children's Theatre" or "Theatre for Young Audiences," this is a prepared theatrical presentation for students to watch, or in which they may occasionally be invited to participate in a peripheral way. This model is defined as lying beyond the scope of this thesis; however, the development of children's theatre companies is inextricably connected with the development of Canadian theatre, and merits much more study than it has

² For example, see Esme Crampton, Good Words, Well Spoken (Toronto: Norman Press, 1980).

so far received.³

One difficult development to categorize is the "Theatre-in-Education" team of actor-teachers who, in role, lead students in structured improvisations of social problems. British in origin, this variant has a highly successful counterpart in the Carousel Theatre Company based in St. Catharines, Ontario. In purpose, Theatre-in-Education is a near relative of the Heathcote Model; however, since its form emphasizes adult performance with peripheral student involvement, it does not lie within the scope of this thesis.

2.2 DRAMA AND THEATRE

One of the factors which initiated my interest in the topic of models for educational drama was the problem of terminology. It seemed to me that two people could each call themselves drama teachers, yet completely disagree about the nature of their work, with a vehemence that would have been absurd among painters, sailors, baseball players, or any vocation imaginable. Although specializations and differences in technique exist in these other careers as well, drama teachers continue to use the same few terms to

³ To date, the most thorough examination of Canadian children's theatre is A Mirror of our Dreams (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1979) by Joyce Doclittle and Zina Barnieh. It illustrates the vital impetus Canadian children's theatre has given to our regional theatres and dramatic literature, and reveals Erian Way's considerable influence on the participational style of Canadian children's theatre.

apply to an increasingly broad range of important concepts. As Heathcote puts it, "the terms are only too familiar - the precise meaning too vague."⁴ In the following descriptions and definitions, it has been considered less important to pinpoint irrefutable boundaries to the terms as it has been to clarify how they have been used in the past, and how they will be used in the following pages.

The broadest of these terms is drama. Before the advent of the Slade Model, this term meant written drama, either in a book or in performance. Through the influence of Slade and Way after World War II, however, drama came to mean the opposite of theatre:

'theatre' is largely concerned with communication between actors and an audience; drama is largely concerned with experience by the participants, irrespective of any function of communication to an audience.⁵

** Drama has developed from an extra curricular skill - ie theatre to a fundamental curricular concept*

More recently, drama has become an inclusive term embracing theatre, improvisation, and man's ability to project himself imaginatively into another personality, situation, or set of attitudes:

Drama The human process whereby imaginative thought becomes action, drama is based on internal empathy and identification, and leads to external improvisation (both overt and covert). It is this act of impersonation that creates meaning through interaction with the

⁴ "Subject or System?", p.42.

⁵ Erian Way, Development through Drama (London: Longman, 1967), pp.2-3.

external world, specifically other people.
Theatre The art form of the dramatic process, theatre is the foundation and codified product of drama whereby "the costumed player" is at the centre of the form.⁶

It is this latter inclusive relation between "drama" and "theatre" (and by extension "dramatic" and "theatrical") which will be accepted in this thesis. The following definitions are also offered for clarity:

- Dramatic Literature - written playscripts, usually intended for theatrical presentation. Thus, a distinction is made between play (i.e. children's play) and a play (i.e. a piece of dramatic literature).
- Formal Drama - theatre; drama presented for an audience. It usually evolves from a playscript. Informal Drama is unscripted, disposable, and not intended for public view.
- Educational Drama - any form of dramatic activity sanctioned in schools. This is my term for the union of all models listed in section 2.1. It includes any formal or informal drama in which students take an active part. It does not include performances by visiting groups, or the general didacticism associated with the aesthetics of theatre or of dramatic literature.

⁶ Courtney, The Dramatic Curriculum, p.vii. The definition for "Dramatic Literature" which follows is taken from the same source.

- Playmaking - the process of creating a piece of potentially formal drama through informal means and group negotiation. The playmaking is the process of formalization.
- Children's Theatre - theatre performed for children, though not usually by children; also Theatre for Children and Theatre for Young Audiences.
- Creative Dramatics, Child Drama, and Developmental Drama - historical terms describing the form and purpose of the Ward Model, the Slade Model, and the Way Model respectively. Terms like these which apply mainly to just one model will be introduced in the appropriate chapter.

2.3 SCHOOLS AND CURRICULUM

Since the models have been derived from educational drama in the United States and Britain, foreign terminology such as "sephenore" or "sixth form" has been converted to Canadian equivalents wherever possible. The current terms which apply to grade levels in British Columbia are:

- Elementary: Grades 1-7, subdivided into Primary (1-3) and Intermediate (4-7).
- Secondary: Grades 8-12, subdivided into Junior Secondary (8-10) and Senior Secondary (11-12).

These divisions are not sacrosanct and have changed through the years, as shown in Table 2 on page 18.

TABLE 2

Grade Groupings in British Columbia Schools

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CA. 1930	SCHCOL								HIGH SCHOOL			
CA. 1950	ELEMENTARY					JUNIOR HIGH			HIGH SCHOOL			
CA. 1970	ELEMENTARY					Secondary						
	Primary		Intermediate			JUNIOR SEC.			SR. SEC.			
1980's?	Elementary				Middle				SECONDARY			
Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Notes:

1. Lower case letters indicate a less common grade range for a school.
2. Middle schools sometimes include grade five as well.
3. Kindergartens are attached to most primary and elementary schools.
4. Confusion arises from the fact that all of these terms are currently in use, as are most of the grade groupings.

Other terms which need defining at this point are:

- Curriculum - a term which can operate at several levels.

This is the over-all plan of instruction. It may be applied to the complete organization of all instruction, as authorized by the Department of Education, ...or the total curricular offerings of a given school....⁷

Similarly, the curriculum of a course is the material which students are expected to learn and the activities they are expected to do. Hence, the term drama curriculum may refer to approved drama courses across the province, or to the content of a particular drama course.

In British Columbia, the provincial government has the final authority in matters of curriculum at both levels, and makes its wishes known through bulletins for administrators and curriculum guides for teachers.

- Drama Programme - for the purposes of this thesis, is that combination of drama courses, audience training, performance opportunities, and expert guidance.

⁷ G.A. Victor Thomson, A Survey of Academic Programmes and Requirements (M.A. thesis, University of Victoria, 1972), p.5.

Regretfully, we cannot accept Courtney's definition of curriculum as "what takes place between a teacher and student." (Dramatic Curriculum, p.61.) Seeking an inclusive definition, he has applied too broad a concept to a term which already has a fairly common and specific meaning.

dance in drama which exists within a single school in a given school year. It is the sum of all models for educational drama in that school in that year.

- Classroom Drama. - those elements of a drama programme that take place in a classroom.

Chapter III

THE WARD MODEL - DRAMATIZING STORIES

3.1 BACKGROUND

Winifred Ward, described as "America's first lady of drama for children"¹, was born in Eldora, Iowa in 1884. She trained at the Cumnock School of Oratory, coached declamation contests, and for eight years taught public school before enrolling at the University of Chicago as an English major. After receiving her degree in 1918, she was invited to return to teach at the Cumnock School, which shortly thereafter became Northwestern University's School of Speech. She remained on the faculty of Northwestern for thirty-two years until her retirement in 1950.

Miss Ward soon established herself in two other positions which she also held until her retirement, and which also contributed to her unparalleled reputation in American educational drama:

In 1924, in addition to her regular teaching, she was instrumental in introducing creative dramatics into the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades in the Evanston public schools. Later, classes were added in the

¹ Subtitle of Go Adventuring: A Celebration of Winifred Ward, ed. Ruth Beall Heinig (New Orleans: Anchorage Press, 1977). The ensuing biographical material is drawn from the editor's article "Winifred Ward: Her Life in Art", pp. 12-17.

lower grades. Miss Ward became the first supervisor of this program and held the position until her retirement. And in 1925, with Ralph Dennis and Alexander Dean, she founded the Children's Theater of Evanston, one of the oldest children's theaters in the country.²

Thus, for over a quarter of a century, Winifred Ward worked and taught simultaneously as an Assistant Professor of Dramatic Production at Northwestern University, as Supervisor of Dramatics for the Elementary Schools of Evanston, Illinois, and as Director of the Children's Theater of Evanston. Under her leadership, "...Northwestern became an important training institution in the area of child drama, and Ward trained a generation of creative dramatics leaders who were to popularize further the ideas she first articulated."³

From her retirement in 1950 to her death in 1975 at age ninety, Winifred Ward persisted in her energetic devotion to all forms of educational drama:

...[She] continued to remain active, writing, speaking, leading workshops and consulting. She commented in 1952, "If anyone had told me that life could be as interesting and exciting after retirement as mine has proved to be, I should have looked forward to that time merely as a turning-point in my career."⁴

² Ibid., p.15. Dennis and Dean were colleagues of Miss Ward at Northwestern. Dean later became famous as a teacher of directing at Yale, particularly through his influential book Fundamentals of Play Directing (1941).

³ Jan A. Guffin, "Winifred Ward: A Critical Biography", Go Adventuring, p.36.

⁴ Heinig, "Winifred Ward", p. 16.

Her death brought tributes from leading arts educators around the world, as if the honours normally bestowed at retirement had had to be deferred until her work was finally over. Although Miss Ward's contribution to the development of Children's Theatre was also important, her influence on the form of classroom drama was immense. Quite literally, there was not a single American book on classroom drama published before the mid-1960's that was not based on the Ward Model.

Most outstanding arts movements seem to have been started by a single outstanding personality. Canadian scholar Dr. Barbara McIntyre, Professor Emeritus of Theatre at the University of Victoria and a one-time colleague of Miss Ward's, recalls that Evanston became a kind of Mecca for exponents of classroom drama from all across the United States.⁵ While theatre for children was attracting community support in many cities, particularly through the efforts of the several Junior Leagues of America, yet dramatic activity in classrooms was still extremely rare. However, the Evanston school district, in cooperation with Northwestern University, hired a number of itinerant drama specialists, many of whom had trained under the supervision of Miss Ward, to

⁵ Two other great ladies of American educational theatre also taught with Miss Ward at Northwestern: Charlotte Chorpenning, later children's playwright-in-residence at the Goodman Theater in Chicago, whose plays dictated the style of children's theatre for many years; and Viola Spolin, whose Improvisation for the Theater is discussed at length in chapter VI.

provide every elementary-age student in the district with weekly activities in creative dramatics. Moreover, the regular classroom teacher was obliged to remain with the class during the specialist's lesson; thus, all teachers were exposed to Miss Ward's methods for creative dramatics with elementary-age children, and many overcame some initial reticence to lead such activities on their own. As Miss Ward's and Evanston's reputations grew, an increasing number of requests for assistance and information led to the need to document her work for others to emulate. This need was initially met by her Playmaking with Children (1947)⁶, a thorough description of her methods of classroom drama, supplemented by an annotated bibliography, comments on about two hundred stories suitable for dramatizing, and a list of sources for many hundreds more. In response to continued demand, Miss Ward compiled a collection of one hundred Stories to Dramatize (1952), suitable for immediate classroom use, with abbreviated introductory chapters on the objectives of creative drama, criteria for selecting stories, and classroom methods.

The influence that Winifred Ward had on the development of classroom drama in the United States cannot be overstated. There were three ways in which this influence was disseminated. First, through the national reputation acquired

⁶ There were two editions published, with slightly differing titles: Playmaking with Children from Kindergarten to High School (1947), and Playmaking with Children from Kindergarten through Junior High School, 2nd ed. (1957).

by the Evanston School District's program in creative drama-
 matics for elementary school children. Secondly, through
 the publication of her books, particularly Stories to Drama-
 tize, which provided the classroom teacher perhaps inexperi-
 enced in dramatic activity with both the recipe and the
 ingredients for playmaking.⁷ Finally, as both supervisor of
 dramatics in Evanston and as faculty member at Northwestern,
 Miss Ward trained, encouraged, and influenced many of the
 best-known writers on classroom drama in the United States,
 including Geraldine Brain Siks, Kenneth Graham, and Barbara
 McIntyre.⁸

⁷ This one book was so popular that Miss Ward's pub-
 lisher and long-time friend, Sara Spencer of the Children's
 Theater Press, saw an addition built onto the existing train
 station across the street from her home in Anchorage, Ken-
 tucky, due entirely to the volume of shipments it generated.

⁸ Dr. Siks, a long-time faculty member in the Drama
 Department of the University of Washington, co-edited Chil-
 dren's Theater and Creative Dramatics (1961), one of the
 important early books in this field. Dr. Graham was chair-
 man of the School of Speech at the University of Minnesota
 and president of the Children's Theater Association of Amer-
 ica for many years. Dr. McIntyre headed training programmes
 in creative dramatics successively at the University of
 Pittsburgh, Northwestern, and the University of Victoria,
 and wrote several books including Infernal Dramatics (1963)
 and Creative Drama in the Elementary School (1974). All
 three have been frequent contributors to anthologies and
 scholarly journals; and, curiously, all were raised in small
 towns west of the Great Lakes, like Miss Ward herself.

A number of Miss Ward's other celebrated students are
 mentioned in Guffin, p.36.

performing
a story

3.2 DESCRIPTION

The Ward Model may be defined as an unscripted plot-oriented student performance based on a story provided by the teacher. Suggested methods for choosing the story, presenting it to the group, and casting, performing, and evaluating the presentation are described clearly and succinctly in Stories to Dramatize, and at some length in Playmaking for Children.⁹ The activities in this model normally adhere to the following sequence:

1. The teacher chooses a story appropriate for the group. The story should contain action and revolve about some conflict. The characters should be clearly distinguishable from one another, and should be either realistic or anthropomorphic. It should have potential for dialogue in the scenes to be performed, although it mustn't depend on fanciful or poetic language. Educationally, the story would not be worth dramatizing if it didn't possess some intrinsic value, either as a folk-tale or a piece of literature. Finally, although the stories need not end happily, poetic justice should be served: "No clever rascal should ever be so attractive that he wins sympathy. No fine person should be made to seem ridiculous. No

⁹ Pp. 4-15 and pp. 50-113, respectively.

story should be used if it is likely to lower moral standards."¹⁰ To summarize,

The choice of story, then is of supreme importance. It must be suited to the age and tastes of the children and be challenging to their abilities, though not too difficult for them to dramatize with satisfaction to themselves. It must be worthy of the time spent on it; and it must be of the kind to gain in effectiveness by being made into a play.¹¹

In addition, let us see to it always that the stories we use have the quality which makes them worth the time and thought which we are to spend on them.¹²

2. The teacher reads or tells the story to the group. The story should be trimmed of complications, and presented clearly enough and slowly enough for all to understand. The teacher may pause to enjoy any humor in it, or to heighten suspenseful moments; the story may also be interrupted to emphasize an important point, to question the listeners for understanding, or to allow the students to "try on" the characters or attitudes involved in a particular situation, in effect a small rehearsal for the dramatization to follow. Certainly Miss Ward's precepts make good

¹⁰ Ward, Stories, p. 6. It seems to me that a lot of fine material fails to pass this test of poetic justice, including two of the most popular of all plays for children: Reynard the Fox and Don Quixote by Arthur Fauguez.

¹¹ Ward, Playmaking, pp. 51-2.

¹² Ibid., p. 76.

sense for any story-telling, particularly in her paramount concern for the sincerity of its telling:

A storyteller should never talk down to the children, never make light of the material he is using, whether it be funny or serious. Respect for boys and girls is one of the requisites of the storyteller, just as it is a requisite for a teacher.¹³

3. The teacher leads group planning for the performance. This planning is at first general, taking the form of a discussion of what scenes from the story will be staged and where the action will take place. The teacher involves the students in deciding these matters, with such prompting as "At what point shall it begin? Where will the scene take place? How much of the story will be told in this scene?"¹⁴ As the students begin to practise, or "try on", bits of performance, the teacher may coach them to elaborate matters of character, attitude, or environment, while reminding them of the through-line of the story as required.
4. The teacher chooses who is to play which character, with volunteers assigned to the different roles. Since the scene will be repeated subsequently with a different cast, ". . . we must avoid using all the most imaginative or talented children in one cast, thus

¹³ Ward, Playmaking, p. 86.

¹⁴ Ward, Stories, p. 11.

risking a pccrer playing the' second time."¹⁵ Most stories will be divided into a series of shorter scenes, until the players become sufficiently familiar with the material to play them in sequence.

5. The first cast performs the scene before the rest of the group. It may be profitable to play a pantomime version before dialogue is added. Not too much is expected of this first attempt; interruptions are discouraged nevertheless, as students fumble with a barely familiar plot, new characters, and improvised dialogue. "In cases where the cast is floundering - and this is usually the result of insufficient planning - we might as well just acknowledge it and step in."¹⁶ But usually, this step serves primarily as a starting point for improving the performance of the story.
6. The teacher leads a whole group discussion to evaluate the performance. Were the dialogue and timing appropriate? Was the climax made important enough? Did the performers work together as a team? "Could we all hear and understand what was said? (Mistakes of grammar and pronunciation are noted by the teacher, and drill later given on common faults.)"¹⁷ Carp-

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁶ Ward, Playmaking, p. 100.

¹⁷ Ward, Stories, p. 13.

ing about slips of the tongue or mishandling of imaginary objects can wait until important matters have been cleared up. In all cases, the evaluation must be kept positive:

...you as a teacher have to insist that the "good comments" ... are given first...."Now, how can we make it better?" (Not what was wrong with it!)....Criticisms are kept impersonal by using the names of the players. The teacher can see to it that no child is hurt by unkind or personal criticism. And before a second playing, it is a good idea to sum up about three of the more pertinent suggestions for the benefit of the next cast.¹⁸

7. Steps 4 through 6 are repeated for a new cast, until as many students as possible have had a chance to perform.
8. Steps 3 through 7 are repeated until the entire story has been "dramatized", which is to say transposed from narrative to theatrical form. Finishing a single story should continue

...until the children have gained from it all that they are capable of getting at their present stage of development. But if the interest wanes before that time, the dramatization should be brought quickly to a close, or else we should inject new ideas which will revive their interest.

.....
Some small projects may be completed within one period, but most of them will carry over. Several class hours will be devoted to each story, as a rule, but the longer dramatizations may require one or two

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 14.

months.¹⁹

9. The story, polished with practice, may then be presented to an outside audience, although this step is emphatically optional. In this case, the audience should be conditioned to expect an informal rather than a formal theatre experience; acceptable composition for such an audience might be a group of students the same age as the performers who may be interested in the story, or a parent-teacher group being given a demonstration of playmaking. However, experience in directing formal plays, like the presence of an audience, can be a hazard of which the playmaking teacher must be wary:

...we need to remind ourselves often that we are not rehearsing a play for the entertainment of an audience, [but] that we are giving our children an opportunity for creative self-expression, and that if we take the play out of their hands they lose almost everything they should be getting out of the experience.²⁰

*drama
not theatre
informal
drama at first*

¹⁹ Ward, Playmaking, pp. 106-7.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 101.

3.3 SUMMARY

The Ward Model is identifiable by the following activities:

1. A story is transmuted from narrative to theatrical form.
2. Action and dialogue are rehearsed for improvement, but not written down.
3. Part of the group performs, while the remainder takes the role of audience. Students transfer freely from one of these modes to the other. Audiences from outside the playmaking group are permissible under certain circumstances, but this practice is certainly not encouraged.

Since this is the first of several models to be based upon and named after the work of a single influential person, several points of clarification need to be made here. First, the methods herein described as the "Ward Model" were not unique to this one teacher. In England for example, well-known drama educator Maisie Cobby published a series of books on playmaking that employed similar methods. Considering how little communication there appears to have been between North American and British drama educators before 1950, and considering that Maisie Cobby's stature in England was hardly less than Winifred Ward's in America, it seems likely that these books grew out of simultaneous independent developments in English education. Nonetheless, there is no

question that this playmaking model is more closely associated with its American proponent than its British. The point of describing and naming a model in this way is to provide an instantly recognizable frame of reference for a complex set of objectives, activities, and methods; therefore, describing Miss Cobby's work as following the "Ward Model" implies no lack of originality in it, but rather its less widespread recognition.

Secondly, the description of the "Ward Model" is not intended to imply that Miss Ward herself followed it slavishly or without variation. For example, her work in the Children's Theater of Evanston previously mentioned bears only the most superficial resemblance to this model for classroom dramatic activity. Also, she encouraged the use of adolescent problems rather than stories as the basis for junior high school playmaking. The following passages describe her working in the Heathcote and Spolin models respectively:

Sometimes "role-playing" is used to help solve problems common to this age. A teacher may write on the blackboard, as the children suggest, a list of possibilities, and the class may then choose one to play.... It is perhaps better not to play these situations in a child's own character; and it is most desirable for the children to exchange roles after having played once so that they can feel both sides of the question.²¹

²¹ Ward, Stories, pp.233-4.

Aside from role-playing, studies in characterization are valuable. If a teacher collects many interesting bits of costumes and properties, gives one to each child, numbers them by fives, perhaps, allowing ten minutes for them to plan a scene, each five may come forth from its corner with a tiny scene in which the characters are people who might use these particular properties and costumes. Or ... each may do an individual pantomime as a character suggested by his costume or property.²²

Yet even with the older students, Miss Ward's own devotion to literature and to the great stories of our culture led her to prefer a literary rather than a sociological base for her classes' improvisations:

To a certain extent, the teacher of creative grammar can make good use of problems of everyday life as content.... But it would be cheating the children to use only such material, and deprive them of the great stories that extend their horizons and introduce them to characters who are both fascinating and ennobling.²³

*Literature
main
approach*

Finally, I believe Miss Ward herself would scorn any suggestion that this model was her own invention. She acknowledged a strong debt to the ideals of John Dewey, and saw her own work as belonging to a stream of creative arts education espoused by such educators as Hughes Mearns and Natalie Cole.²⁴

²² Ibid., p.234.

²³ Ibid., p.2.

²⁴ These two authors are mentioned many times in her writings, notably in the annotated bibliography to Playmaking, pp.260-61.

Although the Ward Model continues to be a dominant form of children's classroom drama in the United States,²⁵ it has been largely superseded by other models in Britain and in Canada. One celebrated educator who still works from a story base is Canadian David Booth, a professor of drama at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and co-author of the very popular Nobody in the Cast. Aracáçara, the Journal of the Association of E.C. Drama Educators, described this unflappable teacher's playmaking with a group of more than two hundred children!²⁶

Miss Ward never lost sight of her very strong sense of purpose in educating her students to be good citizens of the American democratic society. Group decision-making, independent thinking, social cooperation, and the fearless oral expression of one's ideas: all these attributes are promoted through dramatization, and all form part of the American ideal of citizenry in a democracy. This super-objective was explicitly described in both Playmaking for Children and Stories to Dramatize; and while busy with a colossal number of educational, administrative, and theatrical tasks, Miss Ward's overall vision of this goal never blurred.

²⁵ For example, two recent publications on creative dramatics in the classroom continue to draw heavily on this model. See bibliographic entries by McCaslin and by Heinig and Stillwell, under the Ward Model.

²⁶ Vol.2, no.3 (December 1980), p.9. I was fortunate to attend another session Mr. Booth conducted in Victoria during this same visit to British Columbia in 1980.

super objective

Chapter IV

THE SLADE MODEL - CHILD ART FOR ART'S SAKE

4.1 BACKGROUND

While story dramatization and children's theatres were slowly spreading throughout America after World War II, dramatic activity in the schools was already an integral part of school life in Britain. Besides a long tradition of drama festivals and the School Play, one reason for drama's secure place in the educational scene was the existence of County Drama Advisers. During the war, the Women's Institutes in Britain had persuaded the Carnegie Foundation to provide half the funds for each county in England to hire its own Drama Adviser, who would assist community and school groups in all types of dramatic activity. One such adviser was Maisie Cobby, mentioned in the preceding section; another was Gerald Tyler, later president of ASSITEJ, the international organization for children's theatre. In many cases, the county's educational authority would provide the other half of the funding; and when the Carnegie financial support was withdrawn a decade afterwards, many drama advisers had performed such a volume of worthwhile tasks that the educational authority involved chose to retain the position

at its own full cost.¹

But drama educators began to realize that they had some fundamental disagreements among themselves as to objectives and methodology. Even in America where the Ward model predominated,

...four major philosophical differences emerged among creative dramatics leaders [during the 1950's]: some favored creative drama as a tool for learning facts; some for its value as a recreational device; others for its therapeutic value, and still others for its value as an individual art form.²

Precisely this same kind of fragmentation among drama educators was occurring at this time in Britain; however, because school theatrical and dramatic activity there was so much more widespread, this philosophical splintering was noisier and better documented than it was in North America. Among the many influential books produced to promote one of these purposes to the exclusion of the others was Child Drama, published in 1954 by the Drama Adviser to the City of Birmingham Educational Committee, Peter Slade.

As with most influential drama educators, and all after whom these models are named, Slade had a strong theatre base on which his attitudes and methods of educational drama were overlaid.

¹ Most of the information in this paragraph was gleaned from an interview with Mr. J.M.C. Meiklejohn, who was Drama Adviser to the Physical Fitness Division of the Department of National Health and Welfare, Ottawa, during the 1950's.

² Guffin, p.37.

After training and experience as an actor and producer - including running his own companies and training studio - he turned to teaching and education. He trained and directed experimental Children's Theatre and youth companies in the early 1930s... He trained and directed the first professional theatre company (the Pear Tree Players) entirely concerned with Education, and was one of the early supporters of drama-therapy [in England] He has done drama advisory work in almost every county at one time or another...³

Another influence in the development of Slade's theories that led to Child Drama was the popularity of so-called progressive education, as espoused for example by John Dewey and A.S. Neill, which seems to have held much wider favour in Britain than in North America. The ideals of progressive education were first fully expounded in Rousseau's Emile, a highly romanticized eighteenth-century fictional account of the education of a boy free of the taint of unnatural influences. Although Emile was taught by a single tutor, Edmund B. Holmes applied the same ideals to the entire British school system in 1911 in What Is and What Might Be. Considering that Holmes was then chief inspector of elementary education in England, this work is surprisingly fanciful: the school is named Utopia, its teacher Egeria, and all the children are well-behaved because of the natural delight they find in learning. The influence of the Romantic Rebellion in general, and of Rousseau and Wordsworth in particular, is unmistakable, as revealed in a section entitled "The Path of Self-Realisation":

³ Brian Way, Introduction to Child Drama, pp.9-10.

...the basis of education in this country, as in Christendom generally, is the doctrine of original sin In Utopia, the training which the child receives may be said to be based on the doctrine of original goodness. It is taken for granted by Egeria that the child is neither a lump of clay nor a tabula rasa, but a "living soul";... that he is by nature a 'child of God' rather than a 'child of wrath.'⁴

Holmes recognizes that children are "... all born actors; and ... it is but natural that the dramatic instinct should be fostered in every possible way."⁵

Finally, Slade seems to have been influenced by Piaget's theories of child psychology. He places much more emphasis on children's stages of development in his writing than did Ward, emphasis that continues in the writings of Brian Way and Richard Courtney. He also takes delight in phenomenological observation of children's development, for instance in the way that different aged groups use available space differently in their improvised dramatic activities.⁶ His categories of personal and projected play are also highly reminiscent of Piaget's observations on children's play and its relationship to learning.⁷

⁴ Edmund F. Holmes, What Is and What Might Be (London: Constable, 1911), pp. 161-3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

⁶ See, for example, Child Drama, p. 161.

⁷ See Mary Ann Spencer Fulaski, Understanding Piaget: An Introduction to Children's Cognitive Development, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), pp. 78-93.

4.2 DESCRIPTION

When asked how to begin an improvisation, Slade once replied:

There are a number of ways. You can read a story and then get the children to act it, they can mine to a story or poem while it is being read, better still they can make up something entirely of their own - give them an outline.....⁸

In form then, the Slade Model is only a variant of the Ward Model, differing in that the story to be dramatized is not *always* carefully selected from the world of literature but whimsically improvised from the teacher's imagination. Often beginning from a few unrelated ideas suggested by the class, Slade could spin an elaborate, fanciful, and fairly well constructed story which would be then translated from narrative to dramatic form. Although Child Drama contains very few hints as to how Slade actually conducted his classes and workshops, his methods are given detailed exposition in the autobiographical Experience of Spontaneity (1968). This story motif is repeated many times, with adult community groups as well as with children - even with a group of hired motorcyclists in the army in World War II!⁹

⁸ Peter Slade, Experience of Spontaneity, (London: Longmans, 1968), p.138.

⁹ See for example Ibid., pp.120-4 and pp.111-3. One elaborate allegory was extemporized from suggestions of "piano playing," "open window," and "brown bag" (pp.156-7).

What distinguishes the Slade Model is not the form of the activity, however, or even its purpose, which runs parallel to the concept of Play as Release. What distinguishes the Slade Model is the attitude which the teacher has towards the children's work. This attitude is based upon and reflects the following beliefs:

1. Child Drama is an art form in its own right, entirely distinct from adult forms of theatre. It is a parallel concept to the more familiar view of Child Art as a qualitatively different form than that of adult artists, and has the same philosophical roots in the writings of Rousseau, Blake, and other Romantics. Since the advent of Primitivism in art, "...the Child has been held up as a paradigm of the ideal man", despite the fact that "...the Ancients had a low opinion of children if they appraised them at all."¹⁰ Not surprisingly, Slade similarly admires Child Drama more than its adult counterpart:

We still find many intelligent people bemusing the fact that great artists do not yet write plays for children to act. This is to misunderstand completely, and to underestimate considerably, the Children's own creative ability. No one can write for them. There is no need... They have their own Art. Curs pales before it.¹¹

¹⁰ George Gas, The Cult of Childhood (London: Warburg Institute, 1966), p.9 and p.12.

¹¹ Slade, Child Drama, pp.82-3. Slade remarks on the connection between Child Art and Child Drama on p.357.

Slade sees adult theatrical trappings such as scripts, costumes, or audiences as entirely incongruous, even laughably so.

2. Child Drama is rooted in children's natural propensity for play. This point is hardly controversial, as virtually all child psychologists and drama educators have made the same observation.
3. Child Drama is intuitively and thoroughly understood by the child, but not by the adult. It is therefore impossible to describe it in a systematic manner, since children understand it only in an innate non-verbal way, while adults don't understand it at all. Child Drama is therefore not very useful as a teaching resource, since it idealizes its subject while approaching it in a variety of rebarbative ways; the beginning of the book shows the reader what to expect stylistically:

This book is about a very wonderful thing which exists in our midst but is as yet hardly noticed. It fails to impress itself upon so many not because it is weak, for it is vital, but because for the most part it is either callously neglected or arrogantly trod under foot. For those who walk with their eyes open it can be found in any place on earth where there are children, parched and battered though it may be. It is a creation, a skill. It blossoms where there are patience, understanding, happiness, freedom, observation and humility.¹²

¹² Ibid., p.19.

4. The success of Child Drama is evaluated in terms of its participants' commitment to the activity in progress. The term coined by Slade to describe this level of commitment, and still in common use among drama educators, is absorption, defined as "...being completely wrapped up in what is being done ... to the exclusion of all other thoughts.... A strong form of concentration."¹³
5. Child Drama benefits the whole person, rather than providing specific skills or knowledge. The claims for the affective benefits of such activity can be comprehensive and extravagant, and are expressed by Slade as expected results rather than as desirable tendencies:

In watching thousands of young people in different parts of the country, and in being privileged to create things with them, and to share confidences about their earlier years, I would say without hesitation that cleanliness, tidiness, gracefulness, politeness, cheerfulness, confidence, ability to mix, thoughtfulness for others, discrimination, moral discernment, honesty and loyalty, ability to lead companions, reliability, and a readiness to remain steadfast under difficulties, appear to be the result of correct and prolonged Drama training. For this reason, those who have had good Drama training are easily noticed.¹⁴

*When "correct & prolonged" use of
this approach we could develop*

¹³ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 125.

Slade's work with adults as described in Experience of Spontaneity carries exactly these same attitudes. While the ancients may have treated children as just small delinquent adults, Slade seems to treat adults as just large neurotic children.

4.3 SUMMARY

The Slade Model then may include a wide variety of activities, but is identifiable by the following attitudes that a teacher has regarding the group's work:

1. Child Drama is a separate art form, existing in its own right and for its own sake.
2. It is an expression of children's natural propensity for dramatic play.
3. It is not understood by adults, nor can it be evaluated or described in adult terms.

In my opinion, Slade had several negative effects on the cause of drama education in the schools. His extravagant claims are hard to believe and harder still to prove.¹⁵ The evangelical fervour with which he promoted educational drama probably alienated as many teachers as it converted. In the hands of a less skillful teacher, Child Drama could

¹⁵ Proof in the statistical sense is more difficult still than in the argumentative sense. As George Gurkle said in an address to the American Educational Theater Association in 1970, "...there is very little in the way of factual knowledge arrived at by scientific methodologies.... And what little there is ... is too barren of wider implications to warrant much discussion." (Empirical Research in Theatre: State of the Art, 1970)

come to resemble an unstructured free-for-all, with the students being the final arbiters of appropriate behavior. Gavin Bolton, who has recapitulated several models in his career, recalls his conversion to the Slade Model, the resulting chaos in his drama class, and the indignation with which he defended this new method:

I made the mistake ... of abandoning all I knew from my own experience and allowing myself to be taken over by what I understood of the new principles. In practice, therefore, I conveyed to my classes that the drama session was theirs and that they should get on with it. They did.

As the volume of sound rose above permissible metal-work class noise-level the headmaster's distressed eyebrows would appear over the pane of glass in the door. It was some time before he challenged me openly about my creative drama work....what did I think I was doing in drama lessons? My reply was a masterpiece of self-righteous arrogance. I pointed out to him, using my recently acquired tone of spiritual dedication, that form 3A whom we had always regarded as a bright set, co-operative enough under firm treatment, were really misunderstood, emotionally disturbed, deprived adolescents for whom this kind of drama was therapeutic release.¹⁶

Although his writings indicate dedicated use of student-centred activity, his dissemination of the work was messianically Slade-centred, which tended to obscure the real purpose and practical value of the work. It is easy to be offended by Slade's smug belief in his own ability to truly understand children, an ability which he does not ascribe so magnanimously to other adults. To disagree with

¹⁶ Bolton, "Drama and Theatre in Education: A Survey," in Dodd and Hicks, p.10.

Slade's ideas is to dislike children: opposition, or even debate, comes only "...from those who care for the artificialities of inanimate 'theatre' more than children and real life."¹⁷ A teacher is working in the Slade model if, like Bolton above, he answers critical evaluation by denying the validity of any appraisal of the students' work by anyone who does not "understand" it. By definition, the one who criticizes it or questions it in any way is ignorant of its artistic merit. Slade warily judges other experts in educational drama by whether they "appear to be in sympathy."¹⁸

Despite these shortcomings, however, there is no doubt that Child Drama had a number of far-reaching positive effects as well. First, it promoted drama as a valid subject for curricular study at all levels of public education, whereas drama heretofore had been largely an extra-curricular production-oriented activity. Secondly, it warned that young children may be harmed by performing publicly at too young an age, an opinion that is now gaining universal acceptance: for example, the Victoria Schools Drama Festival finally eliminated elementary-level productions in 1977, in favour of a less formal sharing of drama activities. Thirdly, Child Drama established affective goals for school drama programmes, goals which must have helped creative drama weather the cognitive storms of Elcom's Taxonomy which

¹⁷ Slade, Child Drama, p.360.

¹⁸ Slade, Experience of Spontaneity, p.300.

dominated education in the 1960's, goals which are still fundamental to Canadian drama educators.¹⁹ It pushed school drama off the proscenium stage and into an open space. And finally, it provided a basis for Slade's co-worker Brian Way to experiment in open staging, participational theatre, and developmental drama, ideas which were to pervade drama education in British Columbia more than any other non-performance model.

¹⁹ See, for instance, Joyce Wilkinson, "Developmental Drama in Education", Canadian Children's Literature, No. 8 and 9 (1977), pp. 39-45.

Chapter V

THE WAY MODEL - DEVELOPMENT THROUGH DRAMA

5.1 BACKGROUND

Although Child Drama had an immediate emotional appeal due to its sentimental view of children, it clearly preached to the converted. One such convert was Erian Way, whose work with the West Country Children's Theatre anticipated decades of theoretical and practical work in bridging the gap between young performers and young audience:

This was founded in 1944 by Erian Way, who, with four professional players, would descend on a classroom, outline a play, and in a matter of minutes the children were reading and improvising with full dramatic force with the professionals.¹

When the company dispersed due to lack of funds, Way became editor of the journal Theatre in Education, founded a drama advisory service for teachers called the Theatre Centre, and helped Peter Slade prepare his writings for publication. In his Introduction to Child Drama, Way acknowledged his debt to Slade in clarifying the difference between drama and theatre which later became part of the language of educational drama, "...the difference between Drama as part of

¹ Philip A. Coggin, Drama and Education (London: Thames and Hudson, 1956), p.269. This was printed in the United States in the same year under the title The Uses of Drama.

life and Theatre as an Art Form..."² Whereas Slade perceived these as two mutually exclusive art forms, however, Way developed the concept of a Drama/Theatre dichotomy, a continuum ranging from drama at one end to theatre at the other as defined on page 15 above. This distinction between the terms "drama" and "theatre" is still accepted by most drama educators.

Child Drama had stirred up more questions than it had answered, and its evangelical tone tended to split teacher opinion along Way's drama/theatre division. It had created immediate interest, certainly, but also immediate needs. Due to the very strong tradition of performance models in British schools, one such need was a clear elucidation of the potential in schools for both dramatic and theatrical activities, as distinguished by Way. Due to the lack of specific description of methodology in Child Drama, another need was for a body of resource material for practising teachers. And finally, due to the immense popularity of empirical methods in the social sciences from the late 1950's through the early 1970's, teachers needed a more systematic approach to instruction in this new improvised drama.

² P.9. It is believed the two men stopped working together at about this time because Way wished to bring more elements of creative drama into presentational form (i.e. "participation plays"), while Slade rejected the presentational form outright.

A veritable flood of resource books appeared to meet these needs. A.F. Alington's Drama and Education (1961) and Richard Courtney's Teaching Drama (1965) provided concise compendia of suggested drama activities from pre-school to secondary. Activities for the younger groups tended toward story dramatizations following Maisie Cobby's work, while older students were expected to "naturally" gravitate toward dramatic readings or production of the school play. Sandwiched between these extremes was a series of teacher-led improvisations and role-play exercises which were greatly expanded upon in a second generation of resource books from both sides of the Atlantic: in England, Teaching Drama (1965) by Pemberton-Eilling and Clegg, Improvisation (1966) by John Hodgson and Ernest Richards, Drama and the Teacher (1974) by Derek Fowskill, and A Practical Guide to Drama in the Secondary School (1975) by David Self; and in Canada, Nobody in the Cast (1969) by Robert Bartlett et al., and A Different Drummer (1972) by David Kemp. However, the most famous and still most influential of this second wave of resource books was Brian Way's Development through Drama (1967), the title of which gave a new term to our educational lexicon.

In retrospect, there seem to be several reasons why this book should have attained such great popularity in Canada, the most obvious of which is the personal influence of Way and those who studied with him. In 1959, the arts

advisers to three Canadian governments. - Donald Wetmore in Halifax, Mary Ellen Burgess in Regina, and Michael Meiklejohn in Ottawa - arranged a cross-Canada tour for Brian Way, financed by the Dominion Drama Festival and the fledgling Canada Council.

The results of Way's first Canadian tour, during which he gave workshops in child drama techniques and talked to teachers and young people about his philosophy of participational plays for the young, were not immediately evident, but became increasingly so as dozens of young Canadians, curious about participational theatre for children flocked to the Theatre Centre in London to apprentice, to act and to direct for Brian Way.³

One such was Ken Kramer, who founded Regina's Globe Theatre in the mid-1960's originally to produce participational children's plays. Some major British drama educators in this "developmental drama" style also emigrated to Canada at about the same time. Margaret Faulkes, co-founder and director of Way's Theatre Centre, joined the faculty of the University of Alberta in 1967. Richard Courtney came to the University of Victoria in 1968, about the time he published Play, Drama and Thought (1968), an important but difficult book on the intellectual background for educational drama. After moving to the University of Calgary in 1971, Courtney

³ Joyce Declittle, "A Canadian Perspective," Canadian Theatre Review, no. 10 (Spring 1976), p. 8.

Miss Declittle's details are a bit uncertain: Peter Slade notes that Brian Way visited Canada in both 1958 and 1959 (Experience of Spontaneity, p. 268), while Mr. Meiklejohn recalls that the Department of National Health and Welfare was involved in funding at least one of the tours (personal interview).

founded and edited a journal entitled Discussions in Developmental Drama, which helped to popularize the term among Canadian drama educators. Finally, Way himself has visited this country several times since his first two tours in the late 1950's to teach workshops and short courses.

Besides these personal influences, a number of qualities intrinsic to Development through Drama led to its widespread acceptance in western Canada. It contained probably the greatest volume of practical exercises of any of the resource books mentioned. The exercises required neither theatre training on the part of the teachers nor an available theatre facility, conditions which are frankly the norm in British Columbia's secondary schools. Suggested activities were in the form of self-contained exercises which required very little in the way of materials or preparation. Way intentionally avoided burdening his reading audience with too much philosophy: "The major part of this book is ... [concerned with practical matters - the 'what' to do rather than the 'why'...]"; which Slade had not adequately addressed in Child Drama. Finally, elements of teacher control were built into the exercises, and further general control techniques suggested, so that the teacher did not have to risk depending on the doctrine of original goodness that Rousseau, Holmes, and Slade had held to be self-evident. (Most practising teachers believe they deal with a number of

* Way, Development through Drama, p.2.

counter-examples to this doctrine on a daily basis.) Development through Drama became known in British Columbia at a time when more and more secondary schools wished to start drama programmes, when the numbers of teachers and students of drama were increasing rapidly, and when many of these teachers, untrained in drama, unequipped with theatre facilities, uninformed by their Curriculum Guides, and unsupported by any provincial specialist association, needed accessible answers to the recurring question, "What do I do now?" To them, Development through Drama was a godsend.

5.2 DESCRIPTION

The Way Model needs to be defined in terms of both its form and its purpose. It may be described as a series of unscripted experiential exercises, executed simultaneously by the whole group of students, for the purpose of improving their sensitivity to the concerns of others. Characteristic of this model is the following sequence of activities:

1. The teacher begins from an egocentric "discovery" of the senses, movement, and voice production, and gradually introduces more social kinds of improvisation.
2. The teacher makes frequent use of music to establish rhythms or to evoke moods. For either of these pur-

poses, the music may be a pre-recorded selection,⁵ or may be produced by the group of students.

3. The teacher decides before the class begins what exercises are to be done, and leads the class through them in a lock-step manner. Deviation from this pre-determined plan may be permitted, but is not expected.
4. The teacher maintains constant control over these whole-group activities using an audible control convention established at his first meeting with the class:

It is important to establish some simple arrangement with the class concerning you, as teacher, having full control at all times. All that is necessary is to be able to make a sound loud enough for the whole class to hear at the same moment. Build the teacher-class bond by explaining that the moment they hear the particular sound they are to be absolutely still and quiet, even if they are in mid-sentence or almost in mid-air.

.....
 The sound the teacher makes for these moments of control can be as simple as a single strong clap of the hands; but better still would be a single sound on a cymbal or a small drum.... A whistle is not recommended ... because of its other associations....⁶

⁵ A list of evocative recordings is provided in Development through Drama, p.300. Similar lists may be found in many of the resource books mentioned in the section above. The selections tend toward modern "sericus" music, although I attended a workshop during which Mr. Way used a recording of the popular drum soloist Sandy Nelson.

⁶ Ibid., pp.68-9.

5. The purpose of the exercises is not the acquisition of theatre skills nor the expression of an innate need to play, but rather the "development" of the individual student, as implied in the title. This development is understood to be an increased capacity for humanistic sensitivity to the feelings of others, particularly to those less fortunate in some way than the students. Way's exercises consistently seek to extend the students' capacity to empathize with other people. Unlike the Spolin model, the quality of the resulting imitation is not at all important, only its sincerity; unlike the Heathcote model, reflection on the experience is not a teacher-led activity, but rather is assumed to comprise an unarticulated enrichment to the students' daily life. This "development" is affective rather than cognitive, experiential rather than informative. Way opens Development through Drama with the following example:

The answer to many simple questions might take one of two forms - either that of information or else that of direct experience; the former answer belongs to the category of academic education, the latter to drama. For example, the question might be 'What is a blind person?' The reply could be 'A blind person is a person who cannot see'. Alternatively, the reply could be 'Close your eyes and, keeping them closed all the time, try to find your way out of this room.' The first answer contains concise and accurate information; the mind is possibly satisfied. But the second answer leads the inquirer to moments of direct experience, transcending mere know-

ledge, enriching the imagination, possibly touching the heart and soul as well as the mind. This ... is the precise function of drama.⁷

5.3 SUMMARY

The Way Model, then, is identifiable by the following characteristics:

1. The teacher dictates an activity to be performed in groups of one or more.
2. All groups perform the activity simultaneously.
3. The degree of teacher control remains constant, and is usually accompanied by an audible control device.
4. The purpose of the activity is to develop among the students an increased humanistic empathy with other people.

Besides the proliferation of resource books as noted, the practical usefulness of this model is demonstrated by the fact that the new recently published curriculum guides for junior secondary drama in British Columbia are explicitly based on Way principles.⁸

⁷ Ibid., p.1. This example is fundamental to the Way model: it was employed to begin a workshop he led in Vancouver in 1980, and is used in the last paragraph of Development through Drama as well as in the first.

⁸ See, for instance, references to Development through Drama in British Columbia's new Drama 8 curriculum guide, Prologue, pp.7, 13, and the end of each topic in the "Resource" section.

The model is not without its weaknesses, however. The teacher role can feel like that of a ringmaster, as he urges his class through a series of hoops whose purpose is never really clear to them. In addition, the teacher may feel it presumptuous or futile for him to impose a set of values on the students, an imposition that is axiomatic to this model. Finally, Way is not at all helpful in promoting the cause of curricular drama within our educational system, because he specifically discourages both its use as a teaching tool for other subject areas and the establishment of a timetable slot for drama:

However, the idea of drama being a way of teaching can in itself create another confusion by suggesting that drama is a useful tool for teaching other subjects. This is indeed so, but only after drama exists within its own right.

.....
Does this then mean that drama is yet another subject that has to be fitted into an already overcrowded curriculum? No. Drama is not another subject;.... it is a way of education in the fullest sense.....⁹

An implied difference from the Slade Model is Way's assumption that children are not naturally good, as may be inferred from his frequent concern with and reference to control techniques. Nor are they naturally good at drama, at least not without the experience of being led by a capable teacher-animateur:

⁹ Way, Development through Drama, p.7.

We cannot use number to solve interesting problems until we have experienced and to some extent mastered number itself: no more can we use drama to understand ... history or ... literature until we have experienced and mastered certain basic aspects of drama itself. Ultimately, drama is a valuable tool, but first the tool itself must be fashioned.¹⁰

-law for granted
 The postulation of a common natural gift for drama, not just for play but also specifically for identification and imitation, and the use of this gift for whatever purpose is agreed to, marks the boundary between the Way model and a long tradition of the so-called "Dramatic Method" in teaching. More recently, this concept has been applied to the teaching of language skills by James Moffett and others, and to the teaching of an astonishing breadth of topics by a number of British drama educators, led by Gavin Bolton and Dorothy Heathcote.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Chapter VI

THE SPOLIN MODEL - IMPROVISATION FOR THE THEATRE

6.1. BACKGROUND

In North America as well as in Great Britain, the most firmly entrenched form of drama in schools has been the School Play. As each of the three models discussed above gained recognition, improvisational methods and affective goals increased in importance; however, the School Play continued to be the most visible segment of a school drama programme, whether or not any classroom drama was going on as well. Since most classroom drama in British Columbia was taking place in high schools, and since the resource books by Alington, Courtney, and Pemberton-Filling and Clegg assumed the existence of a school play at that level, the popularity of the Way Model left another major problem to be resolved: the training of theatre skills in the classroom.

By the mid-1960's, improvisation had become a popular technique in schools for training professional actors, but had not made many incursions into the product-oriented School Play. Such world famous schools as the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, the Actors Studio in New York, and the Pasadena Playhouse in California used techniques similar to Way's for a similar purpose: to develop greater sensi-

tivity in the actor. It should be noted that none of the models described above has professed any intention of teaching children theatrical skills, and all were originally aimed at the junior secondary level or younger. As more senior high schools allotted curricular time to the study of drama, however, teachers sought ways of adapting the developmental drama form to teach acting skills, as was already being practised in these professional training schools. The need for a resource book in this area was filled by a professional theatre teacher, Viola Spolin, with her very popular work Improvisation for the Theatre (1963).

Mrs. Spolin took her early training in recreational group play under Neva L. Boyd, author of Handbook of Games (1945) and several other similar titles, who had a pervasive effect on Spolin's later work:

A pioneer in her field, she founded the Recreational Training School at Chicago's Hull House, and from 1927 until her retirement in 1941 she served as a sociologist on the faculty of Northwestern University. From 1924 to 1927 as her student at her house, I received from her an extraordinary training in the use of games, storytelling folk dance, and dramatics as tools for stimulating creative expression in both children and adults, through self-discovery and personal experiencing. The effects of her inspiration never left me for a single day.¹

¹ Viola Spolin, Improvisation for the Theater (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1963), p.vii.

Subsequently, Mrs. Spolin worked as a teacher and supervisor of creative dramatics in a recreational project in Chicago, training largely inexperienced teacher-directors to lead neighbourhood drama groups. In 1945, after moving to California and establishing the Young Actors Company in Hollywood, she continued her experiments with the application of creative group work and game principles to the teaching of theatre techniques to young performers. In the late 1950's, Mrs. Spolin returned to Chicago where her son Paul Sills had founded "... the first professional improvisational theater in the country, the Compass (1956-1958)..."²

Although the material had been drafted for publication for many years, its final form was reached after the author observed how improvisation works professionally - at the Second City in Chicago, the improvisational theater of Paul Sills. His further development of the form in use professionally brought new discoveries and the introduction of many newly invented exercises in her Chicago workshops. The manuscript underwent total revision to include the new material and to present the clearest use of the form for professional as well as community and children's theater.³

Out of these workshops came Improvisation for the Theater and the concept of "theatre games."

² Ibid. All this biographical information has been drawn from this source, pp. vii-x.

³ Ibid., p.x. The Second City troupe produced many of the best American comic actors of its time, including Mike Nichols, Elaine May, and Avery Schreiber.

To Spolin, the basis for learning is experience, and a
"...game is a natural group form providing the involvement
and personal freedom necessary for experiencing... Skills
 are developed at the very moment a person is having all the
 fun and excitement [cf] playing a game...."⁴ Any game
 involves group agreement as to a goal and as to the rules
 for attaining this goal, with the energy of the group
 focussed on a common concern.

The energy released to solve the problem, being
 restricted by the rules of the game and bound by
 group decision, creates an explosion - or spon-
 taneity - and as is the nature of explosions,
 everything is torn apart, rearranged, unblocked.⁵

Therefore, in order to teach theatre techniques through the
 use of theatre games, the teacher-umpire needs to analyze
 what techniques are desirable for the group to learn, and to
 invent an improvisational theatre problem that will teach
 this technique by analogy. In Spolin's words, the teacher
 is essentially "...giving problems to solve problems."⁶

The Spolin Model postulates that "...the techniques of
the theater are the techniques of communicating"⁷, that
these techniques are teachable, and that the integration of
technique with the creative self-expression of an artist is

⁴ Ibid., p.4.

⁵ Ibid., p.6.

⁶ Ibid., p.20. Italics deleted.

⁷ Ibid., p.14. Italics deleted.

the result of experiencing this communication in an organic spontaneous way. The Spclin Model, like the Stanislavski method for acting, is a device for the creation of an environment in which artistic inspiration is most likely to take place:

For it is by direct, dynamic awareness of an acting experience that experiencing and techniques are spontaneously wedded, freeing the student for the flowing, endless pattern of stage behavior. Theater games do this.⁸

6.2 DESCRIPTION

The Spclin Model may be defined as a series of acting problems posed by the teacher, to be solved by the students through improvisational performances, for the purpose of improving their techniques for communicating with an audience. Each problem is called a theatre game, with a stated objective or "Point of Concentration" (POC) for the student to achieve. Although some orientational games take the form of whole group experiential exercises as in the Way Model, the usual form of Spclin's theatre games is a series of small-cast improvised scenes performed within the following framework:

1. The teacher sets a problem that everyone will work on, with the Point of Concentration explicitly stated. More advanced games usually involve challenging the divided consciousness of the actor, who strives

⁸ Ibid.

to achieve a certain goal without damaging the believability of his portrayal. For example, the "Contact Exercise" requires that

The student actor is to make a direct physical contact (touch) as each new thought or phrase of dialogue is introduced. With each change of dialogue, a different physical contact must be made.... [The Point of Concentration is] to make a new direct physical contact with each new thought or phrase of dialogue.⁹

2. The students, in small groups, prepare their scene. This preparation is implied in the phrase that Spolin uses to begin most game descriptions, that "Who, What, and Where are agreed upon"; thus, the content of the scene is usually determined by the students rather than by the teacher. This recurring phrase means that each group decides, given the restrictions as stated by the teacher, who the characters are that they will portray, what the basic action of the scene will be, and where it will be set.
3. After what is usually a simultaneous preparation time for all groups, one of the groups performs its scene while the others take on the role of audience. Instead of becoming a part of the audience, the teacher spurs on the performers by "Side Coaching", a verbal reinforcement of the Point of Concentration expressed in short imperative sentences: "Share the

⁹ Ibid., pp. 184-5.

stage picture! See the buttons on John's coat! Share your voice with the audience!"¹⁰

It should be noted that since the purpose of these games is to improve an actor's communication with an audience, the presence of the student-audience is vital to this model. While a member of the student-audience, the actor watches other students attempt to solve the same problem that he has been working on, as well as developing the external eye traditionally associated with stage technique; while playing to this audience, the actor attempts to communicate within the restrictions of the game:

When there is understanding of the role of the audience, complete release and freedom come to the player... When the audience is understood to be an organic part of the theater experience, the student-actor is immediately given a host's sense of responsibility toward them which has in it no nervous tension. The fourth wall disappears, and the lonely locker-in becomes part of the game, part of the experience, and is welcome!¹¹

4. "Evaluation takes place after each individual team has finished working on the acting problem."¹² This evaluation takes the form of a group discussion led by the teacher-director, who attempts to elicit

¹⁰ Ibid., p.29.

¹¹ Ibid., p.13.

¹² Ibid., p.26.

objective responses from the audience in terms of the group's success in solving the stated problem and adhering to the stated Point of Concentration. This establishment of a predetermined criterion by which a scene will be evaluated is, in my opinion, the greatest strength of the Spolin Model. Led by a skilled teacher-director, the group can evaluate acting and acting problems without criticizing the actors personally, allowing students to give and to accept commentary on one another's work while keeping complex social concerns at arm's length.

5. The performance and evaluation steps are repeated with the next team, until all the students have had a chance to attempt to solve the acting problem.
6. Often, this entire process will be repeated with the same rules, or with variations, or with additional restrictions, until the specific acting technique being explored has been assimilated to the teacher's satisfaction; then, the group moves on to the next game.

6.3 SUMMARY

The Spolin Model, then, is identifiable by the following characteristics:

1. The teacher sets a specific problem to be solved in an improvised scene.

2. The students, in teams, prepare the content of their scene.
3. Each team in turn presents its scene, which is then evaluated by subjective group discussion according to the criteria of the problem as originally stated.

Many practising drama teachers in British Columbia make no clear distinction between the Way Model and the Spclin Model; indeed, many of the exercises listed in either model may be easily adapted to the other. Although these two models are similar in their exercise/game approach, there are key differences between them in purpose, control techniques, and attitude towards potential audience:

1. The purpose of the Way Model is to develop individuals' sensitivity, while the purpose of the Spclin Model is to develop actors' skills. Because most theatre teachers believe that a good actor needs also to be a sensitive person, developmental drama exercises may often be found as part of a Spclin-inspired theatre training programme, usually as preliminary or "warm-up" exercises before beginning the day's acting problem.
2. While Way's group agrees to abide by the teacher's control, Spclin's agrees to abide by the rules of the game; therefore, the latter model assumes the group is working toward a common goal, rather than being herded toward a valuable insight. By implication,

the Spolin Model allows the teacher frequent respites from the maintenance of this control, which in my personal experience is much less a strain than the constant level of control required by the Way Model.

3. In the Way Model, audiences are forbidden; in the Spolin Model, they are required. These opposite attitudes toward the presence of an audience are logical extensions respectively of the purpose of each of the two models.

An interesting variation of the Spolin Model may be seen in the work of British expatriate Keith Johnstone, probably the most influential acting teacher in western Canada. After a brief career as an elementary school teacher, Johnstone became part of the frenetic creative activity surrounding the English Stage Society at London's Royal Court Theatre in the mid-1950's. Although lacking any theatrical training or experience, Johnstone joined "the Court" as a playwright, then became a play-reader (that is, a dramaturgical talent scout), and finally was asked to chair the Court's "Writers Group", working with such bright young playwrights as Ann Jellicoe, John Arden, and Edward Bond. When he insisted that this group should act their ideas out rather than just sitting and talking them over, it "...began to function as an improvisation group. We learned that things invented on the spur of the moment could be as good

or better than the texts we laboured over."¹³ His experience as an artist, writer, and teacher led him to believe that "...dullness was not an inevitable consequence of age, but of education..."¹⁴; so that when he was asked to extend his workshops to include professional actors at the Royal Court Theatre Studio, he set about trying to find ways of rediscovering imaginative response in the adult:

Lacking solutions, I had to find my own. What I did was to concentrate on relationships between strangers, and on ways of combining the imagination of two people which would be additive, rather than subtractive. I developed status transactions, and word-at-a-time games, and almost all of the work described in this book.¹⁵

As in the parallel developments of Ward and Cobby, Johnstone's games were developed independently of Spolin's, and have a different emphasis. Not only was Johnstone unaware of Spolin's work when he started, but he also later rejected her concept of a predetermined "Who, What, and Where" as muzzling true spontaneity.¹⁶ The "student preparation" step is thus eliminated, as it interferes with a spontaneous response to the challenge. Evaluation is based on

¹³ Keith Johnstone, Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre (London: Faker and Faker, 1979), p.26. The biographical information here is drawn from a chapter entitled "Notes on myself", pp.13-32.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.14.

¹⁵ Ibid., p.27.

¹⁶ He rejected Stanislavski's "Given Circumstances" for similar reasons: see Impro, pp.26-7.

how imaginative and funny a scene turns out to be, rather than on some predetermined criterion. Like Paul Sills in America, Johnstone was apparently the first teacher-director in England to have improvisational material performed for an audience. Spontaneous comedy was the goal, so of course cut-side audiences were more than welcome. Unlike Spolin's systematic inculcation of communication skills, Johnstone taught his actors techniques for finding an imaginative and funny response to any stimulus. Perhaps because Johnstone began by training professionals, he didn't seem to perceive a need to first train his actors in more rudimentary skills.

The style of improvisation in western Canada has been greatly influenced by Keith Johnstone, partly because he has spent so much of his time in western Canada in recent years. In 1968, he was invited to spend a term as guest lecturer at the University of Victoria, where his methods greatly influenced Carl Hare and his "Company One", a professional touring group which presented original and sometimes improvised material to both local and national acclaim. Johnstone later joined the faculty of the University of Calgary, where he has taught for the past ten years. Not only has he trained many actors in western Canada, but he has been a highly popular workshop leader at many teachers' conferences: long-time British Columbia drama educator Laurie Lynds believes that Johnstone's workshops have been highly influential in establishing improvisation in this province's

secondary school drama classrooms.¹⁷ Johnstone's most recent invention has been "Theatre Sports", a witty energetic improvisational framework for team competition, that has achieved great popularity with some professional companies in Victoria and Vancouver and with secondary school drama groups throughout the province.

¹⁷ Audiotape, 1982.

Chapter VII

THE SCHOOL PLAY

7.1. BACKGROUND

The previous four models may be described as non-performance models. They specifically exclude playscripts from their activities and, except for some potential variants of the Spolin model, discourage the presence of an outside audience in varying degrees of vehemence. Yet the familiar performance-oriented model of the School Play predates all these other models, predates any form of theatre for young audiences, predates even written drama in English.

The beginnings of the School Play are the beginnings of western theatre itself. In mediaeval Europe, portions of the Latin liturgy began to be performed as the impersonation of characters speaking in role, rather than in the narrative form of the scripture. The oldest of these short liturgical dramas, or "tropes", depicting the women at Christ's tomb on the first Easter Sunday, were performed no later than the tenth century A.D. By the year 970, Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, gave detailed instructions, in effect the first stage directions, for the performance of this trope known as the Quem Queritis. "This dramatic rendering of church canticles had been growing for many years, and it had become

necessary to explain and regulate the intrusion of Drama into Divine Service."¹ The expressed purpose of these portrayals was didactic in the broad sense: to teach articles of Christian faith to neophytes and those who did not understand Latin. Moreover, since the performances were associated with monastic schools, and since the priests themselves would probably have had other duties at such an important celebration, it is likely that some of these first performers were students. In any case, there is no doubt that schoolboys were among the first actors in England, as the "...first recorded dramatic performance in England is a play about St. Catherine performed by choirboys at Dunstable in A.D. 1110."² It seems that the Church, unable to resist the spread of this liturgical drama, employed it instead for holy purposes; for although there are few surviving records of the performances themselves, there are a number of surviving complaints about and justifications for their continuation.³

In later mediaeval times, the tradition of the Boy Bishop flourished. For one day a year, choirboys took over all the adult roles of the Church; but, unlike the equivalent adult role inversion known as the Feast of Fools, the

¹ Coggin, p.46. The stage directions themselves are quoted at some length in Richard Courtney, Play, Drama & Thought, 3rd ed. (New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1974), pp. 178-9.

² Coggin, p.47.

³ Some of these are quoted in Coggin, pp.50-51.

Boy Bishop and his retinue carried out their clerical functions with all the ceremonial dignity they could muster:

He was surrounded by his boy "priests" and was distinguished by robes which corresponded to those of the real bishop. If he died during his term of office, he was buried with all state due to the dignity of a true bishop, and during the Christmas season he provided dramatic entertainment... [and] paid the expenses out of the beautiful gifts which appertained to his office.*

As the sponsorship of English schools passed from religious organizations to secular ones, so the Boy Bishop custom continued at such venerable public schools as St. Paul's, Eton, and Winchester. As abuses crept into this practice, Henry VIII tried to suppress it by proclamation, until it finally died out during the explosion of school drama in the middle part of the sixteenth century.

Although this curious pageant may seem to have only a superficial similarity to the tradition of the School Play, closer examination reveals fundamental analogies which made possible the growth of school productions during the reign of Elizabeth, which in turn fostered the first written drama in English. First, the rights and duties assumed by the Boy Bishops were not mere fantasies or burlesques, but real adult roles which they were expected to fulfill some day in earnest; thus, the ceremony was an ancestor of modern occu-

* T.H. Vail Motter, The School Drama in England (1929; rpt. Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1968), p.6. Most of the information in this paragraph is also drawn from this source.

paticnal role playing which occurs spontaneously in children's play (e.g. "playing house"), is embraced enthusiastically by all models of educational drama, and is employed to great effect in modern vocational training. At the University of Victoria, for example, the schools of law and Social Work hold elaborate courtroom and counselling simulations respectively, which are considered a highlight of their academic year. Secondly, a tradition was begun of adults attending a student performance and treating it with serious expectation. This tradition continued well into the Jacobean professional theatre and has resurfaced frequently: for example, the phenomena of Master William Betty in Regency England or Shirley Temple in Depression America would have been unthinkable in most European countries, but have attracted popular admiration and professional imitation in English-speaking theatre. Thirdly, the Boy Bishop was always selected from students in religious training, so that the idea of schools presenting theatrical performances for the public was not so much an innovation of Elizabethan times as it was another secularization among many such secularizations associated with the English Renaissance. Finally, the Boy Bishop and his attendants temporarily took on full adult tasks within a system which otherwise denied them such responsibility, an opportunity which serious and ambitious young people find at once attractive in its novelty and rigorous in its discipline. This shift in locus of con-

tried from the familiar demands of one's elders to the more stringent and exhilarating demands of a public performance and pride in one's own contribution to it, continues I believe to be no small factor in the persistent allure of the School Play.

The great era of the School Play was the middle half of the sixteenth century when it was generally recognized as the best theatre in England, perhaps in the world. Before the erection of London's first professional theatre building in 1576, at least seven schools are known to have presented plays in Latin, with several also performing in English.⁵ Nicholas Udall, author of the first English comedy Ralph Roister Doister (ca. 1550), probably wrote it to be performed by the boys of Eton or Westminster, both of which he served as headmaster, and parlayed his reputation as author and producer of school plays into an appointment as Master of the Revels to Queen Mary in 1554.⁶ Two of Udall's students from Eton also gained great renown as producers of school plays. William Malim served as headmaster of both St. Paul's and Eton, where he obliged every teacher on his staff

⁵ See Vail Matter, p.237.

⁶ Udall's reputation as a schoolmaster was somewhat more tarnished. Renowned for the severity of his floggings, he was dismissed from Eton and imprisoned in 1541 for theft and moral turpitude. Apparently his interest in boys went beyond the pedagogic. (See Vail Matter, pp.53-56.) His subsequent rise from this disgrace suggests that the court of Mary Tudor may have favoured him as a secret Catholic, for his first teaching appointment had been in a Catholic school.

to present regular dramatic performances in both Latin and English.⁷ In 1561, Richard Mulcaster became the first headmaster of the newly-created Merchant Taylors' School, where he "... developed acting to such a pitch of perfection that the Merchant Taylors' boys were frequent performers at court and elsewhere during his incumbency."⁸ Mulcaster's productions were so popular with the public that in 1573 an alarmed Worshipful Company of Merchant Taylors banned further performances in the school's Common Hall, although the boys continued to play frequently at Court.⁹ Queen Elizabeth herself apparently took a personal interest in school drama: her statute for the refounding of Westminster School in 1560 decreed that the boys should produce annual Christmas plays in both Latin and English or their masters be subject to a fine, a tradition which has continued to the present century.¹⁰ Headmaster Thomas Ashton at Shrewsbury instructed his staff that "...every Thursday the scholars of the First Form... [shall] play one act of a comedy."¹¹ Shrewsbury's public performances were so highly regarded that the Queen

⁷ Malim's instructions are quoted in Vail Motter, p.50; English translation from the Latin given in Coggin, p.63.

⁸ Vail Motter, p.29. Mulcaster also shared Udall's reputation for severe corporal punishment.

⁹ See Vail Motter, pp.108-110.

¹⁰ The statute is quoted in Vail Motter, p.86; English translation in Coggin, p.65.

¹¹ Quoted in Coggin, p.65. The ensuing references to Elizabeth's interest are drawn from Vail Motter, pp.209-10 and 213-15.

twice attempted the journey to see them, and gave the fledgling school a special operating grant. Between Elizabeth's accession in 1558 and the building of the Burbages' professional Theatre in 1576, rewards for court appearances by school and chapel boys outnumbered those for adult groups by more than two to one.¹²

School productions provided the first fillip to the great written drama of the Elizabethan Age, which later carried into university and professional theatre. Contemporary with Ralph Roister Doister, the comedy Gammer Gurton's Needle was written and performed at Cambridge in 1550, followed by the first tragedy in English, Coriolanus, performed at the Inns of the Court in 1562. John Heywood and John Lyly wrote many plays for the boys of St. Paul's, and both Ben Jonson and Christopher Marlowe attended public schools in which the School Play was an established institution. At Merchant Taylors' School, Mulcaster's students included Edmund Spenser, Thomas Kyd, and "... nine of the translators of the King James Bible..."¹³ The great Jacobean actor Edward Alleyn even founded his own school, at Dulwich, about 1617.

The rise of London's professional theatres in the latter part of the sixteenth century eclipsed the widespread public attention for school drama, although a famous passage

¹² Figures drawn from Vail Motter, p.14.

¹³ Coggin, p.63. Information on playwrights here is drawn from Coggin and Vail Motter, and may be verified through their indexes.

in Hamlet (III.ii.340-375) laments the lingering popularity of professional companies of boy actors. The abuses of these companies, which ranged from deprivation to legalized kidnapping, implicated school drama as well, providing fuel for the increasingly fierce Puritan denunciation of any form of theatre whatsoever. Although there are records of performances at a few schools which maintained annual in-house productions during the Commonwealth, and at many more that mounted one occasionally, the golden age of the School Play was dealt its final ignominious blow with "...Oliver Cromwell's destruction of the Dean's Great Hall at the King's School, Canterbury, 'for being profaned by the King's Scholars having acted plays there.'"¹⁴

While drama of all kinds was being repressed in England, it was approaching its zenith in France. Play production was specifically promoted by the Jesuit schools which spread rapidly throughout Europe and even Canada in the seventeenth century. While pioneer priests in the New World stressed the theatre's "edifying aspects to the detriment of the dramatic aspects of the spectacle,"¹⁵ their European brethren were not restricted by such frontier austerity:

Besides the large public audiences that attended these plays, there were also frequent performances

¹⁴ Vail Matter, p.241.

¹⁵ Theresa L. MacKinnor, "Theatre for Young Audiences in Canada," Diss. New York University 1974, p.16.

before the various courts of Europe.¹⁶

As in Elizabethan England, criticisms of the educational value of these performances grew more censorious with their popularity, their production values, and the time they took from the boys' other studies. Also as in England, the first writers of school drama were highly educated teacher-scholars, although it wasn't long before more celebrated playwrights also began providing scripts for School Plays. The most famous example of these was at the Convent School of Saint-Cyr, founded by Mme de Maintenon, morganatic wife of Louis XIV. The girls began by performing proverbs she had written in dramatic form, and soon progressed to classics by Corneille and Racine. When the purpler passages of these plays seemed to be portrayed somewhat too enthusiastically by the girls, Racine himself was asked to provide a moral play for them to perform; and although he had bitterly rejected the professional theatre some years before, he obliged in this laudable aim by writing for them Esther. The play, elaborately staged, was so well received that the Sun King himself ordered a subsequent performance for the court, and even helped seat the guests. The production turned out to be a theatrical triumph but an educational fiasco, as backbiting, jealousy, and neglect of studies became the rule among the young actresses. Within a year,

¹⁶ Coggin, p.89.

they were performing another original Racine piece -- in private!¹⁷

It stands to reason that boys who went to school and later became well-known professional actors should have first displayed their remarkable talents in school productions. Sure enough, we find that many of the greatest actors in England are known to have appeared in school productions: Barton Booth, Tate Wilkinson, Garrick, Macready, Irving, and Olivier are among the most notable. In our century, the School Play has also proven to be a training ground for stage directors: Sir Tyrone Guthrie and Sir John Gielgud first attracted attention working with university theatre groups, while Sir Michael Redgrave began his career as a schoolteacher: "In the early thirties, Michael Redgrave started producing plays at Cranleigh where he taught modern languages."¹⁸ There are also examples of school theatre in British Columbia providing a springboard to professional careers: Peter Mannering, founder of Victoria's Easton Theatre, directed himself while a student in North Vancouver in the early 1940's; Tom Kerr established a province-wide reputation as a high school director in Kamloops in the 1960's before beginning his professional career; and Victor Mitchell, before becoming chairman of the Drama Department at the University of Calgary, was involved in

¹⁷ See Coggin, pp.92-96.

¹⁸ Coggin, p.198.

Victoria High School productions as both a student actor in the late 1940's and as a teacher director in the late 1950's.¹⁹

In England, the rebirth of professional theatre during the Restoration left school play production far behind. Since the content of Restoration plays would hardly have been considered suitable for schoolboys, the School Play in the seventeenth century assumed the guise of kinetic literature, with Shakespeare, Addison, Plautus, and Terence being the most popular authors. Trends in the School Play in succeeding centuries are succinctly summarized in the following extracts:

The classics of English and Latin, then were the entering wedge by means of which the drama returned once more to the school stages. But the eighteenth century also witnessed the introduction of two other elements..., namely, original plays written for the schoolboy actors, and light plays, usually farces, chosen by the boys solely for their own amusement.

.....
The nineteenth century repeats the story of its predecessor, but is distinguished in three respects: first, because it witnessed dramatic activity in all of the schools...; secondly, it was characterized by the predominance of the amusement aim which found expression in a large body of worthless plays chosen by the boys because the school authorities in many places were not concerned with dramatics; and thirdly, because at a few schools, ...drama was recognized by the authorities, and the plays which resulted are notable.

¹⁹ This information is derived from audiotapes made by the writer with Peter Mannering (1981), Laurie Lynds (1982), and Tommy Mayne (1982).

The twentieth century has witnessed the rapid development of what is known as Little Theatre Movement... [which] has stimulated the professional stage both of England and America... its influence has been felt... in the raising of dramatic standards, in the education of audiences satisfied to see a play by amateurs for the play's merits, even though the production lacks professional finish, and in the stimulation of a demand for plays in...schools where dramatics have only recently become a fixture in the school's regime.²⁰

In this century, the rise of the Little Theatre Movement has greatly influenced the School Play. Particularly strong in the eastern United States, this movement treated the theatre as a serious art form rather than as a social diversion. It spread to Canada with the founding of the Ottawa Drama League in 1913 and Toronto's Hart House Theatre in 1919, and gained tremendous strength during the Depression. Between the early 1920's and the early 1950's, Little Theatre was simply the only theatre in Canada; it was therefore the pattern from which the School Play took shape.

The School Play in some areas has traditionally been an obligation given to a beginning teacher with too little experience to say "No".²¹ In Canada, Roy Mitchell's The School Theatre (1925) gave the school director enough simple stagecraft and principles of organization to create a Little Theatre in his school. In the United States, many books

²⁰ Vail Motter, pp.242-243.

²¹ Audiotape of Laurie Lynds indicates that this ritualistic foisting is still prevalent in rural school districts in British Columbia.

from Lillian Collins' The Little Theatre in the School (1930) to Charlotte Kay Matter's Theater in High School (1970), provided lifesaving comprehensive step-by-step instructions on how to produce a School Play. The School Play also benefited from the Little Theatre's adoption of the concept of "Art Theatre" long before the professionals did, resulting in the proliferation of what stage designer Robert Edmond Jones called the "new stagecraft": non-illusory scenery, use of mass rather than decoration, open spaces framed by black drapes. A virtue could then be made of economic and technical necessity, as such sparsely decorated plays as Our Town and The Happy Journey became very popular among school groups. Yet another connection between community and school drama was the fact that many teacher directors were also active members of their local Little Theatre troupe: the Victoria Theatre Guild, for example, was founded as the "Mimes and Masquers Club" in the early 1930's by a group of teachers including Ira Dilworth and Bunny Burn. There was such a high percentage of teachers among its membership that the club was soon nicknamed "Mams and Masters"! In Calgary, a nationally-known community group, Workshop 14, was formed by graduates of Betty Mitchell's theatre classes at Western Canada High School. In Montreal, professionals and former professionals have frequently directed school productions. In Victoria, the full professional facilities of the civic-owned McPherson Playhouse is

made available to school groups several times a year at nominal cost.

Charles Rittenhouse, supervisor of Speech Arts for the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal from 1939 to 1969, addressed the 1981 annual meeting of the Association for Canadian Theatre History with a recollection of school productions in Montreal during his tenure. His list of plays produced illustrates the four main streams of scripts chosen for school plays: classics such as Everyman, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and The Imaginary Invalid; modern classics such as Our Town and Noah; Broadway and West End stage hits such as Arsenic and Old Lace and Teahouse of the August Moon; and plays written with young actors in mind, such as Junior Miss and Time Out for Ginger.²² Unlike their British counterparts, Canadian teachers seem to have been reluctant to write plays for their students to perform, preferring instead to depend on such published series as French's Acting Edition.

²² Charles Rittenhouse, "The Golden Days of Theatre in the Protestant Schools of Greater Montreal" (unpubl. paper, 1981), pp.2-3. See Appendix C, part 1, for a list of titles given in this paper.

7.2 DESCRIPTION

The School Play is a public performance of a scripted play for a mixed audience of adults and students. Usually, all the performers are students, the director is a teacher, and the rehearsals are extra-curricular. The play is presented either as a full evening's entertainment in itself, or with other activities for a more varied bill. The play-script may be selected from the classical repertory, the modern stage, or may have been written by the teacher or the students themselves. The School Play is a full imitation of adult forms of theatre, with such trappings as admission charges, ushers, intermission refreshments, curtain calls, even newspaper columnists.

There are many reasons for producing a School Play. It is a good public relations event for a school: few activities in our educational system have a tangible end-product that can be demonstrated to hundreds of people at a time; for this reason, school principals have been known to demand some sort of school production from time to time. In addition, the School Play is the oldest and most visible form of educational drama, so school administrators who are unfamiliar with other models will often assume a drama programme exists to produce a School Play. For the drama teacher, the School Play can be an extremely powerful motivational tool for his students of theatre arts and crafts, as well as an impressive summative display of his programme's accomplish-

ments. It also provides an opportunity for the teacher to work together with his students towards a common goal, a welcome change from the adversarial role more usual in the daily traffic of learning. A successful production gives students a great feeling of accomplishment following a long period of group effort, a singularly effective object lesson in delayed gratification and the potential for cooperative achievement. Performing in front of an audience helps a young person to improve speech communication skills, to overcome self-consciousness, and to practise the performance of complex tasks under the glare of public attention. Finally, once the initial fear is overcome, performing can be exhilarating good fun.

Despite these many potential benefits, however, the School Play has encountered vehement opposition throughout its long and distinguished history. This criticism springs from the belief that theatre can be held responsible for encouraging at least one of the following objectionable qualities: immorality in general, exhibitionism in the young, and distraction from one's proper duties. In older times, there was the traditional Puritan opposition to the perceived licentiousness of any form of theatre. How much worse then was it for impressionable youth to be encouraged in this kind of immorality; an authentic performance of a classical Greek drama could well have been the object of the wrath of the Elizabethan pamphleteer who wrote:

Even in her majesty's chapel these pretty upstart youths profane the Lord's Day by the lascivious writhing of their tender limbs, and gorgeous decking of their apparel, in feigning bawdy fables gathered from idolatrous heathen poets.²³

Secondly, there has developed in modern times a belief that prematurely successful exhibitionism can be psychologically damaging to the young. This was certainly observable in the Esther fiasco, and is the main reason for the aversion to audiences inherent in the Ward, Slade, and Way models. As one notable headmistress pleaded in 1897,

It may be urged that theatricals teach unselfconsciousness, but this form of unselfconsciousness is worth very little and costs very much; for successful acting eats out the deeper part of a child's nature, as nothing else does.... it is the audience that does the harm.²⁴

Finally, there has always been the educational concern that the great amount of time and energy demanded of the student thespian robs the more important studies of his attentions. As one of Ben Jonson's characters said in condemning clever schoolmasters:

They make all their scholars play-boys! Is't not a fine sight, to see all our children made inter-luders? Do we pay money for this? We send them to learn their grammar and their Terence, and they

²³ The Children of the Chapel Royal Stript and Whipt, quoted in F.K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, 4 vols., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), III, pp.34-35. Spelling has been standardized in this and subsequent quotations from this work.

²⁴ Quoted in Coggin, p.194.

learn their play-books!²⁵

All these criticisms have some validity, and must therefore be answered by teachers who choose to make the model of the School Play an important part of their drama programme. The first criticism cannot be refuted. Throughout the centuries, friends of the theatre have been unable to defend it on moral grounds: as one Puritan critic pointed out,

If any goodness were to be learned at plays, it is likely that the players themselves which commit every syllable to memory should profit most... but the daily experience of their behaviour showeth that they reap no [moral] profit by the discipline themselves.²⁶

The only defense for the School Play on moral grounds, then, as for theatre in general, is to refuse to plead: that the theatre's potential for moral uplift is not a relevant criterion by which to judge it, that rather the didacticism of Art transcends the narrower precepts of dogma. The second argument, that performing can be bad for children, can best be answered through the educational doctrine of readiness: a competent teacher would not allow students to perform in public if they were not ready for the experience. We've seen that the Ward model allows the presence of an audience

²⁵ The Staple of News (1631). The passage quoted may be found in version edited by D. Kifer (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), p. 106.

²⁶ Steven Gosson, Plays Confuted in Five Actions (1582), quoted in Chambers, IV, p. 216.

only under special circumstances, and even such theatre professionals as Spolin and Johnstone treat the introduction of audiences with some delicacy. No educational system or activity has found a way to protect students from poor teaching, and the School Play is no exception; under the guidance of a talented teacher, however, play production can be a tremendous learning experience. For the third argument, supporters of the School Play are fortunate that most educational philosophers agree that the benefits of the School Play are greatly underestimated by its critics, and fully justify the expenditure of time and energy involved. For example, the French humanist philosopher Montaigne, in recalling with pride his own career as a student actor, points out the love of learning that this activity fostered:

It's an exercise I do not condemn for young gentlemen... There is no better way of alluring the affection or tempting the appetite, otherwise you merely produce asses laden with books.²⁷

Influenced by his admiration for the Jesuit schools and their use of play production, Sir Francis Bacon went even further, to suggest that the School Play has more to recommend it than its professional counterpart:

It is a thing indeed, if practised professionally, of low repute; but if it be made a part of discipline, it is of excellent use. I mean stage-playing: an art which strengthens the memory, regulates the tone and effect of the voice and

²⁷ De L'Education des Enfants (1580), quoted in Coggin, p.76.

pronunciation, teaches a decent carriage of the countenance and gesture, gives not a little assurance, and accustoms young men to bear being looked at.²⁸

As to the amount of time and attention a School Play demands, my own belief is that this criticism rests on the questionable assumption that these resources are fixed quantities to be allocated, like water in a bucket. My observation is that time and energy are more akin to water in a well, subject to the fluctuation of seasons as well as to demands of usage, which in wisdom is spent wildly in times of plenty and conserved in times of drought. Surely no one has more time and energy at their disposal than the young; yet nowhere do they spend these resources more stingily than in school. If the School Play can be a device to prime the pump to release the energies hoarded or wasted by our young, it needs no other rationale for the fullest possible support for its continued widespread popularity in our schools.

7.3 SUMMARY

Because of the unprecedented proliferation of electronic entertainment media over the past three decades, the institution of the School Play is now being confronted with new challenges and new opportunities. Since television and cinema provide accessible and inexpensive amusement with much greater facility than can school productions, it seems

²⁸ The Advancement of Learning (1605), quoted in Coggin, p. 127.

unlikely that plays chosen for simple entertainment values can continue to attract audiences to the School Play as they have in the past. At the same time, the professional theatre has responded to the rising popularity of mass media, the rising cost of skilled personnel, and the consequently rising financial dangers of failure, with a trend toward choosing small-cast inoffensive amusements, also presented with much superior results than is possible for students to achieve. These factors, along with the increasing sophistication of young people on our electronically shrinking planet, mean that such mindless fare as Time Cut for Ginger is hopefully doomed to disappear forever from the high school stage.

With this avenue being closed to the School Play, new possibilities arise. One of these is an innovative rediscovery of the classics. In England, some highly acclaimed Shakespearean productions seeking the spirit of their original presentational form have taken place at Sloane School and at Harrow, and have been documented in Shakespeare and the Young Actor (1955) and McClintock at the Globe (1946). Locally, Victoria High School used a kind of design concept commonly associated with Canada's Stratford Festival in choosing a "Ecaring Twenties" setting for their 1978 production of A Midsummer Night's Dream. A Montreal high school production of the same play "... was televised in part over the C.B.C. and received full-page colour coverage

in the Toronto Weekly Star, February 9, 1959."²⁹ The selection of challenging and difficult modern plays is also becoming a common practice in schools: Smithers Secondary produced the propagandist Depression play Waiting for Lefty this year, while finalists at the provincial high school festival included one play by Jules Feiffer and two by Israel Horovitz. Locally, Mount Douglas Secondary has presented both Marat/Sade and Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris in the last decade, while Lansdowne Junior Secondary has presented new and often unknown Canadian one-act plays in the local schools' drama festival for the past seven years.³⁰ A number of student-written plays are performed every year as well, including this year's regional festival winner in Kitimat.

While the question of what constitutes suitable material for a School Play is undergoing some redefinition, so are people's ideas of what should be the significance of a play's content for both actors and audience. The element of participation in Brian Way's plays has been adapted by several high schools in an increasing number of plays produced for audiences of elementary school children: for instance, the Victoria Association of Drama Educators reports that no fewer than seven local secondary schools performed for ele-

²⁹ Rittenhouse, p.11.

³⁰ Some of the plays presented have been: The Station, Big X Little Y, Babel Rap, Dccrs, and The Twin Sinks of Allan Sammy.

mentary schools in the past school year.³¹ The social and historical playmaking of Dorothy Heathcote (see "Heathcote Model", chapter IX) has also led to a new kind of presentation called "docudrama". This year's local festival adjudicator, Juliana Saxton, a professional writer and director, has encouraged teachers to explore this form as a way of developing dramatic material that has personal significance to the student performers. The production of unscripted school plays will probably become more common as more students are trained in the improvisational techniques described in the new curriculum guides for secondary drama courses in British Columbia. One such form for unscripted performance, Keith Johnstone's "Theatre Sports", has become a central part of the drama programmes of several local secondary schools: a number of public demonstrations have been given by these schools, and a regular Theatre Sports league is being planned for the 1982-83 season.

In conclusion, the School Play persists as the most popular model for educational drama in our schools. Despite some opinion that its educational liabilities outweigh its advantages, the School Play continues to be one of the most important and prestigious events in a school year. In an era when many teachers seem less willing to spend their free time in volunteer supervision, drama teachers insist on

³¹ This information was given out at a meeting of the Association at the Victoria School Board offices, 19 May 1982.

their right to weary themselves in extra-curricular production projects.³² The School Play twines among the other forms of educational drama like a vine of morning glory: to some educators it is a resilient flower which flourishes in spite of neglect; to others it is a noxious weed, which frustrates all attempts to eradicate it.

³² For example, the Journal of the Association of B.C. Drama Educators (December 1980) responded to the possibility of a province-wide withdrawal of teachers' voluntary services with an article noting that "... many of us have a comprehensive performance program which is part of our total drama/theatre program at the secondary level", and regretting any necessary cessation of this extra involvement. (vol.2, no.3, p.2.)

Chapter VIII

THE MOFFETT MODEL - STUDENT-CENTRED LANGUAGE ARTS

8.1 BACKGROUND

Having dealt with types of dramatic activity that one might expect to find in a class labelled "Drama", we now turn to dramatic activity which may occur in other classrooms. ~~The use of drama to teach other subjects, known as the "Dramatic Method", is older even than the School Play, about as old as schools themselves.~~ The feature which distinguishes this model from the others previously described is the different purpose and tone of its didacticism, ~~prescriptive and scientific rather than descriptive and artistic,~~ although there is ~~some similarity to the creative self-expression goal of the Slade model and the literary base of the Ward model.~~ However, the Dramatic Method is clearly a direct antecedent of the more recently developed model of Drama as a Learning Medium, the inclusive approach to educational drama described in the next section, which has become both a touchstone and a point of controversy for the world's current experts in this field.

It can be argued that the Dramatic Method is part of all teaching because the dramatic imagination is inextrica-

bly woven into the fabric of the human condition. As Richard Courtney puts it:

The essential human characteristic is imagination, and this is dramatic in character. Both imagination and dramatic actions, therefore, are inherent parts of any effective education. It is not, simply that life is like a stage: life itself is a drama.¹

For many centuries, educational philosophers and practising teachers have observed that the imaginative, imitative, and reflective qualities of what we call drama are the common property of all students, indeed of all people, and thus may be incorporated into a social learning situation in order to make the curriculum more personally significant and thus more memorable to the individual student. The use of drama as a teaching tool rests on this belief that dramatic imagination is inseparable from the process of learning, a belief which found its first expression in Aristotle's Poetics:

Imitation is natural to man from childhood, one of his advantages over the lower animals being... that he is the most imitative creature in the world, and learns at first by imitation.²

Thus, the skillful teacher, rather than allowing students time for play to recuperate from and prepare for further learning, uses play in the learning process itself: play is not the recess, but the lesson. The viability of this

¹ The Dramatic Curriculum, pp.20-21.

² Quoted in Coggin, p.18.

approach has been pointed out for centuries, while the average schoolmaster continued to break his switch over generations of boys' behinds. Plato advised teachers in his ideal Republic that studies might be better learned if they were presented in a cheerful manner: "...for while bodily labours performed under constraint do not harm the body, nothing that is learned under compulsion stays with the mind...."³ Renaissance thinkers embraced this philosophy as yet another enlightenment of the ancients: Rabelais prescribed over two hundred games to assist in the education of Gargantua⁴, while Martin Luther instructed his civic educational authorities to explicit children's natural propensities for learning and for play:

By the gracious arrangement of God, children take delight in acquiring knowledge, whether languages, mathematics, or history.... For what is all this but mere child's play, in which the Greeks in former ages trained their children, and by this means became wonderfully skillful people, capable for every undertaking.⁵

Despite these reputable opinions, it was not until the Romantic Rebellion that the Dramatic Method became a popular device in the classroom. Although Rousseau's sentimentalized Emile with its 1-to-1 pupil/teacher ratio had no prac-

³ Quoted in Robert Ulich, Three Thousand Years of Educational Wisdom, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.59.

⁴ See Coggin, p.59.

⁵ "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen", quoted in Ulich, p.233.

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Drama Method*

tical educational basis, its implicit casting of the child in the Romantic role of the "noble savage" had far-reaching influence on the development of public education in the nineteenth century and progressive education in the twentieth. Pioneer educators and administrators such as Pestalozzi, Herbart, and Froebel recognized the importance of student-centred teaching methods: "Let the child not only be acted upon, but let him be an agent in intellectual education."⁶ In echoing this creed, leaders of modern progressive education such as A.S. Neill in England and John Dewey in America have furthermore related these changes in educational method to changes made necessary by the evolution of modern society: "...the introduction of more active, expressive, and self-directing factors ... are not mere accidents, they are the necessities of the larger social evolution."⁷ For Dewey, the growing popularity of the Dramatic Method had the inevitability of an idea whose time had come; its influence may certainly be discerned in the documented rationales of all experimental schools in the last two centuries.

⁶ Pestalozzi, Educational Writings, quoted in Alan Cohen and Norman Garner, Readings in the History of Educational Thought (London: University of London Press, 1967), p.133. See also Ulich, p.519 and p.547 for similar sentiments from Herbart and Froebel.

⁷ John Dewey, The School and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1899), p.44.

The Dramatic Method may be employed in a wide range of curricular studies, as is shown in the next section; but because of the close relationship between dramatic activity and verbal and non-verbal forms of communication, it first gained a legitimate place in schools in the teaching of what we now call language arts. Beginning with the traditional areas of literature and language, dramatic invention has become the recommended method of instruction for those teachers who favour the integrated approach to communications skills championed by the celebrated American educator James Moffett. In one sense this model may be considered obsolete, since it may be viewed as a single complex application of the concept of Drama as a Learning Medium; yet although the Heathcote model is attracting great attention among the world's leaders in educational drama, its impact has not been strongly felt in North American classrooms. For better or worse, the use of drama to facilitate study of literature and language, in vernacular as well as foreign languages, has a much longer tradition and firmer place than does the Heathcote model in today's classrooms.

8.2 STUDYING DRAMATIC LITERATURE

If one subscribes to the adage that plays are meant to be acted, it should come as no surprise that oral interpretation of dramatic literature in schools is as old as the study of dramatic literature, though not as old as the plays

themselves. Plato banned their study from his ideal Republic; and while witnessing plays was permissible, "...no one who pretends to virtue must take part in one. They [comedies] are to be acted by foreigners and slaves."⁸ During the Renaissance, however, the surviving plays of Greece and Rome formed a major part of the study of literature, and were usually studied through oral reading. Montaigne's schoolboy acting experience mentioned on page 90 was probably intended for training in Latin, for it was in the Renaissance schools that "...Terence, and especially the acting of Terence, was found to be such a stimulating exercise in spoken Latin."⁹ In England, Cardinal Wolsey's statutes for Ipswich School prescribed Terence for oral interpretation, and encouraged the masters to prepare for this work with some elementary script analysis.¹⁰ After the schoolboy companies had largely abandoned Latin performances in favour of their popular sixteenth-century successes in English, the universities carried on the tradition of plays for the study of Latin language and literature both. In Hamlet, both the Prince and Polonius appear proud of their accomplishments in university acting, although it seems likely that both characters would consider it beneath their dignity to perform in public.

⁸ Quoted in Coggin, p. 14. See also pp. 11-14.

⁹ Coggin, p. 60; see also p. 76.

¹⁰ See Coggin, p. 61.

We have seen that the School Play in England was revived in the eighteenth century as a means of studying dramatic literature. By this time, Shakespeare was recognized as an author worthy of study, the home-town literary hero of a prosperous and expanding nation. Since the School Play has always attracted more notice than classroom dramatic activities, dramatic readings in the latter environment are not well documented; however, the literary value of the script chosen for the School Play was apparently a major consideration in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and continued to be so well into the twentieth. England's Special Reports on Educational Subjects of 1898 extolled the educational virtues of school productions in Latin and Greek, while performances of the right sort of plays in English were also encouraged so that "the sooner the child becomes familiar with the best type of theatrical art the less likely he is to be permanently attracted by the worst."¹¹

At about the turn of the century, the Dramatic Method found a celebrated home at Perse School, Cambridge, under its famous headmaster Dr. W.H.D. Rouse. In a series of "Perse Playbooks" beginning in 1911, dramatic rehearsal and

¹¹ Quoted in Coggin, p.204. The most famous series of school plays in Greek began in 1881 at Bradfield College under the direction of the young Frank Benson, who was later knighted for his services to the professional theatre. In 1888 an authentic outdoor amphitheatre was carved out of a quarry on the school grounds for these productions, which continued well into this century. See Vail Matter, pp.233-4.

performance were explicitly promoted as the most effective method of instruction for modern schools:

Acting is one of the most potent means of learning. Thought, word, and action linked together make an impression such as nothing else can make. In this direction lies the salvation of our schools.¹²

Dr. Rouse was a classical scholar who used the Dramatic Method to make dead languages come to life, while his colleague E. Caldwell Cook applied the method to language, literature, and other curricular areas. Cook had a particularly enthusiastic hands-on approach to Shakespeare: when asked how he would teach a Shakespearean play, he replied simply, "Act it". "After all, if you can act Shakespeare you can act anything, and if you cannot act Shakespeare you might as well sit down."¹³ To Rouse and Cook, the goal of dramatic activity was not the product of a School Play, but rather the educational benefits of the student-centred learning situation under which the rehearsals took place: "It is not acting we teach the boys, but the value of action."¹⁴

¹² Quoted in Coggin, p.232.

¹³ E. Caldwell Cook, The Play Way (London: Heinemann, 1917), p.195 and p.183.

¹⁴ Quoted in Coggin, p.233.

In Canada, play production as a teaching method has often been used to introduce practical theatre training into institutions that might otherwise disdain such a programme. For example, the first production course offered in any Canadian university originated in the late 1930's at Queens, where Professor William Angus directed an annual Shakespearean play using prospective school directors enrolled in the Queens teacher training programme. Our own university's Music Theatre Workshop, begun in the late 1970's by Dr. Dale McIntosh, operates on precisely the same principles. Our now-flourishing Theatre Department began as a practical course of study for dramatic literature: in 1962 Carl Hare was invited to launch a theatre specialization within the English Department, several years before the establishment of a Faculty of Fine Arts, and built a small studio theatre with mainly volunteer labour of theatre aficionados drawn from the student body, the faculty, and the community at large.

Contemporary drama as literature has regained the prestige it lost to the novel in the nineteenth century.¹⁵ Accordingly, a literary approach to drama may be applied to classics of the modern stage as well as to those of bygone eras. There have been a number of resource books compiled for use in secondary drama classes that consist mainly of

¹⁵ This resurgence may be seen for example in the large number of modern playwrights who have been named Nobel laureates: they include Shaw, O'Neill, Pirandello, Beckett, and several others.

explorations in dramatic literature for young actors. These resource books, which show surprisingly little awareness of unscripted models for educational drama, rather seem to assume that the core activity in secondary theatre classes is the gaining of personal insight into the characters which appear in a variety of good plays. Perhaps the best-known of these books is David Adland's six-volume series The Group Approach to Drama (1964-72), containing a wide range of dramatic activities based mainly on modern English dramaturgy. In Canada, Andrew Parkin's Stage One (1973) uses only scenes from the rapidly growing repertory of Canadian dramatic literature. Unfortunately, this province's most recently published curriculum guide, On Stage for Drama 10, prescribes instead Samuel Elkind's Improvisation Handbook (1975) for this purpose. Elkind's title is somewhat deceiving, as all improvisations following a curt section on warm-up games are based on dialogue excerpts. Although this book and its three companion volumes Scenes for Acting Practice draw on an effective mixture of American and European plays, they contain no scenes at all from any Canadian sources.

From a Canadian point of view, perhaps the best of this kind of resource book is Herman Voaden's Look Both Ways (1975), an anthology of "...eighty theatre 'experiences' - plays, short plays, and mini-plays, and poems and prose passages that invite oral interpretation or imaginative stage

treatment."¹⁶ Aimed at senior secondary drama classes, about a third of its selections are from Canadian sources, blended thematically with selections from world literature, both traditional and newfangled. Each chapter ends with a list of additional titles suggested for supplementary explanations on the given theme. The purpose of the book, carefully considered and explicitly stated, is to promote young people's awareness of Canadian theatre, of modern innovations in theatre art, and of the relevance of dramatic literature to one's own life:

The anthology will, we hope, carry on enthusiasm for our burgeoning and exciting native theatre to young people....

Another goal is to open doors to the challenging world of today's theatre: its open-stage and free-form techniques, its improvisational and "collective creation" approaches, set against examples of traditional theatre....

The third and most important goal is to spur young people to think honestly and searchingly about themselves and the world, to encourage them to "look both ways", to be open to ideas from others and yet be inner-directed in thought and spirit.... We have searched for material, especially of our own time and country, that would illuminate the personal problems that confront young people, what many of them find wrong with the world, and answers that may help them.¹⁷

¹⁶ Herman Vaden, Look Both Ways (Toronto: Macmillan, 1975), p.vii.

¹⁷ Ibid. The suggestion that there exist answers to these universal kinds of problems seems a bit anachronistic, a vestige of the optimistic ebullience of the mid-1960's.

Given Voaden's tacit assumption that the purpose of a drama class is the practical interpretation of written drama, this is a remarkable resource book; the only disappointing aspect of it is that such an assumption could be made as recently as 1975!

As shown in the table on page 3, less than half of the British Columbia's drama teachers have any appreciable drama/theatre training at the university level. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that more of our drama teachers have been trained to teach drama as literature than have been trained in all the other models put together. The converted English teacher who has aspired or acceded to teach curricular drama likely has greater interest than knowledge in the practice of drama with young people. For teachers with this kind of background, a literary approach is more familiar and less threatening than either the high-risk unscripted models, or the high-profile School Play. Indeed, many of the leading drama teachers in British Columbia began with little or no formal theatre training, and through diligent self-improvement have become leaders in their field.

The use of scripted drama to study foreign languages and literature, such a venerable practice in Europe, does not seem to have found any acceptance in western Canada. No mention is made of dramatic literature in British Columbia's curriculum guides for secondary French, Latin, German, Spanish, or Russian. The approach to modern languages here

seems more utilitarian than artistic: one recently published guide states firmly that "...the principal focus of the German language programme is on the practical application of present day, spoken and written, German...."¹⁸ However, even though play production is not part of the curriculum, this guide is not above making the pointed suggestion that a major event such as a foreign-language production will be remembered long after the vocabulary and verb endings have slipped away, and even encourages the use of curricular time for the ancillary preparations necessary to create such an event:

If we try to project what a student is likely to remember 10 or 20 years after his exposure to second language instruction, it seems certain that he will remember the big splash activity, the flamboyant flair, the bubbly brouhaha rather than the day-to-day conventional curriculum. Many teachers should treat the preparation for these programs as part of the curriculum: teaching the vocabulary and structures, teaching the dialogues and dialogue adaptation, teaching the songs, the gestures, the information needed for making suitable stage scenery and props, writing the letters of invitation....¹⁹

Compilers of British Columbia's secondary English curricula seem to expect that dramatic literature will be studied in the drama classes, for there is almost as little mention of it in the English curriculum guides as in their

¹⁸ Secondary Guide: German Programme (Victoria, B.C.: Ministry of Education, 1976), p.11.

¹⁹ Dale E. Lange, E. James, J. Charles, eds., Foreign Language Education: A Reappraisal (1972), quoted in Secondary German Programme, p.60.

foreign language counterparts. The only prescribed dramatic text in any compulsory course is Julius Caesar for English 10. A few Shakespearean plays are authorized for optional use in English 11, as are Ostrovsky's Romanoff and Juliet and Rose's Twelve Angry Men for English 12. The more academic English Literature 12 course prescribes one Shakespeare, one Shaw, and one eighteenth-century comedy, but the great works of the twentieth century stage are conspicuously absent from our schools; and except for a passing suggestion that the limited resources of a classroom production of Julius Caesar might be comparable to the spare staging of the Elizabethan playhouse,²⁰ there is no apparent recognition that a play involves any added dimension beyond those of other literary genres. With the elimination of Theatre Background 11 from the secondary drama curriculum in its current revision, dramatic literature is almost completely excluded from classrooms in British Columbia.

If there is any future for the study of dramatic literature in our public schools, it may reside in an as-yet unimplemented ministry guide entitled Humanities Enrichment Curriculum Materials. Prepared as a project in 1979 at the University of British Columbia, this guide outlines "...an open-ended interdisciplinary program integrating twentieth-century history, literature, drama, economics, law, and

²⁰ English 10: A Resource Book for Teachers (Victoria, B.C.: Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 1978), p.131.

geography",²¹ in which the dramatic component is second in importance only to the historical. Perhaps the written drama would be best served by this kind of cross-disciplinary course, in which the effect of social and political forces on playwrights, and in turn the theatre's effect on its audiences, may be studied in concert with and not isolated from such literary considerations as plot, theme, and language. Only within such an integrated approach may students be led to the understanding that modern drama is written to be performed, that theatre is a distilled expression of man's dramatic instinct, and that "theatrical performances codify in each culture the dramatic processes whereby the people in a society make dramatic sense out of the world."²²

8.3 PRACTISING COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS

The use of drama in teaching the four skills of language arts - listening, speaking, reading, and writing - follows a pattern similar to its use with dramatic literature: it was extolled by a famous ancient, rediscovered during the Renaissance, frowned upon by the Puritans, codified in the eighteenth century, and spread with the proliferation of public schooling in the nineteenth century. In our own century, the increasingly pragmatic emphasis in edu-

²¹ Stanley S. Elank, Claora Styrcon, and Robert Wilson (Victoria, B.C.: Ministry of Education, 1979), introduction, n.pag.

²² Courtney, The Dramatic Curriculum, p.20.

cation has resulted in less dramatic literature in the schools, but a much greater awareness of the power of the Dramatic Method for practising communications skills.

The famous ancient in this case was the lawyer and educator Quintilian (A.D. 35-99), a Spaniard by birth who taught rhetoric in Rome for twenty years by appointment of the emperor Vespasian.²³ In his precepts for educating privileged young men for public life, Quintilian recognized that the public stage had examples which could be applied to his favourite topic, oratory:

[Although] I would not have my pupil indulge in impersonations after the manner of the comic stage, as some teachers advocate, yet I do wish that there should be a certain modulation of the voice, whereby such passages may be distinguished from those in which the poet speaks in his own person.²⁴

In addition, he suggested that the teacher could invent word games and competitions to enliven the lessons, sort of a dim ancestor of "Reach for the Top":

There are ... certain games which have an educational value for the boys, as for instance when they compete in posing each other with all types of questions which they ask turn and turn about.²⁵

²³ See Cohen and Garner, p.259.

²⁴ Quoted in Coggin, pp.23-24.

²⁵ Quoted in Ulich, p.110.

With his wariness of theatre art in general, yet his enthusiasm for its application to language arts teaching, Quintilian may be considered the first proponent of the Dramatic Method; and through the rediscovery of his major work, Institutio Oratoria, "his influence on Renaissance education was enormous ... Vittorino da Feltre, Erasmus, and Luther were all his admirers."²⁶

In the Renaissance, there was not the separation of language and literature that has been accepted subsequently: one taught the other, as for instance in the cited use of Terence's comedies as an exercise in spoken Latin. The Jesuit schools were once again responsible for the popularization of educational drama: they prescribed a "concertatio" or school contest of oratorical and other skills reminiscent of the games suggested by Quintilian, recommended that "...both a poem and an oration... should be recited from the pulpit every other Saturday by one or another student..."²⁷ They also conducted the first student playwriting contests, with the winning entry being performed before the class. Montaigne recalls having learned his Greek by way of a language game, probably more clearly than he recalls the language itself:

²⁶ Coggin, p.23.

²⁷ Ratic Studiorum, quoted in Ulich, p.285. See also p.286.

As to Greek, of which I have but a smattering, my father proposed to teach it by a new device, making of it a sort of sport and recreation. We tossed our declensions to and fro, after the manner of those who by certain games... learn geometry and arithmetic. Among other things, he had been advised to make me enjoy study and duty; to accept them of my own free will, and to educate my soul in all liberty and delight, without any severity or constraint.²⁸

Even the Puritans allowed dramatic performances for educational purposes at a time when all other forms of theatre were forbidden to the faithful: the Synod of Nimes (1572) conceded that

...when in a college it will be found useful to youth to act some story, it can be tolerated, provided it be not taken from Holy Scripture... and by permission of the Colloquy to whom the composition must be submitted.²⁹

Another set of rules was promulgated by the stern Puritan critic John Northbrooke. Although he averred that the public playhouse was the speediest way for Satan "...to bring men and women into his snare of concupiscence and filthy lusts of wicked whoredom...",³⁰ yet drama was allowed its legitimate place in the schools:

I think it is lawful for a schoolmaster to practise his scholars to play comedies,... [provided] that it be for... utterance sake, in Latin, and very seldom in English..., that they be not pranked and decked up in gorgeous and sumptuous

²⁸ De L'Education des Enfants, quoted in Ulich, p.299.

²⁹ Chambers, I, p.249 fn., translated in Coggin, p.106.

³⁰ Chambers, IV, p.198.

apparel.... [and] that it be not made a common exercise, publicly, for profit and gain of money, but for learning and exercise sake....³¹

In typically Puritan fashion, Northbrocke seems to grudgingly tolerate performances in schools so long as no one enjoys them, a goal probably easier to attain in a classroom than in a public theatre.

While schools of the eighteenth century laid great stress on the study of Greek, Latin, and Mathematics to teach logical thought processes, there was less concern that these skills be useful in themselves. In the nineteenth century, however, Pestalozzi and his followers postulated two ideals which still remain pillars of modern education: to begin from children's sense impressions, and to provide training in the practical skills of adult life. The application of dramatic play to the teaching of language skills was an obvious corollary of these principles: "To realize his aim, Pestalozzi placed a great deal of emphasis upon exercises in sense impressions and oral language use."³² This concept of a lesson being centred around the student's perceptions rather than the teacher's, of teaching by stimulating the students themselves to identify, imitate, and reflect upon the curriculum in terms of their own life experiences, is the essence of both the Dramatic Method and

³¹ Ibid., IV, p.199.

³² Charles R. Duke, Creative Dramatics and English Teaching (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1974), p.20.

modern progressive education. In our century, the two are barely distinguishable from one another.

The practical application of the Dramatic Method to language arts instruction had a strong philosophical base long before any adequate resource books appeared. Before drama had gained acceptance as a legitimate subject area, early resource books seemed to use drama's acknowledged value in language arts as a pretext to introduce theatre arts instruction into the classroom: E.J. Burton's highly-regarded Teaching English through Self-Expression (1949) for instance admits aiming "...at educating pupils not only through drama but in drama."³³ In Burton's classroom, any development of the skills traditionally associated with English teaching are distinctly incidental to theatrical considerations, in for instance appointing a juvenile director to "...arrange the various groups, and see that no one gets in anyone else's way, and that you're not just strung out in a line across the stage."³⁴ More recently, Charles R. Duke's Creative Dramatics and English Teaching (1974) contains much historical and resource material that would be highly useful to the drama specialist, but less obviously relevant to the English classroom.

³³ (London: Evans, 1949), p.7.

³⁴ Ibid., p.12.

A more systematic but equally enthusiastic approach to the application of dramatic methods to language arts teaching grew out of the famous Dartmouth Conference of 1966. Co-sponsored by the Modern Languages Association of America and national associations of teachers of English in both the United Kingdom and the United States, noted British and American educators met at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, in August and September of that year. In the mid-1960's, there was great public concern about the individual's role in society, a concern to which liberal educators felt that the school system needed to find a valid response. At the same time, the influx from England of new methods and philosophies in educational drama, primarily the many resource books associated with the Way model, seemed to provide the response that American educators were seeking. In effect, the seminar was transformed into an effusive promotion of the use of drama in language arts education, for what the delegates perceived as the central task of English teaching: communication. In one of many monographs which were inspired by the conference, Douglas Barnes described a new attitude toward the use of drama in the teaching of English:

Drama is not an educational frill, an applied ornament that can be dispensed with. It is not merely an extra activity for those students whose high intellectual abilities leave them time and energy for lightweight amusements. Nor is it merely an innocuous way of busying those incapable of more abstract intellectual activities. Drama is

an essential part of a democratic education.³⁵

The ideals of drama as education for a democratic citizenry, articulated earlier by Winifred Ward, were reiterated with a greater sense of urgency, as no less than the survival of society itself was now at stake:

A democracy needs men and women who can project themselves imaginatively into all of the complexities of a situation without suffering the heated fears and intolerances of those who cannot stand uncertainty. . . . We need men and women who can hold in suspension the complex demands and contradictions of life without being driven by anxiety to simplify them to a slogan or an inflexible code able indeed to chance.³⁶

The qualities perceived as the most vitally important to the survival of western society were no longer those of the cold war, the scientific and technological advances of the 1950's, but rather those skills of empathy and communication associated with the arts in general and drama in particular. Guidelines issued by the conference's participants stressed that "drama and oral communication should become the centrality of pupil's exploring, extending, and shaping of experience in the classroom", and that "there is a definite urgency for developing classroom approaches stressing the vital, creative, dramatic involvement of young people in

³⁵ Douglas Barnes, Drama in the English Classroom (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1968), p.vii.

³⁶ Ibid., p.2.

language experiences."³⁷ Teachers of English were being encouraged not just to use some drama techniques available in the new resource books, but to leap the hedge and to become drama teachers themselves in their own classrooms:

What we are recommending, in sum, is not only that drama activities be part of all English teaching, but that all English teaching approach the condition of drama.³⁸

Suddenly, the world of educational methodology was beating a path to the drama teacher's classroom door. While most of the faithful welcomed these new converts, others were concerned that the use of drama as a teaching method implied a denial of the value of children's dramatic activity for its own sake. Perhaps the most outspoken of these critics was Brian Way's long-time associate Margaret Faulkes, who would only grudgingly allow use of the Dramatic Method even in elementary schools:

Some schools will consider it [drama] only if it is used to teach other subjects -- language arts and social studies in particular. While such a justification may be considered as better than nothing, its validity can be challenged.... Drama, while equal to the other arts in the adult world, is denied equal status as a valid subject in elementary education.³⁹

³⁷ Guidelines quoted in Duke, p.30; see also p.31.

³⁸ Farnes, p.52.

³⁹ Margaret Faulkes, "A Fine Art?", Journal of the Fine Arts Council of the Alberta Teachers Association (Summer 1968), p.31.

This spirited defence of drama for its own sake by Faulkes and Way, and their resentment of what they perceived as drama's relegation to the role of handmaiden to the traditional curriculum, seems somewhat self-serving and reactionary, and has been largely ignored or greeted quizzically by other drama educators who feel that the more forms of drama that exist in schools the better. Under the growing influence of Dorothy Heathcote, educational drama in the 1970's has moved decidedly away from dichotomies of drama/theatre and method/subject associated with the Way Model, and toward the integration of drama with other subject areas, the collective wish of language arts educators at the Dartmouth Conference.

why?

Although many books were inspired by the conference's findings, none achieved the lasting success of James Moffett's A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K-13 (1968). This book is unique in the literature of educational drama in several ways. First, it is intended for neither the drama specialist nor the English specialist, but rather for generalist teachers of language and communications. Under Moffett's influence, teachers began to perceive language arts less as a timetabled subject and more as a cross-curricular concern, less as a collection of skills to be mastered and more as a complex conversion of symbols requiring continual renegotiation:

Language arts or English should be a kind of intellectual "homeroom," where a student can see the totality of his symbolic life.... You need not fear you have no subject and try to manufac-

ture one by making kids read about writing and write about reading.... The special province of the language teacher, and therefore the main definition of language arts, is communication consciousness.⁴⁰

This change in the contextual definition of language arts education involved some fundamental changes in teaching rationale. To facilitate these changes, Moffett treated both theoretical and practical considerations in equal detail, emphasizing that teachers should assimilate the principles of symbolic communication before attempting to apply them to a class. Later elaborated in a logical way, these principles are first stated as simple self-evident truths:

Communication is overcoming a differential, some imbalance of knowledge between the two parties.

Defined by communication concepts, language arts is a set of two productive and two receptive activities -- speaking and listening, reading and writing....

The fundamental formula of communication is: I to you about it.⁴¹

Despite some revolutionary inferences in developing these principles, Moffett carefully avoids protestations of novelty or miracle cures; instead, he asserts that many traditional activities are perfectly valid, but that all poten-

⁴⁰ James Moffett and Betty Jane Wagner, Student-Centered Language Arts and Reading, K-13, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), p.23.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp.9, 16, and 11 respectively.

tial activities need to be evaluated in terms of the teacher's global concept of communications skills:

First, the rationale aims to stimulate an understanding of what you are doing that will enable you to work within a general plan in which details are worked out... as you go. Second, some activities, like analyzing dummy sentences, should not be done at all, and other activities, like show-and-tell, work well only when done certain ways. For good judgment in choosing activities and deciding how they are to be done, you need to relate decision-making to a philosophy of language learning and language growth.⁴²

It is odd that Moffett's work is not particularly well-known among drama specialists. Perhaps this is because, unlike Burton or Barnes who seem to aim at making English teachers into drama teachers, Moffett aims at making them better English teachers. He does not assume that everyone wants to be a drama specialist, as many other resource books seem to do; and thus, he avoids threatening his reading audience with an unfamiliar role. Yet although A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum is directed at English teachers, the keystone of its method is unquestionably drama. Even in a chapter on difficulties in reading, which only the most single-minded drama specialist would attempt to treat through improvisation, Moffett contends that comprehension difficulties arise from poor motivation, lack of life experience, and egocentricity -- all areas in which drama can be specifically efficacious:

⁴² Ibid., p.3.

In drama work, ...students enacting a story or poem will have to deal specifically with problems of eccentricity because differences in understanding crop up in the enactment and have to be straightened out.⁴³

To Mcffett, drama is no frill, but rather the core of the core curriculum:

None of the activities presented in this chapter are merely "games for kiddies" or "enrichment." Rather, they are a serious, yet enjoyable, part of the business of classroom learning. Teachers should not feel that time spent on them is time diverted from the tasks of learning about language, literature, and composition or of teaching basic skills. Drama will definitely further such goals and frequently, by increasing motivation, will accelerate learning in other areas.⁴⁴

The educational benefits that he claims for drama are considerable; yet unlike the sentimental sugarcoated served up by Slade, Mcffett stresses intellectual and organizational skills highly valued in our current society and readily transferable to unforeseen conditions in the future:

No other activity ... puts such constant pressure on the participants to think on their feet, make decisions, exercise independence, and respond to the unexpected in a flexible, creative way as dramatic invention does. Role-playing develops problem-solving skills, inductive and deductive reasoning, sorting and classifying, putting into sequence, and conceptualizing spatial relationships.⁴⁵

⁴³ Ibid., pp.126-7; see also pp.122-132.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.101.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.104; contrast with Slade's perceived benefits, quoted on page 43.

Moffett's theory of language arts education has become the accepted standard in its field. British Columbia has not escaped its pervasive influence at all levels of public education: A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum is widely used in this university's Faculty of Education, while echoes of Moffett may be discerned throughout the province's language arts curricula: for example, the Elementary Language Arts Curriculum Guide proposes that the first basic aim of the program is "...to develop the skills and attitudes of effective communication (listening, speaking, reading, writing)",⁴⁶ while its secondary counterpart begins with an even more sweeping endorsement of Moffett's concept of the basic communications skills:

At the centre of the educational process lie the communications skills of language -- listening, speaking, reading and writing. The development of these skills makes available to students, through their study of language and literature, the heritage of civilizing ideas.⁴⁷

Another echo of Moffett is the recognition that because a language arts curriculum is intrinsically open-ended, the teacher must be guided by global principles rather than by a catalogue of teachable skills:

⁴⁶ (Victoria, B.C.: Ministry of Education, 1978), p.9.

⁴⁷ Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, Secondary Guide -- English 8-12, rev. 1978 (Victoria, B.C.: Province of British Columbia, 1979), p.1.

At its best, an English lesson not only helps students to acquire a variety of essential skills but at the same time extends their knowledge of the world.... The challenge of teaching English lies in adapting and applying the program to the specific needs and abilities of the student.⁴⁸

Therefore, success in teaching depends upon the teacher's ability to apply his overall vision of language arts to the prescribed curriculum, adapting or discarding traditional teaching practices according to their relevance to the needs of the students.

Whether A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum was a leader in its own time, or rather an expression of commonly-held beliefs, is difficult to determine; however, there can be little debate over its great influence on language arts education, or the profound implications it contains for public education in general. His description of student-centered learning has brought into question even the physical model of the classroom. His rejection of linear growth models for learning in favour of a cumulative one has led to a loosening of the stranglehold that Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (1956) has held on educational philosophy since the era of the Sputnik. One of Mcffett's colleagues comments, with apparent relief, on the lessening importance of identifying observable behaviours:

...[While] the spelling out of instructional objectives was ... a clarifying exercise.... merely identifying cognitive, affective,

⁴⁸ Ibid.

or manipulative outcomes seems a paltry goal when confronted with . . . actual divergent thinking with which students can astound their teachers.

Defenders of educational drama have expended much energy futilely chasing down identifiable behaviors participants in drama should demonstrate. The truth is that the most significant outcomes of drama may well be those that cannot be seen.⁴⁹

Moffett distinguished pedagogical considerations from administrative and evaluative ones: "Good education is not easy to administer and to assess."⁵⁰ He also discriminated between good control and good learning: "When working spontaneously you may not look as organized as a teacher who is working with a lesson plan . . . that casts him as the star."⁵¹ He provided a coherent alternative to the empirical product-oriented emphasis of behavioral theory in education; and more importantly, did it by the same rigorous academic reasoning by which the other had achieved pre-eminence a decade before.

While the School Play continued to survive despite pressure to return to the basics in the 1970's, classroom drama began to share in the public approval of the "3 P's". While the earlier contributions of Ward and Slade were accorded archival respect, drama in the 1970's accepted this newly-stated role as a learning medium. The concept of edu-

⁴⁹ Betty Jane Wagner, "Educational Drama and the Brain's Right Hemisphere", Educational Drama for Today's Schools, p.133 and p.140 respectively.

⁵⁰ Moffett and Wagner, p.22.

⁵¹ Ibid., p.52.

cational accountability, a by-product of behavioristic educational theory, gave even those drama teachers unsympathetic with the Dramatic Method a shelter from the storm of reaction, a more readily accountable purpose than could be provided by nebulous aesthetics:

A teacher interested in doing drama with children should be able to convince parents, supervisors, and principals of the validity of drama if he emphasizes the contribution drama makes to the language arts curriculum.... The teacher interested in the benefits drama provides knows his children will grow even in ways other than these, but he may find it easier to proselytize for drama if he emphasizes the richness it adds to the language arts.⁵²

⁵² John W. Stewig, Spontaneous Drama: A Language Art (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1973), pp.99-100.

Chapter IX

THE HEATHCOTE MODEL - DRAMA AS A LEARNING MEDIUM

9.1 BACKGROUND

It is not a large step from the concept of the Dramatic Method to that of Drama as a Learning Medium; once drama has been discovered as a way of teaching language and literature, can history, geography, and other subjects be far behind? The boundary between any one of these models and its nearest neighbour can become very blurred, and none more so than between these last two. There are, however, some fundamental differences between the specific use of drama to teach communications skills, and the holistic use of drama to teach whatever one chooses to teach. Furthermore, there is a range of new teaching techniques and a unique style associated with this model, innovations which cannot be discussed without reference to the implausible intelligence, dynamism, and sensitivity of its leading practitioner, Dorothy Heathcote.

The antecedents for Drama as a Learning Medium are virtually identical to those of the preceding model. However, one early instance of the use of play production for a broad range of educational purposes may be found in the work of Stephanie de Genlis, a tutor to the household of the Duc de

Chartres about the time of the French Revolution. She wrote moral plays for her charges to perform, used historical tableaux as a theatrical guessing game, and "in her Memoirs she avers that she was the first governess [sic] who taught languages by conversation."¹ It is difficult to lend any credence to her accomplishments, however, partly because the only praise we have of it is autobiographical and embarrassingly gushy. Her name would have probably slept in obscurity if Winifred Ward had not begun her Theatre for Children with a glowing acknowledgement of her debt to the spirit of Mme de Genlis, and printed the latter's portrait as a frontispiece.

The first reliably documented example of an integrated pedagogy based on dramatic play is E. Caldwell Cook's work referred to in the preceding chapter.

As a young, idealistic graduate from Oxford, Cook was given a post as a teacher of English at the Perse School in Cambridge... [He was encouraged] in developing the Mummery, a large room rebuilt on the principles of the Elizabethan theatre, where the boys could act out their own improvised plays based on poetic narrative and dramatic literature. Caldwell Cook had to find his own way; or rather, he responded to the youngsters in his classes, who helped him to discover an activity method which gave enough freedom and discipline for them to extend their range and power of expression.²

¹ Winifred Ward, Theatre for Children, 3rd ed. (Anchorage, Ky.: Children's Theatre Press, 1958), p.6. The section on Mme de Genlis spans pp.1-7.

² John Hodgson, ed., The Uses of Drama (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972), p.145. Incidentally, the editor inexplicably confuses Cook's mentor Dr. W.H.D. House with the more recent literary scholar Dr. A.L. Rowse.

The theoretical background which accompanies practical method in The Play Way inevitably recapitulates much liberal educational philosophy from Aristotle through F.B. Holmes; however, there are several suggestions anticipating Moffett and Heathcote which sound ringingly modern, especially considering they were written not by some wild-eyed prophet, but by a young practising teacher in a conservative school system.³

We must remind ourselves that, although progressive education had been much talked about by Cook's day, its principles were not widely practised. The "What Is" portion of Holmes' What Is and What Might Be paints a bleak picture of English educational practice:

Whatever else the current system of education may do to the child, there is one thing which it cannot fail to do to him, - to blight his mental growth. . . . Western education strangles some faculties, arrests the growth of others, stunts the growth of a third group, and distorts the growth of a fourth.⁴

Neither usefulness nor agreeability seem to have been much considered in drafting the curriculum, let alone post-Romantic theory. While public schooling spread geographically, educational content remained frozen for centuries; for example, historian Thomas Carlyle described the course of study

³ Cook himself is aware that he is using radical teaching techniques to reinforce traditional values: "Your true revolutionary is only a conservative endowed with insight." (p. 12.)

⁴ Holmes, p. 79.

of as reputable a school as Winchester in the mid-nineteenth century:

The Greek and Latin grammars of the College only are used. The routine of education comprises the classics throughout, and composition in verse and prose. The other parts of education, such as French, Arithmetic, Mathematics, etc., are not taught in this school.⁵

To Cook as to other progressive educators, usefulness and agreeability were extremely important. Echoing the German philosopher Karl Groos, Cook saw child's play as vital preparation for the tasks of adult life:

It would not be wise to send a child innocent into the big world; and talking is of poor avail. But it is possible to hold rehearsals, to try our strength in a make-believe big world. And that is play.⁶

Because "the natural means of study in youth is play",⁷ and because of the seriousness with which children treat their make-believe, the teacher who can harness this power can find the students tackling very weighty material with spirit and determination: their "...hearty interest is a powerful engine which will carry a load eventually to its appointed destination."⁸ The teacher is the conductor and guide in

⁵ Quoted in Coggin, p. 148.

⁶ Cook, p. 1. A detailed analysis of the relationship between Groos' philosophy and educational drama may be found in Courtney, Play, Drama & Thought, pp. 27-31.

⁷ Cook, p. 1.

⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

this process, balancing enjoyment and purpose both for his students and for himself:

It is play with a purpose. But be careful that you do not leave all the play to the boys, and find yourself the sole keeper of the purpose. Just as the boys must appreciate the purpose, so must the master appreciate the play.⁹

Cock's own definition of his method rejects both teacher-led amusements and product-oriented presentations, reiterating instead the importance of the process and its seriousness of purpose:

...the Play Way is not a bunch of contrivances for making scholarly pursuits pleasurable, but the active philosophy of making pleasurable pursuits valuable. But the claim here put forward is not for the destination, but chiefly for the journey. Any means that becomes in this way an end in itself I call the Play Way.¹⁰

To achieve this integration of the means and the end, of usefulness and agreeability, of involvement and objectivity, requires some innovations in teaching technique, innovations which have been recently described in such resource books as The Drama of History (1974) and Drama Guidelines (1976), and in the works of Gavin Bolton and Crothy Heathcote. One such change is that the teacher must be able to improvise variations on his lesson plan to take advantage of teachable moments as they arise. A linear scientific method

⁹ Ibid., p.38.

¹⁰ Ibid., p.8.

is not responsive enough for teaching in this cumulative artistic way:

What if a growing mind scorns systematic progress ... and leaps back and forth over the field of study.... Let us have outline schemes by all means, but leave the details to the hour in which it shall be told to us what we shall do.¹¹

A liberal education prizes a balance of knowledge, while a child absorbed in learning can be the most egocentric of monomaniacs. There must also be provision for learning a small amount in great depth, as well as for larger amounts superficially:

The present-day puritan has that negative habit of mind which condemns all forms of excess but excess of restraint.... Not he who covers the most ground, but he who has the most delight in his journey, is the best traveller.¹²

Finally, a teacher in the Play Way must come to an understanding that "direct instruction is only a small part of what can take place in the classroom",¹³ and that greater achievement depends upon student-centred learning:

Once you realize that the teacher only exists for the learners, once you believe that the soul of any other being entrusted to your care is greater than the furniture of your own mind, once this belief in you reaches the level of a faith, then, believe me, the mountain of your learning and

¹¹ Ibid., p.5.

¹² Ibid., p.7.

¹³ Ibid., p.28.

self-sufficiency is easily removed....¹⁴

In retrospect, Cocks's theory and practice of drama as a cross-curricular student-centred teaching method may be clearly seen as a predecessor of Drama as a Learning Medium. Its effect was not really felt, however, until its principles had been rediscovered by another generation of drama educators following World War II. In America, Winifred Ward suggested that teachers could sometimes organize "Integrated Projects," for which creative dramatics would serve as "the center of a study to which a number of other school subjects or activities contribute...."¹⁵ Moreover, Lease and Siks' Creative Dramatics in Home, School, and Community (1952) suggested a number of practicable ways for using drama to teach not only language arts, but also social studies, arithmetic, science, safety, and several other subjects.¹⁶ In Britain, both Coggin's and Courtney's historical analyses of educational drama acknowledged the advanced nature of Cocks's work.¹⁷ After the Dartmouth Conference, however, the methods of Dorothy Heathcote gained recognition on both sides of the Atlantic, and have remained the most controver-

¹⁴ Ibid., p.12.

¹⁵ Stories to Dramatize, p.362.

¹⁶ See Ruth Lease and Geraldine Erain Siks, (New York: Harper and Row, 1952), pp. 133-149. Even in these applications, the authors maintain Ward's literary bias for the improvisations.

¹⁷ In Drama and Education and Play, Drama & Thought, respectively.

sial model for educational drama in the last decade.

Dorothy Heathcote was born in a small Yorkshire village in 1926, and left school at age 14 to work at the looms in a local textile mill. Stage-struck and determined to become an actress, Heathcote auditioned and was accepted at a highly-regarded theatre school in nearby Bradford, while her strong-willed mother agreed to shoulder the extra burden of work at the mill. At Bradford, Heathcote studied under noted British actress Esme Church, "...who took a keen interest in teaching and had an understanding of educational trends...."¹⁸ After three years of theatre training, Heathcote found a job as a drama teacher in a boys' public school. By 1954 she had been appointed to teach drama at the Institute of Education at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a position she still holds. She has also become internationally known as "...a much-sought-after lecturer and teacher at conferences and workshops not only in England but in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Israel."¹⁹

According to her own account in the BBC biographical film Three Looms Waiting, Heathcote began her teaching career with little idea of what a drama teacher was supposed to do, and was left much to her own devices by the school authorities. As a result, she developed a unique teaching

¹⁸ Betty Jane Wagner, Dorothy Heathcote: Drama as a Learning Medium (Washington: National Education Association, 1976), p.14.

¹⁹ Ibid.

style, affected less by other educational models and more by her own working-class values, histrionic talents, and prodigious outside reading. A commanding figure in the classroom, with a "...large sturdy build, ruddy cheeks, and mesmerizing eyes...",²⁰ Heathcote is said to evoke drama rather than directing it, using students' instinctive gift for drama in order to elicit new insights from them. She will teach a specific curriculum if asked to, or teach more general content arising from students' suggestions; but her most celebrated work has involved the universals of man's social evolution: communities, families, heritage, exploration. "Denied by poverty the mixed benefits of a university education, she is endowed with an insatiable curiosity and a capacity to open up for herself vast vistas of aesthetic and historical experience."²¹ Her talent for leading students toward similar kinds of insight in their playmaking, accepting the role of medium in another sense, is best expressed in her own idiosyncratic manner of expression:

I don't have a name for what I do. As a person, it seems to me I simply stand midway between all that has happened before I arrived and what is now. What I do at this moment obviously shapes up some part of what is to come. Everything that has happened before me I have something in common with, and this is my secret for finding material for drama.²²

²⁰ Ibid., p. 13.

²¹ Ibid., p. 167.

²² Quoted in Ibid., p. 13.

At about the same time as the Dartmouth Conference, Heathcote was filmed teaching some demonstration classes with a group of reform school boys in England. Distributed under the title of Improvised Drama, this film marked the beginning of a widespread documentation of Heathcote's work, on film and in print, which has had much to do with her current status in the field of educational drama. In 1971 the BBC made the aforementioned biographical film of her work, and many subsequent demonstration classes and lectures have also been preserved on film and videotape.²³ Also beginning in the early 1970's, Mrs. Heathcote taught short courses at North American universities virtually every year, most recently in Victoria in 1980, Oregon in 1981, and Calgary in 1982. In addition, she has published articles on her teaching goals and methods in many scholarly journals and anthologies, and was the subject of a monograph describing and analyzing her work. On film and in print, the power of her intellect, strength of character, and sense of purpose are awesome, though tempered with an Irish sense of humor. What is perhaps most remarkable is that she disdains to use her enormous talents for self-aggrandizement: the work is all-important, and she takes much more pleasure in her students' accomplishments, be they child actors or adult teachers, than she does in her own. Having taken a three-week intensive course with Mrs. Heathcote, I find it difficult to

²³ See Ibid., pp.236-8, for a list of these to 1976.

describe her work without prattling her praise.

Heathcote's reputation has spread not only through her own example, but also through her influence on a number of other celebrated drama educators; in fact, most recent monographs in educational drama have acknowledged a debt to her work. Her inspiration, for instance, initiated The Drama of History (1974) by John Fines and Raymond Verrier, a description of the authors' experimentation in co-operative student-centred history teaching. Her own articles serve as keynotes to collections such as R. Baird Shuman's Educational Drama for Today's Schools (1978) and Ken Robinson's Exploring Theatre and Education (1980), among others. She is acknowledged for her challenge and inspiration in the very practical Drama Guidelines (1976) and the very theoretical Towards a Theory of Drama in Education (1979).

Not everyone agrees that Heathcote's method is the best way of teaching drama. It has been largely ignored by the new British Columbia drama curriculum guides, whose authors feel that it would be destructive and dangerous for most drama teachers to attempt to teach in this way; indeed, Heathcote likes to teach improvisationally, operating at a high level of uncertainty that would make most teachers very uncomfortable. More discouraging words have been heard from way supporters such as Margaret Faulkes who have vehemently rejected the ponderous pace, manipulative questioning, and unremitting intensity in Heathcote's work, particularly in

her work with smaller children.²⁴ However, it is impossible to discuss current trends in educational drama without concentrating on Dorothy Heathcote, unquestionably the most charismatic figure in educational drama today. Moreover, it is almost as difficult to talk about her teaching without talking about her personality. In her continued work in teacher training, after all, Heathcote recognizes that one cannot fully separate the teacher from the person:

As Heathcote knows, we are all rooted in the rich soil of our beliefs. If our teaching stems from these, if it remains true to our values, we will find we have what she has -- an ever-surging energy to go on, a drive to keep at the task, based on assurance that the goal is right.²⁵

9.2 DESCRIPTION

The Heathcote Model is an integrated use of unscripted dramatic play as a teaching device. There is no provision for an audience, although the model is frequently found in demonstration classes for experienced drama educators to observe. Through the personal influence of such noted educators as Dorothy Heathcote, Gavin Eclton, and Canadian Norah Morgan, and through a number of practical and theoretical publications in the past ten years, the Heathcote Model

²⁴ This rejection is best expressed in Margaret Faulkes, "Is This Educational Creative Drama?", an unpublished article criticizing Heathcote's demonstration classes at the 1974 convention of the Canadian Child and Youth Drama Association.

²⁵ Wagner, Learning Medium, p.218.

has become the most widely-discussed in educational drama today.

This model uses a number of techniques characteristic of some other models described above, and has introduced some new methods as well. As in the Mcffett model, the teacher's overall goal is of paramount importance, while the activities need not follow any particular pattern. One could find narrative, exercise, or any manner of activity in a Heathcote class. As in the Mcffett model, drama is also employed to make activities student-centred rather than teacher-centred, and to allow the students to find greater personal significance in the learning.

Rather than the usual role of the teacher as the one who knows, Heathcote will intentionally withhold her knowledge and expertise from the students. She does this to "...help children find the feel of what they know...",²⁶ to avoid overpowering them with her own expertise so that they will be encouraged to use knowledge they don't know they possess. She will endow the students with what she calls the "mantle of the expert", giving them the dramatic role of research scientists, or skilled artisans, or explorers, often in a context wherein their assumed knowledge is greater than hers.

There are two major kinds of growth possible in 'mantle of the expert'. One is an almost awesome understanding of a sense of responsibility. The

²⁶ Wagner, Learning Medium, p.15.

other is a respect for expertise and for the objective world that has been studied. It seems to me that more than any other activity across the curriculum this particular form of drama can give children a glimpse of the meaning of scholarship.²⁷

This technique is clearly a dramatic game in itself, which can only be effective, if the teacher leads the group in their suspension of disbelief.

The knowledge that the students uncover in this way is sometimes in the cognitive domain, but more often in the affective, what Heathcote calls the "left hand of knowing". Recent psychological research has shown that the right side of the brain, which controls the motor functions of the left side of the body, "...is also responsible for assessing the body's orientation in space and for synthesis as a mode of knowing.... The other half of the brain is responsible for speech and logic."²⁸ The integration of these two functions, the intellectual and the intuitive, and the granting of equal status to each, suggests that students have a much broader and much deeper knowledge at their command than a scientific model of education could possibly recognize. It is in the evocation of this knowledge, along with an elevated poetic style of language to express it, that the Heath-

²⁷ Bolton, Towards a Theory, p.69.

²⁸ Wagner, "Right Hemisphere", p.135.

cote model displays its most spectacular results.²⁹

As well as withholding knowledge, Heathcote will also withhold her substantial qualities of leadership. In the film Building Relief, for example, she chooses to absent herself from a whole-group improvised task, but only after satisfying herself that the students are capable of assuming the leadership at that point, and after satisfying the students that she will step in and assist if required. She prefers the use of whole-group improvisations as it centres the work not on individual students, but rather on the student in a social context.^{*} Social concerns are carefully considered in both the content of the dramatic work and in the language of her instruction.

Recall that the three tenses of dramatic activity are identification, imitation, and reflection: the dramatic imagination in reference to the future, the present, and the past respectively. Each of these three tenses is present in each model; but only in the Heathcote Model is the reflective mode an observable teacher-led activity, a verbalized testimony to the breadth and depth of the learning. Wagner notes six specific techniques used by Heathcote to enable students to reflect upon the deeper significance of the situation which they are depicting:

²⁹ These results, which cannot be briefly explained in a right-handed way, are well documented in Wagner's Learning Medium and in the films cited therein.

Stopping the drama to reflect; slowing the pace within the drama; imposing rituals; classifying responses of the class and giving them back to the class in categories that reveal their implications; interjecting probes and presses; and using symbols.³⁰

After their belief in and commitment to their drama has been painstakingly established, students show little difficulty in shifting back and forth between imitative and reflective modes, just as an actor in rehearsing an emotional scene can repeat the experience many times. Interruptions do not damage the quality of the imitation, but rather seem to enhance it. Heathcote can also improvise rituals with astonishing glibness, as for instance in having each student invent and verbalize one memorable quality of a fellow-adventurer who "died" in their improvisation. Her rule-of-thumb for inventing rituals, typically, is a simple principle carrying complex implications: "For a thing to be religious, it need only be simple and repetitive."³¹ But for the children to only reflect upon the symbolic significance of their dramatized actions is not enough for Heathcote. They are also prodded to find a significant language which can adequately express their depth of feeling:

³⁰ Learning Medium, p.77.

³¹ Dorothy Heathcote, "Of These Seeds Eccoming", Educational Drama for Today's Schools, p.15. The sample ritual described appears in the film Building Belief and is transcribed in Wagner, Learning Medium, p.81.

We have been challenged not only to feel, but to organize our feelings into some kind of expression. In other words, we have challenged the children first to feel and comprehend, then to make their knowledge clear to themselves. We have challenged their language, both emotional and intellectual...³²

People may learn by doing, but not while doing; the Heathcote model builds into the lesson an opportunity to learn by reflecting on the make-believe experience.

To teachers working in other models of educational drama, a Heathcote lesson must seem like all talk and no action. Her most virulent critic, Margaret Faulkes, has questioned whether Heathcote's work is educational, or creative, or whether it can even be called drama:

One concludes that Mrs. Heathcote is... offering not an alternative method of Drama, but an alternative to Drama itself.

In support of this conclusion, there was little evidence in her workshops of the core elements of physical action, imagination, and speech which are integral to even the most simplistic beginning approach to drama.³³

There is, however, another way to interpret this paucity of overt action:

Dorothy Heathcote's teaching is the best example we have of drama work operating at the level of subjective meaning but she does not require that it be sensational...

³² Heathcote, "Drama as Challenge", The Uses of Drama, p.160.

³³ Faulkes, "Is This Educational Creative Drama?", p.4.

A feature of Type D drama then is that it is primarily concerned with learning at a subjective level of meaning.³⁴

The apparent ease with which Heathcote can elicit an elevated symbolic language from the students is uncanny, language which often surprises the students themselves. She probes and presses for deeper understanding and richer expression, depending on the maturity and level of commitment of the group:

Probes ... are used to assess a class's ability to respond. The class can either take them or leave them. Presses, however, are deliberate reinforcements of probes. They do not let the class off the hook.

.....
Without presses, nothing significant happens. When a class has to submit to your press, when you won't let them out the easy way, modification of the class has a chance to happen. If you let them solve the problem easily, there is no drama, only a set of happenings.³⁵

Heathcote insists that the teacher "...challenge the energies, the intelligence and the efforts of the children in his class", and "...to make the doing worth the doing".³⁶

press in #1- terms

The students do not resent this extremely rigorous form of play. On the contrary, they seem to revel in it, perhaps because they have been shown such genuine respect for their

³⁴ Bolton, Towards a Theory, p.32. "Type D" drama is Bolton's term for what I call the "Heathcote Model."

³⁵ Wagner, Learning Medium, pp. 89-90.

³⁶ Heathcote, "Drama as Challenge", p.157, and "Of These Seeds Becoming", p.8.

abilities and efforts, but also because, by any subjective judgment, the quality of the resulting drama is so strong. It is hard for students to return to more mundane playmaking after being guided through this kind of intensified examination of the symbolic and dramatic nature of their own lives.

Teachers can find the Heathcote model a somewhat threatening one to use. For them to work within it successfully, Heathcote recognizes that teachers have to define a number of individual thresholds, beyond which limits they should not venture. These thresholds have been categorized as follows:³⁷

1. Decision-taking: what decisions must you reserve for yourself, and what decisions will you allow the students to make?
2. Noise: at what point do the students make too much noise or the wrong kind of noise?
3. Distance: how close do you want to be to your students, both physically and emotionally?
4. Size of Groups: what size of group do you want the class divided into?
5. Teaching Registers: what attitudes do you use in making yourself a resource to the class? Some of the registers that Heathcote uses are:
 - the one-who-knows register

³⁷ The ensuing list is summarized from Wagner, Learning Medium, pp.34-41.

- the would-you-like-to-know register
- the I-have-no-idea register
- the suggester-of-implications register
- the interested-listener register
- the it's-no-use-asking-me register

6. Status as a Teacher: what kind of feedback do you require from teaching in order for you to want to return the next day?

The Heathcote model does not insist that the teacher stretch himself beyond his tolerance in these thresholds; rather, that the teacher be aware of them and stay within them, to maintain the effectiveness of his teaching. For teachers as well as for students, Heathcote wants you to begin from where you are.

To work within this model, the teacher also needs to develop a new attitude toward lesson planning. The more decision-making is left to the students, the less useful is a detailed plan. Hours of preparation sometimes need to be hastily discarded if the group's improvisation takes an unexpected turn. Fines and Verrier suggest that the beginning of the lesson is critical: "This we feel should be planned in great detail, down to all the administration of movement and the actual words used by the teacher at the start."³⁸ From this point, the teacher must have faith in the students' interest and in his own ability to respond to contingencies, to show assurance "...even though the whole

³⁸ John Fines and Raymond Verrier, The Drama of History (London: New University Education, 1974), p.24.

of the rest of the lesson lies like a void, frighteningly empty...."³⁹ For this reason, teachers using the Heathcote model need to appreciate the exhilaration of working at risk.

The risk of teaching in the Heathcote model lies not just in uncertainty about what is to happen next, but also in the abandoning of typical teacher roles and attitudes. The teacher's superior knowledge cannot be used for control, but must instead be held in reserve. The fundamental hypocrisy of Socratic questioning is laid bare: why ask a question if you already know the answer? Instead of providing repeated stimuli for the students to respond to, the teacher must train himself to respond to the stimulus of their responses. Unlike scientific teaching, a lesson is not easily replicated. Also unlike scientific education, activity must be slowed down or stopped for the most important learning to take place. Observable action is no longer the yardstick for learning: it is merely a way of getting ready.

The best-known innovation of the Heathcote model, and apparently the riskiest, is the technique of teacher-in-role. Instead of the teacher guiding the drama from outside it, like a modern stage director, the teacher creates a role for himself within the improvisation. This technique can enhance the group's commitment to their dramatizing in several ways. First, it can quickly plunge the group into the

³⁹ Ibid., p.25.

middle of a dramatic situation. Just as quickly, it can initiate use of the intuitive half of the brain as well as the intellectual:

Talking about emotion is no substitute for reacting to it, so Heathcote's characteristic stance at the beginning is to step into a role and play it in a highly charged often aggressive way!⁴⁰

Travis

This reinforces the value of make-believe by personal example, as the students can see the teacher joining in their activity. It also helps support the concentration of those students who may feel sheepish about their play-acting, and allows the teacher to heighten the drama by introducing new facts or problems from within it.

rather than asking questions

Perhaps the greatest advantage to the teacher-in-role technique is that it sets aside the usual teacher/student roles, allowing both the student and the teacher the opportunity to explore other roles. Current psychological theory concurs with Courtney, Bolton, and other drama educators that people frequently assume and discard a variety of roles in their daily interpersonal relations. "The actor who is this night Hamlet is also at other times a father to his children, son to his parents, citizen of his country and so on. He is also an actor who is also a spectator.... The children are in role as students while I am placed in the

⁴⁰ Wagner, Learning Medium, p. 128.

role of teacher."⁴¹ Heathcote will often assume a middle-rank role so that she has enough authority to impose conditions on the drama, but not enough to make the final decisions. In this position of greatest maneuverability,

Heathcote is in a position to communicate freely to those of both higher and lower ranks. She can impose the limits that create tension and even work to raise a group to a feverish pitch of anger against her; ...Through opposing her in role, the children develop a sense of their own power.⁴²

Heathcote ensures that the class is never confused about whether she is a participant in the drama or playing the role of teacher. She uses her own acting talent to signal changes in role, altering her bearing, vocal quality, even linguistic style. When supplementing her own role-playing with student-teachers in role, who may not be so eloquent at signalling, she will establish a highly visible symbol - perhaps a shield or a costume - as a convention to signal the class.

Signals clearly when she is teacher & when she is a participant in drama

Other models for educational drama can accept a teacher briefly taking on a role in order to move the drama forward, as Ward says, "...to stir up new ideas by entering the play yourself."⁴³ Heathcote, however, uses role throughout the

⁴¹ Heathcote, "From the Particular to the Universal", p.12. In her Victoria workshop, Heathcote made frequent reference to psychologist Erving Goffman's concepts and vocabulary of role-playing in everyday human interaction, for instance in Frame Analysis (1974).

⁴² Wagner, Learning Medium, p.129.

⁴³ Stories to Dramatize, p.14.

lesson, slipping back into her teacher role whenever it would be the most effective of the roles available to her. In role, she can allow the discipline to arise from the requirements of the drama, instead of it being imposed by the teacher. As in the Spolin model, the initial agreement to play carries an implicit agreement to abide by the rules of the game; and while these rules are seldom stated explicitly in the Heathcote model, the students' instinct for play and for drama enables them to accept the rules all the same. While in role, the teacher can often discipline other players much more effectively than in his role as teacher: the drama will involve some point of tension in which everyone has agreed to believe, and chastisement in terms of this make-believe criterion can be made much harder, yet with fewer interpersonal repercussions, than can be done in the usual teacher/student roles.

9.3 SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The Heathcote Model can best be summarized by the word 'integration'. Left-brain and right-brain, drama as method and drama as subject, teacher roles and student roles, the doer and the watcher: all dichotomies may be viewed as part of a single complex whole, a perception of life which is perhaps Heathcote's greatest gift to her students:

Dorothy Heathcote is not out to cleanse experience of its bewildering variety or mystery. She reminds us that the information available at any given moment is never neat or linear -- it comes

at us in a swirl of images and sensory data. In this chaos Heathcote discerns structure and pattern, but always the structure is subject to transformation in the next moment.⁴⁴

One effect of this integration has been a re-thinking of the dichotomy of drama and theatre as defined by Way. On page 16 above, for example, Courtney defines theatre not as the opposite of drama, but as a special conventionalized form of man's dramatic instinct. This inclusive description of drama/theatre means, among other things, that a drama teacher no longer needs to feel guilty about putting on plays, as the Slade and Way models would probably have them feel. The theatre is also a part of our dramatic lives:

A barrier has grown up and people have taken sides. ...If our purpose in education is that children shall learn by doing as much as by listening to, then both these fields of activity, the so-called formal and the so-called informal are only two views of the same thing.⁴⁵

To explore what drama and theatre have in common in terms of methods, goals, and concepts, a group of celebrated drama educators and theatre professionals gathered for a weekend conference at the BBC's Riverside studios in 1978. The resulting monograph, Ken Robinson's Exploring Theatre and Education (1980) indicates that although the drama/theatre division may have been a useful clarification, it seems to have also nurtured some entirely unnecessary distrust.

⁴⁴ Wagner, Learning Medium, p.166.

⁴⁵ Heathcote, "Drama as Challenge", p.164.

In the Heathcote Model, the concept of dramatic conflict is superseded by that of dramatic tension. The deliberate downplaying of action in favour of the potential for action is implicit in Heathcote's terse definition of drama: "A man in a mess".⁴⁶ Children raised in the last two decades have seen real wars and staged wars fought on the same television screen, which seems to have dulled their capacity to distinguish or to care. By illustrating dilemmas of the human condition in microcosm, and by enabling young people to find personal significance in these dilemmas, Heathcote may be the first educator to have found an effective answer to the adolescent shrug of "Who cares?" There is an urgent seriousness of purpose to the Heathcote model, and not a moment too soon!

The effects of this model are just now beginning to be felt in British Columbia, by the same means as it has spread through England and North America. The repercussions of Heathcote's 1980 visit to Victoria are still being felt among this province's drama teaching fraternity. The short course taught by Gavin Bolton at the University of British Columbia this summer should strengthen the influence of this kind of drama teaching. The recent publications mentioned in this chapter have created a lot of interest and controversy as well.

⁴⁶ From the film Three Locals Waiting.

In addition, the Association of E.C. Drama Educators has done much to raise its members' consciousness about current trends in educational drama. The most recent issue of Abracadabra, the journal of this association, contains articles by Gavin Eolton and Juliana Saxton, along with the conclusion of a two-part analysis of Heathcote's methods not dissimilar from this one.⁴⁷ Its last three presidents, Carol Tarlington, Gary Rupert, and Renee Norman, have taken a personal and professional interest in the use of drama as a cross-curricular learning medium, particularly at the elementary level. In fact, Mrs. Norman is sharing teaching responsibilities with Mr. Eolton this summer, and Ms. Tarlington spent several months studying with him in England during the 1980-81 academic year.

The teaching skills required by this model, as we have seen, are more sophisticated than those of traditional teaching. Perhaps this is why Heathcote and Eolton work predominantly in the area of teacher training, both in their full-time positions in England and in the short courses they teach around the world. Heathcote describes the special skills required in this model as follows:

1. To delay arrivals, so that time is made for trying on, turning around, testing this way and that;

⁴⁷ Vol.4, no.2 (June 1982).

2. To preserve interest and concern so that in each new examination there is a chance for more understanding to take place.
3. To press and pummel during the journey in such a way that all elements come to light, and the traveler feels the journey to be there, and
4. To illuminate the parts as they come clear, and guide to the next dark patch.⁴⁸

The emphasis that Heathcote and Bolton place on teacher training is echoed in the work of leading Canadian exponents of this model. David Booth in Toronto, Nolah Morgan in St. Catharines, and Juliana Saxton in Victoria are all active in training the next generation of drama teachers in integrated approaches to drama, theatre, and education.

One final gift of the Heathcote Model is an explanation as to what drama teaching can do that other kinds of teaching cannot. Many broad statements of good intentions seem to be applicable to any teaching, or to the lessons of life in a still broader context. Heathcote herself admits that for many years, she had been unable to provide reasons why learning through the medium of drama could be more effective than other methods:

Now I have some...

Are they not the most common of common-sense?

1. Thinking from within a situation forces a different type of thinking;

⁴⁸ Heathcote, "Of These Seeds Becoming", p.5.

2. Sharing thinking, bouncing it off other's thought, keeps thought fluidly in action, yet it constantly clears away fog....
3. Keeping in touch with universal myths and themes ... keeps me in touch with myself to recognize the forces in myself at deeper levels than the task-level living of my life.
4. Building a language for expression and a language for reflection is important to the growth of people so that they remain in touch with who and what they themselves are.
5. Trying on all types of experiences in safety ... is important in my "forming of myself" to accept and live fruitfully in the twin world of technology and humanity -- as I must.⁴⁹

The greatest drawback to the Heathcote Model is that it is so extremely difficult to use, particularly for those teachers who do not have Heathcote's flair for improvisational teaching. Even Heathcote herself has difficulty explaining her work analytically: it is less a method than a philosophy, less a way of teaching than a way of thinking. For this reason, Gavin Bolton is often considered a more important figure than Heathcote, since he is more able to bring this model within the reach of the ordinary teacher. It is of some consolation that even Bolton is awed by the talent of his long-time friend and mentor: "I shall never catch up with her genius, but I enjoy the chase."⁵⁰ To the gifted drama teacher, however, the Heathcote Model offers an

⁴⁹ Heathcote, "Of These Seeds Eccoming", pp.8-9.

⁵⁰ Bolton, Towards a Theory, p.iv.

irresistible challenge to take on the role of teacher-artist as she does. One nine-year-old summed up the feelings of many admirers of Heathcote, when he and his fellow-adventurers became frightened during their journey back through time:

HEATHCOTE: Should we go forward, do you think? I feel very responsible for all our safety.

BOY: Yes. We must go forward now to find out all there is to know. We owe it to ourselves.⁵¹

⁵¹ Quoted in Wagner, Learning Medium, p.172.

Chapter X

EDUCATIONAL DRAMA IN BRITISH COLUMBIA'S PAST

It has been said that Canada has very little history but a great deal of geography. This aphorism is particularly true of British Columbia, with its vast stretches of rugged wilderness, whose first towns were founded as recently as the nineteenth century. In a relatively young society such as this, one might think that documentation would be easier to find, that information would be buried under fewer years of rubble. In practice, the reverse seems to be true. The pioneers who established this fertile beachhead on the Pacific Rim were much more concerned with the business of accomplishing things than with recording their accomplishments. In addition, government agencies have only recently developed consistent methods of collecting and reporting data. Although the Provincial Archives and the Ministry of Education records contain a wealth of valuable information, this information tends to be incomplete and scattered. As a result, many questions remain unanswered, as the pieces of paper which might illuminate them have remained neglected or undiscovered, even discarded. Perhaps it may be considered axiomatic that people need to develop a history before they can develop a concern for preserving it.

What is remembered is that which remains after the less important has been forgotten. This chapter is not intended to be a continuous comprehensive treatment of the history of drama education in British Columbia, but rather a collection of highlights, the local archetypes described as illustrations of the international archetypes of the previous chapters. It should be noted, however, that there is great opportunity here for more comprehensive research, which I hope this chapter may influence someone to undertake.

10.1 A CASE STUDY: VICTORIA HIGH SCHOOL

At this point it might be useful to trace the development of educational drama within a single school. We have chosen Victoria High School for this purpose, for a number of reasons. As indicated in Table 3 on page 159, it was the first high school in British Columbia, and was for a time the only Canadian high school west of Winnipeg. In addition, its past is better documented than most high schools, a history of the school having been published as part of the school's centennial celebrations in 1976. An archives was catalogued for the same occasion, and its organization is only slightly frayed from its somewhat neglected storage within the school. These archival materials are probably available to any member of the public, but as a former student and teacher of the school I have found them particularly accessible. Since my parents and my siblings all attend-

ed this school as well, over a period of almost fifty years, it has also given me a great deal of personal satisfaction to explore the past of this grand old institution.

TABLE 3

High Schools in British Columbia to 1900

Years Established

<u>Year</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Gross Enrollment</u>	<u>Average Attendance</u>
1876	Victoria	60	49
1884	New Westminster	40	22
1886	Nanaimo	21	14
1890	Vancouver	31	25

Average Daily Attendance, 1899-1900

<u>High School</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Divisions</u>
Nanaimo	46	1
New Westminster	42	2
Vancouver	138	5
Victoria	124	4

Victoria High School first opened in August, 1876, in a two-room log cabin on what is now the grounds of Central

Junior High School.¹ Although there were no facilities for performance, debating and oral reading immediately became the most notable activities in the school's curriculum:

*Drama
given
out of*

A Lyceum Club has been organized among the male pupils, who debate once a week after school hours. Considerable interest is manifested in these exercises. Another source of intellectual improvement, common to both sexes, was... the preparation of manuscript newspapers, filled chiefly with original compositions... The articles were written as home exercises and read by pupils selected for the purpose semi-monthly.²

In 1882 the school moved into a new brick annex to the adjacent public school, and in 1902 to its own building on the same grounds. This new building, designed by the famous architect F.M. Rattenbury, contained a school "assembly room, which is a unique feature of the building... taking up the entire westerly portion of the second story."³ In this auditorium in 1906 the matriculating class presented She Stoops to Conquer under the direction of the young but formidable English teacher Jeannette Cann, who taught at

*Drama at
extra-curric
Thea.*

¹ There is a tenuous connection between Victoria High School and the celebrated American actor-director-producer David Belasco, who had attended school in this same cabin some years earlier. Not surprisingly, it is reported that he excelled at recitation. For an account of Belasco's eventful boyhood years in Victoria, including appearances with Charles Kean's touring company, see William Winter, The Life of David Belasco, vol.1 (1918:rpt. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1970), pp.2-17.

² Sixth Annual Report on the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia: 1876-77 (Victoria, B.C.: Province of British Columbia, 1877), p.13. Subsequent citations of this volume will be in the form Annual Report: year.

³ Victoria Colonist, 17 August 1902, p.8.

Victoria High School and Victoria College for over thirty years. The Canconer, a school monthly magazine founded that same year, not unexpectedly described the occasion as "a great success."⁴ The school administration was quick to recognize what fine public relations this meant for the school, and the calendar for the next school year was enthusiastic about this new activity:

School Play
is
its reasoning

Dramatic Society. This society is valuable not only as an excellent means of training in elocution and memory for its members, but also as a source of instruction and amusement for the School and its friends. The large Assembly Hall of the School is furnished with a capacious stage, with footlights. The pupils manufacture and paint their own scenery.⁵

Although the history of the school lists this as the first school play,⁶ it was not the first student performance in that auditorium. In 1903 under an agreement with McGill University, Victoria College enrolled its first class of seven students, sharing the staff and premises of Victoria High School as it continued to do for several years. In the spring of 1904, these students produced what might be called ~~the first high school play in British Columbia:~~

⁴ Vol. I, no. 6 (June 1906), p. 13.

⁵ Calendar of Victoria High School and College: Session 1906-07, p. 23.

⁶ Peter L. Smith, Come Give a Cheer (Victoria, B.C.: Victoria High School Centennial Celebrations Committee, 1976), p. 47.

...the chief diversion of that spring was the presentation of "Le Voyage de Monsieur Perrichon." This light comedy by Eugene Labiche was an item in the French course, and someone had the idea it would be fun to play it in English. Mon. Ferrichon, a successful French business man, takes his wife and attractive daughter on a holiday to a Swiss Mountain resort. There, they meet with various farcical adventures and Mlle Ferrichon is beset by suitors.⁷

One of the suitors was played by young Joseph B. Clearihue, later a Rhodes Scholar, judge, and first chancellor of the University of Victoria. The other was played by Freddie Wood.

Frederic G.C. Wood is now more closely identified with the University of British Columbia than with his home town of Victoria. After winning academic distinction at McGill and at Harvard, he became the first native son on the faculty of U.B.C., joining its two-man English Department in 1915. In his first year there he founded the university's Players' Club, and guided it to great success over the years. In 1921, Professor Wood also helped to organize the Vancouver Little Theatre. In 1952 a modest workshop theatre at U.B.C. was fashioned out of surplus army huts, which the grateful university named after Frederic Wood; in 1963 a handsome new theatre building was opened under the same name.

⁷ Frederic G.C. Wood, "Early Days of Victoria College," (n.p.:n.p., 1962), pp.4-5.

After graduating from McGill in 1910, Wood returned to Victoria High School to teach English. A popular and energetic young teacher, he formed a boys' debating society called "Beta Delta." He also staged his own adaptations of scenes from the novels of Sir Walter Scott and Charles Dickens in 1911 and 1912, the first school productions since She Stoops to Conquer. The redoubtable Miss Cann replied with a revival of the play in 1913, and the same year formed a girls' debating society aptly entitled "Portia". The twin traditions of debating societies and the matriculation play continued for many decades. Miss Cann's strict discipline and Freddie Wood's "biting wit and uncompromising standards in the theatre,"⁸ along with their high standards of scholarship and genuine affection for their students, set the tone for the tradition of school plays at Victoria High.

} plays /
Debating
together

The flurry of dramatic activity associated with Freddie Wood's four years on the staff of Victoria High School could not have occurred at a better time for the future of drama at the school. Principal S.J. Willis was involved in the planning of the present Victoria High School building, which began construction in the fall of 1912. During this last burst of pre-war optimism, an 800-seat assembly hall with a large proscenium stage was built in the centre of the school, around which all its other facilities were arrayed. It is still one of only two school theatre facilities in

⁸ Clyde Gilmer, "100-Seat UEC Theatre Honors 'Freddie' Wood," Vancouver Sun, 10 December 1952, p.13.

Greater Victoria.⁹

There seem to be two main ingredients to the long-term success of a secondary drama programme: the energy of the teacher, and the support of the school's administration. The first decade in the present Victoria High School building saw several different principals and several different play directors. Out of this uncertainty emerged Ira Dilworth, a diversely talented young man who firmly established the Matriculation Play as an annual event. After staging five full Shakespearean plays in successive years (1922-26), Dilworth became one of the youngest principals ever at Victoria High, the school's first graduate to attain this position. Although his new responsibilities forced him to give up the matric play, he continued to seek ways of making the arts part of every student's education. He was renowned for conducting brief daily assemblies at which he would introduce and then play recordings of light classical music from his own collection. Sometimes student musicians or professional guests would perform instead. He brought in Major Bullock-Webster from the E.C. Dramatic School to direct the next two matric plays, until a new directing talent emerged from his own teaching staff. He often conducted the school orchestra himself. After leaving Victoria High in 1934, Dilworth achieved fame in successive careers as a university

2 components
that have made
drama
continue

Influential
teacher in
growth of
secondary
drama

⁹ The other is at Oak Bay Secondary (West), built as Oak Bay Junior High in the 1950's. Other school theatre facilities near Victoria are at Parklands Secondary in Sidney, and Spencer Junior Secondary in Langford.

professor, a C.E.C. executive, and literary editor for Emily Carr; but he left behind the beginnings of a tradition of school theatre that continued unbroken for half a century.

TABLE 4

Staff Stability at Victoria High School, 1926-1982

	In Office	Years on Staff
<u>Principals</u>		
*Ira Dilworth	1926-34	18
Harry L. Smith	1934-55	41
*Harry D. Dee	1955-59	32
*G.A.V. Thomson	1959-66	21
J. Duncan Leimer	1966-79	28
*William J. Garner	1979-80	3
Jack Lowther	1980-82	2
<u>Drama Teachers</u>		
Ella Cameron	1929-44	29
H.S. Huin	1944-45	1
*Thomas W. Mayne	1945-62	33
H.C. Farr	1962-74	14
*Denis Johnston	1974-80	6
Janice Turner	1980-81	1
Joe Baur	1981-82	15
<u>Some Other Play Directors</u>		
Jeannette Cann	1906, 13	18
*F.G.C. Wood	1911, 12	4
I. Fullock-Webster	1927-28	--
*Harry Dee	1932, 36	32
Norma Douglas	1953-60	26
*Victor Mitchell	1960	2

* = VHS graduate

The stability of both the school principalship and the school drama department which both began with Ira Dilworth

*Drama
Dept
begun by
this man*

are illustrated in Table 4 above. Until the end of the 1970's, every principal had previously served as a teacher and vice-principal on the staff. Similarly, every drama teacher had the opportunity of learning from a preceding one, either as a junior member of the staff or as a student in bygone years. In addition, both Ella Cameron and Thomas Mayne gave up drama teaching long before retirement to take on important departmental chairmanships within the school, and therefore lent considerable status to their support of their successors. One drama teacher, H.S. ("Eunny") Eurn later succeeded Bullock-Webster as the province's Director of School and Community Drama, while another director, Harry Dee, later became vice-principal and principal of the school. The continued success of the school play at Victoria High was due in no small part to the stature of the directors, the interest and support given by the principals, and the stability and continuity evident in both positions.

It seems that the school play was also held in high regard by the student body. In school annuals between the wars, it is not unusual to find the same young people dressed in athletic uniforms and Shakespearean costumes. This may be partly due to a less compartmentalized approach to education than we have nowadays, or to the influence of long-time principal Harry Smith, renowned for both his athletic prowess and his love of Shakespeare.

In a school as old as this one, with so few competing schools in the early years, one might expect to find a number of adult celebrities who once took part in the Matriculation Play. Sure enough, we find among the cast lists the names of journalists Bruce Hutchison and Brian Tobin, academics James Gibsco and Harry Gilliland, politician Hugh Curtis, artist Max Maynard, architect John DiCastrì. My own favourite piece of celebrity casting comes from the 1925 production of A Midsummer Night's Dream, with the roles of Lysander and Demetrius taken by artist Jack Shadbolt and the late provincial cabinet strongman Waldo Skillings. With the recent rise of professional theatre in Canada, Vic High performers of the 1950's and 1960's have made names for themselves in the Canadian arts scene, such as actor-singer Bill Hosie, conductor Timothy Vernon, and technicians Lawrence Eastick and Ian Focì.

Traditions die hard. The stability and continuity which fostered drama at Victoria High have crumbled since the 1976 school centenary. Millions of dollars of poorly designed renovations completed in 1980 have changed a glorious old temple of public education into a bewildering decrepit catacomb. For every year since Ira Dilworth took office in 1926, either the principal or the vice-principal had been a graduate of Victoria High School, and both had had prior teaching experience on its staff. Both these records have been broken in the past five years. Similarly, the continuity of drama teachers which began with Dilworth

has been broken: one who was hired on a temporary contract survived only one frenetic year in 1980-81, while the programme continued to decline in 1981-82 under an amiable but untrained staff member. No plays were produced last year, not even a one-act for the local schools' drama festival, and it is possible that no drama course will be offered in 1982-83, for the first time since Ella Cameron ruled the auditorium in the 1930's.

Ghosts of past productions and colourful characters still may be discerned in the old cavernous auditorium, almost unchanged since its opening in 1914. Today there are countless drama programmes across British Columbia producing more and better classroom drama and school plays than Ira Dilworth would have thought possible; but at Vic High, instability, declining enrolment, and lack of administrative commitment to drama have brought an end to a great tradition. Whether a new one will rise from the ashes of Vic High drama in its second century is impossible to foretell; but there is no doubt that the vigour of its drama programme in the first century had a lasting effect on the growth of adult as well as school theatre in Victoria and in British Columbia.¹⁰

¹⁰ See Appendix C, part 2, for a list of major productions at Victoria High School, 1906-1981.

10.2 BULLOCK-WEBSTER GETS DRAMA ORGANIZED

One of the most striking and enigmatic figures in the history of theatre in British Columbia was Major Llewellyn ("Bill") Bullock-Webster, whose brusque persistence in attracting official attention to school and community drama activity led to this province's acknowledged leadership in school theatre in Canada. Born in Wales in 1878, he had served in the British Army during the Boer War, but illness prevented his active participation. At about the turn of the century he emigrated to Canada, apparently touring with some minor companies as a bit player and assistant stage manager. By 1911 he had settled in Prince Rupert, and there acquired a remarkable collection of administrative titles: Alderman, Police Commissioner, Federal Government Seed Inspector, Commissioner for Taking Affidavits. He was also responsible for founding the Northern B.C. Agricultural and Industrial Association, the Prince Rupert Exhibition, and the Prince Rupert Dramatic Society, of which he was the first president and first stage director. There could not have been a single citizen of pre-war Prince Rupert whose name appeared on more letterheads than that of L. Bullock-Webster.

His activities in Prince Rupert illustrated several characteristics which were typical of Bullock-Webster's subsequent careers. He had a penchant for founding new organizations with grandiose titles, and printing letterhead which bore his name. He was a prolific and eloquent correspon-

dent, particularly gifted in dealing with faceless government agencies. He enjoyed hobnobbing with social or governmental luminaries, and often used newly-created titles and newly-printed letterhead to make connections with such people.¹¹ And finally, despite enduring varying degrees of financial desperation for most of his life, he consistently compromised his chances for personal gain in favour of his devotion to public service and community drama.

In 1917, two years after Freddie Wood joined the faculty at U.B.C. and Ira Dilworth joined the staff at Victoria High, Bullock-Webster was posted to Victoria's Willows barracks. He was demobilized in January 1919 having attained the rank of Major a title which virtually replaced his Christian name in subsequent years. Employment must have been difficult to find in post-war Victoria, for he began working as a night watchman for a shipyard. By May of 1920, his name appeared on the letterhead of the Harbour Marine Veteran's Shipbuilding Association (I. Bullock-Webster, President), and he was publishing a trade journal called "The Rivet." By the end of 1920, however, the yard was about to close, and he was once again out of work. At 42 years old, with a family to support, his prospects could not have looked promising.

¹¹ For instance, Provincial Secretary H. E. Young had been persuaded to attend the 1914 Prince Rupert Exhibition, and later wrote to Exhibition Manager Bullock-Webster to thank him for the engraved medal commemorating the event which had been mailed to him. (Letter, 10 November 1914.)

But the Major had recently revived his interest in amateur theatricals, acting and singing in several plays and revues in Victoria. Brandishing some vague professional credentials, he launched an ambitious production of a pseudo-Greek "Alfresco Drama" by a local matron, entitled Danae, or the Birth of Perseus. Advertisements in the Victoria Colonist indicated that chorus roles for this event would be cast from the hastily-founded B.C. Dramatic School under the direction of I. Fullock-Webster. Soon there appeared large choruses of dancers and singers composed almost entirely of society girls from Victoria's very thick upper crust, including the daughter of the mayor. When Mayor Hayward and council extended their patronage on May 3, 1921, the publicity bash was on. Rehearsals, which were written up in the society columns, seem to have been dedicated as much to the social graces as to the Muse:

Mrs. Chas. Wilson last night very kindly lent her beautiful home at Uplands for a rehearsal of the Greek play, Danae, which is to be produced about the end of the month under the direction of Major Bullock-Webster, and the occasion was unique in the history of the preparations for the performance, as it was the first time that the principals had gone through their parts from memory. About ten of the principals were present, and the entire four acts were gone through, without music. The next rehearsal will go a step further, as the full chorus will be present, and with the principals will go through the whole play.¹²

¹² Victoria Colonist, 4 June 1921, p.8.

Perhaps lacking the price of a theatre rental, the School announced that the performances would take place in the cut-door gardens of a large private home in the exclusive Rockland neighbourhood. Making a virtue of this necessity, the newspaper report of this decision compared this innovation favourably with some of the greatest advances of our civilization:

The early attempts at any big innovation are apt to meet with derision. Was this not true of Marconi's first wireless and of pioneer flying men? ...[Comic verses] heaped ridicule on Wilbur Wright and his brother when attempting their early flights.¹³

Curtailed by some unseasonable weather, the successful cut-door run was followed shortly by an additional three performances at the Royal Victoria Theatre. Whether the production made any money for the fledgling school is difficult to determine; however, it established the viability of this new letterhead and introduced its founder into the highest of Victoria's society.

The E.C. Dramatic School produced an ambitious schedule of "Dramalogues" at the Empress Hotel over the next decade, with important audience members listed in newspaper reports more often than the performers. Probably to give enrollment a boost, the Major also staged another "Alfresco Drama" of his own devising in 1924, The Curse of Chirra-Pocnje, and scored a casting coup of some note when the only daughter of

¹³ Victoria Colonist, 13 May 1921, p.13.

the incumbent Lieutenant-Governor consented to play the principal role.¹⁴ This production was apparently intended to pave the way for the opening of a Vancouver office of the B.C. Dramatic School, and for a time the Major commuted to the mainland every week to give elocution lessons there as well. Yet despite securing incidental visits from actor Sir John Martin-Harvey (in 1924) and novelist Barness Crozy (in 1925) the fortunes of the B.C. Dramatic School declined steadily in the late 1920's, and by April of 1932 it was forced to close its doors permanently.

Now over fifty and out of work in the midst of the Great Depression, the Major "...was obliged to work as a gardener and then seek a clerkship at a very small salary."¹⁵ For a man of less spirit, this surely would have been the final galling humiliation; for the Major, however, it was the beginning of his greatest successes. It is unclear how he managed to maneuver himself into a government position to supervise drama: there are apocryphal stories of his informing the Department of Education of its shocking neglect of drama, and moving into a disused office under a stairwell. Once entrenched, this quintessential civil ser-

¹⁴ One headline announced "Victoria Society Girls in the Alfresco Drama," with an accompanying picture of a group of young ladies in flowing gowns brandishing plywood scimitars (Cyclist, 1924 July 17, p.9). One citizen whose daughter performed in the play wrote enthusiastically that Victoria could well become "the Easton of Canada," (Cyclist, 1924 July 23, p.4), which in some ways it has.

¹⁵ Letter from L. Bullock-Webster to Samuel J. Willis, Deputy Minister of Education, 1943 August 24.

vant rose mercurially in status (though not in salary) through his awesome capacity for correspondence, his persistence in seeking inexpensive patronage in high places, and his knack for always seeming important, whether or not he really was. As late as 1943 he pleaded that he drew "less pay than many of the clerks in the Civil Service and less than some of the unmarried women."¹⁶ His title, however, was impressive: Organizer of School and Community Drama; and his reports which appeared in the Department of Education's annual reports from 1935 to 1946 chronicle the phenomenal accomplishments of his tiny Branch.

To dub the Major an "Organizer" was something of an understatement. At about the time his E.C. Dramatic School was folding, he had founded the B.C. Drama Association, a closely-knit organization of community theatre groups which this year celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. He had also instituted the Canadian Drama Award, which recognized the contributions of dedicated theatrical pioneers across the country. Once established in the Civil Service, he donated his own collection of scripts to start a Provincial Drama Library, which for decades supplied copies of plays to school and community groups throughout the province. Using his new government title (and letterhead), he established himself as an important western contact for the new Dominion Drama Festival: in fact, the Major's own E.C. Drama Festival

¹⁶ Ibid.

opened a year before the DDF!

As always, the Major's work was accompanied by a tremendous volume of correspondence, as shown in Table 5.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Letters/ Parcels</u>	<u>Plays in Library</u>	<u>Books Loaned</u>	<u>Adult Clubs</u>	<u>School Clubs</u>
1937	853	NR	NR	NR	NR
1938	4142	234	701	154	NR
1939	7837	756	809	127	86
1940	10635	NR	998	163	157
1941	13748	NR	1164	101	173
1942	NR	NR	NR	NR	186
1943	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
1944	13250	2000+	1510	77	219
1945	9800	2500+	2600	NR	315
1946	16000+	NR	NR	NR	NR

NR = not reported

This is all the more remarkable in that he had no clerical assistance until 1939, when student Anne Adamsen joined the branch on a temporary basis and stayed almost forty years. With this additional help he began to publish two monthly newsletters, for community and school drama groups respectively. Through the mail and through his own indefatigable travelling throughout the province, he overcame the twin obstacles of distance and terrain to give isolated drama groups a feeling that they were all a part of some vast

important movement, which in a sense they were. Committees sprang up; letterheads proliferated. Drama enthusiasts finally had a focal point through which to channel their energies, and the Major could be depended upon to report their accomplishments to Important Persons in Victoria and elsewhere.

The outbreak of World War II brought an abrupt change in emphasis in his work, as the Major wrote in 1940:

During the last twelve months, Canada's growing war effort has necessitated drastic curtailment and reshaping of drama activity.

The three major drama organizations within this Province - namely, the British Columbia Region of the Dominion Drama Festival, the Provincial Drama Association, and the School and Community Drama Branch of the Education Department - which now work in close co-operation with each other, were unanimous in their decision to postpone the big festivals for the duration of the war.¹⁷

With adult drama curtailed, the Major poured his enormous energies into school drama. The first provincial drama course guide was published in 1939, with minor revisions in 1941. School drama festival committees began operating in 1940, with the first school festivals held in Victoria and Vancouver in 1941. High school contests for drama essays, scriptwriting, and theatrical scrapbooks were given much greater attention than in previous years. Scholarships were obtained for outstanding student performers to attend summer theatre schools at either Banff or the University of British

*1st
course
guide*

¹⁷ Annual Report: 1939-40, p. E 94.

Columbia.¹⁸ By 1941 a system of certification for adjudicators had begun. By 1943, "elementary drama was included in some of the cut-over recreational programmes for children."¹⁹ Under the command of Major Bullock-Webster, British Columbia took the vanguard of school drama in Canada. And the Major ensured that everyone was told just how important this was:

The work of Community Drama in most parts of the province has met with very cordial support from the Press. The following quotation from the "Prince George Citizen" is typical: "This district is setting a fine example by continuing, during the war, the cultural activities that are so beneficial to the young people of our Province."²⁰

Throughout the war years, the Major had looked forward to staging a huge International Drama Festival which would put Victoria at the cultural centre of the world. It was finally held in the Royal Theatre from August 5 to August 10, 1946, representing a triumphal re-establishment of community theatre in British Columbia:

This proved successful both artistically and financially, and, above all, it served the purpose for which it was planned - as a post-war gesture of good fellowship and friendly feeling between various drama groups of different national origin. The principal award was carried off by the Portland Civic Theatre of Oregon, but the second award went to the Golden Dragon Theatre Guild, a young Chinese-Canadian group from British Columbia.

¹⁸ One recipient was Bruce Gerussi of New Westminster, later to become one of Canada's favourite actors. See Annual Report: 1945-46, p.MM 144.

¹⁹ Annual Report: 1943-44, p.B 129.

²⁰ Annual Report: 1941-42, p.B 104.

This festival was followed by the Pacific Drama Conference, which was attended by speakers from as far away as New York, Quebec, Montreal, and San Francisco.²¹

But the triumph was brief. Someone had discovered the Major was already several years past the compulsory retirement age, and he was asked to step down at the end of the next month. When his Civil Service position evaporated, so did his hard-won financial security. With only thirteen years' service, most of it at very low salary, there was not much of a pension; and when the Bullock-Websters retired to England, it was several years before they were allowed to collect any Canadian funds at all.

It would be easy to paint the Major as a strutting humbug on a provincial stage. He always seemed to create a need for his services, a need which had hitherto gone unnoticed. Yet everyone who worked with him, from secretaries to cabinet ministers, from civic authorities in Prince Rupert to society girls in Victoria, did not seem to mind his butting in at all, but rather seemed awfully grateful that he had. His desire for status, which he never had the money to buy nor the pedigree to inherit, seems to have been forgiven as a minor weakness in an energetic and devoted servant of his community. Long-time Deputy Minister of Education S.J. Willis, who had only grudgingly acceded to the Major's repeated pleadings for a permanent position, wrote an unsol-

²¹ Annual Report: 1945-46, p.MM 144.

icated and moving personal reference on the occasion of the enforced retirement. And in his first annual report as Bullock-Webster's successor, educator Bunny Burn closed his incisive evaluation of drama in British Columbia with the following tribute:

[There are indications of] an ever-increasing consciousness of the necessity of developing the Fine Arts all over this broad Dominion, and of a realization that the Fine Arts are not for a few, but for all.

*Fine Arts
is
for everyone*

It is, therefore, a pleasure to recall that the British Columbia Government long ago were conscious of this fact in the appointment of Major Bullock-Webster to the post of Director of School and Community Drama. His work on behalf of the Department was intensive to a high degree, and British Columbia became a model for the other Provinces of Canada. His development of British Columbia drama reached far afield, beyond the limits of his own Province, and in closing this report, I should like to pay tribute to him and the Department under which he served.²²

10.3 DOROTHY SCHERSET TRAINS TEACHERS

One of Bullock-Webster's less successful ventures while Organizer of School and Community Drama was a Summer Drama School he operated in Qualicum Beach from August 8 to August 27, 1938. Despite the presence of guest lecturers from Cambridge and Bombay,²³ this school was quickly overshadowed by one that began the same year at the University of British Columbia. Like the University of Alberta's Summer Theatre School at Banff, which has since burgeoned into the Banff

²² Annual Report: 1947-48, p. JJ 122.

²³ See Annual Report: 1937-38, p. J 86.

School of Fine Arts, the U.B.C. school offered non-credit theatre courses under the auspices of a new Extension Department, and was led by a new faculty member, Dorothy Somerset.

Miss Somerset was born in Australia in 1900 of Canadian parents, and attended boarding schools in Britain, Switzerland, and Canada.²⁴ While considering a career as a concert pianist, she was sent to the prestigious Radcliffe College in Massachusetts, where one of her hobbies was sewing costumes for the college dramatic society. As her hybrid accent sounded English to the young men of nearby Harvard, she was asked to act in one of their productions. Shortly thereafter she returned to Vancouver and, on the strength of her Harvard acting experience, was invited to join the newly-formed Vancouver Little Theatre.

At twenty-one, Dorothy had become smitten with the stage. Although she taught some French at U.B.C. in the 1920's, most of her considerable energies were devoted to the Vancouver Little Theatre, which she now credits with providing her training. In 1933, after some further theatre training in England, she directed the first act of Shaw's Back to Methuselah for the VLT's entry in the first Dominion Drama Festival. Not only did this production win its zone,

²⁴ The biographical information which follows is drawn mainly from three sources: articles in the Vancouver Province of 16 August 1952 (Magazine section, p.3) and 15 May 1965 (p.29); and a personal interview with Miss Somerset, 2 August 1982.

but it was awarded a prize for the best play in English at the Final Festival.²⁵ Following this triumph, Miss Somerset was asked to succeed Sydney Risk as the director of the U.B.C. Players' Club, by now in its second successful decade under the indirect guidance of Professor Freddie Wood.

The same forces which fostered the Little Theatre Movement, the Dominion Drama Festival, and the new Civil Service position which Bullock-Webster had just begun, were also being felt by British Columbia's only university. To satisfy a demand for educational programmes for the public, a Department of Extension was established in 1936. The new department was quickly flooded with requests from community groups for lectures and short courses in theatre production. Lacking any faculty members with this kind of expertise, the Department asked Miss Somerset to give a week-long theatre course in Invermere, at which Bullock-Webster also lectured. The following year, she was given a full-time appointment in the Extension Department to handle the continued demand for this kind of assistance. Miss Somerset attacked this work with her characteristic energy:

For the next two or three years I had a fascinating time travelling around B.C. ... I packed cartons filled with model sets, makeup kits and other paraphernalia and stayed three days or a week with the various amateur groups, helping them with their problems.²⁶

²⁵ There was one higher accolade, the Pessborough Trophy, which was won that year by "Jim Barber's Spite Fence," an original production of the Manitoba Little Theatre.

In 1938, the Extension Department allocated \$1200 to establish a Summer School of the Theatre, with Dorothy Somerset as chief administrator and instructor. Its purpose was to "improve the standards of Little Theatre productions."²⁷ The training offered was modelled on that which she had received with the Vancouver Little Theatre and that which she was giving to the smaller companies through her Extension travels. The six-week course included instruction in acting, speech, makeup, mime, and other requisite skills of Little Theatre production, and culminated in a public presentation. Despite the limited budget, Miss Somerset managed to hire a full complement of qualified instructors for the courses, while a number of technicians and designers from the Vancouver Little Theatre provided their expertise at virtually no charge. In the best tradition of the Little Theatre Movement, the play chosen to be performed at the conclusion of the course was The Trojan Women, partly because it is a great classic drama and partly because it could accommodate the usual preponderance of female students.

²⁶ Don Stainky, "The Somerset Story," Vancouver Evening, 16 August 1952, E.C. Magazine, p.3.

²⁷ Interview, 1982. Miss Somerset has since objected to my use of this phrase, as she feels it represents an oversimplification of her more complex goals for Canadian theatre.

The outbreak of World War II brought unprecedented demands on the university's community programmes:

The Department of Extension was greatly influenced by war conditions which enlarged the scope and variety of its services. As the resources of the Department increased, more and more attention was given... to short courses instead of occasional lectures... Drama programmes continued to develop under the inspiring direction of Miss Dorothy Somerset who organized and assisted dramatic groups among war workers and units of the armed forces. Summer School courses in theatre increased in number.²⁸

When the University finally allowed the English Department to offer practical theatre courses for credit in 1946, Dorothy Somerset was appointed to teach them, with her old friend Sydney Risk taking over her Extension duties. When a Theatre Department was formed in 1958 she became its first Head, a post she held until her retirement in 1965.

The optimistic 1950's heralded still more expansion for the University of British Columbia, particularly to its Summer Session. Registration rose from under a thousand in 1952 to about five thousand in 1958.

The majority of these students were, of course, teachers, and the sudden rise in registration... was due in great measure to the creation of the College of Education and the impetus which it provided for teachers to improve their qualifications. Nevertheless, the most widely publicized part of the Summer Session was still that which was concerned with the non-credit cultural courses

²⁸ Harry T. Logan, Time Est: A History of the University of British Columbia (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1958), p.163.

offered in co-operation with the Department of Extension.²⁹

The Summer School of the Theatre flourished through the 1950's, attracting a wide variety of students "...ranging from those hoping to get on to the professional stage through amateurs seeking further training to those who just want to see what makes the theatre tick."³⁰ Among the inevitable smattering of students who later became well-known professionals may be found a number of teachers who nurtured school drama up to its enrollment boom of the late 1960's, people like Tommy Mayne, Keith Simpson, and Laurie Lynds.

As the School and Community Drama Branch declined in influence during the 1950's and 1960's, individual teachers became cut off from school drama in other parts of the province. Not only were teachers unaware of other pockets of drama activity, they were also unaware of the communications link which Bullock-Webster had operated in the 1940's. In this period of renewed isolation, the discipline and standards inculcated by the U.E.C. Summer School enabled these teachers to keep drama programmes active and vital in the absence of accepted provincial curricula. When drama enrollment then entered its period of great expansion, there were leaders ready to make the most of the opportunity. And although a number of fixtures of the Vancouver theatre world

²⁹ Ibid., p.233. The Summer School enrollment figures are drawn from the same source.

³⁰ Stainsby.

such as Joy Coghill, Sydney Risk, and Jessie Richardson spent several summers instructing at the U.B.C. school, there was no doubt that the spirit of the school was Dorothy Somerset and her dedicated love of the theatre:

Ovr theatre demands devotion, discipline, and training over a number of years.... Those in the theatre know they need higher standards - that old complacent amateur attitude is pretty well gone but they're not yet aware of what they're facing to become top-notch.... [You must be] uncompromisingly exacting:- keep on asking the very best of yourself.³¹

These attitudes were reflected in the many graduates of the Summer School of the Theatre, who in their own teaching asked the very best of their students and of themselves.

10.4 COMMUNITY DRAMA UNDER BUNNY HURN

After Bullock-Webster retired in 1946, the School and Community Branch operated under Anne Adamsen as Acting Director for one year, before the appointment of Bunny Hurn as the new Director. Hurn had been a member of the Victoria Schools' Drama Festival Committee since its inception, and unlike most supporters of educational drama at this time, was primarily an elementary rather than a secondary teacher. His annual reports do not display the military single-mindedness of Bullock-Webster's, but rather show a great sensitivity toward the many forms of drama which required some kind of official support in order to survive. Tommy Mayne

³¹ Quoted in Stainsby.

recalls Mr. Hurn as a fatherly man, who offered personal as well as professional guidance to those teachers fortunate enough to work with him.³²

Under Hurn, the School and Community Drama Branch played more of a co-ordinating and monitoring role than it had in previous years. This change in emphasis was probably needed to consolidate the gains made through the herculean work of Bullock-Welster, although it also reflected the differences in their personalities. In his unobtrusive way, Hurn not only continued the support of school festivals and other performances, but also saw the value of "using drama both for its own sake and its usefulness in vitalizing all parts of the curriculum."³³ He also recognized the need for in-service training for new teachers of drama, and suggested that such training should be made more accessible: "Teachers without any specific training in the field of school dramatics would benefit greatly from summer-school courses, and many would appreciate the opportunity of attending such courses."³⁴ More of the ongoing services performed by the Branch were handled by his two assistants, as Hurn addressed himself to larger issues facing school and community drama. A new curriculum was written to extend the number of approved courses and the grades in which they were availa-

³² Audiotape, 1982.

³³ Annual Report: 1947-48, p.JJ 120.

³⁴ Annual Report: 1948-49, p.N 124.

ble. He also saw that growing enrollment and new school construction offered an unprecedented opportunity for school drama and community drama to benefit from shared facilities:

The school building programme has resulted in the provision of more suitable accommodation for the presentation of school drama, and there is no doubt at all that both school and community groups have benefited materially. In some cases those responsible for the planning should have made provision for the time when stage equipment would be available. Electrical outlets, grid, pin-rail, and other such facilities should have been installed even if the equipment was not immediately available. Gradually, communities will build up a stock of stage equipment, and in the meantime they may borrow it.³⁵

Hurn's suggestions were not heeded, the opportunity was not seized, and such planning did not generally take place, with the result that most secondary drama programmes are burdened with a combination stage and gymnasium. Even if the sight-lines and acoustics of such a performing facility were not beneath contempt, the extra-curricular activities of even the most lethargic physical education department render it unusable for drama use.³⁶

Hurn was also exceptional in his ability to view drama not just as a set of interesting activities, but also as an integral part of everyone's education and everyone's life. Each kind of drama was just another aspect of this totality. In this vein, he lauded the Massey Commission's "strong plea

³⁵ Annual Report: 1949-50, p. 126.

³⁶ This type of facility is also known as a "hole-in-the-wall" stage, or a "gymnasium."

on behalf of the fine arts for a greatly enlarged share in the pattern of Canadian life."³⁷ He was instrumental in bringing the 1953 DDF Final Festival to Victoria, not for its intrinsic glory but for its longer-term benefits. He was a pioneer in the use of drama as a teaching tool in the elementary schools and in distinguishing between those kinds of drama appropriate for secondary students and those for younger children; yet unlike some of his contemporaries in England, he did not perceive the two as being mutually exclusive:

More dramatic activity has been observed in the elementary-school grades. The activity has been of such a nature as to ensure that it is "drama in education" rather than "education in drama," the emphasis being placed on the by-products with a substantial effort turned toward creativeness.³⁸

Aided by his elementary teaching background along with a measure of native wisdom, Hurn sought to educate the whole person using drama as "a not inconsiderable part in one aspect of the all-around development of the children."³⁹

It was a sad day for drama in British Columbia when the Department of Education chose to place school and community drama under the wing of the Community Programmes Branch, presumably to save the salary of a director. Hurn was made an inspector of elementary schools, a position for which he

³⁷ Annual Report: 1950-51, p.K 126.

³⁸ Ibid., p.K 127.

³⁹ Annual Report: 1953-54, p.O 116.

was admirably qualified. Anne Adamson continued to perform yeoman work, particularly in administering the still-growing Drama Library. However, without the bull-headedness of the Major or the incisiveness of Hurn, and under Directors to whom drama was an ancillary rather than a principal activity, community and school drama lost the focussing agent which had contributed so greatly to the remarkable growth of all kinds of drama in British Columbia over the preceding twenty years. In his own gentle way, Hurn seemed to hint in his last report that the loss of its relative autonomy and its own Director was bound to prove an insurmountable difficulty in continuing the quantity of work the Branch had performed:

Since the inauguration of the Branch in 1935, there has always been inadequacy of money and help needed to enable the staff to eliminate the feeling of frustration over things not done, and it is our wish that with the new organization, these defects will be removed.⁴⁰

These defects, of course, were compounded. The task had proven barely manageable for three people, and was certainly too big for one. Some years later, Miss Adamson's position was removed from the Department of Education and bounced through several other departments. On her retirement in 1977, the holdings of the Provincial Drama Library were discarded or given away.

⁴⁰ Annual Report: 1953-54, p.C 117.

One of the nagging issues implicit in the demise of the School and Community Drama Branch is that it flourished and expanded under a klustery leader who managed to create a series of events which could be paraded before the authorities, and declined in influence under an intelligent and sensitive leader who was more concerned with broader educational goals in the context of our society. Bullock-Webster was a promoter, Hurn a teacher. One cannot help wondering whether educational drama is appreciated well enough outside its ranks to survive in only its less flamboyant models. After falling out of fashion in the early 1970's, for instance, drama festivals and prizes have become more accepted as necessary protection for official support for educational drama. Many outstanding and diversified drama programmes have been built on the success of drama festival awards or splashy school productions. Perhaps the drama educator cannot afford to stop being a drama huckster as well, even if he finds the role slightly distasteful.

TABLE 6

Directors of School and Community Drama

L. Bullock-Webster (Organizer)	1933-46
Anne Adamson (Acting Director)	1946-47
B.S. Hurn (Director)	1947-54
Anne Adamson	1954-77

10.5 ORGANIZATION OF DRAMA TEACHERS

One of the concerns which Bunny Hurn expressed, and which was also postulated on page 3 above, is the extent to which "the loss of one key person, particularly a director, is always keenly felt."⁴¹ In school drama, of course, this key person is the drama teacher. With the end of Hurn's benevolent directorship, the individual drama teacher became as isolated as ever. Doubtless it was still true that "wherever there were keen teachers, reasonably well-equipped to carry on the work, there was to be found good drama playing,"⁴² yet there was no longer any communications link among these teachers nor any agency to help a teacher to improve himself except through his own initiative. Despite these factors, a number of high school directors rose to prominence in the 1950's and early 1960's, many of them in smaller centres: Bert Farr in Merritt, Tom Kerr in Ramloops, Gil Bunch in Mill Bay. Spurred by improved course descriptions and a more relaxed system of credits for graduation brought forward in 1965, drama enrollment increased greatly throughout British Columbia, as shown in Appendix E. Although greater enrollment brought the potential for greater status and support for drama programmes, yet there was no single voice to speak for drama teachers, no single showcase for their efforts, and no means for sharing ideas and exper-

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Drama
became
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⁴¹ Annual Report: 1951-52, p.N 129.

⁴² Annual Report: 1953-54, p.C 117.

tise with others. Some drama teachers began to realize that, given this potential, their lack of cooperative effort was almost embarrassing.

It was certainly embarrassing when a Vancouver columnist pointed it out in print. In his weekly column in the Sun, Jack Richards noted that the new drama curriculum had been implemented, that many high schools in Greater Vancouver produced excellent theatre, and yet community drama was short of talent and all theatre was short of audiences. It seemed that students were not continuing their interest in theatre past their high school graduation:

If all the students who have participated in high school theatre in this area over the past five years had continued their interest as performers, technicians or audience, theatre would be in the healthiest position in history.

Why hasn't this happened?⁴³

In answering his own question, Richards assigned equal blame to community and school groups for this lack of productive co-operation, the former for not actively recruiting promising youngsters into their ranks and the latter for not establishing any extramural links, not even with other schools. What Richards did not mention, which made this situation even more nonsensical, was that for the most part community drama and school drama were being run by the same people: drama teachers for whom theatre was also a hobby.

⁴³ Jack Richards, "School and Community Theatre Must Get Together," Vancouver Sun, 25 June 1965, Leisure Magazine, p.A24.

Virtually every drama teacher at this time was also an active supporter of the local Little Theatre.

Richards' column further suggested that adult and school groups might well get together to create a major project long overdue, a provincial high school drama festival: "Between the schools and the community theatre organizations, a first-class event could be arranged."⁴⁴ Several leading high school drama teachers in the Lower Mainland took up this suggestion, and began to organize such an event. Under the auspices of the Metropolitan Co-Operative Theatre Society, it was decided that the creation of this Final Festival for high school plays would make a worthwhile "Centennial Project" for Canada's 1967 centenary. "The society, composed of 20 community theatre groups,"⁴⁵ invited all interested drama teachers to meet in their own Metric Theatre on June 20, 1966, to discuss the matter.

More than 30 people, most of them teachers from Vancouver, Burnaby, Surrey, Haney and Nanaimo came to the meeting. Some teachers from points more distant wrote in.

The viewpoint of all was overwhelmingly in favor of starting a high school festival.

There's still a tremendous amount of organization work to be done, of course. But a committee headed by Keith Simpson of Vancouver and Laurie Lynds of Burnaby has been set up to deal with it.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Jack Richards, Vancouver Sun, 17 June 1966, Leisure Magazine, p.E3.

⁴⁶ Jack Richards, Vancouver Sun, 30 June 1966, Leisure Magazine, p.A2.

Simpson and Lynds were veteran drama teachers who had established excellent reputations through the quality of their school plays and their work in community theatre. After beginning their teaching careers in the Interior, they had both been hired to operate drama programmes in the Lower Mainland, at Gladstone and Burnaby South Secondary Schools respectively. They first met while attending Dorothy Somerset's Summer School of the Theatre, and both were soon spending their summers teaching theatre as well, Lynds at U.B.C. and Simpson at Eanff. By the early 1960's they had become unofficial resource centres for other young drama teachers in the Lower Mainland, and at the request of the Department of Education had written the 1965 curriculum revisions mentioned in Richards' column. In a field often encumbered with fragile or volatile eggs, these men were confident open-minded leaders who, having achieved a measure of personal success, now directed their attentions to "improving the overall standard of high school acting and drama in British Columbia."⁴⁷

The logistical problems in that first festival were mostly due to the breakdown of communication that followed the elimination of the School and Community Drama Branch. It was not known who was teaching drama in the various regions. It was not known how many festivals were already operating, or where. As contacts were made all over the

⁴⁷ Lynds, audiotape, 1982.

province, however it gradually became clear that the enthusiasm of the Metric Theatre meeting was typical of teacher response to the idea. In some areas, particularly in the Lower Mainland, local festivals were started up to enable them to send a representative to the finals. Using the most obvious available model, the provincial festival followed the format of the Dominion Drama Festival, with technical rehearsals held during the day, performances at night, and the participants otherwise having their time to themselves. Some administrative mistakes were made, especially in scheduling too many plays per evening. Over all, however, the event was a great success. The organizing committee, eager to improve on their performance, repeated the festival in the same format the following year.

Several teachers who took part in these first two festivals soon realized that its format was not conducive to the goal of improving province-wide standards of school play production:

Almost immediately we started thinking, "This isn't enough. If you just have a final festival, the only people you have there are the ones that are best already ... what you really need there are the people that need the most help." And therefore we wanted as soon as possible to change the final festival into an event that could draw many drama students from all over the province, not just the winners of the local festivals.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Ibid.

TABLE 7

Provincial High School Drama Festivals

<u>Year</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Chairman</u>	<u>Adjudicator</u>
1967	Vancouver (Metro)	I. Lynds/K. Simpson	Gil Eunch
1968	Vancouver (Metro)	I. Lynds/K. Simpson	Martin Jenkins
1969	Grand Forks	Michael Stephen	Carl Hare
1970	Vancouver (UEC)	I. Lynds/K. Simpson	Gil Eunch
1971	Prince George	D. Edgar/T. Kerr	Gil Eunch
1972	Victoria	H.C. Farr/M. Stephen	Tom Kerr
1973	Dawson Creek	Anne Exner	Chris Newton
1974	Victoria	M. Farr/M. Stephen	G. Bunch/T. Kerr
1975	Victoria	Michael Farr	Tennis Sweeting
1976	-----	-----	-----
1977	Vancouver (UEC)	Eetty Keller	Gil Eunch
1978	Terrace	Stefan Cieslik	K. Digby/N. Young
1979	Victoria	M. Wright/D. Bambrugh	Douglas Riske
1980	Victoria	M. Wright/D. Bambrugh	John Krich
1981	Victoria	M. Wright/D. Bambrugh	James Roy
1982	Kamloops	Gary Rupert	John Gray

It was decided that the winning plays would still be performed in the evenings, with workshops on various aspects of theatre production conducted during the days, a format not dissimilar to that of the summer schools at which Lynds and Simpson had taught. But a new format was not the only gamble taken in that third year: it was also moved to a small town, as teacher Michael Stephen offered to host this first "B.C. High School Drama Conference" in Grand Forks. Despite the greatly increased cost of hiring workshop personnel, and the organizational headaches of food, accommodation, and transportation for hundreds of young theatre buffs, the new format proved to be a great success. It has continued to the

present day with only minor variations in structure, and has also retained its popularity: an enrollment of over four hundred students and over fifty teachers is considered average for this event.

Another success story in this province's educational drama of the last decade has been the rise of a strong professional organization for drama educators.⁴⁹ The communication problems that had plagued the organizers of the first few provincial drama festivals demonstrated that teachers needed a more reliable way of disseminating information than mere rumour. In addition, the great increase in drama enrollment brought a need for an effective lobby for drama education, a need which the drama teacher operating a one-man department could not possibly fulfill. The ineffectiveness of so many social movements in the 1960's had shown that high energy and noble purpose were not enough to gain the ear of ever-growing bureaucracies. Clout was needed; and to gain it required drama teachers to first get together to determine some common goals, and then to communicate these goals clearly to governing agencies.

The impetus for forming an organization for drama teachers came from the ubiquitous Richard Courtney, who had joined the faculty of the University of Victoria in 1968. Courtney perceived the same needs for an effective communi-

⁴⁹ The F.C. Teachers Federation refers to such a professional organization as a Provincial Specialists Association. There are several dozen such associations which operate under the sponsorship of the Federation.

cations network and a single-voiced lobby as had the Lower Mainland teachers, but his recent experiences in England made him aware of other goals as well. The model of the School Play obviously dominated drama education in British Columbia. Both Courtney and his colleague Carl Hare recognized the need to broaden the kinds of drama education available in the schools to include elements of the Way Model in which Courtney had been writing and the Splin Model in which Hare was so well versed. They talked all night on the Hares' livingroom floor about how to extend the scope of drama education and, at four A.M., the term "Developmental Drama" was coined.⁵⁰

1968

As a result, Courtney invited a number of drama teachers to a conference at the University of Victoria in the spring of 1969 or 1970. Owen Erwin, an associate of Simpson and Lynds and another graduate of the U.B.C. Summer School, became the first president of the organization that was formed at this conference. At first it was decided to adopt Courtney's suggested title of A.B.C.D.E. (Association of British Columbia Drama Educators), but it was soon changed to W.A.D.E. (Western Association of Drama Educators) due to regulations regarding its incorporation as a society. When W.A.D.E. became a Provincial Specialists Association in the mid-1970's, it reverted to its original name.

⁵⁰ Some of this information was drawn from a telephone interview with Mr. Hare, 17 August 1982. The description of their models here is my own inference.

The A.E.C.D.E. continues to expand into the kinds of activities envisaged by its founders. The teachers' conference initiated by Courtney has become an annual event which provides in-service training in many forms of educational drama. The Association continues in its efforts to raise the standards of school plays, and has published a Regional Drama Festival Handbook (1979) and an Adjudicator's Guide (1979) to assist others in this goal. To ensure that drama teachers are kept informed of the activities of their organization, it publishes two journals and three newsletters per year. Through the publications and the conferences, which are well attended, the Association continues to provide collegial communication among its members and to break down the feeling of isolation which is so common among drama teachers in British Columbia.

The A.E.C.D.E. has also become increasingly active in making its views known to other organizations. It has lobbied with the universities regarding their teacher training programmes, with the Ministry of Education regarding curriculum development, and with school districts throughout the province regarding the importance of drama in education at all levels. Partly as a result of the Association's hard work, which is all volunteer labour, the position of a Fine Arts Coordinator freed from teaching duties to act as a resource person and funding board has been created in a number of school districts.

TABLE 8

Presidents of Provincial Drama Teachers

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>City</u>
1970	Cwen Erwin	New Westminster
1973	Keith Simpson	Vancouver
1976	Les Dickason	Nanaimo
1977	Dor Wallace	Nanaimo
1978	Jonathan Rout	Parksville
1979	Carcl Tarlington	Vancouver
1980	Gary Rupert	Victoria
1982	Fenee Norman	Vancouver
1983	<i>There-So Routman</i>	<i>SURREY.</i>

Note: Years for the first three lines are approximate.

Finally, the A.B.C.D.E. is no longer tied to the traditional model of the school play. As mentioned above, its conferences provide in-service training in a variety of alternative models. Recent presidents have also been strongly committed to expanding the use of drama in elementary language arts programmes. Recent junior secondary curricula have promoted the Way Model and the Spolin Model to a point where, in most schools, they have supplanted play production as the principal model in the drama classes. Recent courses given by Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton have been well publicized in the Association's literature, and well attended by its members.⁵¹ Having served on the executive for a

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approach*

⁵¹ An A.B.C.D.E. Past President, Carcl Tarlington, even gave up a year's teaching salary to study with Gavin Bolton in England.

few months, I was impressed with the businesslike manner in which the promotion of a wide range of dramatic activity was planned. In a time of declining enrollment and threatened cutbacks, I feel very confident that the future of educational drama in British Columbia is in good hands.

10.6 DEVELOPMENT OF DRAMA CURRICULA

One of the effects of the establishment of the Provincial High School Drama Festival, and later the Conference which succeeded it, was a renewed awareness that there were outstanding drama programmes all over the province. In particular, the quality of Tom Kerr's productions from Kamloops became a standard to which the best drama teachers in British Columbia aspired. Another effect, however, was the realization that there was also an enormous disparity between the best programmes and the worst ones. While plays directed by Tom Kerr and Bert Farr were winning accolades and prizes, there were other productions that were simply embarrassing:

All this time... we had been having also some very bad plays... [and people asked] if that play won a festival, what must the losers have been like! ...the problem that we could see was the uneven standard around the province.⁵²

⁵² Lynds, audiotape.

The teachers' organization tried to approach this problem in two ways: by improving the standard of adjudication at the regional level, and by bringing as many schools as possible to conferences so that they might improve themselves. In a sense neither remedy could be foolproof, since the issue of quality is so much a matter of individual perception. When the Association acquired the right to approve government financial aid to local festivals in the late 1970's, however, its position in monitoring the organization of these festivals was greatly enhanced. Although the problem of quality in drama festivals may be insolvable, the Association's dogged pursuit of this goal has made its members more aware of the importance of production excellence in promoting educational drama in its various forms.

Another way of strengthening educational drama was through improving the quality of classroom instruction. As drama enrollment declined in the 1960's and 1970's (see Appendix B), productions in festivals came to represent a diminishing proportion of the overall drama activity in the province. At the same time, many drama courses were assigned to untrained and inexperienced drama teachers. While in-service and teacher-training courses proliferated greatly through the work of the Association, these courses tended to attract the more knowledgeable drama teacher who needed a refresher rather than beginning drama teacher who needed a lifeline. Thus, there appeared a demand for new drama cur-

60's - 70's
 Drama
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 from plays
 to other
 activities
 movement
 from plays
 to training
 for employment
 in theatre.

ricula which both resulted from and contributed to the increased enrollment in classroom drama.⁵³

Classroom drama in its older models had had a long history in British Columbia high schools. In 1892, for example, rhetoric was added to the high school curriculum as an optional course at the same time as such modern educational staples as biology, chemistry, and general history.⁵⁴ This rhetoric course was probably one of the first of its kind in Canada, as the Superintendent of Schools observed that "the course of study pursued in our High Schools is very similar to that prescribed... in Ontario and Nova Scotia, with the exception that more optional courses are included in our syllabus."⁵⁵ Thereafter, optional courses seem to have been left up to individual schools or municipalities, and reports of classroom drama disappeared. Some sort of performance was often given at major school events such as prize-giving days, and annual school plays became traditional at such schools as Victoria High, but these were rehearsed out of school time as an extra-curricular activity.

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⁵³ It is interesting to note the particularly high percentage increases in drama enrollment figures around the years 1951, 1965, and 1978, when new curricula were published.

⁵⁴ See F. Henry Johnson, A History of Public Education in British Columbia (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1964), p.64. Previous history courses had been limited to British, Roman, or Canadian.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

By the 1930's the entire high school curriculum was considered ripe for revision. The highly-regarded Putnam-Weir report on education in British Columbia (1925) had concluded that the curriculum was too heavily weighted toward academic studies. The commission found the curriculum "narrow and rigid":

...these schools are meeting the genuine or fancied needs of at most only two classes of students -- those who expect to enter a university and those who wish to teach. In the natural order of things these two classes put together form an insignificant proportion of the total number of pupils in high schools.⁵⁶

Although the curriculum was not broadened for several years, educators anticipated future curriculum expansion with enthusiasm. As Victoria's Municipal Inspector of Schools George Deane reported in 1935:

[It] is essential that the revised curriculum provide a well-balanced but not overloaded programme of studies which will give the pupil an opportunity to progress according to his aptitudes and which will promote character building and mental development.⁵⁷

The following year, Deane reported that the re-organization of Victoria High School under a four-year system had made it possible to offer a number of "free elective" courses, including one in dramatics. This course, probably

1936

⁵⁶ J.H. Putnam and G.M. Weir, A Survey of the School System (Victoria, B.C.: Province of British Columbia, 1925), p.112.

⁵⁷ Annual Report: 1934-35, p.5 57.

taught by Ella Cameron, seems to have been the first drama class in British Columbia. Its establishment under Deare's enthusiastic inspectorate demonstrates that beginning drama programmes require support not only from the staff and administration of a school, but also from policy-makers higher on the bureaucratic ladder. Inspector Deane would probably be pleased to know that Vic High's drama classes have operated continuously for over 45 years. In any case, his report contains what is still an extremely persuasive argument for the value of a liberalized curriculum:

If our high school is to fulfil its function as a democratic institution supported by public funds, it must provide adequate facilities to prepare students to meet the complexities of our modern social and economic life. This objective can be attained only by a curriculum which, in addition to essential fundamentals, provides a sufficient range of variables and free electives, organized so as to make available a student programme which has been adjusted to individual aptitudes and differentiated activities.⁵⁸

If this kind of education seems expensive, it is only because the cost of an inferior education has not been adequately calculated:

Any increase in school costs following such provision will be more than compensated by the elimination of waste resulting from narrowing the programme to courses not suited to the student's aptitude or future, which lead to his marking time or leaving school with a preparation of little real value.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Annual Report: 1935-36, p. E 91.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

The first provincial drama curriculum was published in 1939 as an update bulletin to the Department of Education's Programme of Studies of 1937. It consisted of a single course entitled "Drama and Oral Expression" intended for students in Grade XI and XII, and was undoubtedly written by Major Bullock-Webster. What is most remarkable about this curriculum, part of which is reprinted in Appendix D, is how consistent it is with our current views on classroom drama. Even in the 1930's, drama educators agreed that their curriculum should be descriptive rather than prescriptive, that different topics should be taught concurrently, that class size was a matter of critical concern, and that student activity "should be the outstanding characteristic of the course."⁶⁰ Oddly, the course outline contains no topic that could be considered obsolete for a drama class today.

Funny Eurn's annual report of 1949-50 indicated that a new drama curriculum was in the works. Published in 1951, the new curriculum contained a number of changes which encouraged the growth of enrollment in drama courses. It increased the number of courses to three, so that interested students would not be prevented from re-enrolling after taking the single course. It also extended the grade levels at which drama courses could be offered, as indicated in Table 9 below. Finally, it acknowledged the value of "informal or

new curriculum changes
- more courses
- more grade levels
play oriented

⁶⁰ Programme of Studies (Victoria, B.C.: Province of British Columbia, 1941), p.92.

semi-formal dramatization"⁶¹ in a drama course, particularly in the junior high school grades. As in the previous curriculum, there was no attempt to prescribe a fixed sequence to the activities or dogmatic divisions between contiguous courses. Since Furn's committee was composed entirely of Victoria teachers, each with up to ten years' experience in producing festival entries, the 1951 curriculum was clearly slanted toward the production of one-act plays for festivals. Recommended resource books all had a Little Theatre orientation, and long lists of suitable one-act scripts were appended. Although this curriculum was appropriate for the time and place it was written, it turned out to be a devastating liability to junior secondary drama after the next curriculum revisior.

The next drama curriculum was drafted by practising teachers rather than by the School and Community Drama Branch, whose role by then was entirely one of providing services rather than establishing policies in educational drama. As noted in section 10.5 above, Laurie Lynds and Keith Simpson had become unofficial resource persons for drama teachers in the Lower Mainland, partly because these two had remained in one place during a time of great teacher mobility in the 1950's and early 1960's. In 1965, they were asked to produce a set of new course outlines for senior secondary drama courses. The course numbers for all senior

⁶¹ Drama 1951 (Victoria, B.C.: Province of British Columbia, 1951), p.25.

TABLE 9

Approved Courses for Secondary Drama

<u>Year</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Grades</u>	<u>Titles</u>
1939	1	11-12	Drama and Oral Expression
1951	3	9-12	Drama 10, 20, 30
1965	8	9-12	Drama 9, 10 Acting 11, 12 Stagecraft 11, 12 Theatre Background 11 Writing & Directing 12
1978	8	8-12	Drama 8, 9, 10 Acting 11, 12 Stagecraft 11, 12 Dir./Scriptwriting 12

secondary subjects were being changed at the same time, and the criteria for graduation were greatly liberalized to allow a student to elect one of a wide range of specialties in his last two years of public school. The reason for providing this range of specialties was a new attitude within the Department, apparently connected with federal aid for education, that schools should prepare young people for eventual employment. Accordingly, the stated objective of the new Theatre Specialty was "to provide initial preparation for a career in some branch of theatrical activity,"⁶² although Lynds now admits that a subtler objective was to

*new course
grades
1965
obj changed
from play
to career*

⁶² Theatre 1965, (Victoria, B.C.: Province of British Columbia, 1965), p.7.

actually it was not to prepare them for jobs but
 authorize more theatre courses to enable teachers to strengthen their drama programmes.⁶³ The enrollment figures in Appendix B show that this latter objective was achieved, as the numbers of students taking drama courses increased sharply. In turn, the new courses and increased enrollment contributed to the establishment of a new provincial festival and a new teachers' organization, as we have seen.

TABLE 10

Course Requirements for Theatre Specialty, 1965

English 11 and 12
 Social Studies 11
 Guidance and F.H.E. 11

General Business 12
 one elective 11

Acting 11 and 12
 Stagecraft 11 and 12
 Theatre Background 11
 Writing & Directing 12

Quite reasonably, the authors of these new senior secondary courses assumed that a new junior secondary curriculum would soon follow. However, the Department of Education showed no immediate interest in extending their revisions below Grade XI. To the horror of knowledgeable drama educators, the Department provided a new guide for junior sec-

⁶³ Audictape.

dary drama simply by re-issuing the 1951 high school guide with a new cover and title page! It would be ten years before this blunder was finally rectified.

In the early 1970's, when Laurie Lynds was again asked to lead a Curriculum Revision Committee, he determined to give priority to the sadly outdated and inappropriate junior secondary curriculum. Whereas the 1965 courses had been hurriedly written by two teachers over one summer, Lynds also determined that the new guides would incorporate a great deal of input from drama teachers throughout the province. When the Department declined to give financial support for this goal, Lynds obtained educational leave from his school district to spend the 1975-76 school year travelling about British Columbia. He talked about school drama with drama teachers, administrators, and students. He sat in an innumerable drama classes. After driving five thousand miles through a Canadian winter, he concluded that, for the most part, junior secondary drama classes had somehow escaped all the innovations of unscripted drama of this century:

There were people who were having them [students] do scripts, there were people having them just read scripts, there were people having them do public speaking... and there were people who were away sick most of the time because they couldn't handle junior high...⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Lynds, audiotape.

One example in particular demonstrated the need not only for a new curriculum, but also for some means of bringing that new material to the attention of the hurried beginner:

[I visited] one teacher, in early morning, in one interior town. She was trying to teach in half a portable [classroom] that was half filled with stacked chairs and tables. She had over thirty kids -- Grade VIII, IX and X -- and she was trying to teach out of the old junior drama guide that was so impossible. It was her first year teaching, she knew nothing about drama or theatre, . . . and the principal had already gone up to her and said, "We're expecting a play for Christmas."⁶⁵

Concerned that even an excellent drama curriculum would be ineffective under such circumstances, Lynds persuaded the Ministry of Education to provide some funds for implementing the new programmes. In 1979, after all three junior secondary guides had been published, he recruited a group of dynamic experienced teachers, well versed in the new Drama courses, to give one-day implementation workshops at various centres around the province. At these workshops, representative teachers were given hands-on demonstrations of the material, seasoned with discussions of goals, and encouraged to do the same kind of work with their colleagues. To evaluate the effectiveness of this implementation, Mr. Lynds is currently involved in graduate research examining the use of the new junior secondary drama curriculum.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

It is apparent that Mr. Lynds, along with his long-time colleague Keith Simpson, has been the driving force behind curriculum development in British Columbia drama for the past twenty years. Moreover, the kind of active field research, grass-roots implementation, and scholarly evaluation which has accompanied his work may well serve as a model for future curriculum consultants to emulate, in drama or in other subject areas. The success of a drama programme may still depend too heavily on the personality of a single teacher, and there may still be a great gulf between the good drama programmes and the bad. However, I doubt if there survive any drama classes whose primary activity is to sit in desks and read plays, nor any drama teachers who have never heard of Brian Way. And if the perennial question of "What do I do on Monday?" no longer holds the terror it once did for the average drama teacher in British Columbia, it is due in no small measure to the work of Laurie Lynds.

Chapter XI

CONCLUSIONS

11.1 MODELS PRESENTLY IN USE

All of the models described in this thesis may be found in British Columbia today. For example, the Ward Model exists mainly in elementary schools, where children may be led to play out stories which the teacher reads or which they may concoct themselves. Because this model is so fundamental to classical drama in the United States, where so many of our elementary language arts materials are printed, the suggested uses of drama at this level tend to centre on "dramatizing" the material in this way.¹ Similarly, we have seen that the widespread influence of the Moffett Model is reflected in authorized student-centred language arts activities at all grade levels. If a teacher using either of these models also has particularly strong primitivist or romantic convictions, he will find himself slipping into the attitudes of the Slade Model, his eyes twinkling whimsically but knowingly.

¹ Another graduate student in this degree programme, Mr. Anton Stratford, is currently developing materials for broadening the use of drama in such elementary language arts packages to include other models.

The School Play has clearly been the dominant model in British Columbia's past, as it has in English schools. While our new secondary drama curriculum assumes that some play production will take place, however, most of the suggested classroom activities are based on the Way Model and the Spolin Model. The driving force behind this curriculum, Mr. Laurie Lynds, cites Way, Spolin, and Johnstone as having had the greatest influence on his own attitudes toward classroom drama.² As a result, their models have had an unmistakable influence on our new curriculum. The oldest recommended resource book in Drama 10, Rose Bruford's Teaching Mime (1958) concisely describes the two models upon which the course is based:

Some part of this book will deal with Mime as a useful and happy part of the education of children, especially of shy and backward children; another section will deal with it as a necessary part of training for the life of the theatre, in all its many forms.³

Even for those programmes dominated by the School Play, however, the elements of personal growth and development of future audiences are recognized as vital purposes for this very time-consuming activity. As Dorothy Scmerset put it:

The study of any art is enriching; it's part of the development of the person. That's why we're almost as interested in the people who don't

² Audictape.

³ Rose Bruford, Teaching Mime (London: Methuen, 1958), p. 13.

intend to go on the stage as those who do.⁴

Finally, the Heathcote Model has attracted great interest among leading drama teachers in British Columbia. A number of these teachers have recently studied under Heathcote and Bolton, both here and in England. This model is less a method in itself than an approach which draws on the methods of other models in order to bring the students to explore the human issues at the root of a dramatic situation. Because this kind of teaching is so difficult to explain in conventional educational terms, however, it may well become the private preserve of those dedicated enough to seek instruction from the few master teachers fluent in this model.

11.2 MODELS FOR THE FUTURE

It seems likely that international developments in educational drama will become less important in the coming years than they have in the past. As Bolton implies in Towards a Theory of Drama in Education, educational drama will likely move toward a blending of existing models, rather than the adoption of totally new ones. Although this seems a welcome respite from the rapid growth and change of the last half-century, it is impossible to predict what forces might create the need for a new kind of model. On the other hand, current local issues within the ranks of

⁴ Quoted in Stainsky.

British Columbia's drama teachers, within the Ministry of Education, and within society as a whole will likely have profound effects on the future of drama education in this province.

Within the teaching ranks, the Association of British Columbia Drama Educators continues to grow in stature and in influence, increasingly attending to policy direction as well as professional services. In particular, the question of what kind of drama training should be given to prospective teachers has recently become a major issue within the Association, which has been asking pointed questions of teacher training institutions along these lines. At the same time, the imminent publication of the senior secondary drama curriculum guides will finally complete this highly-regarded revision. These various developments seem to signal a renewed pride and professionalism among drama teachers in British Columbia.

The future of educational drama in this province will also be affected by attitudes at the School Board and Ministry level, perhaps even more profoundly than by the professional development cited above. For example, the 1980 Gillie Report on education in Greater Victoria was adamant in its support of the arts as an important factor in the education of the whole child; however, this report has received less than unbridled enthusiasm from School Board officials and from the voting public. While a subsequent Fine Arts Advi-

sory Committee held public meetings under the direction of this same Board, its report has had no effect thus far on local arts programmes. Nonetheless, fine arts curriculum coordinators, common now in larger school districts, continue to lobby within district administrations for greater support and recognition for drama programmes.

Although the Ministry of Education provided the impetus for the creation of the new drama curriculum, it seems uncertain whether educational drama can attain a profile high enough to command further practical encouragement at this level of government. For example, there has been some concern that the Ministry might omit drama from a new elementary curriculum in the fine arts. In addition, facilities for teaching secondary drama continue to be very poor; and while declining enrollment in urban schools has provided ample space to improve these facilities, yet Ministry regulations and red tape have thus far impeded the release of provincial funds for any such improvements. A few smaller school districts have opted to seek other sources of financing, which has led to the construction of excellent theatre facilities for school and community use in such centres as Terrace, Duncan, and Kitimat. Although certain branches of the Ministry are highly supportive of drama activities, other branches have been formulating policies which may prove to be extremely deleterious to secondary drama enrollments, particularly new directives on graduation requirements and

universities admissions policies. Oddly, it was the Provincial Secretary and not the Minister of Education who chose to underwrite the Provincial High School Drama Conference for the first time in 1982.

Finally, there are trends throughout western society which may have great short-term and long-term effects on drama in British Columbia schools. Declining and shifting enrollments continue to create problems and opportunities without precedent. Society's attitudes toward what their school system can and should do, and at what cost, seem to be caught in eddies of change. Indeed, many societal attitudes seem to be in a state of transition, which is reflected in diverse and sometimes conflicting demands on our school system. These demands, based in part on sentimental recollections of what schools were like in simpler times, have contributed to the modern phenomenon of teacher "turn-out", and to cynicism and apathy at all levels of public education. Whether the public and the students can articulate their expectations of their society in general, and of their school system in particular, will probably affect all kinds of school programmes in the near and far future.

11.3 SUMMARY

This research was instigated by the following observations:

- That there has been a tremendous increase in the volume of classroom drama in British Columbia over the past twenty years.
- That there have been published a commensurately large number of new books in this field, both methodological and philosophical, in the same period.
- That neither these resource books nor practising teachers seem to agree with any consistency on their assumptions about the form and purpose of drama in schools.

It was my belief that a careful analysis of these contradictory assumptions would be useful in clarifying what different people, expert or novice, mean when they call themselves "drama teachers". This thesis was intended first of all to facilitate such clarification.

It was also my belief that drama teachers in British Columbia were not aware of this province's very strong leadership in the inclusion of various kinds of drama in schools. It seems that each new generation of drama teachers dismisses the previous generation as old-fashioned, and sets about re-inventing forms of educational drama. In my opinion, we are constantly and inescapably building on the foundations of that which has gone before. Therefore, a second intention of this thesis was to explore the headwaters of this heritage, for the benefit of both myself and my fellow drama teachers.

According to the gypsy fortune-teller in Wilder's The Skin of Our Teeth, the past is more difficult to tell than the future. My experience with this research would lead me to agree with her. I would add, however, that telling the present seems more difficult still, since we lack the distance to help us put events in their proper frame. While there is a need for empirical researchers to take measurements of the present, and for educational leaders to plan for the future, it is also important to understand how we are influenced by the past. Although I find this kind of research personally intriguing, its rewards are not peculiarly my own: the treasure of our heritage enriches us all.

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Appendix A

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MODELS

Model	Form	Purpose	Content	Focus
Ward	Playmaking	Guided expression	Literature and myth	Dramatic form
Slade	Playmaking	Free expression	Whimsical narrative	Dramatic form
Way	Exercise	Individual empathy	Inclusive	Sensory awareness
Spelin	Exercise	Acting skills	Interpersonal relations	Communication with audience
School Play	Production	Theatrical presentation	Selected playscript	Final product
Moffett (lit.)	Production	Appreciation of literature	Selected playscript	Thematic criticism
Moffett (lang.)	Exercise	Communication	Inclusive	Negotiation of meaning
Heathcote	Inclusive	Depth of understanding	Sociological	Content

This summary was devised at the suggestion and with the assistance of Gavin Bolton, following a personal interview on August 8, 1982. It was undertaken in an attempt to analyze Mr. Bolton's comment that one distinguishing feature of the Heathcote Model is that the focus of the drama is on its content, rather than on some consideration external to the content.

Appendix B

ENROLLMENT IN SECONDARY DRAMA/THEATRE COURSES, 1950: - 1980

Enrollment figures are collected by the Ministry of Education at the end of September each year. The Ministry has no figures available for drama enrollment before 1950.

	<u>Drama Enrollment</u> <u>Grades VIII-XII</u>	<u>% Enr.</u> <u>Increase</u>	<u>Student Pop'n</u> <u>Grades VIII-XII</u>	<u>% Enr./</u> <u>Population</u>
1950	855	--	47447	1.8
1951	1295	51	49922	2.6
1952	1306	1	53319	2.4
1953	1196	-8	56870	2.1
1954	1118	-7	61909	1.8
1955	1272	14	67630	1.9
1956	1306	3	74372	1.8
1957	1028	-21	79873	1.3
1958	1066	4	84533	1.3
1959	1078	1	91415	1.2
1960	1158	7	101049	1.1
1961	1037	-1	110014	0.9
1962	1034	0	118865	0.9
1963	1428	38	122552	1.2
1964	2611	83	129136	2.0
1965	3314	27	134467	2.5
1966	3218	-3	142380	2.3

	<u>Drama Enrollment</u> <u>Grades VIII-XII</u>	<u>% Enr.</u> <u>Increase</u>	<u>Student Pop'n</u> <u>Grades VIII-XII</u>	<u>% Enr./</u> <u>Population</u>
1967	4795	49	153325	3.1
1968	5318	11	165593	3.2
1969	6519	23	174338	3.7
1970	7538	16	184796	4.1
1971	9338	24	192076	4.9
1972	10511	13	195975	5.4
1973	13727	31	202817	6.8
1974	15405	12	208880	7.4
1975	14341	-7	213744	6.7
1976	17421	21	216033	8.1
1977	23979	38	215060	11.1
1978	24287	1	210416	11.5
1979	24653	2	203560	12.1
1980	23897	-3	197119	12.1

If enrollments for locally developed courses such as Music Theatre and Television Production are added to these totals, the total drama enrollment is higher still. In this case, the last seven lines of this table would read:

1974	17797	--	208880	8.5
1975	16811	-6	213744	7.9
1976	20291	21	216033	9.4
1977	24444	20	215060	11.4
1978	25025	2	210416	11.9
1979	25255	1	203560	12.4
1980	24208	-4	197119	12.3

Appendix C

EIGE SCHOOL PLAY SELECTION

1. Plays produced more than once in the Protestant Schools of Greater Montreal, 1938-1972, as listed by Charles Fittenhouse. (The number of productions is given in parentheses.)

<u>Greek to Modern:</u>	Everyman	(2)
	Master Pierre Fathelin	(2)
	A Midsummer Night's Dream	(3)
	Macbeth	(3)
	The Imaginary Invalid	(3)
	Quality Street	(2)
	The Devil's Disciple	(3)
	A Christmas Carol	(4)
	Pride and Prejudice	(2)
<u>Contemporary:</u>	The Enchanted	(2)
	Noah	(2)
	My Three Angels	(3)
	The Barretts of Wimpole Street	(2)
	Our Town	(6)
	The Crucible	(2)
	Dark of the Moon	(2)
	Arsenic and Old Lace	(5)
	You Can't Take It With You	(4)
	Teahouse of the August Moon	(2)
	Junior Miss	(4)
	Time Out for Ginger	(2)
	Out of the Frying Pan	(5)
	I Remember Mama	(2)
	Life With Father	(2)
	Our Hearts Were Young and Gay	(3)
	The Masque of Aescop	(2)
<u>For Children:</u>	Aladdin	(several)
	Alice in Wonderland	(3)
	Cinderella	(several)
	Hansel and Gretel	(several)
	The Elves and the Shoemaker	(several)
	The Emperor's New Clothes	(several)
	Kings of Romania	(3)
	The Masque of Aescop	(3)
	A Midsummer Night's Dream	(3)
	The Odyssey	(2)
	Pied Piper of Hamelin	(several)
	Snow White / Seven Dwarfs	(several)
	Sleeping Beauty	(several)

2. Full-length plays produced by Victoria High School,
1906-1981.

1906	She Stoops to Conquer	Jeanette Cann
1911	Scenes from "Ivanhoe"	F.G.C. Wood
1912	Scenes from Dickens	F.G.C. Wood
1913	She Stoops to Conquer	Jeanette Cann
1915	Nicholas Nickleby	
1916	Scenes from Shakespeare	Millicent Ward
1917	The Merchant of Venice	Helen Badgley
1918	As You Like It	Helen Badgley
1922	As You Like It	Ira Dilworth(?)
1923	Julius Caesar	Ira Dilworth
1924	The Merchant of Venice	Ira Dilworth
1925	A Midsummer Night's Dream	Ira Dilworth
1926	Macbeth	Ira Dilworth
1927	Scenes from Shakespeare	I. Fullcock-Webster
1928	As You Like It	I. Fullcock-Webster
1929	She Stoops to Conquer	Ella Cameron
1930	A Kiss for Cinderella	Ella Cameron
1931	Master Skylark	Ella Cameron
1932	Fanny... Servant Problem	H. Dee/E. Cameron
1933	Macbeth	Ira Dilworth
1934	Mary Rose	Ella Cameron
1935	The Ivory Door	Ella Cameron
1936	The Ivory Door	Harry Dee
1938	Tweedles	Ella Cameron
1939	Abraham Lincoln	Ella Cameron
1947	Our Town	T. Mayne/E. Cameron
1948	Lost Ecruizer	T.W. Mayne
1949	Friend and Prejudice	T.W. Mayne
1950	Meet Me in St. Louis	T.W. Mayne
1951	Sense and Sensibility	T.W. Mayne
1952	Our Town	T.W. Mayne
1953	Rose of the Danube	T. Mayne/N. Douglas
1954	Christa	T. Mayne/N. Douglas
1955	The Fobe	T.W. Mayne
1958	Lust for Life	T.W. Mayne
1959	Song of Norway	Mitchell/Douglas
1962	Richard of Bordeaux	H.C. Farr
1964	The Mouse That Roared	H.C. Farr
1967	Teahouse of the August Moon	H.C. Farr
1976	Romance and Juliet	Denis Johnston
1977	A Midsummer Night's Dream	Denis Johnston
1978	Play It Again, Sam	Denis Johnston
1980	The Effect of Gamma Rays...	Janice Turner
1981	The Wizard of Oz	Janice Turner

3. Full-length plays directed by Keith Simpson at Gladstone Secondary School in Vancouver, 1950-1980.

1950	Song to Remember
1951	Dark Snow
1952	Masquerade
1953	Star Flower
	M'liss
1954	Tulip Time
	The Happy Prince
1955	I Remember Mama
	Enchanted Isle
1956	The Heiress
	The Forest Prince
1957	Ali Baba
	Annie Get Your Gun
	The Wizard of Oz
1958	T'Laganna
	Ecsamunde
1959	Daddy Long-Legs
1960	The Blue Bird
	Lute Song
1961	A Midsummer Night's Dream
	The Fast Heart
1962	Teahouse of the August Moon
1963	Our Town
	The Miracle Worker
1964	Pincocchio
1965	The Diary of Anne Frank
1966	I Remember Mama
1967	The Bourgeois Gentleman
1968	Inherit the Wind
1969	Hobson's Choice
1970	David and Lisa
1971	Time Out for Ginger
	Christmas in the Market Place
1972	Charley's Aunt
	Our Hearts Were Young and Gay
1973	Flowers for Algernon
1974	You Can't Take It With You
	You're a Good Man Charlie Brown
1975	Lilith
1976	The Wizard of Oz
	The Servant of Two Masters
	Tevye and his Daughters
1977	Pygmalion
	Teahouse of the August Moon
1978	A Midsummer Night's Dream
1979	Annie Get Your Gun
	You're a Good Man Charlie Brown
1980	The Imaginary Invalid

Appendix D

DRAMA CURRICULUM, 1941

What follows is the introduction and a summary outline of the first drama curriculum guide in British Columbia. It was first published as a Curriculum Bulletin in 1939, and was reprinted with minor changes in the Department of Education's collected Programme of Studies in 1941. This material was taken from the latter edition.

DRAMA AND ORAL EXPRESSION

INTRODUCTION

This course in Drama and Oral Expression, like all other activities which are employed in education, aims primarily at the integration of personality through stimulating the growth and improving the adjustments of pupils. It affords opportunities for self-realization through self-expression in controlled situations. It furthers social adjustment by developing poise and self-confidence, pleasing forms of speech and address. It aims at developing social competence by participation in hand activities. It should foster

appreciation of dramatic art in its higher forms by increasing the student's knowledge of the theatre and of drama, and by giving him some skill in dramatic performance and in the crafts associated with the theatre.

There are five credits for the course, which should be pursued over the period of two years -- three periods and three credits in Grade XI. and [sic] two periods and two credits in Grade XII. This course may, at the discretion of the principal, be given in one year. Five credits will be assigned to the completed course so given. The activities which are suggested may be replaced by others which may be more appropriate or available in local circumstances.

It is not only impossible but also undesirable to lay down a predetermined sequence of activities. The various phases of the work will usually proceed simultaneously, but none of them should be ignored.

Classes should not be too large; twenty-five is suggested as the largest number that should be admitted to a class.

Teachers need hardly to be reminded that the word "drama" means "doing." Activity should be the outstanding characteristic of the course.

There is no prescribed text-book for this course. The "Stage and the School," by K.A. Cormanney, will be found to be the most useful reference book for pupils.

Summary of Outline

A. Oral Expression	P. 93
I. Pantomime	
II. Pcise	
1. Exercises and Activities	
2. Relaxation Exercises	
3. Walking and Sitting	
III. Dramatization	
IV. Vcice and Diction	
V. Choral Speaking	
E. Drama	P. 101
I. Chocsing the Flay	
II. Casting	
III. Directing	
IV. Acting	
V. Stage Craft	
VI. Lighting	
VII. Stage Costuning	
C. History of the Drama	P. 109
D. Shakespeare	P. 119
F. Faćic	P. 121

Appendix E

AUDIOTAPES MADE FOR THIS THESIS

The Sound and Moving Image Division of the Provincial Archives of British Columbia provided me with blank audiotapes to record interviews with important drama educators as part of this research. The original tapes are stored in the Archives, and are accessible to anyone wishing to listen to them. The holdings of this Division are extensive, and include copies of the audiotape collections of Michael Meiklejohn and Peter Mannering, both of whom have been researching the history of theatre in Canada. It is a fascinating resource.

The tapes from my collection now in the possession of the Archives are:

Anne Adamson	24 April 1982
Laurie Lynds	29 April 1982
Thomas Mayne	10 May 1982
Barbara Meiklejohn	30 April 1982
Michael Meiklejohn	30 April 1982
Keith Simpson	14 June 1982

Another tape, which I made with Peter Mannering in October of 1981, is part of Mr. Meiklejohn's collection.

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Models for Drama/Theatre Education

in the Secondary Schools of British Columbia

Author:


Denis William Johnston

September 1, 1982