

A Master's Thesis:
Fostering inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth in Northern Canada through research in drama
education and Applied Theatre

by

Jena Mailloux

BFA, University of Victoria, 2018

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in Interdisciplinary Studies
in the Departments of Education and Theatre

© Jena Mailloux, 2024
University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other
means, without the permission of the author.

We acknowledge and respect the Lək'wəḡən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose
territory the university stands, and the Lək'wəḡən and W_SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical
relationships with the land continue to this day.

A Master's Thesis:
Fostering Inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ Youth in Northern Canada Through Research in Drama
Education and Applied Theatre

by

Jena Mailloux

BFA, University of Victoria, 2018

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Yasmine Kandil, Supervisor
Department of Theatre

Dr. Monica Prendergast, Supervisor
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Belarie Hyman Zatzman, Committee Member
Theatre & Performance, York University

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways in which theatre can be applied in educational settings to foster inclusion and safety for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth located in remote communities within Northern Canada. The research took place in a remote community within the Northwest Territories (NWT), through a collaboration with teachers who lead the Queer Straight Alliance (QSA) club. By using methods of Community-Based Participatory Action Research, the study posed the following questions: (1) What are the experiences of inclusion and exclusion that 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth have in a remote community within the NWT and how can theatre empower these youth to communicate the ways they feel accepted and safe within their school environment? (2) How can theatre serve as an effective training tool for educators located in remote communities to understand how to foster a school culture of inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students? (3) According to the youth participants and their experiences, what are some ways of thinking that might lead to stigma surrounding gender identity and sexual diversity in remote communities, and how can theatrical interventions begin deconstructing these paradigms? To answer these questions, a series of theatre-based workshops were facilitated with youth participants who were active members of the collaborating secondary school's QSA club. With information from the youth workshops, a theatre-based professional development workshop was also facilitated separately with educator participants who worked at the collaborating school or the school district. This thesis outlines the background information, relevant fieldwork details, and final research findings of the study.

Table of contents

Supervisory committee	ii
Abstract	iii
Table of contents	iv
List of tables	vi
List of figures.....	vii
List of images.....	viii
List of appendices	ix
Acknowledgements	x
Dedication	xi
Language and acronym	xii
A note.....	xiii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1 Research questions.....	1
1.2 Call for research.....	2
1.3 Background.....	4
The Beaufort Delta region	4
2S/LGBTQIAP+ considerations in Northwest Territories' schools	6
Day and Residential Schools in the region	6
2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth at school	8
Educators	11
What is a safe space anyway?	13
Looking towards drama and theatre	16
1.4 Researcher positionality.....	18
Chapter 2: Literature review	21
2.1 Introduction	21
2.2 Creating spaces for queer youth	23
Belonging	25
2.3 The scholarship	25
Theatre research studies that directly involve 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth	26
Theatre research studies that peripherally involve 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth	36
Theatre research studies that involve Indigenous youth in Canada.....	40
2.4 Unique considerations for educators in the NWT	42

2.5 Conclusion	44
Chapter 3: Methods & Theory	47
3.1 Overview of the research	47
3.2 The complement of Community-Based PAR and Applied Theatre	48
3.3 Ethics	53
Personal ethics	56
3.4 Theoretical framework and research design	58
Youth participatory workshops	58
Educator participatory workshop	64
Chapter 4: Field notes	68
4.1 Youth participatory workshops	69
Participants	70
The workshops	69
The devising sessions	82
4.2 Educator participatory workshop	85
Participants	85
The workshop	86
Chapter 5: Research findings	94
5.1 Youth participatory workshops	94
5.2 Educator participatory workshop	100
Chapter 6: Conclusion	105
6.1 Situating the research in a Northern context.....	106
6.2 Limitations of the research	113
6.3 Recommendations for future research	114
6.4 Conclusion	117
6.5 Final thoughts	119
References	121

List of tables:

Table 1: Literature review search codes	21
---	----

List of figures:

Figure 1: Gwich'in Settlement Area	5
Figure 2: Inuvialuit Settlement Region	5
Figure 3: Moral mapping of performative stances towards the other	55
Figure 4: Overview of methods, guiding theories, and methodologies of the youth participatory workshops	61
Figure 5: Overview of methods, guiding theories, and methodologies of the educator participant workshop	64
Figure 6: Timeline of youth participatory workshops	70
Figure 7: Timeline of educator participatory workshop	85

List of images:

Images 1 – 3: the pressures students face at school	87
Image 4: ‘resilience’	88
Image 5: ‘fear/joy’	89
Image 6: ‘resentment’	89

List of appendices

Appendix A: Glossary of terms	129
Appendix B: The Drama Spiral	130
Appendix C: Sample workshop—youth participants	131
Appendix D: Sample workshop—educator participants	140
Appendix E: Summary of devised play	152
Appendix F: Summary of educator workshop scenes	153
Appendix G: <i>Still in Every Class in Every School</i> – Recommendations	154
Appendix I: Tri-council ethics approval	157
Appendix H: Northwest Territories research licence	158

Acknowledgements

It is true that nothing is ever done alone.

First, I must thank the youth participants and educators who made this project possible. These young people, without question, are going to sculpt a beautiful and loving future for our society. They are strong, intelligent, and— already—fierce advocates for the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community. To the educators with whom I collaborated with that lead the Queer Straight Alliance Club, you are moving mountains and changing lives. The work you do for your students is inspiring, and they are so lucky to have you. You lead by example and make great things possible. I cannot thank you enough for welcoming me and this research into the school.

Thank you to the remote community that allowed me to conduct this research. It was precious and sacred to me, and I hope that the information can, at least in small ways, be useful.

To my supervisors, Dr. Yasmine Kandil and Dr. Monica Prendergast, thank you for your unwavering support, deep wisdom, and belief in me. You've been my guides through this process, and have been so generous with your knowledge. You've each challenged me to be better, in your own way, while ensuring I stay true to my heart. I am so grateful to have learned from both of you, and feel proud to have my research shaped by your respective experiences.

To my committee member, Dr. Belarie Hyman Zatzman, thank you for your thoughtful comments, feedback, and prompts to reflect deeper.

To my Mom and Dad, thank you for your support, your love, and your special snack deliveries when I had deadlines to meet. You are my forever cheerleaders. I am so lucky.

To my friends, from near and far, thank you for your endless encouragement, and the confidence you've given me to believe in myself and my worth. You are my chosen family.

Thank you to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Polar Knowledge Canada, and the University of Victoria for supporting me through my studies, thus allowing me to dedicate my time to this research.

Lastly, thank you to the queer community for making the world a more loving, vibrant, and beautiful place to exist. You've shown me what it is to be proud and excited about who I am. You've taught me that we have so much to offer.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my Dad, for giving me the type of love I needed to dare to do this research.



Your love has been a special gift, Dad, that so many members of the queer community do not receive. My gratitude is forever deep, and I will live my whole life trying to love in the way you've always loved me.



Language and acronym

I recognize that the language to best represent the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community continues to evolve (Egale Canada, n.d.). Throughout this thesis, I have used the acronym: 2S/LGBTQIAP+ to represent those who identify as Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Pansexual, and + for identities that may not be captured within this specific acronym. As language and learning progresses, more suitable terminology may emerge. By placing 2S at the front of the acronym, I join others to intentionally acknowledge the history of colonization in Canada, as well as the ongoing marginalization and oppression of Indigenous peoples.

I have also used the word ‘queer’ interchangeably with the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ acronym. While I have used the word queer in this way, I recognize that: a) not all members of the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community identify themselves with this term; b) the differences between such identities are complex and important; and c) it is best practice to confirm how each particular individual would like to be referred to in regards to their own identity (Egale Canada, n.d.). A glossary of definitions related to the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ acronym can be found in the appendix.

A note

Since I began this Master's degree in 2022, the political climate within Canada and the United States has grown increasingly hostile towards the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community, and particularly towards people who are transgender and/or non-binary. The trans community is in desperate need of support and active allyship at this very moment, as legislation that impacts their human rights continues to pass.

The year 2022 saw some of the highest rates of anti-2S/LGBTQIAP+ rhetoric in both the U.S. and Canada (Yourex-West, 2023). In June, 2023, New Brunswick made changes to Policy 713, which “stated that educators are no longer obligated to use the preferred pronouns or names of transgender or non-binary students under the age of 16”(Dubé, 2023, para 4). A domino effect occurred, and on August 22nd, 2023, the Minister of Education in the Province of Saskatchewan announced that schools were now required to “seek parent/guardian permission when changing the preferred name and pronouns used by students under the age of 16 in the school” (Government of Saskatchewan, 2023, para 1).

On January 31st, 2024 “Alberta Premier Danielle Smith announced a suite of policies that target trans Albertans in multiple areas of life” (Toy, 2024, para 1). Since the announcement, there has been an uproar from 2S/LGBTQIAP+ advocates and allies across the country, who believe the policies violate the human rights of people who are transgender and/or non-binary. The dangerous implications of these policies cannot be fulsomely discussed in this thesis. However, I believe an understanding of the current political climate in Canada informs the need for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusion initiatives within the country. At this moment, initiatives are particularly needed to support the trans community, who deserve to know that they do not stand alone.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of this Community-Based Participatory Action Research study was to explore the ways in which theatre can be applied in educational settings to foster inclusion and safety for youth located in remote communities within Northern Canada. The study took place in a remote community within the Northwest Territories (NWT), through a collaboration with teachers who lead the Queer / Straight Alliance (QSA) club at a collaborating secondary school. Youth participants engaged in a series of workshops and devising sessions related to 2S/LGBTQIAP+ experiences. Using themes that arose throughout the youth workshops, a drama-based professional development workshop was facilitated with educators to discuss 2S/LGBTQIAP+ considerations within their school district.

Research Questions

The research questions were as follows: (1) What are the experiences of inclusion and exclusion that 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth have in a remote community within the NWT, and how can theatre empower these youth to communicate the ways they feel accepted and safe in their school environment? (2) How can theatre serve as an effective training tool for educators located in remote communities to understand how to foster a school culture of inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students? (3) According to the youth participants and their experiences, what are some ways of thinking that might lead to stigma surrounding gender identity and sexual diversity in remote communities, and how can theatrical interventions begin deconstructing these paradigms?

Call for research

In Canada, approximately one million people openly identify as part of the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community (Statistics Canada, 2021, p. 1). According to the 2021 census, “one in every 300 Canadians are transgender or non-binary” (Statistics Canada, 2022, para 1). Despite the legalization of same sex marriage in 2005, and the protection of gender identity and gender expression in *Canada’s Human Rights Act* and *Criminal Code* in 2017, the safety and well-being of the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community in Canada remains a concern (Statistics Canada, 2021, p. 1).

In 2019, police reported the highest number (a 41% spike) of hate crimes targeting sexual minority Canadians since 2009 (p. 2). According to a 2018 survey, 2S/LGBTQIAP+ Canadians were more likely to report poor mental health than non-2S/LGBTQIAP+ Canadians, as well as more likely to seriously contemplate suicide in their lifetimes. In addition, 2S/LGBTQIAP+ individuals were twice as likely to report experiences of homelessness or housing insecurity than their non-2S/LGBTQIAP+ counterparts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence predicted that 2S/LGBTQIAP+ individuals were more likely to be disproportionately affected by job-loss and economic fallout (p. 2). Furthermore, transgender Canadians “were almost 3 times more likely than male [cisgender] participants” (p. 3) to report experiences of discrimination. The statistics related to the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community in Canada are continuously alarming, and point to a clear need for further support and societal acceptance.

Among the growing population of openly identifying 2S/LGBTQIAP+ individuals in Canada, 30% are under the age of 25 years old (Statistics Canada, 2021, p. 1). The experiences of many 2S/LGBTQIAP+ young people are worrisome (Abramovich et al., 2021). As a result of “stigma, discrimination, and identity-based rejection,” (p. 2) extensive evidence demonstrates that 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth experience significantly higher rates of peer victimization,

harassment, and discrimination in schools across Canada and the United States; are at greater risk for dating violence; and suffer from considerably higher levels of mental health related conditions as compared to their cisgender and heterosexual counterparts (Hatchel et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2020; Peter et al., 2021; Pufahl et al., 2021; The Trevor Project, 2021; Abramovich et al., 2021; Wright et al., 2021).

In fact, sexual minority youth are, on average, “about three times more likely to present with suicidality than their heterosexual peers” (Hatchel et al., 2019,p. 135). Additionally, a 2019 survey within Canada revealed that 64% of transgender and/or non-binary youth respondents had “self-harmed and/or seriously considered suicide” (Taylor et al., 2020 p. 3). Not only this, but 63% of transgender and/or non-binary youth reported feeling significant emotional distress, and more than 1 in 4 youth stated they had been “physically forced to have sex when they did not want to” (p. 3). 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth are also significantly overrepresented among youth experiencing homelessness, making up “20-40% of the homeless youth population in North America” (p. 2).

Focussing specifically on school climate, a national survey of homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools called *Still in Every Class in Every School*, reported that 62% of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth “feel unsafe at school compared to 11% of cisgender heterosexual students”(Peter et al., 2021,p. 5). In addition, 30% of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ student respondents reported personal experiences of bullying as compared to 8% of cisgender heterosexual students. Even further distressing are the findings that 77% of Indigenous 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth respondents of *Still in Every Class in Every School* experienced harassment in the 12 months leading up to the 2019 survey (Peter et al., 2021b). The empirical evidence related to 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth well-being shows a pattern of overwhelming distress across the country.

Looking towards Northern Canada, suicide is one of the leading causes of death for Inuit youth and children (Kumar & Tjepkema, 2019). In 2008, suicide rates among youth in the Inuvialuit region were “33 times higher than the rest of Canada” (para 8). While these statistics do not specifically relate to 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth, overall this points to a crisis in need of a multi-faceted approach to support all youth in the region.

Evidence demonstrates that participation in theatre can improve mental well-being, elevate resilience, enhance empathy, foster group cohesion, give power to voice, and promote healing (Vettraino et al., 2017). The significant benefits of theatre make the artform a suitable pedagogy to create environments of safety and inclusion. To date, researchers have separately examined theatrical interventions with queer and/or marginalized youth (Conrad, 2020; Tomczyk, 2021; Vettraino et al., 2017; Wernick et al., 2014); however, there has not been Applied Theatre research conducted in Northern Canada to promote 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusion amongst youth and educators.

Background

The Beaufort Delta region

The research took place at a secondary school within the Beaufort Delta region of the Northwest Territories, which was “historically called the Mackenzie District and/or Western Arctic” (Fraser, 2019, p. xxiii). While the research took place in one particular community, students from additional remote communities within the region were also invited to participate in virtual sessions. The area encapsulated communities that are located within the Gwich’in Settlement Region and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. These settlement regions are based on two respective land claims: the *Gwich’in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* signed in 1992

(Gwich'in Tribal Council, n.d.), and the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement* (IFA) signed in 1984 (Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, n.d.). In the end, only students located in one particular community were interested in participating in the research study. The maps below show the boundaries of both settlement regions.

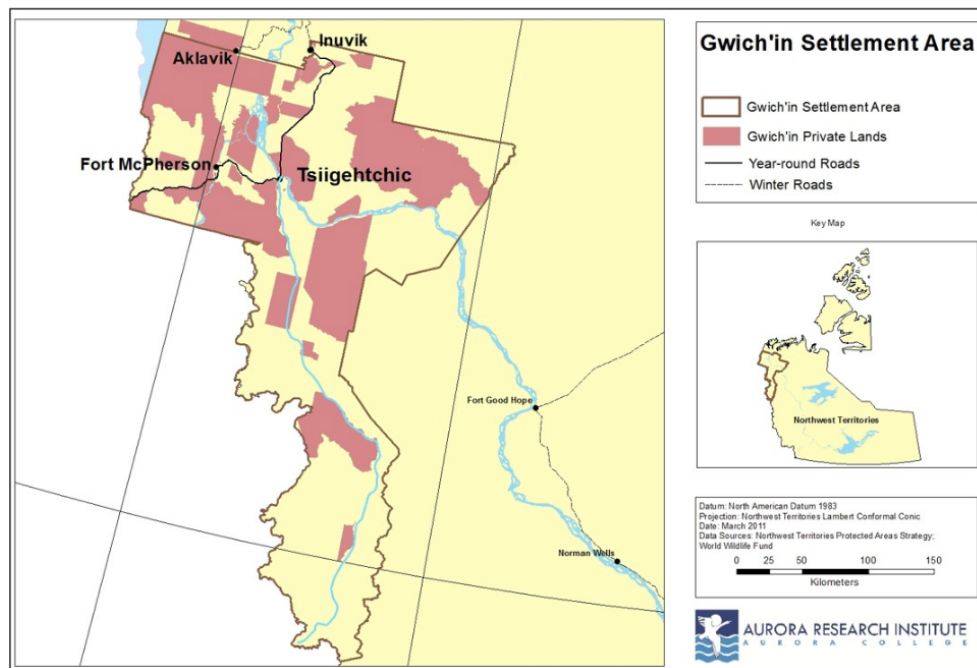


Figure 1: Gwich'in Settlement Area (Aurora Research Institute, 2011a).

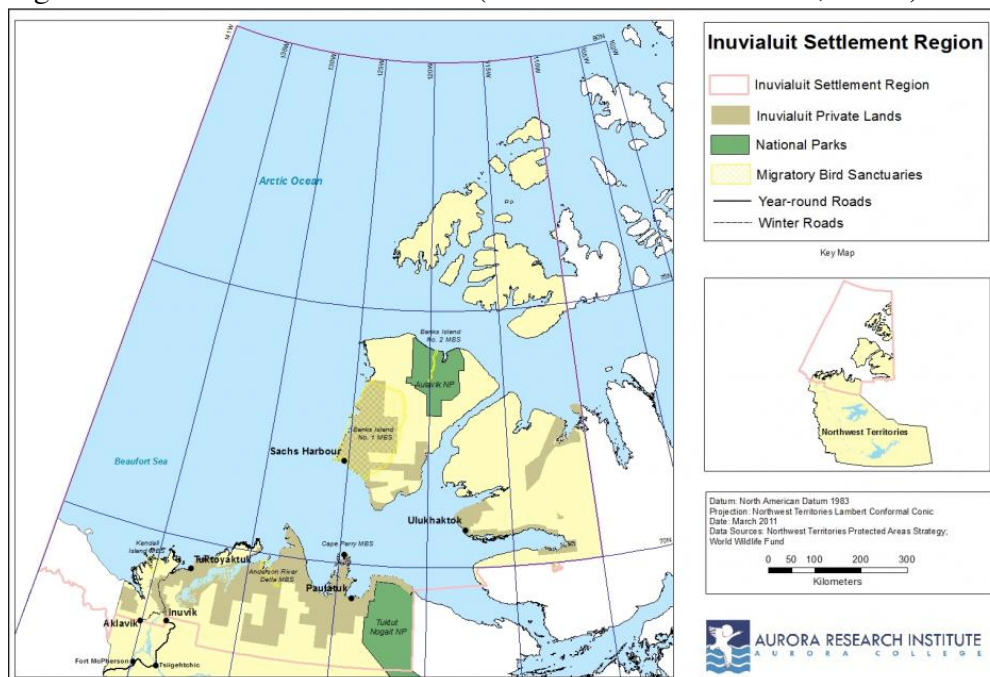


Figure 2: Inuvialuit Settlement Region (Aurora Research Institute, 2011b).

2S/LGBTQIAP+ considerations in Northwest Territories' schools

As part of their Education Renewal in the 2018/19 school year, the Department of Education, Culture, and Employment (ECE) within the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) released guidelines related to ensuring safety and equity for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students in schools (Government of the Northwest Territories, 2017). These guidelines were put together after a gathering of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students and allies from across the territory, who discussed how schools might foster more positive environments of safety and inclusion. This initiative alone speaks to a need for increased understanding of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ considerations amongst fellow peers and educators in the region. Given this context, the research hoped to further enhance the steps taken by ECE to help create school cultures rooted in celebration, acceptance, and safety for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students.

By engaging two participant groups (youth and educators) the research attempted to draw on some of the principles and promising practices noted in the guidelines, such as: “providing supports that respond to all student’s needs” (Government of the Northwest Territories, 2018, p. 13), using a “whole school approach to promote healthy relationships and prevent and address bullying” (p. 13), and “providing staff with professional learning opportunities to better understand, support, and eliminate underlying prejudices” (p. 13). It was hoped that this research could provide useful information and possible tactics to help assist Education Bodies with their efforts of reviewing and revising their educational policies and practices related to safety and inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students.

Day and Residential Schools in the region

It is critical to understand that, like all of Canada, the Beaufort Delta region has been highly impacted by residential schooling that was previously enforced by the Government of

Canada. These schools were specifically “designed to assimilate Indigenous northern children into broader Euro-Canadian society and economies” (Fraser, 2019, p. 11). Such institutions, framed in colonial practises, attempted to destroy culture and “sever important familial connections” (p. 12). Fraser writes:

Over the course of a century, Dinjii Zhuh and Inuvialuit children went from being educated by their families on their ancestral lands to being schooled at distant church operated Indian Residential Schools from 1867 to 1926, then at the nearby residential schools in Aklavik¹ from 1926 to 1959, and then finally at government-owned, church operated residential schools while they attended day schooling in Inuvik² from 1959 to 1996 (2019, p. 4).

As we can see, Residential Schools are recent history.

In addition to violent practises surrounding assimilation, the Residential Schools in Inuvik (which were called Grollier and Stringer Halls), subjected thousands of Indigenous children “to invasive practices that permanently changed their relationship with their bodies” (Fraser, 2019, p. 284-285). An example of this is the way in which “discourses around sexuality were entwined with lessons about Christianity, morality, and secrecy” (p. 286). Conversations surrounding reproduction and intimacy were strictly forbidden (Fraser, 2019).

According to Fraser, traditional Northern Indigenous cultural practises and ways of knowing “were much more transparent and supportive about women’s intimate matters” (p. 290), which focused on “how to create and maintain healthy intimate relationships, and knowledge about Indigenous worldviews as they related to genders” (p. 287). Instead, residential schooling

¹ Aklavik is the Inuvialuktun word for Aklavik, meaning “grizzly place” (Fraser, 2019, p. xxiii)

² In Inuvialuktun, Inuvik is spelt Inuvik, meaning “living place” (p. xxiii).

replaced these teachings with “acts of misogyny, bad attitudes, abuses of power, and violent assaults” (p. 286). These violent assaults frequently included sexual assault. Fraser states that “one way to fully colonize Indigenous youngsters was through physical violation, thereby ensuring their feelings of powerlessness” (p. 304). In the most violent of ways, Indigenous children were stripped of their human rights, as well as their emotional and physical safety.

The efforts to associate women’s bodies with secrecy and shame was a direct assimilation tactic on behalf of the federal government (Fraser, 2019). There were many reasons why such power was asserted, one of which being “the prominent role of Indigenous women in the North as matriarchs” (p. 292). This type of female leadership was not acceptable in a European-colonial context, and Indigenous feminists emphasize today that misogyny, sexism, and heteropatriarchy are undoubtedly tied to settler-colonialism (Arvin et al., 2013).

These histories are incredibly complex, and clearly outline valid reasons for distrust in institutional practises today. An understanding of current relationships with gender expectations and sexuality within the region must be understood alongside and in connection with colonization and the political/religious agenda of the residential school system. This small section is by no means a comprehensive analysis of how the violent practises within Residential Schools impacted the Beaufort Delta region today. Such an analysis is beyond the scope and appropriateness of this thesis.

2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth at school

As discussed earlier, there remains an undeniable need for immediate action and better support for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth. However, this crisis is not a new story being told. Take, for example, the concern of bullying in schools, where sexual and gender minority youth experience more

bullying than other students (Fenaughty, 2019). The presence of gender and sexuality-based forms of bullying are being increasingly recognized in educational contexts as present, harmful, and damaging (Bryan, 2019). A large-scale study conducted with educators across Canada called *The Every Teacher Project* found that many teacher participants were aware of harassment taking place towards 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students in their schools (Taylor et al., 2015), and that 55% of those who were aware of such behaviors knew of cases where the experiences of harassment led students “to engage in self-harming behaviours” (p. 49), including thoughts of suicide and, in some cases, death by suicide. In addition, the study emphasized the significant difficulties transgender students face feeling physically and emotionally safe at school (Taylor et al., 2015).

This information clearly outlines a problem in need of attention, begging the question: how can schools *meaningfully* address homophobic and transphobic violence? Educational researchers argue for a more holistic approach, explaining that in actuality, it must be first understood how institutions act as “agents through which various structures, policies, rules, practices and rituals which produce and reproduce gender are enacted” (Bryan, 2019, p. 256). In applying this lens, a hidden curriculum of cisheteronormativity at school begins to emerge.

Through the taken-for-granted routines embedded within school environments, heteronormative and cisnormative identities are enforced, reinforced, normalized, and celebrated (Bryan, 2019; Weems, 2019). Examples of cisheteronormative assumptions are evident through practices such as gendered competitive sports teams, basic administrative processes and enrollment questions, ease of access to particular washrooms, biased sexual health education curricula, the types of literary works selected in lesson planning, and more (Bryan, 2019; Tomczyk, 2020; Weems, 2019; Swartz, 2020). In critically examining these rituals, it becomes

clear that schools play a serious role in “creating the conditions where bullying flourishes” (Bryan, 2019, p. 256).

Researchers have emphasized that cisheteronormative violence can manifest in schools through overt physical and verbal bullying, but also through subtle micro-aggressions that are experienced negatively (Fenaughty, 2019). From a sociological perspective, bullying plays a large role in policing acceptable identities (Bryan, 2019), meaning that cisheteronormative violence can “[function] as a tool for the preservation of the status quo in relation to traditional understandings and expressions of gender and sexuality (Bryan, 2019, p. 257). In truth, these behaviours are simply working to assert previously taught social norms related to acceptable forms of gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation (Fenaughty, 2019).

With the prevalence of cisheteronormative oppression in schools, 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth have commonly been associated with discourses surrounding risk and vulnerability (Bryan, 2019; Weems, 2019). Scholars have emphasized that such labels have adverse effects, and work to re-stigmatize and further Other queer youth. By continuously asserting the narrative that queer youth are likely to experience mental health difficulties, bullying, and victimization, while failing to celebrate the positive elements of queerness, we assert the idea that to be queer means “an unhappy and dangerous life is to be expected” (p. 262). Additionally, deploying such narratives creates a “homogenizing effect” (p. 262), where heteronormative and cisnormative lifestyles are more favourable (Bryan, 2019; Fenaughty, 2019; Weems, 2019). Already, by nature of a youth’s gender identity or sexual orientation, some individuals are posited as “healthy and ‘normal’ whereas others are marked as automatically vulnerable, “at risk” and hence different and Other” (Bryan, 2019, p. 264).

Effectively addressing issues of cisheteronormative violence in schools would require recognition of “the systemic marginalization” (Weems, 2019, p. 93) that queer youth face. Bryan describes this type of shift in cultural practises as a “tall order” (Bryan, 2019, p. 266), where diverse identities would need to be affirmed, practised, and celebrated within daily life at school.

Educators

Overall, educators seem to be in favour of supporting 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusion in schools, however, the tools to do so aren’t always accessible or known (Taylor et al., 2015). For example, *The Every Teacher Project* reported that two thirds of respondents who had completed formal education training within the five years prior stated: “they had not been at all prepared for sexual and gender diversity education in their B.Ed. degrees” (Taylor et al., p. 24). While this may be institution specific, other educational researchers have echoed similar notions, explaining that “most professional educators receive little to no formal instruction on topics related to gender diversity during their preparation programs” (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018, p. 449) or throughout their career. Given that “teacher skills, attitudes, and motivations are vital ingredients to successful teaching in sexuality education” (Fenaughty, 2019, p. 639) and beyond, robust professional development activities that are tailored to addressing 2S/LGBTQIAP+ concerns in school would seem critical. However, the pedagogy to do so “needs to create space and discussion for people to recognise how seductive and pervasive cisheteronorms can be” (p. 634).

While many teacher respondents in *The Every Teacher Project* expressed comfort in addressing 2S/LGBTQIAP+ content in their classrooms, the study found that educators often assume discussions around 2S/LGBTQIAP+ identities are “irrelevant at younger grades” (Taylor et al., 2015 p. 33). Such an assumption is critical to note, particularly as recent legislation in the

United States— for example, Bill 1557 in the State of Florida—formally and legally disempowers educators from the ability to discuss gender and sexual diversity with students in grades K-3 (The Florida Senate, 2022). However, researchers have argued there are many beneficial reasons for introducing inclusive practises in schools at young ages, such as:

many early-years students have LGBTQ parents, siblings and other loved ones; many early-years transgender students are already keenly aware that their gender identity differs from the gender associated with their birth-assigned sex; many pre-adolescent students who will grow up to be LGB adults are already experiencing same-sex attractions and are internalizing homonegative messages; and early-years students in general are already learning to practice [homophobic and transphobic] harassment as a routine schoolyard pastime (Taylor et al., 2015, p. 33-34).

The importance of teaching inclusion from a young age has been emphasized by a number of academics and educators, stating that teachers must “till the soil” (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018, p. 456). The expression *tilling the soil* means to “assume gender, sexual, and family diversity are always present and therefore make efforts to recognise and affirm a diverse population of students and families through curriculum, norms, and every day practises” (p. 456). Such a philosophy speaks towards a more meaningful understanding of the word ‘inclusion.’ Rather than seek to ‘include’ or generate acceptance for queer lives within hegemonic environments of cisheteronormativity, queer lives and identities are instead celebrated, normalized, and sewn into the “fabric of the school” (Goldstein, 2020, n.p.). In this way, *tilling the soil* has the potential to foster transformative inclusion.

To normalize gender and sexual diversity in schools would require a shift in cultural practises. It is important to note here that ways of understanding gender and sexual identity are

already being taught to children from the moment they are born, through familial make-up, gendered toys, gendered clothing, representation in books and media, etc. Therefore, when an educator neglects to include 2S/LGBTQIAP+ identities in their curricula at young ages, they are not neglecting to teach about gender and sexuality, they are simply neglecting to teach about gender and sexual *diversity*.

What is a safe space anyway?

As a way to address some of the difficulties 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth experience, many schools have started Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) clubs (also called Gay/Straight Alliance or Queer/Straight Alliance clubs). These clubs are meant to act as a haven for youth with similar experiences to gather and connect—a safe space. There are benefits to these spaces, where students can foster relationships and find like-minded peers. Some studies have shown that when a GSA is present at school, levels of bullying and peer victimization towards 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth can decrease (Day et al., 2019). For example, a 2019 school climate survey in the United States reported that queer youth who had a GSA in their school compared to students who did not have GSA in their school were less likely to: hear homophobic remarks (49.4% vs 62.5%), hear transphobic remarks (39.9% vs 50.0%), and miss school due to concerns for their own safety (28.4% vs 39.6%) (Kosciw et al., 2020, p. xxii-xxiii).

Interestingly, findings from the 2019 Canadian school climate survey reported differences in the ‘character’ of GSA clubs, which shaped their overall benefits. For example, 2S/LGBTQIAP+ student respondents who perceived their principal or vice principal to be supportive of their school’s GSA club vs. students who did not perceive their principals to be supportive of their school’s GSA club reported lower levels of: peer victimization (13% vs.

32%), experiences of sexual harassment (14% vs. 38%), and feelings of being unsafe at school due to their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression (38% vs. 67%). Such findings demonstrate the critical nature of administrative and staff support for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusive policies and initiatives (Peter et al., 2021a),p. 125).

With supportive staff, educators, and administrators, GSA clubs can lead to “increased social connection,” less harassment, and improved mental well-being (p. 122). However, as with any development of a safe space, it’s important to ask: who is this safe space actually for? Within the Canadian school climate survey, researchers caution that while GSA clubs have indeed demonstrated benefits for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students, “they may [also] fall short in providing welcoming spaces for BIPOC students or those marginalized within the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community” (p. 122).

Creating a safe space can be a nuanced process. As individuals, the ways in which we experience the world differs and such differences impact our feelings around safety. What may feel like a safe space for one person, may be an entirely unsafe space for another. Put simply, a safe space can be defined as a physical location “free from harm” (Djohari et al., 2018, p. 351). These spaces provide “freedom to try new ideas, to experiment with identities and ways of being, [and] to make mistakes while learning” (p. 351). A safe space may also provide individuals with freedom to explore, take risks, and express themselves without fear (Djohari et al., 2018). In analyzing the creation of safe spaces, scholars have reflected that it is not necessarily the physical space itself that creates feelings of safety, but rather, “it is what people to ‘do’ and their interaction with space that explains how and why ‘safe spaces’ become mentally, physically and emotionally restorative” (p. 351). In addition to one’s interaction within a particular space, feelings around safety are also informed by the complex histories of each place.

In the context of education, “‘safe’ emotional spaces within classrooms are not experienced equally” (p. 354). Lisa Weems discusses the difficulties in creating safe spaces within school environments, given that “historical legacies of inequality, exclusion, and education for social and economic reproduction (...) haunt the walls of particular classrooms” (2019, p. 95). These legacies not only shape the ways in which individuals interact with spaces, but also inform their trust of such spaces. Given the recent history of Residential Schools within Canada, where Indigenous families were violently torn apart, abused, and stripped of their culture, identity, and safety in traumatic and long-lasting ways (National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, 2022), such a consideration is especially important for educators to understand when thinking critically about safe spaces. These histories cannot be erased, and any “appeals to ‘safe space’ must negotiate historical, material, and symbolic linkages between education with heteronormative, racialized, and nationalist agendas” (Weems, 2019, p. 97-98). One must also consider the dynamic nature of spaces, which can evolve and change as quickly as our lived experiences (Djohari et al., 2018). Just because a space may feel safe one day does not guarantee feelings of safety every day.

Looking specifically towards the “idealized” (Weems, 2019, p. 102) spaces of GSA clubs, Weems argues that such efforts can often create micro-environments where:

other forms of epistemic violence or biopolitics occur such as the prevalence of white supremacy, homonormativity (through a collective focus on marriage rights and/or other assimilationist projects), or a depoliticized understanding of sex/gender/desire as a locus of social control (p. 102).

What seems most important in the development of a safe space is to address the process with the nuance it deserves, and to ask questions such as: who is this safe space truly for? How do the

lived experiences of those accessing this space impact their interactions and feelings around safety? What are the systemic reasons for needing such a space in the first place? How do historical legacies impact an individual's ability to trust in this space? The answers to such questions must factor into the creation of any safe space. It is also worth considering that perhaps these questions can only be answered by the individuals accessing the space themselves.

Although GSA clubs may be a contested approach in addressing cisheteronormative violence in schools, scholars such as Catherine McNamara argue the importance of exclusionary spaces where individuals can feel comfortable expressing themselves freely without the suffocation of dominating hegemonies (McNamara, 2020). In this sense, within a school environment, GSA's do provide an element of respite and breathing room from this reality.

Looking towards drama and theatre

There is extensive literature that forms a link between drama and theatre to the creation of safe spaces (Gembus, 2018). These spaces "are not necessarily geographically anchored" (p. 434) but rather, "a property of relationships that those involved in theatre can take with them wherever they perform" (p. 435). Through performance, safe spaces can be "created spontaneously," meaning that any physical location can be "transformed into [a] 'safe' [one]" (p. 433). In this way, drama offers a unique strength that many pedagogies cannot. In drama classrooms, youth are typically provided with "a way for difficult conversations to happen, a way for diverse opinions to find their place in the room, [which is] often unmediated by adult voices" and relevant to their own experiences (Gallagher, 2018, p.17). Drama is also a way for young people to rehearse different realities for our world, which can later provoke transformation in real life (Baer et al., 2019; Santiago-Jirau, 2021; Vettraino et al., 2017).

Research has shown that participation in art, such as drama and theatre, can: improve mental health and well-being, help foster peer-to-peer relationships, enhance social skills and development, elevate resilience and capacity to face challenges, develop confidence, and raise levels of self-esteem (Vettraino et al., 2017; Pufahl et al., 2021; Wernick et al., 2014). Given the immense benefits of the artform, scholars have argued that Applied Theatre programs “have the potential to strengthen personal protective factors so critical for [2S/LGBTQIAP+] students” (Pufahl et al., 2021 p. 32)

Although drama and theatre have been effective tools in creating safe spaces, it’s important to acknowledge there can be a “pervasive ideology that high school [theatre] programs are inherently inclusive” (Brown, 2020, p. 131). This ideology assumes that the drama room is an automatic zone of safety for participants, and neglects to acknowledge that theatre programs often “erase BIPOC students and their lived experiences, pushing them to act out the white canon in programs centered on white norms” (p. 138). Brown argues that if educators continue...

to recreate the white dominant practices many of us (...) experienced as theatre students and fail to interrogate the racist implications of those practices, we will lose the diverse array of voices so many of us claim to want in our theatrical communities (p. 144).

To truly understand the meaning of a ‘safe space’, it is critical to recognize the level of intentionality that is required in their development. For example, when building safe spaces for queer youth, the intersectional nature of a student’s experience must be considered and incorporated from the beginning. The concept of intersectionality was originally theorized by Kimberlé Crenshaw, who discussed how “ignoring difference *within* groups contributes to tension *among* groups”(1991, p. 1242). An intersectional approach, however, recognizes the interconnected nature of identity, and how these layers of identity— such as race and gender—

meet to dictate our actual experiences in society (Crenshaw, 1991). Therefore, when working with queer youth, a facilitator cannot “conflate or ignore intragroup differences” (p. 1242), nor can they assume that if they are queer, they automatically understand the experiences of all queer youth (Santiago-Jirau, 2021). Further considerations related to creating spaces for queer youth within a drama-based context will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Researcher Positionality

Ted T. Aoki stated:

an educated person, first and foremost, understands that one’s ways of knowing, thinking, and doing flow from who one is. Such a person knows that an authentic person is no mere individual, an island unto oneself, but is a being-in-relation-with-others, and hence is, at core, an ethical being” (1990/2004,p. 365).

This quote is one I find myself frequently returning to. I will not pretend to know all of the crevasses of who I am—that is an ever-evolving task to continue understanding throughout my lifetime. However, it is important that I take a moment to acknowledge how my own personal identity shapes the way I understand the world, and also shaped the way I came to understand and interpret this research. There are unconscious biases related to who I am that are inevitably embedded in the research process, as well as in the words I chose to write in this thesis.

Therefore, I included this section as a way to try and “consider dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen” (Milner, 2007 p. 388) throughout the process. I also committed to the attempt of incorporating Milner’s framework for researchers of: “researching the self, researching the self in relation to others, engaged reflection and representation, and shifting from self to system” (p. 394) whenever possible and appropriate.

I am a white-settler cisgender lesbian woman. I grew up in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, and later moved to British Columbia to attend school at University of Victoria, where I completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Applied Theatre. I recognize that access to education has been a privilege for me. Prior to beginning graduate studies, I lived in worked in the community where this research took place for two years. Throughout my time in the Beaufort Delta, I was grateful and humbled to live in a vibrant community, full of love and respect for the land. My experiences in the community impacted me deeply, and I treasure my time spent there that led me to the pursuit of this research. However, my two years of living in the community does not mean I understand the lived experiences those who currently live or grew up in the region, nor the experiences of Indigenous peoples in the Northwest Territories. My role in the community was transient by nature, and my position there led me to understand how my own complicity in systems of oppression as a white-settler contributes to ongoing colonization in this country.

With this learning, I attempted to move through this research process with reflexive thinking regarding my own personal biases. I attempted to be honest with myself, even when it was difficult. In *Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities*, Eve Tuck references the concept of complex personhood, quoting that: “life and people’s lives are simultaneously straightforward and full of enormously subtle meaning”(2009 p. 420, as cited in Gordon, 1997 p. 5). I bring this to the conversation, as I recognize my role as a researcher is complex. Like my participants, I too am a complex individual.

It is also critical to note that my identity as a lesbian woman does not automatically equip me to understand the experiences of other members of the queer community, and particularly the experiences of those who are trans, non-binary, and/or BIPOC. Throughout this research, I tried to remember there are nuances in these experiences that I will never understand.

Each individual person has their own experiences, their own intersectional differences that shape the way they interact with the world, and it is not my place to speak for anyone other than myself. I am a settler and an ally, and hope to stand in solidarity with the queer community. I also hope to stand in solidarity with Indigenous peoples whose cultures have been violently impacted by colonization.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie speaks of the dangers of a single story:

Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity (2009, 17:56).

I can't help but find inspiration in these words. The truth of the matter is that while my identity is important, and shaped the way I approached and understood this research, the purpose of the project was to provide a space for participants to share *their* stories, *many* stories, to grapple with and find belonging in *their own* unique identity. As a researcher, I attempted to hold myself accountable by championing the voices of my participants with genuine care and transparency. I was a facilitator, and only tried to carve out a space for the participants to fill, mold, and reshape it the way they wanted to (Mailloux, 2022).

Chapter 2: Literature review

Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 1, arts-based practices have been known to foster group cohesion, cultivate resilience, and help promote healthy relationships (Vettraino et al., 2017). Drama and performance art specifically have shown significant success in creating environments of safety, trust, community, and free expression amongst 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth (Pufahl et al., 2021; Santiago-Jirau, 2021). To better understand effective methods of cultivating protective factors for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth, such as affirming relationships and feelings of belonging, looking towards art—and particularly theatre arts—is a fruitful starting place. Therefore, this chapter provides a review of the existing scholarship related to theatre-based research studies that involve 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth and/or educators. Given the research took place in the Beaufort Delta region of the Northwest Territories, theatre research studies involving Indigenous youth were also examined. For contextual robustness, additional literature was analyzed to explore the unique challenges educators located in remote locations within NWT may encounter.

To systematically analyze the current body of research related to theatre's role in fostering environments of inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth by engaging both youth and their educators, the literature review is grouped into three distinct sections: (a) theatre research studies that directly involve 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth, (b) theatre research studies that peripherally involve 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth, and (c) theatre research studies that involve Indigenous youth in Canada.

The following code combinations were applied on March 23rd, 2023, without date ranges:

Table 1: Literature review search codes

Search Code	Number of Results	Publications Examined
LGBT*youth*PAR	26,500	2
LGBT*youth*PAR*theatre	5,880	8
LGBT*youth*research*theatre	19,100	5

LGBT*youth*research*theatre*northwest territories	18,400	0
LGBT*youth*research*theatre*north Canada	21,200	0
Qualitative*youth*theatre	119,000	2
Teacher training*theatre*LGBT	17,100	1
Applied theatre*youth*teachers*LGBT	22,600	5

The search codes noted above produced high results, however, not all results specifically addressed the topic. At least five pages or more of results were examined per code combination to retrieve the most relevant literature. To provide more contextual information specific to this study, the following code combinations were searched afterwards: education*remote areas*teaching; education*remote areas*teaching*Canada; teaching*northwest territories; professional development*teachers*theatre

Chapter 1 of this study briefly discussed the dangers of associating queer youth with continuous narratives of risk. To expand: much of the current literature focusses on “risks and vulnerabilities of this marginalized population” (Asakura et al., 2020, p. 1062), however, risk-based frameworks emphasize “the ways in which young people deal with or adapt to hostile environments rather than emphasizing the ways in which they can participate in changing or shaping their environments” (Wagaman, 2015, p. 125). Given the constraints of a risk-based approach, a growing number of studies have shifted the research discourse to focus on elements of resilience. Educators, social workers, and researchers have looked towards art for resilience building and empowerment (Asakura et al., 2020; Wagaman, 2015; Wernick et al., 2014b).

While the shift in discourse from risk to resilience in research serves to counter narratives that perpetuate negative outcomes for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ communities, researchers have also described limitations in a resilience *only* approach. This, they say, may create a simplistic view of experiences within the community, which are often filled with “complexities and

contradictions, such as joy, strengths, struggles, and trauma” (Asakura et al., 2020, p. 1063).

Thus, understanding queer experiences must be done in a way that honours their complexity. To do so, researchers engaging with the queer community have attempted to “take on a more balanced approach to viewing risk and resilience as non-binary concepts” (p. 1063). This nuanced approach to understanding the queer experience was the lens through which this literature review process was analyzed in order to assess the strengths and gaps of previous research studies conducted with 2S/LGBTQIAP+ individuals.

Creating spaces for queer youth

In “Queering Applied Theatre: working with LGBTQ youth to dismantle systems of oppression,” Santiago-Jirau offers a series of guidelines for creating queer-positive spaces with young people. He argues that theatre in “non-traditional settings can promote change in the personal lives of the youth that participate” (Santiago-Jirau, 2021, p. 119). In addition, a theatrical approach, he says, can inspire youth towards social justice change “to radically transform the institutions that shape society and affect the lives of so many queer young people” (p. 119). He states that through this particular artform, queer youth can “rehearse strategies for engaging with the world, activating other youth, building intersectional coalitions, and working with allies” (p. 120). One point that is emphasized in his work is that of pride and celebration, where queer youth can feel themselves seen and represented (Santiago-Jirau, 2021). It’s important to create spaces where all aspects of identity can be expressed without fear. These pieces of identity must be affirmed, and “showcase[d] with complexity and diversity” (p. 123). Moments of celebration allow queer youth the space to feel confident in themselves and see that a queer life can be a beautiful life.

Celebratory Theatre, a new concept being explored by Dr. Yasmine Kandil, values similar beliefs in the art form. Using a Celebratory Theatre approach in community-based theatre means that the work focusses on an individual's "courage and resilience" (Kandil & te Bokkel, 2019, p. 158) rather than the aspects of their experience that posit them as damaged. Such an approach allows participants to imagine a world where, through their struggle, they find hope (Kandil & te Bokkel, 2019). By using a Celebratory Theatre approach with queer youth, the participants can use the space to envision a reality where their identities are a source of joy. In focussing on "traits and achievement that make [the participants] proud" (p. 158), the experience may allow for such feelings to manifest in daily life.

Other important considerations in creating safe spaces for queer youth include: challenging normative systems that "uphold or perpetuate patriarchy" and cisheteronormativity (Santiago-Jirau, 2021 p. 120), creating trauma-informed spaces that provide emotional and physical safety while avoiding experiences that "could be re-traumatizing" (p. 122), creating opportunities for "inter-generational exchange" (p. 123) between queer adults, and creating "youth-led spaces" where participants "have agency regarding what stories they wish to tell and how they wish to tell them" (p. 124).

Prioritizing emotional well-being when working alongside queer youth is an aspect of programming that scholars note as critical time and time again. Theatre Connect, a program for queer youth based out of Florida, has developed recommendations to try and help ensure emotional safety during creative processes (Pufahl et al., 2021). Some of these recommendations include developing working relationships with "mental health counselors, experienced facilitators, and local support organizations" (p. 34), as well as "emphasizing play and theatre skill building" (p. 34) rather than focussing primarily on issues faced by the 2S/LGBTQIAP+

community. In Santiago-Jirau's work, he explains that if participants want to share difficult stories related to their personal lives, the focus should be on experiences that are "scars and not open wounds" (p. 122).

To aid theatre practitioners in discerning the appropriate way to navigate distance between personal experiences that could be emotionally triggering or traumatizing, Clark Baim published 'The Drama Spiral' (Baim, 2020, p. 120). The spiral is meant to assist theatre facilitators in their decision making so that they can work safely and ethically with participants. As theatre processes move closer to the center of the spiral, their work becomes more intimate and has greater potential to emotionally trigger participants. To navigate the work safely, the group should have the ability to jump to the outer rings of the circle with ease (Baim, 2020). When working alongside 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth, theatre practitioners have recommended an approach that stays within the first four rings of the spiral (Pufahl et al., 2021)(the 'Drama Spiral' figure is located in Appendix B).

Belonging

School belonging has been a known protective factor for mitigating against depression and suicidal ideation amongst youth; however, "exposure to ostracism, harassment, and discrimination diminish the sense of belonging" (Hatchel et al., 2019 p. 137). Belonging in a school context speaks to a number of factors, such as how a student perceives safety, and how they experience "school based social support, social connectedness, as well as engagement" (Hatchel et al., p. 137). Given that a sense of belonging plays such a crucial role in mental health and well-being for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth, it is important to understand the mechanisms in which such feelings can be cultivated for these particular groups.

The scholarship

This section analyses previous theatre research studies in detail as they relate to this study; the sub sections highlight prominent themes that arose from this process.

Theatre research studies that directly involve 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth

Benefits of theatrical interventions. The existing body of research literature shows significant positive outcomes in applying theatrical interventions to improve the lived experiences of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth. Expanding on the benefits of theatre that have already been discussed, research studies have documented that participation in theatre projects can: lead to positive identity development amongst 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth (Halverson, 2005); act as a catalyst for empowerment, agency, and youth-led activism (Wernick et al., 2014; Asakura et al., 2020); motivate and prepare students to take action in moments of bullying, discrimination, and harassment (Wernick et al., 2014b; Yulan Gale, 2011); lessen feelings of isolation and create communities of social support (Root, 2021); provide youth with opportunities to imagine positive futures based on adult queer role models (Root, 2021; Santiago-Jirau, 2021); help youth find positive ways to cope with disappointment and manage social stigma—oftentimes through the “joy of artistic expression” (Conway, 2011, p. 26; Halverson, 2005); provide opportunities for self-acceptance, self-affirmation and self-pride (Ansloos & Wager, 2020; Conway, 2011); and create environments where youth can speak freely with peers experiencing similar challenges, thus encouraging them to overcome such challenges (Root, 2021).

2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth face additional developmental challenges as compared non-2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth. For example, to feel comfortable and embrace their internal sense of

self, queer youth must grapple with “identity disclosure” (Halverson, 2005, p. 83) or, in other words, the process of ‘coming out’. Coming out is a distinct developmental task which only queer youth must undergo. Youth participating in previous studies have described the process as one that is filled with “fear of rejection by family, friends, and peers, and an obligation to reveal your sexual identity to everyone, including strangers” (p. 84). Not only this, but youth have stated that coming out can be frustrating and exhausting, “cause you have to do it continually” (p. 84).

In addition to the stressful process of coming out, queer youth must learn how to navigate an identity that is stigmatized in society while simultaneously “unlearning the assumption of heterosexuality” (p. 83). This can be a lofty task, which explains how and why 2S/LGBTQIAP+ individuals often internalize and accept the “prejudices against them within the dominant society” (Pheterson, 1986, p. 148). Accepting prejudices against oneself is often referred to as internalized or appropriated oppression (Olvera Moreno, 2018), and is associated with feelings of “self-hatred, self-concealment, fear of violence and feelings of inferiority, resignation, isolation, [and] powerlessness” (Pheterson, 1986, p. 148). Given the unique struggles facing the queer population, a crucial aspect of positive identity development, in part, relies on spaces where queer youth have the opportunity to: imagine different alternatives, explore possible identities, and to “see their painful, personal stories independent of themselves, allowing them to move beyond these events toward a positive future” (Halverson, 2005, p. 67).

Through participation in theatre, queer youth are often afforded the necessary space to break free of the boundaries within dominant society, and explore many different aspects of self (Halverson, 2005). For example, in a study conducted with queer youth at About Face Youth Theatre (Chicago), one participant described his experience in playing a character “nothing like”

himself as “liberating,” stating that he “found a part of himself he didn’t know was there” (Halverson, 2005, p. 86). Equally as empowering for the youth participants was the opportunity to see their stories played out on stage in front of an audience. Through this performative process, the youth described the ability to “let go,” “pull away,” or “detach” themselves from a previously painful experience in order to “let it have a life of its own” (p. 87). Oftentimes in theatre, youth are “free to express their innermost disappointments, and to explore different ways of overcoming them” (Conway, 2011, p. 28). In doing so, youth can begin to understand disappointing experiences separate from themselves, and learn that such experiences may be a part of life, but do not define their lives in “totality” (Conway, 2011, p. 30).

Another positive outcome that both theatre and arts-based studies have reported is the positive impact that queer adult role models have for queer youth (Asakura et al., 2020; Root, 2021; Santiago-Jirau, 2021). In many cases, queer adult role models can provide “comfort and shared identity” (Asakura et al., 2020, p. 1070). A recent study was conducted with older 2S/LGBTQIAP+ identifying youth to better understand the long-term effects of participation in 2S/LGBTQIAP+ theatre-based programs amongst young people (Root, 2021). To partake in the study, the participants had to be a member of an “LGBT-oriented community theatre/arts group” (...) where aspects of gender identity and sexual orientation were discussed, with the purpose of creation of theatre” (p. 47) being the primary goal of the group. To participate in the research, individuals had to be an active member of a theatre group for at least 8 months in their early youth. The research participants were then interviewed based on the perceived impact of their participation within the group in relation to their well-being. Throughout the process, participants described “the importance of getting to see queer adults living as queer people and being happy

within their lives” (p. 58). Not only this, but many participants also stated that the group allowed them to create “lifelong friendships and support systems” (p. 77) amongst their peers.

While most of the feedback surrounding the theatre group was positive, the participants also described some moments of tension and emotional upset in relation to their involvement. While theatre programs have the potential to be healing, they may also open conversations related to wounds that can be distressing for youth. For example, one participant in the study above reported often being told they were “not queer enough” (Root, 2021, p. 78). Another participant described a traumatic experience of a fellow peer who died by suicide while they were both members of the theatre group. Such an experience is why (as described above) practitioners and theatre facilitators who are not drama therapists recommend that in theatrical settings with queer youth, conversations and stories shared remain positive or resolved (Santiago-Jirau, 2021). However, because queer youth may be actively struggling with difficulties in their lives, such a task is not always possible. Not only this, but theatre is a living art, and work within this artform may not always be predictable. For this reason, theatre practitioners also recommend working alongside professional counselors when tackling emotionally sensitive material (Pufahl et al., 2021).

Overall, however, the benefits of theatrical interventions for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth are extensive, and often lead to positive outcomes for this population (Asakura et al., 2020; Conway, 2011; Halverson, 2005; Phillips, 2016; Root, 2021; Wernick et al., 2014; Yulan Gale, 2011). Therefore, the data provides sufficient evidence to justify a need for the development of additional theatre-based programming specifically tailored to the concerns of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth.

Emphasis on youth-led approaches. A critical aspect involved in nearly every study that directly engaged 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth was an emphasis on agency, ownership, and empowerment (Ansloos & Wager, 2020; Asakura et al., 2020; Sawyer, 2019; Tomczyk, 2021; Vettraino et al., 2017; Wernick et al., 2016; Yulan Gale, 2011). The work conducted by Riot Youth, an organization in Michigan, is an effective example of this approach in action. Riot Youth provides a space for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth to “to build community and works as a catalyst for youth-led organizing” (p. 49). In one Riot Youth project, the youth participants conducted a Participatory Action Research study to survey students in schools about their experiences in relation to homophobic and transphobic bullying. To disseminate their findings, Riot Youth participants wrote a comprehensive research report with recommendations for faculty at their schools. However, when the youth continued to experience push back from school personnel, they turned to theatre and storytelling as a way to prompt adults to make the changes they desired. The youth created a theatre ensemble called ‘Gayrilla Theatre’ and developed a play based on their lived experiences at school. The youth then performed this play to educators and staff members within the district (Wernick et al., 2014b).

Through this process, youth were treated as subject matter experts; their active involvement and desire for change motivated adults to “enact a youth-centered agenda that was created by Riot Youth participants” (p. 61). Youth participants attributed the shift in attitude on behalf of school personnel to the combination of their quantitative and qualitative data being presented in tandem. While many educators entered the performance space seemingly resistant, the play rendered them more empathetic and open to learning from 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth. Following the performances, changes were made to the school district’s non-discrimination policy. In addition, the “youth’s influence spread to the state and national levels, engaging in

statewide teacher trainings and performing for state legislators who were debating enumerated antibullying legislation” (p. 61). Here we can see how through theatre, youth were inspired to take active roles in creating tangible change within their daily environments.

Applied Theatre practitioner and scholars Michael Etherton and Tim Prentki (2006) state that “[i]n order to contribute to a more equitable world, we, as applied theatre practitioners need to have ideas of how to reform our praxis in order to contribute to long-term solutions” (p. 143). A way in which this might be possible, they say, is to conduct work with individuals who are in positions to create change. The Riot Youth study provides an example of how marginalized communities can use theatre as a voice to propel changemakers into measurable action.

While the Riot Youth research study produced promising results as a model for youth-led change, it is important to recognize that the active involvement of Riot Youth participants was largely reliant on existing social dynamics that were already present within the group prior to the play creation process (Wernick et al., 2014b). This level of intimacy and group cohesion amongst youth participants may not always be present, and can take a great deal of time to cultivate. For example, in an evaluation of a similar theatre-based initiative in California called ‘Youthink In Action, the lead researcher, Yulan Gale, identified a lack of rehearsal time and irregular participation leading to a lack of ability to meaningfully explore why homophobia and transphobia exist at school (2011).

For the project, youth developed a scene that showed cisheteronormative bullying at school. The youth later presented this scene to teachers. As the scene unraveled, the teachers were prompted to enter into the action and respond in an appropriate way. Throughout the process, Yulan Gale found that youth participants became too quickly satisfied with any type of intervention from the teachers, despite finding “some of them painful to witness” (p. 40). In

hypothesizing why this may have occurred, Yulan Gale thought perhaps the youth were “so used to status quo of teachers tolerating homophobic bullying that any response at all was exciting” (p. 40). With more time in rehearsals to understand the root cause of homophobic and transphobic bullying, the group would have been provided with “more tools to contextualize the scene, invite more interventions, and perhaps even envision strategies for prevention” (p 41).

In this example, the scene presented by the youth involved a real-life story of a student who experienced homophobic bullying at school in front of a teacher who ignored the occurrence. Although the story was a source of pain for the student, he felt it was a story that needed to be shared. Throughout the process, the facilitators feared that if the story was told in the way it truly happened, some teachers may feel defensive and refuse to meaningfully engage with the action. While the student agreed to let go of portraying the story in its true form, instances occurred in rehearsal that made Yulan Gale wonder “if perhaps he needed more time for his story to be witnessed as it really happened, before he was ready to move to the collective” (p. 37).

With this in mind, it is important to recognize that school personnel should not rely on a “pedagogy of exposure” (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018, p. 454) to bring about necessary change in schools. A pedagogy of exposure involves “*exposing* children to public scrutiny, relying on them as catalysts for institutional change” (p. 452). An exposure-based approach could leave students susceptible to further discrimination and vulnerability. Additionally, applying a “pedagogy of exposure” (p. 454) can be limiting, implying that individuals must ‘know’ someone within the community “before making changes to be more affirming and supportive” (p. 454). Thus, institutions should offer training opportunities for their educators in ways that do not position youth as “sacrificial lambs” to generate understanding regarding the importance of inclusion at

school. Furthermore, waiting for “families and children to expose themselves (...) leaves educators scrambling to support individual students because there are no institutional supports in place” (p. 456).

Dramatic structures. Considering the distinct attention Applied Theatre scholars pay to agency and autonomy, it is not surprising that many of the studies conducted with 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth turn to the work of Augusto Boal as a guiding light. Boal, inspired by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, applied Freire’s pedagogical “techniques to democratize theatre” (Olvera Moreno, 2018, p. 33) and “promote dialogic communication that uncovers the existence and mechanisms of oppression” (Wernick et al., 2014, p. 49). A number of studies employ techniques from Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed (T.O.) (Baer et al., 2019; Logie et al., 2019; Olvera Moreno, 2018; Wernick et al., 2014b, 2016; Yulan Gale, 2011). Theatre of the Oppressed is a system of physical exercises, aesthetic games, image techniques and special improvisations whose goal is to safeguard, develop and reshape this human vocation, by turning the practice of theatre into an effective tool for the comprehension of social and personal problems and the search for their solutions (Boal, 2013).

The influence of Boal and Freire were evident in the practises of most theatre studies that were examined in this literature review.

To explain, the goals and intentions of many studies were to use the artform to develop a critical consciousness (Freire, 2003) amongst youth so that they may better understand their situations and be inspired to take an active role in reshaping them. In two cases already discussed, queer students used their own stories to devise scenes or a play and perform them to teachers for awareness building (Wernick et al., 2014b; Yulan Gale, 2011). Other projects have prompted queer youth or children of queer families to use poetry, writing, song, digital

technology, storytelling, or collective devising as a way to enhance identity development, celebrate their strengths, and see their situations within a larger societal picture (Halverson, 2005; Asakura et al., 2020; Baer, 2020; Williams, 2014; Phillips, 2016).

In a mixed methods study to evaluate the efficacy of T.O. in fighting oppression for the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community, the techniques were found to be effective in: increasing one's awareness of oppression and privilege, enhancing participants' sense of community and safety, as well as decreasing feelings of internalized/appropriated oppression (Olvera Moreno, 2018) . Boal's techniques have been fundamental to the field of Applied Theatre, and provide practitioners with helpful frameworks to begin elevating their praxes.

Attention to intersectionality. When working alongside queer youth, scholars and theatre facilitators have attended to the importance of honouring each individual's experience as valid, complex, and unique (Asakura et al., 2020; Fenaughty, 2019; Tomczyk, 2021). A generalized approach to understanding the queer experience can lead to conflict, misunderstanding, and a lack of group cohesion (Wagaman, 2015). The queer community experiences a breadth of oppression, and exploring "the diversity of cisheteronormative oppression is important to prevent certain marginalised identities and experiences from being obscured by the experience of comparatively privileged sexual and gender minorities (e.g., cisgender gay men)" (Fenaughty, 2019, p. 631).

In "Queering High School"—a verbatim ethnodrama that was created to highlight the experiences of "sexual and gender minority youth with respect to homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in an Alberta high school" (Tomczyk, 2021, p. 208)— the lead researcher, Tomczyk, speaks to his commitment towards honouring all of the intersecting identities that are part of the queer community. In the participant recruitment phase of his research, Tomczyk stated: "I

deliberately ensured that the participants I worked with represented as many various identities of 2SLGBTQ+ persons as possible (age, sexual orientation, gender identity, location of school, etc.)” (p. 211). He also discussed how engagement with all aspects of his participants’ identities was critical to the project. For example, in describing the play, Tomczyk says “it was the uniqueness of each participant that contributed to the creation of characters in the ethnodrama” (p. 211). Had this effort not been made, he believes the research would have lacked a fulsome understanding of the individuals who made up his research group. By representing a multitude of identities through various characters in the play, Tomczyk hoped that participants would feel valued for their whole selves.

Looking to another study called *‘Changing Ourselves, Changing the World’* (Wagaman, 2015) researchers worked alongside a group of queer youth located in a large city in the southwestern United States to mentor them in their own study, so that they could evaluate the benefits of a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach. It’s important to note here that within this study, the youth participants did not specifically engage in theatre-based activities. However, the researchers’ evaluation of the PAR approach is relevant. For example, near the beginning of the participants’ time together, the research evaluators stated that “the differences in the group and in the broader LGBTQ community became prominent both in the interactions during meetings and in the focus of the group’s research” (p. 138) Among the group, these differences became frustrating and inhibited the participants from communicating effectively. Some of the youth researchers felt misunderstood, and at one point “a transphobic trigger that was not recognized as such by half of the research team created a split in the group that involved half of the researchers walking out of a team meeting” (p. 139).

As the group worked together to resolve the conflict, this moment of tension led to a growing awareness of intersectional oppression that exists within the queer community. In addition, the project “gave [the youth researchers] opportunities to find their own voices and to express opinions about the issues facing their community in ways that may have differed from their peers or co-researchers” (p. 135). Over time, “the team began to develop a consciousness around how their differences impacted what they each brought to the table and the value that diversity offered them and their work” (p. 138). This shows the importance of youth having a space to celebrate that “queer worlds come in a multitude of forms” (Asakura et al., 2020,p. 1070).

Theatre research studies that peripherally involve 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth

Increasing allyship. A handful of studies have discussed how theatrical interventions can generate feelings of empathy among non-2S/LGBTQIAP+ groups, thus increasing allyship and their intentions to participate in activist efforts for queer rights. Such an effort is undoubtedly necessary, as “the development of heterosexual and cisgender allies is a key component to addressing LGBTQQ bullying” (Wernick et al., 2016 p. 160). Not only this, but given the multiplicity of identities within the queer community, attending to allyship is a helpful tool for queer youth to understand how they might support each other (Wernick et al., 2016).

Returning to the example of Riot Youth/Gayrilla Theatre, in addition to performing the play for school district personnel, the youth participants also performed their scripted play for middle school and high school students who identified as heterosexual and cisgender. To measure the impact of the performance, youth audience members were provided with numbered pre-test and post-test surveys to anonymously complete before and after viewing the

performance. Through this process, the research team discovered that “average advocacy intentions were significantly higher in the post-test than in the pre-test” (Wernick et al., 2016, p. 195). This evidence suggests that the process of witnessing 2S/LGBTQIAP+ peer stories on stage triggered a sense of empathy among cisgender and heterosexual student participants; the experience also showed the potential to inspire audience members into action in the future.

Looking towards studies conducted within Canada, *LGBTQ Families Speak Out* was a multi-year project led by Dr. Tara Goldstein, where 37 interviews were conducted amongst queer families in Ontario. From the interview material, the research team developed a verbatim theatre play called *Out at School*, which discussed some of the experiences the queer community faces within the Canadian education system (Goldstein, 2020). In an extension of the project, a research team member, Pamela Baer, paired a reading of *Out at School* with Theatre of the Oppressed techniques in an undergraduate Applied Theatre classroom. This approach revealed great success because it “invited students to determine what might come next: to not only work through a call for change, but also to imagine, concretely, what needs to change and how they (and society) might go about doing that” (p. 428). Not only this, but after the experience, students were inspired to build upon the subject matter outside of the classroom. Baer and her team conceptualize this experience as “startling empathy” where the goal is to “extend audience participation from feeling as a liberatory praxis of naming our worlds into embodied action of changing our worlds” (p. 424). This example reveals the efficacy of participatory theatre exercises, where participants can engage in deep and reflective explorations.

The findings from these three examples have been echoed by additional theatre educators, such as Kathleen Gallagher, who argues that individual “micro discoveries” within the drama spaces “might offer macro ways forward” (Gallagher, 2018, p. 11). Here we see the ways

in which theatre can be a powerful tool to develop empathy for equity seeking groups, as well as activate a more inclusive and caring society.

Professional development for teachers. Throughout the literature identification process, only one study was discovered that used theatre to interactively engage teachers in professional development practises that specifically discuss 2S/LGBTQIAP+ considerations within classrooms. The study, “Youthink in Action” (which has already been discussed), employed Theatre of the Oppressed techniques amongst youth and teachers. Reflecting on their experiences, both the youth and teacher participants felt the project deepened their understanding in relation to homophobic and transphobic bullying interventions. While the researcher would have preferred more time for discussion and deep explorations, a handful of the teacher participants still showed a nuanced understanding around the reasons why discrimination exists towards 2S/LGBTQIAP+ groups, and recognized a need for more holistic initiatives that move beyond basic bullying interventions.

Other research involving educators has engaged the group to participate as passive audience members, and will sometimes include active talkbacks following a performance (Tomczyk, 2021; Wernick et al., 2014; Goldstein, 2021). These studies have yielded positive audience responses, with many expressing a heightened sense of empathy and understanding for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth and families. While this approach is a valuable one, providing opportunities for participatory theatre experiences may enhance empathetic responses, as well as increase participants’ ability for self-reflection, thus working as a potential catalyst for future action (Baer et al., 2019; Logie et al., 2019).

Studies employing theatre as a professional development tool more generally amongst educators have also yielded positive results (Dawson et al., 2011; Gallagher & Service, 2010).

For example, Drama for Schools (DFS), an Applied Theatre professional development program in Texas forms partnerships with “school districts interested in shifting the learning culture of their classrooms” (Dawson et al., 2011, p. 313). Their model, which spans over the course of a year, provides teachers with drama-based training that is, in turn, actively integrated into their curriculum. An evaluation of the program revealed “a shift in the relationship between teacher and student,” and “a greater symbiosis in the flow between the pedagogy of teaching and the process of learning” (p. 330). For DFS, to make sustainable changes in instruction “teachers need to experience what happens when they are allowed to learn in a collaborative, dialogic professional development environment” (p. 315). Such an environment, they argue, can be created through drama-based pedagogies.

Recommendations for schools. A number of organizations and studies have released recommendations for schools to improve their 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusive practises (Baer et al., 2019; Government of the Northwest Territories, 2018; Goldstein et al., 2018). Such an effort is important for many reasons. For example, in 2019 “79% of trans students [in Canada] who had been the victims of physical harassment reported that teachers and staff were ineffective in addressing transphobic harassment” (Peter et al., 2021, p. 4). The evidence from this report coincides with its earlier 2015 counterpart, the *Every Teacher Project*, where 74% of participants who experienced victimization stated that they did not receive support from school personnel (Taylor et al., 2015 p. 106).

While many students acknowledged that their teachers were unaware of the bullying at the time, this demonstrates a heightened need for increased understanding amongst educators in how to prevent, recognize, and address cisheteronormative oppression at school. In the final report for *Still in Every Class in Every School* (2021), a series of recommendations were made

for ministries, administrators, and teachers to enact (the recommendations section of this report can be found in Appendix G).

Theatre research studies that involve Indigenous youth in Canada

Decolonizing research. While this research study include all youth who participate in the QSA club regardless of their sexual, gender, or cultural identity, given the location of the research within the Gwich'in Settlement Area and near the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, many of the youth participants involved in the research are Indigenous. For this reason, it is important to understand and value Indigenous research approaches as well as consider the ways in which theatre practitioners and scholars have attempted to decolonize their practises in an ethically informed and respectful manner.

Furthermore, the research community at large would benefit by recognizing “Indigenous peoples as the authors of important theories about the world we all live in” (Arvin et al., 2013, p. 21). In doing so, settler researchers in particular can take steps to avoid the perpetuation of damage towards Indigenous peoples through research. Indigenous scholar Eve Tuck has discussed a need to avoid extractive research processes “where outsider, often white, research types come in for a hot minute and then, having extracted whatever they need, take off for the next community ‘in need’” (Tuck et al., 2008, p. 65).

Damage-centered research is defined as “research that intends to document peoples’ pain and brokenness to hold those in power accountable for their oppression” (Tuck, 2009 p. 409). In lieu of damage-centered research, Tuck instead offers a desire-based research framework, which aims to understand the “complexity, contradiction, and the self-determination of lived lives” (p. 416). One methodology which Tuck has turned towards as a means of honouring the individuals

and communities where her research is centred, is that of Participatory Action Research (PAR). Desire-based research frameworks, as well as PAR methodologies, will be discussed in further detail throughout Chapter 3.

Indigenous research approaches interrogate and resist “the imposition of the colonial nation state in the lives of Indigenous peoples” (Ansloos & Wager, 2020, p.53) by applying methods that highlight “creativity, agency, and lived experience” (p. 53). In such an approach, “research must first analyze the structures, systems, and methods of how colonial nation-states establish, negotiate, and manipulate power” (p. 53). Given that Applied Theatre “works overtly either to reassert or to undermine socio-political norms, as its intent is to reveal more clearly the way the world is working” (Prendergast & Saxton, 2016, p. 7), the praxis has the potential to function as a decolonizing research methodology.

In a study conducted with Indigenous youth to explore their experiences of homelessness, researchers conceptualized and assessed Applied Theatre “as [a] critical, anti-oppressive and decolonizing” (Ansloos & Wager, 2020, p. 53) research methodology. Over three years, researchers worked alongside youth to create and perform a production entitled *Surviving the Cracks*. Upon reflection on their participation in the project, the youth participants spoke highly of the process, stating they had formed valuable relationships with each other, received opportunities for growth, enhanced their personal resilience, strength, and “belief in their own potential” (p. 60) despite challenges. They also expressed “a desire to utilize the arts for collective social action and advocacy” (p. 59). Not only this, but “the participants described the significance of using Applied Theatre research methods to inspire hope” (p. 59). In this example we can see the value of Applied Theatre processes when they are enacted with intention.

Applied Theatre practitioner Diane Conrad has echoed similar notions in her own theatre-based work alongside Indigenous youth. Conrad has paid particular attention to avoid “furthering colonial violence and damage-centered narratives” (Conrad, 2020 p. 259). Instead, Conrad describes *survivance* and *resurgence* as powerful concepts to consider when working with Indigenous youth. In this particular context, Conrad summarizes the definition of survivance as the indication of “Indigenous presence as active, vibrant, and alive, and survival as resistance to dominant discourses of disappearance” (p. 259). Looking towards the definition of resurgence, Conrad quotes scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson who describes resurgence as the “regeneration of Indigenous political, educational and knowledge systems” (2016, p. 21). Although Conrad believes these concepts can guide ethical Applied Theatre initiatives, she also recognizes: “ultimately, it is not for me, but for Indigenous youth and Indigenous scholars to determine what, if any, relevance this work has for Indigenous survivance and resurgence” (Conrad, 2020, p. 259). Through these concepts, we can see the importance of community centered research, rooted in the needs, wants, and active participation of the individuals whom the research concerns.

Unique considerations for educators in the NWT

Given that a component of this study engaged working educators in the Northwest Territories, it is helpful to understand the unique challenges that educators in this location may encounter in their daily teaching practice. Please note that this section only briefly touches on these considerations, and the subject is worthy of a more in-depth analysis.

McGregor & McGregor write: “over the nearly 50 years since its inception, territorial teacher education has been shaped by a deep tension between upholding distinct Northern

Indigenous identities based on profound relationships to place, and sustaining academic credentials and accreditation standards” (2017,p. 213). The pair explain how education in the North long preceded

missionary – or state sponsored schooling (...). Indigenous peoples have always taught their children and youth the knowledges, skills, values, and languages necessary for life in the North (...). This learning persists even today, despite significant challenges and changes” (p. 215).

Day and Residential Schools in the area acted as an interruption for “the ability of parents to mentor their children in survival skills (...) which separated families from their seasonal camps and ancestral connections to the land” (p. 215).

Present day, McGregor and McGregor argue for teacher education programs that prepare graduates to “contribute to creating schools led by Indigenous people, with more Northern teachers at all levels of the system, who use culture and language as the basis for instruction, and involve Indigenous parents and community members in all levels of decision-making” (p. 227). They also emphasize the importance of “Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators learning how to work together to transform schools, carefully and intentionally, contributing their respective strengths” (p. 227).

A recent thesis published by a resident and teacher located in a remote community in the NWT explains that “it is the Territorial expectation that all teachers in our schools engage in and offer culturally relevant learning opportunities for students” (Wolki, 2020, p. 2). To do so, Wolki elaborates that teachers are provided with two curriculum documents that were developed by the GNWT “in consultation with community members and Inuvialuit and Dene Elders from various northern communities” (p. 14). In speaking towards these documents, Wolki states:

while they provide valuable information, the curriculum's content requires teachers to have culturally responsive knowledge, understanding and pedagogical skillsets that align with the region's locales. The suite of abilities and understanding needed to teach the curriculum is a substantive challenge, especially when factoring in high attrition rates among teachers in the NWT (p. 14).

Similar to McGregor and McGregor, Wolki highlights the importance of culturally responsive education, but describes challenges that educators face in "offering culturally relevant experiences to their students while balancing the overall school curriculum" (p. 58).

In addition, educators located in the North also face unique environmental conditions. For example:

huge geographic distances, limited or non-existent road systems and challenging air travel create significant differences across the Arctic, and affect the everyday experience of life, of schools and of teacher education curriculum outcomes, materials, pedagogy, and so on (p. 215).

Therefore, it is critical to note that the challenges educators face in remote regions differ from those in urban areas. Such differences are important to understand from community to community and must be factored into the development of any effective professional development initiatives. This small summary simply scratches the surface in relation to the unique challenges that educators located in the remote areas of NWT may encounter within daily life at school.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this literature review process revealed success in using theatre as a means to foster inclusion and cultivate well-being. Future research studies that use theatre to engage

2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth should consider: a) crafting their methodology in a way that allows for youth leadership; b) paying distinct attention to the multiplicity of identities that make up the research participant group; c) focusing on elements of pride and celebration, while simultaneously acknowledging the complexity of queer experiences; and (d) employing research methodologies that are decolonial. In addition, future studies that aim to enhance inclusion in schools would benefit from finding ways to increase allyship among non-2S/LGBTQIAP+ communities without relying on pedagogies of exposure that could leave queer individuals feeling more vulnerable.

While this literature review process examined a number of studies that have used theatre to engage 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth, the inventory of research was relatively low considering the benefits their data revealed. The studies discussed in this review also span a large geographic region (across the United States and Canada) over a length of more than 10 years. Region specific data would be helpful to understand how theatre practitioners should tailor their approach depending on the location of the work. Additionally, no theatre studies were found that specifically engaged 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth located in remote and rural communities in Canada. This demonstrates a gap in current research, as it is essential to understand the diverse needs of students located in more geographically isolated regions as compared to urban centers.

Finally, no studies were discovered that engaged working educators in participatory theatre-based initiatives to *proactively* promote 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusion within schools. The research study that did engage educators in participatory theatre, while valuable, focussed on reactive bullying interventions only. Other research studies looked towards provoking empathy through passive audience participation. While this approach is admirable, the creation of an entire play with youth as performers is not always possible due to time constraints. In addition,

youth should not be expected to reveal their identities for the purpose of teacher education.

Given the promise participatory theatre shows in developing empathy and inspiring action (as discussed above), further research is needed to assess the efficacy of participatory theatre when used as an active training tool for teachers to enhance their ability to foster safe and supportive environments for queer youth in school.

In the NWT, a small handful of professional organizations are currently engaging youth located in the Beaufort Delta region with arts-based programming. The Northern Mosaic Network, based out of Yellowknife, NT, offers creative workshops, training opportunities, and camps to support 2S/LGBTQIAP+ individuals. Since 2020, they have been working to decentralize their programming and better support the remote communities within the territory (Northern Mosaic Network, n.d.). Foxy and Smash is another organization that supports young men, women, and gender diverse youth in sexual health education and healthy relationship development in the North. This organization offers workshops and retreats, and incorporates arts-based methods into their programming (Foxy, 2023; Smash 2023). While these organizations provide important education for youth in the North, adding to the body of research literature specific to the region would aid such initiatives in further developing their programming, as well as justify the need for more support around arts-based approaches given their proven efficacy.

Chapter 3: Methods & Theory

This chapter discusses the methods and design of the research project, as well as the guiding theories that helped frame its structure. The chapter also explores ethical principles to consider when conducting creative research that is rooted in the lived experiences of a particular community.

Overview of research

The methods driving the research forward included a combination of Community-Based Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Arts-Based Methods, specifically using Applied Theatre and Drama. The research engaged two participant groups: (a) youth who are members of the Queer-Straight Alliance Club at the collaborating school and identified as part of the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community or an ally, and (b) working educators at the collaborating school district.

The study hoped to answer: (1) What are the experiences of inclusion and exclusion that 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth have in a remote community within the NWT, and how can theatre empower these youth to communicate the ways they feel accepted and safe within their school environment? (2) How can theatre serve as an effective training tool for educators located in remote communities to understand how to foster a school culture of inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students? (3) According to the youth participants and their experiences, what are some ways of thinking that might lead to stigma surrounding gender identity and sexual diversity in remote communities, and how can theatrical interventions begin deconstructing these paradigms?

To try and answer these questions, six youth participants engaged in a series of four drama-based workshops and two devising sessions over the course of one month to explore self-expression and their experiences of inclusion and exclusion. Later on, incorporating themes discussed in the youth workshops, the group of 16 educators took part in one three-hour participatory drama workshop to explore how they might foster more accepting environments for queer youth in their daily professional practice. The participant groups did not interact with one another throughout the process. Rather, I, as the facilitator, purposely acted as a bridge between the youth participants and the educator participants. This approach was a deliberate decision based on the needs of the youth participants, who did not express a desire to engage with their teachers on the topic of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusion. The decision was also based on literature that describes potential emotional hardship youth may experience when they are forced to reveal their own vulnerabilities for the purpose of education (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018).

The complement of Community-Based PAR and Applied Theatre

While various definitions for Applied Theatre and Drama exist, some scholars in the field explain the practice as “theatre and drama in non-traditional contexts” meaning “that projects always take place in communities, in institutions or with specific groups [using] the practice of theatre where it is least expected” (Vettraino et al., 2017, p. 82). Applied Theatre is deeply participatory, and involves creation “by people who would not usually make theatre” (p. 82). Typically, Applied Theatre projects bring together individuals “who have a vested interest in [an] issue,” (Prendergast & Saxton, 2016, p. 6) which is taken up by a performance. In the case of Applied Drama, practitioners recognize the work “as a separate field of practice that is process-based and does not generally involve a theatrical performance to an audience” (p. vi). While

Applied Theatre projects typically work towards a performance, their starting points frequently begin through dramatic process. Although there is distinction between the final goals of theatre and drama, their values, processes, and participatory elements are fundamentally connected and similar to one another.

Working through the lens of Applied Theatre and Drama, participants can take on many roles such as: planning, acting in role, observing and engaging in reflection, sharing ideas, devising, critiquing out of role, or performing (O'Connor & Anderson, 2020). Such engagement may involve working with stories that represent direct experiences from their lives or may instead be grounded in a fictional world that relates to a specific problem relevant to the group. In any circumstance, the “theatre forms used are designed to create a safe and critical distance from a subject” (p. 37). These theatre forms might include “researching, writing and performing a scripted play, verbatim theatre, storytelling, participatory improvisation, contemporary performance-art, forum theatre, process drama or site-specific performance” (p. 37).

Applied Theatre praxis “has been adapted, shaped, morphed and re-deployed by practitioners, educators and facilitators to bring about, for both participants and audiences, a heightened awareness of human and social issues through a focus on a particular topic” (Kandil, 2014, p.609). Using this form of theatre is meant to “challenge societal norms and encourage reflection in order to bring greater understanding with a view to empowerment of its participants” (p. 609). Inherent in the process is a shared value of collaboration.

Applied Theatre as Research (ATAR) is growing in recognition. ATAR “calls first and foremost for a politically and socially committed approach that requires research to be responsive to and driven by each unique setting” (O'Connor & Anderson, 2020, p. 47). Centered around the human experience, the research methodology employs a fictional frame to access

emotions, understandings, and knowledge “at a deeper level that engages and provokes the imagination beyond what might be possible in other research methodologies” (p. 51). In this way, ATAR recognizes that “numbers and words” are not the only ways to evaluate and communicate knowledge, but “image, sound, movement, and colour are equally valid” means of revealing important understandings about the world we currently live in, and in tandem, the world we might hope to live in (p. 24).

A critical element of Applied Theatre praxis is the presence of a facilitator. Practitioners in the artform take up the word facilitator in its original sense: ‘to make easy,’ and describe the role as “a multidisciplinary who must know about theatre and how it works as well as being equipped with an understanding of teaching and learning” (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009, p. 18). In addition, a key aspect of this role recognizes “that the community participants— both actors and spectators— hold the knowledge of the subject under investigation, whereas the facilitator holds the aesthetic knowledge of the theatre form” (p.18). This understanding creates a fruitful space for eliciting powerful information in research settings.

Given the participatory elements of Applied Theatre and the artform’s inherent dedication to working in collaboration with communities, Participatory Action Research (PAR) processes are complementary in nature. Just as theatre “for social change focuses on building the voices of marginalized groups and providing a structure for those voices to be heard” (Wernick et al., 2014, p. 49), similarly, Participatory Action Research “work[s] collaboratively with participants to change their setting and circumstances for the better” (Saldana et al., 2011, p. 19). In discussing Participatory Theatre in Action Research, Kandil states:

inherent in any Applied Theatre participatory practice are the fundamental constructs of action research, particularly in the way it is carried out through the spiral nature of the

methodology in three stages: (1) careful planning of the action or intervention (planning of workshop sessions or rehearsals); (2) implementation of the plan (intervention), all the while carefully documenting the results (carrying out the workshop, rehearsals or performance), and (3) re-planning by adjusting interventions based on the findings from the first stage (planning for a second workshop, rehearsal or performance) of the spiral. (2014, p. 610).

Furthermore, similar to Applied Theatre practice, PAR directly involves individuals who are affected by an issue to conduct research that “builds on their lived experiences” (Wernick et al., 2014, p. 49). PAR enables “people to see themselves as actors rather than spectators, as people with agency and control” (O’Connor & Anderson, 2020, p. 21).

In this study, the spiral method of PAR was a critical component of the research process. With the youth participants, weekly workshops were designed on a rolling basis depending on the occurrences that took place the week prior. For example, during the first workshop – which was based on the theme: ‘celebration’ – the concept of identity became a core area of interest for the youth participants. They also expressed a desire to engage in improvisation (improv). Therefore, the following workshop focussed on the theme of ‘identity’ primarily through improv exercises. Similarly, the educator workshop was designed in a way that incorporated emerging themes from the youth workshop. For example, devised scenes from the youth workshops were discussed and performed by the educator participants.

The Collective of Researchers on Educational Disappointment and Desire (CREDD)—a research group that was founded in 2006 in New York City—looked to PAR as a means to stand “in opposition to the kinds of research that have been and continue to be used for domination” (p.

51). Researchers who are developing PAR studies may look to CREDD's definition as a guideline:

there is transparency on all matters of the research; the research questions are co-constructed; the project design and design of research methods are collaboratively negotiated and co-constructed; analysis is co-constructed; and the products of the research are dynamic, interactive, and are prepared and disseminated in collaboration (Tuck et al., 2008, p. 51).

To conduct ethically grounded research, one of the founders of CREDD, Eve Tuck, consistently emphasizes the importance of community collaboration in all research processes (Tuck, 2009a, 2009b; Tuck et al., 2008). To achieve this, leaning on Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) methodologies may prove helpful for researchers. CBPR carries similar goals to those of Participatory Action Research. Broadly, CPBR focuses on equitable involvement of all partners in the research process. The approach begins with community, and must ensure that the research is of importance to those it implicates (O'Connor & Anderson, 2020). Additionally, CBPR emphasizes a commitment to transparency within research (2020).

Considering the complementary goals and shared values of community, collaboration, empowerment and agency within CPBR, PAR, and ATAR processes, their combination can offer a dynamic structure for ethically grounded studies. The methods can be used as a means to augment one another (Kandil, 2014). Given this research project sought to explore the ways in which theatre could enhance feelings of safety and inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students in remote communities— an exploration that could not be done without full participation of the individuals it implicates—CBPR, PAR, and ATAR were the most suitable methods to design this research project.

Ethics

In Applied Theatre projects, facilitators must negotiate the presence of complex power dynamics and diverse agendas amongst their participants, as well as within themselves (Kandil, 2014).

Many Applied Theatre practitioners and scholars have grappled with ethics in their work, which often extend far beyond the required institutional ethics that are involved when conducting research in communities (Owis et al., 2022). For example, in the *LGBTQ Families Speak Out / Out at School* research project, the team describes the concept of care as a value sewn into the fabric of their work together (Owis et al., 2022).

The importance of grounding community-based work with an ethos of care has been echoed by other scholars in the field of Applied Theatre. In *Applied Theatre Ethics*, Sadeghi-Yekta and Prendergast write of three guiding “red threads” to conduct ethical work with community members, which are: presence, service, and care (2022, p. 7). Their metaphor of a red thread refers to weaving, “in which the red thread allows the weaver to follow the pattern” (Fox & Dauber, 1999, p. 65).

In conceptualizing the first red thread of service, they state: “if we can begin to see the work we do as applied theatre artists as a form of service, we will develop a *cleaner* understanding of reciprocity and collaboration” (p. 8). The thread of service was inspired by their work with Indigenous artists and communities, where their collaborators have asked the question: “how can I be of service to you?” (p. 8). Quoting Diane Taylor, Sadeghi-Yekta and Prendergast present their second red thread of: presence. Presence means to be “present among, with, and to, walking and talking with others” (Taylor, 2020, p. 4). Lastly, they discuss their third red thread, which is care. Embodying the third red thread of care happens in real time, and means that one is fundamentally implicated with the performance and work taking place (p. 10).

Care means to accept responsibility for others with a sense of reciprocity. The three threads of presence, service, and care can serve as helpful ethical guides throughout the duration of Applied Theatre work, particularly in community.

For practitioners who may be working in communities whose cultural backgrounds and lived experiences are different from their own, Dwight Conquergood has attempted to map out the potential ethical pitfalls they may embody (Conquergood, 2013). While his diagram focusses on ethnography and performance, an understanding of these ethical pitfalls is helpful to understand and anticipate for all creative work that involves collaboration with communities in which a facilitator enters as an outsider. The diagram below shows the four ethical pitfalls that Conquergood describes as “morally problematic” (p. 70).

Situated between detachment and commitment, Conquergood names the four pitfalls to be: ‘The Custodian’s Rip-Off,’ ‘The Skeptic’s Cop-Out,’ ‘The Enthusiast’s Infatuation,’ and ‘The Curators Exhibitionism.’ The four pitfalls are “graphically represented as the extreme corners of a moral map,” whereas the “center of the map represents the moral center that transcends and reconciles the spin-off extremes” (p. 70). He explains that the centre of the diagram, which is titled ‘Dialogic Performance,’ holds tension from all four quadrants to reach a point where individuals can “question, debate, and challenge one another” (p. 75). Dialogic performance is where a path towards “genuine understanding of others” (p.75) might emerge. Descriptions of the pitfalls are noted directly below the diagram.

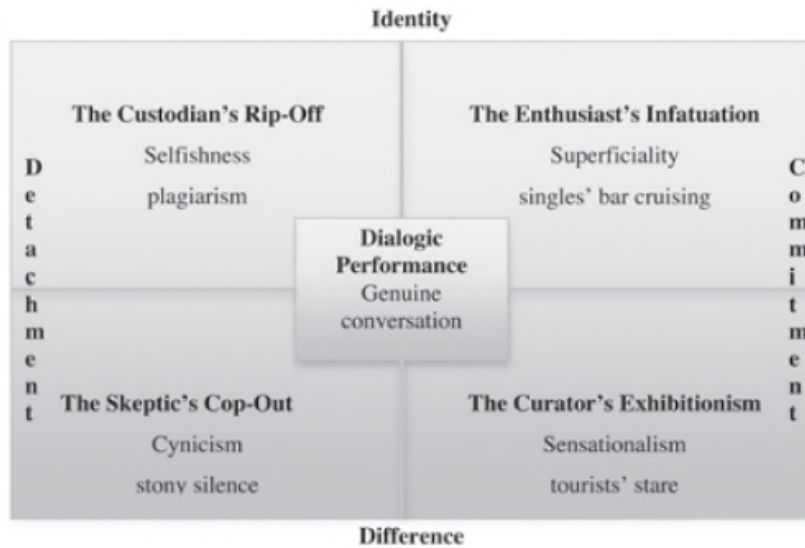


Figure 3: Moral Mapping of Performative Stances Towards the Other (Conquergood, 2013, p. 71).

‘The Custodian’s Rip-Off’ is an ethical pitfall associated with selfishness, where alongside extreme detachment there may be an “overriding motive of ‘finding good performance material’” (p. 70). According to Conquergood, this ethical pitfall neglects to seek genuine understanding or inquiry, ignores the sacredness of important cultural traditions and values, and can be compared to theft. Moving on to ‘The Enthusiast’s Infatuation’, this pitfall is “marked by superficiality” (p. 71); it involves quick-fix thinking, and shallow beliefs such as: “aren't all people really just alike?” (p. 72).

The next quadrant, titled the ‘The Curators Exhibitionism’ is the performance stance that aims to “astonish rather than understand,” and grows out of fascination with the “exotic, culturally remote, [or] primitive” (p. 73). Conquergood explains: “whereas the enthusiast assumed too easy an Identity with the other, the curator is committed to the Difference of the other” (p. 73). Finally, ‘The Skeptic’s Cop-Out,’ which is described as the “refuge of cowards and cynics,” is the moral stance Conquergood associates with paralyzing skepticism. He

describes this pitfall as the most “morally reprehensible” for the reason that “it forecloses dialogue” (p. 74) before an attempt is even made. The other pitfalls—however problematic they may be—leave room for learning and growth.

In this research, I was primarily entering the space as an outsider. Given my outsider status, I felt it was important to understand these ethical pitfalls so that when they emerged, I could demonstrate a sense of ownership related to my failings, ignorance, and biases. While the quadrants in Conquergood’s diagram represent extremes, he also explains them to represent a spectrum. Not only this, but I understood the pitfalls as fluid, and therefore, I, as a facilitator, may be entrapped in a pitfall from one rehearsal to the next, or one decision to the next. For this research, I tried to keep all of these ethical considerations and pitfalls in mind as I worked alongside my participant groups. I had hoped to work ethically as a practitioner and researcher, and to do so, I wanted to demonstrate values of honesty, humbleness, the ability to admit when I was wrong, and a commitment to reflexive presence.

Personal ethics

When I first began thinking about my research project, I grappled immensely with the moral and ethical considerations involved. Researchers speak of damage to communities when research processes are extractive (Tuck, 2009b). Would I be doing just that? What right did I have to conduct this research? While my sexual identity rendered me, in some small way, an insider to the queer community, my cultural identity was that of an outsider. As a white settler, I lack perspective in relation to the lived experiences of a person who is both queer and Indigenous. Further to this point—while not all of the research participants identified as Indigenous—I also do not know what it may be like to grow up as a queer person in the particular remote

community where the research took place. For these reasons, I knew there were complexities related to the lived experiences of my research participants that I would never understand. Before speaking to my research participants, I noted down a number of reflexive questions I thought were important for me to answer:

- How can I proceed with my research in a way that gives to the community, rather than takes away?
- How can I ensure my presence does not contribute to further damage, acknowledging the damage that my systemic complicity has already done?
- How can I peel back the layers of my biases to disrupt rather than reinforce damaging ways of thinking and doing?
- How do colonial values contribute to rhetoric related to the queer community, and how will my cultural identity reinforce these narratives?
- How can my skills work in celebration with and for the intersectional experiences of the queer community?
- As an outsider, how can I proceed with my research in a way that is always rooted in respect?

I list these questions as an ongoing reflexive process for myself, even as I write this chapter, with the understanding that no matter how I answer them now, these answers will never be complete responses. My process of learning, reflecting, and growing is constantly ongoing, and ethics are always living. The make-up of what a researcher's ethical commitment entails changes, morphs, or grows in each moment, and most importantly, is negotiated and co-constructed in real time with those you work alongside.

Theoretical framework and research design

Youth participatory workshops

Conceptualizing the project. Designing the youth component of the overall research project was an effort made in part with the teacher collaborators and youth participants involved. It is important I note here that while the students and teachers influenced the structure and design of the project, given I was hoping to evaluate the efficacy of the theatrical artform to foster inclusion, my intentions were to work through a dramatic and/or theatrical lens. I was transparent regarding my research intentions and dedication to working with an arts-based approach.

As an individual who previously lived in the community where the research took place, I thought perhaps a project like this might be of interest to the school. With this in mind, I first reached out to some personal contacts at the collaborating school in June, 2022, to see if an Applied Theatre project related to the experiences of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students might be something beneficial to them. I initially spoke with the drama teacher at the school who later looped in the two teacher leaders of the Queer Straight Alliance (QSA) Club the following September.

Upon meeting, the QSA leaders believed their students would be interested in participating, and explained that they would gauge their thoughts at the next club meeting. If the students were not interested, the project would not proceed. At this time, the teachers also mentioned that they would like to provide the option for the QSA clubs located in all remote communities to be part of the work digitally, if they wanted to. While I was hesitant to open up a digital aspect to the project given the theatre-based element of the work and my capacity to manage in-person and digital facilitation simultaneously, I also felt discomfort centering a project around a value of inclusion while failing to create access for participation. I confirmed

that if students from other communities were interested, I would find a way to design the project so that their voices could be included too.

In this case, the project would have likely been designed as follows: (1) digital workshops with the entire group; (2) in-person scene work with the students located at the collaborating high school (using themes from the large group digital workshops); and (3) large group workshops during Pride week. In the end, students from the further communities did not express interest in participating in the project. I am not certain why the students from afar were not interested in participating, but it could perhaps be attributed to a lack of experience with theatre, or a fear of discussing queer considerations while actually located within their communities with a stranger. The students and teachers did not know me, and projects such as this may require an established sense of trust to garner participation. Lack of engagement from the further communities will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

Late September, 2022, I received a note from one of the teacher collaborators stating that the QSA students in their location were interested, but wanted the opportunity to meet with me to ask more questions. On October 5th, 2022, I met with the students online and told them a little bit about myself. The students asked me questions about Applied Theatre, the types of activities we might be doing, and what the project would look like if they were to participate. I shared some possibilities: we could simply gather with one another to participate in theatre activities and exercises, we could spend some time devising scenes and perform for members in the group, or, if they were interested, we could spend time devising a play to show to an audience of teachers or other students.

After stating my openness and flexibility related to the project, I asked the students what they might be interested in doing. The students shared that they would be interested in gathering

as a group to participate in theatre exercises, and would maybe like to create scenes for one another. They also mentioned that they would like to re-evaluate the idea of presenting the scenes to outsiders based on their level of comfort as they went through the process. Finally, they explained that they were not interested in performing scenes for teachers at the school, and if they did present, they would like the ability to choose who the audience members would be. I agreed to this structure. I then asked if they would be comfortable that I take themes from our time together to facilitate a workshop with teachers at the school that discussed how they could create safer environments for 2S/LGBQIAP+ youth. I stated that this would be an aspect of my research. The students agreed they would be comfortable with this approach.

It was this meeting that made up the research design of the project: we would gather as a group for theatre-based workshops, explore some scene devising, and assess levels of comfortability along the way in relation to play devising and performance for outsiders. If the students were interested in performing, they would hand-pick their audience. With that said, there was no pressure or critical intention to perform or create a play at all.

Theoretical framework. When designing and conducting the research project, it was important to me that the process: (a) provide a sense of autonomy and self-determination to the youth participants (b) recognize the youth participants as important knowledge holders and experts of their own experiences (c) celebrate queer experiences. While these important goals were influenced by literature surrounding 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth (as discussed in Chapter 2), they were also important to me in relation to navigating my personal identity as a researcher.

To explain further, my experience as a lesbian woman equipped me with enough knowledge to know that focusing on the difficulties of being queer would not be helpful to my

participants, and would instead emphasize stories they may already know too well; my identity as a white-settler and cisgender woman meant that I carried biases that could perpetuate harm in research. For example, because of my identity, I have unconscious biases related to white-centered systems of power and hegemonic gender norms. In the words that I say, and activities that I facilitate, it is possible (and likely) for these unconscious biases to surface. The surfacing of these biases may render participants feeling misheard and/or misunderstood. For these reasons, I was deeply inspired by Eve Tuck’s desire-based research framework, Homi Bhabha’s post-colonial theory of the ‘third-space’, and Dr. Yasmine Kandil’s emerging concept of Celebratory Theatre.

The following diagram graphically represents an ‘at a glance’ overview of the methods, guiding theories, and methodologies that made up the youth component of the research. The methodologies section shows the ways in which data was collected throughout the process. Further explanations related to desire-based research, the third-space, and Celebratory Theatre are noted directly below the diagram.

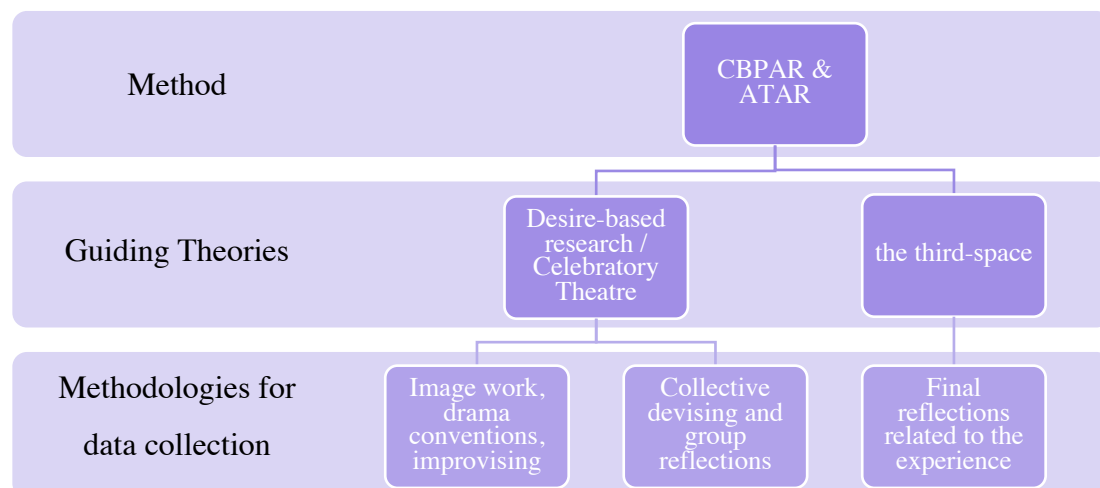


Figure 4: Overview of methods, guiding theories, and methodologies of the youth participatory workshops

Theorized by Indigenous scholar Eve Tuck, desire-based research is a call for educational researchers, practitioners, and communities to imagine new theories of change in research (2009b). Tuck argues that much of the research involving communities who are historically disenfranchised has been ‘damage-focused,’ where “one of the major activities is to document pain or loss in an individual, community, or tribe” (p. 413). Instead, Tuck offers an “antidote” to damage-centered research: “to craft our research to capture *desire* instead of damage” (p. 416). Desire-based research frameworks, she explains, “are concerned with understanding complexity, contradiction, and the self-determination of lived lives” (p. 416). In this way, desire-based research does not simply focus on pain and loss, but also acknowledges a communities’ wisdom and hope.

A critical understanding involved in a desire-based research framework is that of complex personhood, which is described as: “conferring the respect on others that comes from presuming that life and people’s lives are simultaneously straightforward and full of enormously subtle meaning” (Gordon, 1997, p. 5). As such, a desire-based research framework allows space for “exploring the complexity of personhood, including contradictions, complicities, and interdependencies” (Conrad, 2020, p. 264) that make up an individual’s whole self.

Desire-based research is a complementary guiding light to that of Celebratory Theatre. Celebratory Theatre draws on experiences of a particular community to form a narrative that represents their strength. These stories do not negate the hardships that individuals have faced, but also takes time to “recognize [their] courage and resilience” (Kandil & te Bokkel, 2019, p. 158). When those who have shared their stories see them played out on stage, they witness an ending that emphasizes resilience and hope. Thus, the experience affords an opportunity for individuals to focus on hope in real life too.

This study attempted to honour desire-based research processes and Celebratory Theatre with the youth participants in deliberate ways. Some examples include: (a) allowing the youth participants autonomy related to their participation (i.e., youth were welcome to step out of any activity; youth participants also directed theatre processes as a group by deciding how to proceed with scene work, devising, and performance—these processes only went forward based on their desire to continue or not); (b) the first workshop conducted with the youth was based on the theme of celebration which set a tone for our work together; and (c) organically, the youth participants focussed on hope and societal progress in their scene work .

Just as desire-based research and Celebratory Theatre honour the complexity of the human experience, theories of the third-space focus on creating spaces where many truths are allowed to exist at once. Homi Bhabha, a cultural theorist, initially created the concept of the third-space (Buckreis, 2012, p. 275). Bhabha proposed that, in an environment where “the dominant culture tries to control and assimilate other cultures on *its* term”, there is a need for a third space, where hegemonic relationships can be disrupted and transformed into a place of hybridity (p. 275). As Buckreis states: “unlike homogenization, which seeks to eliminate or reconcile differences, hybridization embraces differences in the creation of something new” (p. 275). Bhabha argued that the third-space does not intend to ignore differences, but rather honours differences in such a way that a transformed space of learning, appreciation, and growth begins to emerge. Through acknowledging difference— a space of inherent tension—we are propelled into new ways of thinking, knowing, and doing.

Given the multitude of identities that exist within the queer community, as well as the systemic inequity that impacts individuals who are both queer and BIPOC, the concept of the third-space is helpful to understand. This particular research project brought together students of

different queer identities as well as different cultural identities, and it was important to think about the ways in which a space could be created to honour these differences. In attempt to build a third-space, I as a facilitator, tried my best to focus on ethical values of trust, honesty, and ensemble building throughout our time together.

The theories described above made up the basis of my theoretical framework when approaching the youth participatory workshops. They served as guiding lights throughout the process, and helped me to make decisions throughout the duration of the field work as the project evolved and shifted along the way. These theories were intentionally selected to avoid damage-centered narratives in the research that would posit the youth participants as ‘vulnerable,’ ‘oppressed’, or ‘at-risk.’ Instead, I hoped that these theories would help acknowledge the youth participants as beautifully complex people, experts of their own experiences, and autonomous beings in relation to their own personal boundaries and desires. The ways in which these theories manifested in actual practice, as well as the activities carried out with the participants will be described in further detail in Chapter 4.

Educator participatory workshop

Theoretical framework. Educators play a critical role in creating the daily environments students are a part of, and therefore, are placed in key positions to foster change for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth. The educator workshop was meant to be informed by the voices of the youth participants in the study, but designed in such a way that avoided a ‘pedagogy of exposure’ (which was discussed in Chapter 2) (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018). The distinct attention paid to avoiding a pedagogy of exposure was informed by the youth participants and the boundaries they had expressed during the initial conceptualization of the project.

Two theories guided the educator component of the workshop: critical pedagogy and queer theory. The following diagram graphically demonstrates an ‘at a glance’ overview of the methods, guiding theories, and methodologies that made up the educator workshop. The methodologies section shows the ways in which data was collected throughout the process.

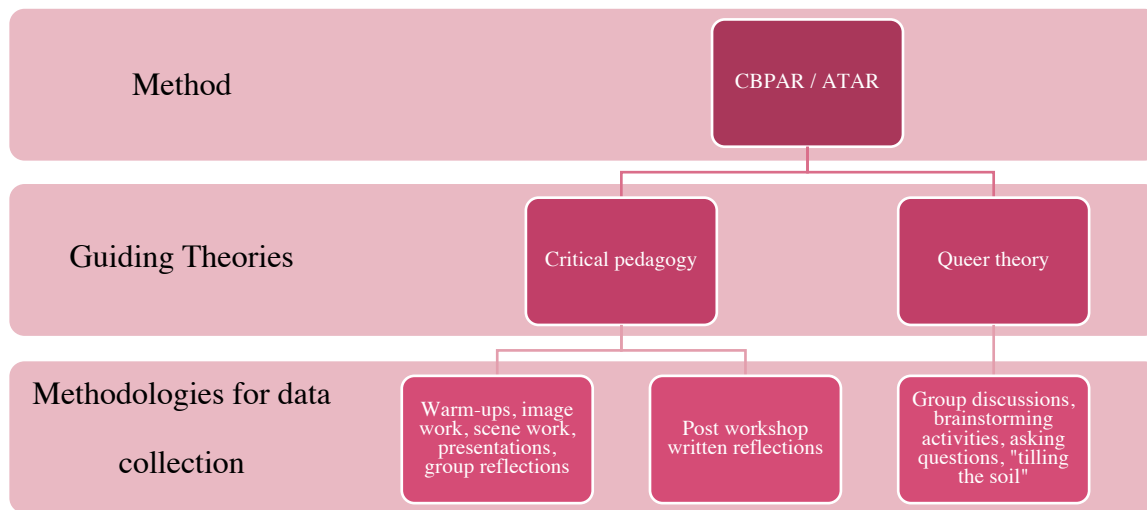


Figure 6: Overview of methods, guiding theories, and methodologies of educator component

Critical pedagogy is an educational theory with roots in the work of Paulo Freire, which combines “critical reflection and action” (Conrad, 2020, p. 261) to reveal the structures and systems that influence ways in which the world is really working. Critical pedagogy surrounds itself amongst values of social justice and empowerment. In an educational context, the pedagogy hopes to inspire students into action based on “an active engaged curriculum that enables children to question, challenge and remake their reality” (O’Connor, 2013, p. 127). Applied Theatre scholars often look to theories of critical pedagogy to complement their praxis. For example, Sheila Preston argues that critical pedagogy can be “a natural bedfellow for the Applied Theatre practitioner attempting to apply theoretical agendas of social justice and transformation into practice, but in a critical and reflexive way” (2016, p. 22).

For this particular research, the educator workshop was meant to be a space for teachers to engage in meaningful discussions surrounding the experiences of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students at their school; and through drama activities, to be inspired to foster more inclusive spaces for these students. Therefore, critical pedagogy was a suitable theory to frame the workshop. However, given critical theory “does not always specifically identify heteronormativity and cisnormativity as an agent of oppression” (Tomczyk, 2020, p. 55), scholars argue that queer theory can be used as means to intensify critical pedagogy (Hackford-Peer, 2019).

Tomczyk describes the process of ‘queering’ to mean that the work is situated in “a non-heteronormative, and a non-cisnormative perspective” (Tomczyk, 2020, p. 1) where current ways of knowing, being, and doing might be challenged. However, he also states that “defining queer theory is exceptionally problematic as it defies closure and remains in the process of ambiguous (un)becoming” (p. 54). To ‘queer’ as a verb means to question, to be in “constant flux” (p. 54), to be comfortable in the unknown. In further describing queer theory, Tomczyk quotes Jagose to state: “it is not simply that queer has yet to solidify and take on a more consistent profile, but rather that its definitional indeterminacy, its elasticity, is one of its constituent characteristics” (1996, p. 1). With that said, one key characteristic of queering for Tomczyk means to open up “ideas to imagine other possibilities” (2020, p. 2).

Just as Tomczyk did, I, too, turned to queer theory to “interrogate our implicit, taken-for-granted assumptions of heteronormativity and cisnormativity that lead to homophobia, biphobia and transphobia within schools”; and to critical pedagogy for its “focus on democracy, freedom, social justice, and ethics” (p. 56). These two theories helped to ground the educator workshop, and influenced the activities that made up our three-hours together. For example, the workshop design attempted to provide a space for educators to consider the additional difficulties queer

youth face, and how those difficulties might be alleviated. More information related to the ways in which these theories manifested themselves in actual practice, as well as the activities carried out with the participants, will be further described in Chapter 4.

Although the educator participatory workshop relied upon the youth participatory workshops, the goals of each component were not the same. The youth workshops aimed to generate feelings of inclusion for youth participants by constructing a dramatic space where students could explore their identities and experiences without judgement. The educator workshop sought to evaluate how drama might be an effective tool to begin conversations related to how to foster safer environments for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students within a professional context. Given each group was composed of different participants with very specific goals, they both required their own unique theoretical frameworks to serve as authentic guiding lights throughout the research process.

Chapter 4: Field notes

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a detailed account of the youth participatory workshops and the educator participatory workshop. These details are provided to better understand why particular decisions were made throughout the process, as well as to reveal which pertinent occurrences led to the research findings described in Chapter 5. This chapter also provides context related to each participant group and describes an overall timeline of the project.

The field research for the project took place in-person at a secondary school located in a remote community within the Northwest Territories, from May 10th to June 11th, 2023. The timeline was specifically chosen based on the resources that the teachers and students had to offer (however, I was willing to stay longer). Throughout this time, I facilitated a series of drama workshops and devising sessions with the youth participants. The educators who led the Queer / Straight Alliance (QSA) club were present at all sessions. I also facilitated a workshop with educators, which included the two QSA leaders. The structure of the workshops and the ways in which participants responded to their contents will be discussed in detail throughout this chapter.

Prior to beginning the in-person research, an information session was held digitally with the youth participants to discuss ethical protocols, review data collections processes, distribute consent forms, etc. I also hosted an information session for the educator participants for the same purpose. On May 8th, I went to the school to meet the teachers, receive a tour of the QSA room and drama space, as well as meet the in-school counselor the students would have access to throughout the process. I am not aware of any instances where the students utilized the counselor throughout the project, however, they were informed that this was an option available to them. The students already knew the counselor prior to our time together. In hindsight, it would have been beneficial to discuss the experiences of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth at the school with the

counselor. However, throughout the planning stages of the project, I did have an opportunity to speak with the QSA teachers about their students' experiences prior to beginning the workshops. These conversations gave me a sense of the group's dynamics, as well as some of the difficulties the youth might be facing at home and/or within the community.

Youth participatory workshops

The initial plan for the youth workshops were to meet with the students during their QSA Club meeting time, which took place once a week throughout a 70-minute lunch break. My work with the youth would take place in the month leading up to Pride, where my teacher collaborators had planned a three-day event for QSA Club students from across the Beaufort Delta region. Some of the planned activities included: songwriting with a Two-Spirit Indigenous artist, workshops with the Northern Mosaic Network, a movie screening of a Pride related documentary, and more. The teachers had also planned the community Pride Parade during this time. Therefore, we scheduled the research project to take place the month prior to Pride, as the students would already be helping prepare for the events, and the project could act as a compliment to the upcoming activities. Not only this, but if the students did decide to create a performance piece, the youth from the remote communities would be present in-person as possible audience members.

Given we were only meeting once per week, I was nervous about the limited time I would have with the students. However, I wanted to structure the research in a way that considered the resources the school and students had to offer. Furthermore, the workshop schedule aligned with the desire the youth participants had expressed to simply participate in theatre workshops first and decide later if they'd like to continue exploring this medium of work. We had agreed that if the students did want to spend more time exploring, additional sessions

would be added later on. Throughout my time spent with the youth, they did express a desire to continue our work together. The following timeline shows the workshops and devising sessions that took place with the youth participants.

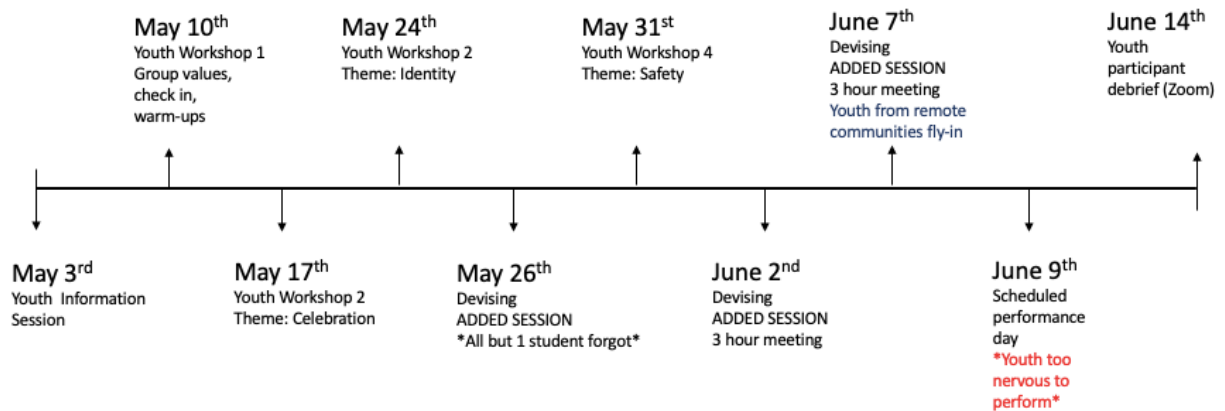


Figure 6: Timeline of youth participatory workshops

Participants

To maintain confidentiality, the youth participants selected their own pseudonyms, which will be referred to throughout this chapter. In total, six youth took part in the drama-based workshops over the course of the project. Four of these youth (Micah (any pronouns), Link (she/her), Sammy (she/her), and Raymond (she/her)) consistently attended the workshops, while one participant attended three workshops (Dreadnought, he/him), and another attended only one workshop (Yip (she/her)). All four of the consistent youth participants, Micah, Link, Sammy, and Raymond, were interested in devising scenes, however, Raymond did not want to perform in the scenes that were created.

The participants varied in age and grade level, but were all in secondary school (grades 7-12). Given the small size of the school, the specific age and grade levels are not noted as an

additional means to maintain student confidentiality. Beyond asking their preferred pronouns, I did not ask the participants to formally identify their cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, and/or gender identity. As members of the QSA, it could be assumed that all participants identified as members of the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community, or allies. However, over the course of our work together, the participants openly identified themselves when and how they felt comfortable. In relation to cultural backgrounds, the youth participant group was made up of Indigenous and white students. In terms of queerness, there was an array of representation from youth, who identified as bi-sexual, pan-sexual, asexual, lesbian, and gay. One youth participant described themselves as an ally. While some participants were experimenting with pronouns, no participant specifically identified themselves as transgender and/or non-binary at the particular time the project took place.

The workshops

As a facilitator, I did not predetermine the workshop contents or their focus themes prior to conducting the research. Instead, I planned for the first two workshops (ensemble building and celebration) and based on how the sessions unfolded, I planned for the next week. As mentioned previously, this was a deliberate decision based on the spiral method of PAR (Kandil, 2014). Excluding the two devising sessions that were added later on, I facilitated four workshops in total. Their themes were: ensemble building, celebration, identity, and safety. The workshops will be discussed first, and the devising sessions will be discussed afterwards.

Workshop 1: Ensemble building. This workshop was the first time I met the youth participants in person. Therefore, I felt it was important to establish a sense of rapport with them. For this session, there were three participants: Micah, Link, and Raymond. The workshop began

with introductions, as well as a brief check-in where the students shared a number from 1-10 that represented their energy and a colour that represented their mood. The youth really enjoyed these check-ins and it became a ritual they looked forward to at each meeting. After the check in, we took some time to establish our values for working creatively together as a group. These values were something we looked at and adjusted every time we met throughout the process. The values that the youth contributed included: 'respect', 'communication', 'understanding', 'jokes', 'be aware of each other's triggers', 'speak freely but be mindful', 'keep feedback constructive', and 'least amount of peer pressure possible'. In later sessions, I asked if they were willing to add the value: 'try to step out of comfort zone'. I suggested this addition because, throughout our first session, I noticed the youth often stepped out of particular activities and watched from the side. With such a small group, this meant we could not engage in some of the activities I'd planned. The youth participants welcomed my suggestion, and over time, they stepped out of the activities less often.

After our group values were established, we played a series of drama warm-ups that would introduce the youth to upcoming activities that may follow throughout our time together (i.e., 'complete the image' (Boal, 2005) to prepare the participants for future image work). Because we were only meeting for an hour, I felt it was important to take adequate time for warm-ups so that I could establish a relationship with the group and generate excitement amongst them for the work that lay ahead. I was also trying to prioritize a sense of ensemble building with the notion of the 'third-space' guiding the research.

Workshop 2: Celebration. The purpose of this workshop was to celebrate the identities of the youth participants. The session had four participants in total: Micah, Link, Raymond, and Dreadnought. Given the research intended to find ways to cultivate a safe space for

2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth, it was important for their identities to be affirmed through the lens of joy. Following the check-in, review of group values, and warm-ups, the workshop began with the youth participants brainstorming answers to the following questions: ‘What do you love about your identity?’ ‘When have you felt most proud of yourself? / Where do you feel most yourself?’ ‘What do you love about your community?’ ‘What do you think 2S/LGBTQIAP+ people can teach the world?’ The youth participants really enjoyed answering these questions.

In response to the first question of identity, their answers included: “being a lesbian”, elements of their appearance (i.e., “my lovey face”), references to their friendships, hobbies, and ability to accept others, as well as their cultural backgrounds (i.e., one participant wrote: Indigenouness). In response to feeling proud or most like themselves, answers included: multiple references to being with their friends, engaging in their hobbies, talking to their pets, or being in their room. One participant referenced talking with their grandmother, which was the only reference to family. References to school were not mentioned in this question.

When asked what they loved about their community, many answers came up, including: acceptance, culture, Indigenous culture, family, love, respect, people, animals, religion, etc. This was an interesting set of responses in contrast to the others; it was clear that the participants could identify many things they loved about their community. However, during my time working with the students, they had also expressed feeling worry at times about fitting in within the community. This example demonstrates the need to see the participants’ experiences as complex (Tuck, 2009). For example, while they may love many elements of their community, they may simultaneously feel worry related to the acceptance of queer identities within the community.

Finally, in response to the final question related to what queer people can teach the world, students said: gay love, hope, acceptance of identity, inspiration, how to discover yourself, community, and individualism (in relation to being unique).

After brainstorming these questions, the youth participants were then asked to choose one word that stood out to them from their answers, and as a group, create a still image to represent the word. I had originally broken the group of four into two groups of two for their brainstorming, but I could sense discomfort when I asked them to create their still images. In my field notes, I wrote that in this moment, they seemed to “get lost in the process” (Field Notes, May 17th, 2023, Mailloux). For this particular workshop, it was Dreadnought’s first time coming to any QSA meeting, and he was not present during our ensemble building session. Because the other students were good friends with one another, had previously attended QSA meetings, and were all at the earlier workshop with me, it was clear that they were a tight knit group. The presence of the new participant gave way to a new dynamic amongst the students. In that moment, I offered that they could all create a series of images together as a large group, which they gladly accepted. ‘Love’ was the word that students had chosen to create an image of, where they depicted three different types of love: love between friends, a romantic proposal between two women, and a family portrait.

At that time, I was hoping to explore themes with more depth. In the moment, I decided to change focus. Instead, I called out words from their responses to the questions that I felt could lead to fruitful image work. I gave them 10 seconds to think on their feet and create an image in real time. The students really enjoyed this type of rapid-fire creation. The most striking word I called out was simply the word: identity. In this image, without planning or discussion, each student assumed their own unique position. One student was posed in a hunting position to

represent her Indigenous culture. Another student appeared to be reading a book. The other student was slouched forward with a concerned look on her face; she held out her hands in front of her in something that looked like a ball. Finally, the last student appeared to be holding a pair of binoculars in front of his face, looking out into the distance.

I then tapped each student on the shoulder and asked them to reveal a word or phrase they were thinking or feeling in the moment. Some of these responses were quite striking: one said the word ‘Indigenous.’ The student who held binoculars said the word: ‘searching.’ The student who had taken the pose with her hand held out in front said the word: ‘struggle.’ This became a prominent theme that remained consistent through all of the workshops: the students’ sense of struggle or confusion in grappling with their identities.

After our image work, I brought the students together for a reflection. I asked the students questions about what resonated with them from our work together. During this time, the group stated that they really enjoyed exploring items related to the concept of identity. When asked to explain further, Micah stated: “because identity is a big part of everyone’s life, and it’s fun to find ways to express it. And a lot of identity, especially here, it’s linked to, like, community.” In agreeance with Micah’s point, Link explained that she also enjoyed the explorations of identity because:

identity is a part of, well, identity is who you are and you know it’s very important to know about and learn about. And, also, when you feel most like yourself because a lot of times it’s interesting to think about genuine connections with people, and also yourself too. So, yeah, I just found that very interesting to think about.

Afterwards, the youth described their desire to act out scenes and engage in improvisation (improv). Based on their feedback, I designed the following workshop around the theme of identity.

Workshop 3: Identity. Through character building, this workshop was meant to provide the youth with opportunities to explore and experiment with different aspects of identity. For the workshop, two new participants joined: Sammy and Yip. Dreadnought, Micah, and Link also attended. Like the workshops previously, we checked-in as a group, went over our values, and did warm-ups. Afterwards, I created a playing area, and asked if anyone would like to pull from a hat of improv prompts to create a scene. After pulling a prompt, the students were given time to prepare. The students had specifically asked me to do improv, and were very excited to get started. They freely volunteered each time, switching up the group and including everyone without me having to coordinate. While there were times throughout the duration of my time with the youth where I felt moments of tension arise between the Dreadnought and the QSA regulars (Micah, Link Sammy, Raymond, and Yip), the dynamics of their scene work in this workshop was very inclusive, and allowed everyone to challenge one another.

I believe that the moments where students were actually bringing scenes to life might have been, for our group, the most authentic demonstration of the third-space theory in practice. In these scenes, the youth seemed to put aside any existing dynamics in the group to come together and create a fictional world. In these fictional worlds, each person was included. They explored many different identities from trans, bi-sexual, asexual, straight, and lesbian characters. They also found moments to challenge stereotypes that are influencing the current political climate. For example, Micah would often create homophobic and transphobic characters and

prompt their scene partners to educate the character. In many scenes, the students focused on affirming one another while acting as teachers, best friends, and allies standing against injustice. In total, the students improvised and created six scenes during this session. As a facilitator, I felt energized by the lively spirit the youth participants offered during this workshop. In tandem, I sensed that the youth felt energized by the content we were exploring. Some of the youth stated that they really enjoyed the prompts because they could “actually create something with them.”

During our reflection at the end of this workshop, I inventoried the students to see how they felt about continuing our work together. I asked if they would like to stay with the workshops we’d been doing, or if they wanted to add sessions to create scenes or a play. I also asked if they might like to devise something to perform to the incoming youth travelling from the remote communities for the Pride events. The youth were immediately excited about this possibility, stating that it would be fun and they were interested in doing so. Therefore, I worked with the teachers to schedule an additional three meetings with the youth who were interested. The students forgot about one of our planned meetings, and therefore we only met for an additional two three-hour sessions.

The scenes that were improvised during this workshop ended up serving as a starting point throughout the upcoming devising sessions. With permission, I also took a handful of the most fruitful and authentic scenes that the students improvised from these prompts and incorporated them into my work with the educator participants later on. The scenes that were selected for the educator workshop were based on: the identities of the characters (i.e. I wanted to ensure that the scenes showcased diverse queer representation), and the relational dynamics of the characters (i.e. scenes between students, teachers, and counselors provided a direct path to discuss queer considerations in school environments).

Workshop 4: Safety. The reason the theme of safety was selected for this workshop was based on an intention to understand the ways in which these particular students define safety on their terms. I had hoped to take learnings from the youth to their teachers, so that we could discuss how safe spaces are unique to specific individuals. I had specifically mentioned these intentions to the youth participants during the workshop. The youth participants in attendance included: Link, Raymond, Sammy, Micah, and Dreadnought.

I was pleased to see that Dreadnought continued to attend our sessions, as he was quite shy and the previous sessions with me were his only exposure to the QSA club up to that point. He was entering into a very close group of youth who were already friends; he was also the only male identifying participant. This, I think, made a challenging dynamic for him to try and integrate into. I do believe that the theatre activities provided an easier way for him to feel comfortable in the space, as the exercises inherently required inclusion of each person in the room. With that said, the theatre work was not long enough to penetrate the group dynamics in a tangible way so that he could fulsomely feel included. Perhaps with more dedicated time to work creatively as group, a shift in dynamic would have been possible.

On this particular day, the youth participants entered the space with a heightened, unfocused energy. I took immediate note of their energy during our check-in, as I was acutely aware that some of the content I had planned to discuss that day required more seriousness than we had explored up to this point. During the check-in, I discussed the workshop content for the day, and stated that it might require focus from them. They listened and were keen to get started; however, even before beginning our warm-ups, their conversations quickly reverted to jokes among themselves and I found it difficult to maintain their attention. Nonetheless, I tried to press

on. Outside of our devising sessions, I knew this would be my last opportunity to gather information from the larger group of youth participants and so I felt the time was precious.

My original workshop plan included a check-in, group values review, and warm-ups. After that, I had planned a quick brainstorm of the word ‘safety.’ Using their responses, I would prompt them to create a still image. Afterwards, I had planned to do an adaptation of the exercise ‘What does it take to pass?’ from the *Artful anti-oppression tool-kit* (Tremblay et al., 2016). Once we’d done this exercise, I had planned reflection questions, and then another brainstorming session. Afterwards, I had hoped to break them into groups for a scene writing exercise where I would provide them an opportunity to actually write scenes that I would take to their teachers.

Upon reflection, this was clearly a poorly planned workshop; not only was it improperly timed in a significant way, but the flow was disjointed and the exercises did not lead into each other. Perhaps even more importantly was that after this workshop I realized that instead of prioritizing the youth participants and what might be meaningful for them, I was prioritizing my upcoming workshop with the educator participants. In the end, we did not get to the second brainstorming, or to the scene writing. We only managed to get to my adaptation of the exercise ‘What does it take to pass?’ and even still, we ran short of reflection time. This was because I had stopped our work after the still image activity to do a breathing exercise with the youth. Their energy had remained unfocused, and I wanted to bring them to a more concentrated place before I launched into an exercise that had the potential to be vulnerable.

After the workshop, I felt immediate guilt for running low on reflection time. This was because at the very end, I did reach a point of vulnerability with the youth participants. In the exercise, I had laid tape through the center of the room. On one side, I explained that it was a place where they felt completely safe and comfortable. I asked them to walk around in that

space. I then explained that the line represented an artificial border that they crossed each day (whether it represented school, a class, a room, a store, etc.) where they might have to make changes about themselves to feel comfortable and safe. As they walked in their place of safety, I asked them to cross the border. I later stopped their walking, and asked them what they felt when they crossed the border.

A few interesting things happened during this exercise: one participant, who was wearing a shirt over her clothes that said the word lesbian on it, took off her shirt and spoke out loud saying: 'I can't be as gay at home.' Another student, whose body language completely changed into a smaller version of herself, explained that when she crossed the border, she was worried about how others might perceive her. The third participant described feeling very comfortable at home, but when she went out into the community felt like she was in a 'wolf-den.' Finally, Dreadnought described his experience crossing the border as: "I don't feel seen, I don't feel heard, I feel like nobody cares." The bell rang shortly after this, and I didn't have an opportunity to bring us into a circle together and check-in before they went to class.

I was immediately uncomfortable with how the session went, and had a conversation with the teacher (who was present in the room for the workshop) afterwards to see what she thought. She didn't express concern, but I felt I had done a disservice to the youth, and without proper reflection time, a disservice to the practice of Applied Theatre. I later contacted another teacher I had been working with who had a close relationship with Dreadnought. I asked him if he was able to quickly check in with him, and let him know that I really valued his participation. The teacher did check in on the student, who hadn't thought as much about the activity as I had. With that said, I believe that I was particularly worried about this session because in an unintentional way, I had entered (in a very short time) into one of the deepest rings of the drama spiral; by

having the youth artificially cross into areas where they might not be comfortable and safe, I was potentially asking them to access unresolved difficulties in their lives that they might be currently struggling with.

While I was designing the content of this workshop, I needed to consider the activities with more thought. In the end, I don't believe I learned any new information from the youth that I didn't already know by doing this exercise. Not only this, but I don't believe the exercise felt good for the participants and thus did not contribute to my intention to create a safe space through drama. The youth had already expressed they wanted to do theatre work for themselves, not to send messages to their teachers. Therefore, in many ways, asking them to write scenes would have gone against the initial agreements we made together, and I could have run into the potential of losing their trust.

Immediately after this workshop, I realized I had designed the content with my own agenda in mind. I had forgotten to honour the key question in designing an Applied Theatre workshop: who is this for? On this day, I wrote in my field notes:

Today was a very weird session, and I think I made a few mistakes as a facilitator. I really wanted to gather some information related to what safety means to them in particular so I could take that to my teacher workshop. Perhaps my priorities were more dedicated to that today than the youth, I don't know (...). I am now grappling with my experience as a facilitator, realizing how subjective these projects can be and how reliant they are on the efficacy of the facilitator. With a different facilitator, the programming would be completely different too. A lot of this relies on trusting your gut in the moment, and sometimes we might be wrong (Field Notes, May 31st, 2023, Mailloux).

This workshop was perhaps the low point of my time in the field, and if I could do anything differently, I would redesign the content in a way that stays true to my youth participants. For example, I might have chosen to create a workshop surrounding the future and how the participants wish to see themselves, their school, and community evolve in the years to come. Or, I may have created a space to explore the moments they've felt most seen and accepted. With irony, none of the content that was elicited in this workshop ended up being incorporated into my workshop with the educators. As this was my last session with the full group, I didn't feel there was an appropriate time to address what happened in the workshop. With that said, if I could go back, I would make more of an effort create a space where a discussion would have been possible.

The devising sessions

Four youth participants were interested in devising a 'mini play' to perform to the incoming youth travelling from the remote communities for the Pride events: Link, Micah, Sammy, and Raymond. The three youth who were interested in performing did have some experience in theatre before, and therefore seemed more comfortable working with the artform than the other participants. I did not pressure any of the participants to create a mini play, and expressed many times that we would only take on the goal if it was something they wanted to do. I felt nervous to press on given our limited sessions together and my knowledge of the time it takes to create a performance from scratch. However, the youth still expressed their desire to continue the devising work and given their interest, I felt excited about the prospect.

We added a total of six hours to devise and rehearse a mini performance. While this was not a lot of time to create any type of performance, the students were talented at working with

improvisation, and so we decided the piece would be a structured improv performance: we knew what would happen in the scenes, but their exact lines would change each time.

Our time together devising was exciting, fun, and, I believe, a meaningful exercise. To prompt their creativity, I brought in a list of scenes that had already been improvised as a starting point. I also laid out a variety of additional improvisation prompts on the ground for them to read. Some of the prompts included things like: 'I want people in the community to understand that...', 'I feel really understood by you because...', 'love is like...' They discussed some of the prompts that stood out to them, and improvised a few more scenes. In the end, the students decided that the story would be centered around three characters who were 'queer fairies' travelling to earth. Each fairy was responsible for checking on a respective human grappling with their queer identity. They decided that, for the humans, they would each explore a scene that represented their own personal queer identities. Therefore, the scenes they devised represented a bi-sexual experience, an asexual experience, and a pan-sexual experience/an experience that would challenge the need to label oneself altogether. A detailed summary of the performance that we created can be found in the appendix.

On the day of the performance, I went to the school early to begin setting up. The youth from the remote communities had arrived two days earlier. However, when I went into the QSA room, my youth participants described feeling very nervous, and expressed that they didn't want to perform. They said that it felt, 'too close to home,' and they didn't know if it was 'the right crowd.' I immediately told them not to worry, and let the teacher know we wouldn't be performing. At no point through the process did I want the youth participants to perform if they were not comfortable. I was also acutely aware that the play represented elements of their own

experiences, which is a vulnerable process. I stayed for the rest of the day, and got ready for the parade with the youth participants.

The week after the Pride events, I met with the youth participants to debrief the project. I asked them if they were willing to discuss more about what they felt on the day of the performance. In reflection Micah expressed:

I felt nervous, but I kind of wanted to do it. But then at the same time, I felt like it would have been nice to do it another time. It just didn't feel like the right people to perform for (...). It felt like it was expressing and exposing a part of me that I hadn't really done to a big group of people before.

Link agreed with the high level of vulnerability she felt in portraying a story that represented her own experience, despite various fictional elements we added to each scene. She continued on to say:

If we'd had more time to interact with the communities, like if we had a few more days—and it was hard because of schedules—but if we had more time with them, it'd be fine. Or, on the contrary, if we didn't have any experiences with them beforehand, that would also be fine.

These were incredibly insightful moments of feedback from the youth, where they expressed a heightened layer of vulnerability performing to an audience that they'd met and interacted with, but did not yet feel safe and comfortable with. These youth were acutely aware of their own emotional boundaries, and had been from the start of the project. In discussing the process of devising itself, Micah said: "It was amazing. I felt like I got to be myself. I feel a lot closer to you guys (*to the other participants*)."

Link echoed: "It was meaningful (...). Even though we didn't perform it, it was still a good experience." As an Applied Theatre facilitator,

this feedback was not of surprise to me. Applied Theatre is often process based, and the positive experiences that stem from collaborating with a group do not always need to be associated with a performance or product for the experience to generate community and feel worthwhile.

Educator participatory workshop

The educator workshop took place on June 5th, 2023. The workshop was scheduled as one of the many learning opportunities available to educators on their professional development day. This workshop was a critical component of the project, given the research sought to answer how theatre could act as an effective training tool for educators to foster inclusion. By using themes that arose during the youth workshops, I had hoped the design would allow for a close look at how their particular students might feel safe, supported, and celebrated. The following timeline shows an overview of the key dates associated with the educator component of the research.

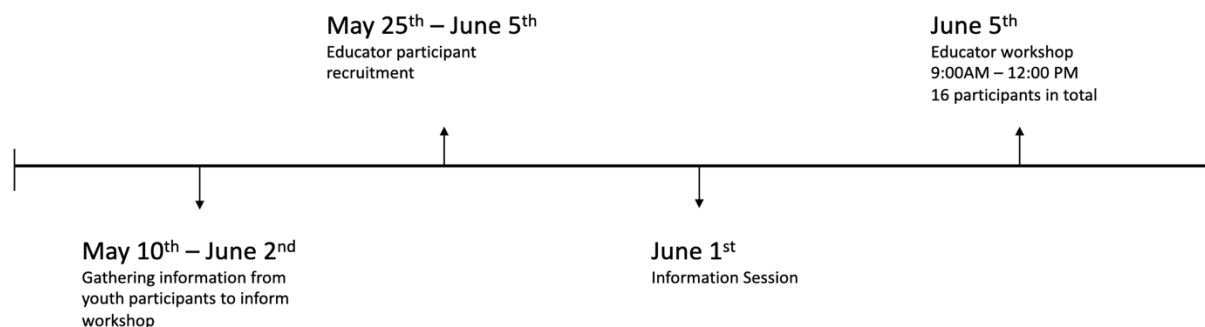


Figure 7: Timeline of the educator participatory workshop

Participants

A total of 16 educators participated in the workshop, including the project's two teacher collaborators. This particular secondary school has approximately 50 full-time staff members,

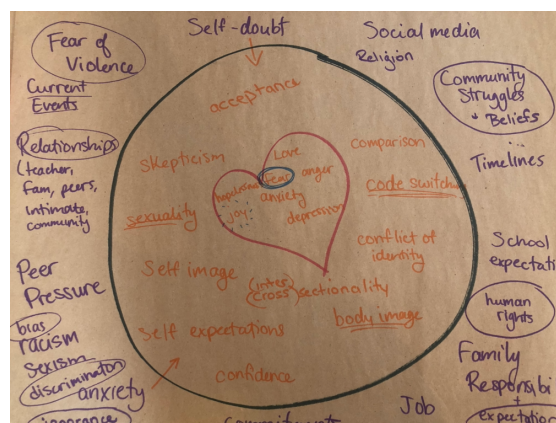
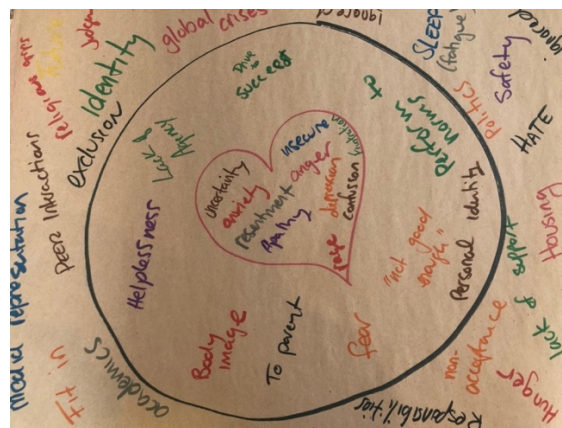
including teachers, administrators, and other support services. With that said, the educators were a combination of staff members who either worked at the secondary school or the district office. One participant left halfway through the workshop, but 15 participants stayed for its duration. Earlier in the week, I had hosted an information session to recruit participants. Only three educators attended the session, and so I was happy with the number of participants who joined on the day of. Throughout the workshop, two of the educators self-identified themselves to be part of the queer community. I did not formally ask the educators to identify their cultural backgrounds.

The workshop

At the start of the workshop, I began with an introduction of my background. I explained that my intentions for the workshop were not to push an agenda, but rather, to try and open up a space where drama could act as a catalyst for meaningful discussions. After the introductions, I facilitated a number of low-pressure warm-ups: ball toss, name torpedo, enemy defender, complete the image, and the great game of power (Boal, 2005; Taylor & Murphy, 2014). I received feedback afterwards that these activities were key to creating a welcoming space, which helped the participants feel comfortable engaging in activities later on.

Following the warm ups, I separated the participants into three groups and led a brainstorming activity where they would discuss the internal and external pressures that students experience from the moment they wake up, to the moment they go to bed at night. As shown in the images below, these educators were very aware of the many pressures their students face; each paper was full of meaningful responses. After some discussion, I asked each group to repeat the activity imagining that this student was part of the queer community. Some of the responses

that were added included pressure of politics, traditional roles, gender roles, fitting in, body image, fear, human rights, etc. To contribute to the notion of ‘queering’ the space, I added some pressures that were not mentioned, such as: gendered clothing, bathrooms, and sports teams, as well as questions such as: do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend, representation in the media, etc. This activity led to fruitful discussions afterwards, and provoked an emotional response in the participants. One of the educators stated that “the heart was too small” (referring to the heart of student, which was drawn on the paper) to carry so much pressure, and that the heart space needed to expand. For the educators, they spoke about how it was provoking to see the magnitude of pressures their students might be facing written on a page.





images of the pressures students may face at school, 2023

Following this brainstorm exercise, I asked the participants to choose one word from the ‘heart’ on their papers—which represented feelings students might experience based on the pressures they face—and create a still image that embodied the word. The three words that were chosen for still images included: resilience, fear/joy, and resentment. For the image that represented the word resilience, participants stood back to back in a circle with their arms linked. In reflection, they explained that they stood in this formation to represent support for one another, but they chose not to face inwards to demonstrate that they could never truly understand the lived experiences of others.



image of: “resilience”, 2023

For the image of fear and joy, the participants created a circular formation that resembled a wave: some participants were standing on two feet appearing joyful, while others were on their knees neutral, and two more were curled on the ground in distress. Originally, the group planned to stand in a single line, but they decided to change the image to form a circle, demonstrating that our emotions are fluid and can ebb and flow throughout a day.



image of: “fear / joy”, 2023

Finally, the group image to represent resentment showed one individual walking forward with ease, while another, had forces holding them back preventing forward motion.



image of: “resentment”, 2023

This image work was incredibly fruitful, and led to generative conversations about the layers of emotion students might experience each day at school.

For the final portion of the workshop, each group was given a scripted scene originally improvised by the youth participants. Prior to the workshop, I ensured I had permission from the youth to bring these scenes to their educators. There were four scenes in total. Three of these scenes were generated during the devising sessions with the youth, where they honed in on stories that represented their own identities. The fourth scene was improvised by the youth participants during a workshop (a summary of the scenes can be found in Appendix F).

The educators read the scenes aloud, engaged in small group discussions, and performed the scenes for the rest of the group. In general, the educators were moved by the scenes their students had created (in particular, they were moved by the support displayed in the stories). In this way, they were evidently attuned to the content of the scenes, and expressed inspiration by the affirming nature of each one.

While most of the scenes had positive responses that led to discussions around how the educators might better support queer students, there was evident discomfort around a scene that explored asexuality. The discussions surrounding this scene involved educators feeling unequipped to properly support a student who might be asexual or aromantic. During a small group discussion, one educator in particular was very angry about the scene. Because of the anger this educator was vocalizing, I asked the group to instead imagine the teacher in the scene was a school counsellor. This was a change that I felt was necessary; the group seemed unable to have any meaningful discussions about the content because this particular teacher was stuck on asserting the teacher had behaved inappropriately in the scene by discussing the definition of asexuality with the student. This example demonstrates how quickly identities are evolving

within the queer community, and that there may be a lack of understanding amongst educators regarding some identities compared to others. It may also point to possible discomfort or restriction educators may feel in discussing sexuality, in general, with students.

In reflection, one participant discussed how they were surprised each scene ended with a hopeful tone. One educator expressed curiosity as to whether the feeling of hope was a reality for these students. In response, another educator (one of the QSA teachers who was present during the sessions with the youth) explained that by embodying such affirming characters, hope was a reality the students created for themselves in the moment— thus demonstrating their current wants and needs. The affirming nature of these scenes for the youth could also perhaps be attributed to the convergence of desire-based research (Tuck, 2009b) and Celebratory Theatre (Kandil & te Bokkel, 2019) manifesting in real time.

The feedback regarding the value of the workshop was positive overall; educators expressed how the drama-based elements of the work provided an opportunity for them to reflect on the content in new and dynamic ways. Not only this, but they were further invested in the content because it was informed by students at their school. For example, one educator wrote:

I found the workshop very useful. It allowed a collective sharing of ideas and perspectives while also bringing up new ways for us to interact with these ideas together— all stemming from the themes shared by students in the schools and place in which we work. I really found the moments where people physically set in a scene were able to share how they felt as the character in that moment quite resonant (...). I think exploring themes through the activities helped open up 2S/LGBTQIAP+ discussions in new ways than usual educator sessions since it focused on expression and thoughts in the moment in really generative ways, versus some information-loading methods.

Another educator described how the content of the workshop helped him see the experiences of students in more empathetic ways; and he expressed a desire to help mitigate difficult experiences for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth in the future:

I felt the workshop was very relevant and beneficial to my practice as an educator because it allowed me – a straight, white, male – to immerse myself in what it may be like for a 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth in today's social climate. Opportunities such as these provide me with the tools and the empathy to better connect with my students from this particular community and hopefully alleviate or at least mitigate the stress that their personal journey may be causing.

Additional feedback described how the dramatic activities helped build a sense of connection and collective sharing amongst colleagues:

The structure of the workshop was intentional and effective in bringing a group of familiar colleagues to unfamiliar places. I could feel our collective mindfulness, our shared moment deepen, as we worked through the exercises. One activity was a step down, and into the next. We connected physically and verbally with names and ball passes, the symbolic value of which was not lost on us when we transitioned to exploring different interpretations of power dynamics. Here, we managed to share and build on one another's perspectives without having to discard one idea for the next, but rather to weave and build a collective picture that had more dimension and impact than any single siloed response. Ultimately, the narrative that the workshop established, which moved a group of quiet and uncertain educational colleagues towards a mindful and collective exploration of student perspectives was masterfully crafted and highly effective.

As a creative reflection, another educator wrote an original song using words that were shared by the participants throughout the workshop. The lyrics of the song say:

*Living in the chaos,
out of control.
When power's so absolute.*

*Change creates meaning,
in the soul.
Making the heart space bigger.*

*How can one feel so much and survive?
So many layers, all that's honourable is me.
What makes us human so we can thrive?*

*We're nailing this...
Joy in the cycle—
friendship, allyship everyone.
Doing the work,
speak your truth.*

*Singing everyone, doing the work,
speak your truth.
Everyone,
doing the work.
Speak your truth.
Speak your truth.*

Chapter 5: Research findings

As stated previously, this research study aimed to explore how drama and theatre can act as a catalyst for feelings of safety amongst queer youth, as well as how drama and theatre might work as an effective training tool for educators to foster inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students. The research sought to answer the main research questions (listed in Chapter 1 & 3) by using drama-based workshops and—eventually—play building, to explore the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of the participants.

The methods of the research included a combination of Community-Based Participatory Action Research and Applied Theatre as Research (Kandil, 2014; O'Connor & Anderson, 2020; Tuck et al., 2008). The theories guiding the youth component included: desire-based research, theories of the third-space, and Celebratory Theatre (Buckreis, 2012; Kandil & te Bokkel, 2019; Tuck, 2009a, 2009b). The guiding theories of the educator workshop were critical pedagogy and queer theory (Fenaghty, 2019; Hackford-Peer, 2019; Jagose, 1996; Preston, 2016).

Youth participatory workshops

The current literature surrounding 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusion, particularly concerning youth, emphasizes a need to move away from risk-based research frameworks / programming, and instead focus on attributes of resilience, celebration, and joy (Bryan, 2019; Meyer & Leonardi, 2018; Pufahl et al., 2021; Santiago-Jirau, 2021). Similarly, Indigenous researcher Eve Tuck advocates for a shift away from risk-based theories of change where research is concerned, particularly when working alongside Indigenous and/or disenfranchised communities (Tuck, 2009b). Theatre researcher Yasmine Kandil has also championed notions of celebration in performance; her research has revealed positive outcomes when stories focus on the beauty of

resilience within the human experience (Kandil & te Bokkel, 2019). For these reasons, and for the well-being of the participants, the drama-based workshops in this study were structured in a way that did not specifically intend to probe youth to tell stories related to trauma they might have experienced—or are currently experiencing—in relation to their queer identities. With that said, through the way the youth interacted with activities as well as the scene work they created, the participants organically used the theatrical artform to embody their feeling of exclusion and inclusion related to the queer experience.

The main themes of exclusion that these particular youth participants brought to the surface in their scene work included: (a) a recognition of their ‘difference’ from others specifically in relation to their queer identities and how that difference is not always welcomed (b) confusion and struggle related to their identities (c) pressure to ‘choose’ an identity/label and (d) pressure to stay true to this label. These themes manifested throughout the workshops and devising sessions in various ways.

From the beginning of our work together during the celebratory workshop—a workshop that was specifically crafted to focus on feelings of joy—the youth participants were aware of how their queer identities do not fall within the dominant group’s identities, and how that difference often brings up discomfort in others. For example, when answering the question: ‘what can 2S/LGBTQIAP+ people teach the world?’ one of the youth participants wrote: ‘gay people are not hell spawn.’ The answer was validated by other participants in the group, who drew check marks next to the sentence. In later sessions, one participant expressed how they have to dim their queer expression when they return to their home vs. when they are at school. While these youth participants showed much excitement in displaying their queerness in QSA Club settings, they were acutely aware that it would not be safe or fully acceptable to show their pride in all

settings. While this is not a surprising finding, it is worth mentioning that, for these participants, feelings of being different because of their queerness were still prominent in their lives.

The youth participants were consistently interested in exploring the theme of identity. However, most of the explorations were primarily associated with feelings of struggle and confusion. The most striking examples of this confusion manifested in our devising sessions. During our play creation, a fictional ‘queer fairy’ world was used to string together three scenes that represented the real identities of the students who were performing. The three scenes were fictional, but the essence of the story embodied the students’ identities. In all three scenes, the main character experienced confusion and discomfort inside themselves, acknowledging that they are unsure why they feel so different from their peers.

This was perhaps most evident in Link’s scene, which represented an asexual identity. In the scene, a student confides in their teacher that while she sees and hears about all of her peers engaging in sexual relationships, she doesn’t think she’ll ‘ever feel that way about someone.’ She then continues to express worry, because she really wants to fit in with her friends. While these particular students were fairly confident in their identities at the time of the play creation, their scenes all demonstrated an intense journey of confusion, discomfort, and worry to reach that point. This highlights that the milestones queer youth must surpass for positive identity development (i.e., the need to question dominant norms, acknowledge difference in one self, and come out) (Halverson, 2005) continue to be present and challenging in the lives of youth. Not only this, but some of their work touched on elements of exclusion within the queer community itself. For example, during the identity workshop, the students improvised a scene of a character stating they are bi-sexual. The other character in the scene, a peer, challenges them by stating

that they can't like both genders; they must 'choose' one: "you either like guys, or you like girls".

In addition to grappling with queer identities, another prominent theme centered around the feeling of pressure to 'choose' a specific identity and stay true to this identity. This sense of pressure was particularly evident in Micah's scene, where the main character confided in their friends that none of the labels within the queer community felt 'right' for them, and they didn't want to choose one but felt like they needed to, so that people 'weren't confused'. This was an interesting scene, because while Micah openly identified as pansexual in real life, their character didn't feel that label matched how they felt inside. When I first met Micah, and asked them to share their preferred pronouns, they stated that 'any and all' pronouns were okay. Micah was queering our space in real time, confidently and continuously exploring their own sense of self.

In many ways, the students all felt connected to Micah's scene. For example, when we were devising the scene as a group, Raymond, who was seemingly disengaged at this point, suddenly spoke up to say: "the scene needs to say that just because someone identified one way before, doesn't mean that person has to identify the same way forever" (Field notes, June 8th, 2023). All of the students agreed with this suggestion excitedly, and it became clear that one of the desires amongst the group was to have a welcomed sense of flexibility and fluidity in relation to their identities.

Every scene that the youth created consistently ended in a hopeful tone (both within the workshops and during the devising sessions). Through these hopeful endings, alongside reflections afterwards, the youth were communicating very particular desires. In addition to a sense of fluidity, the youth were demonstrating a desire for: a) consistent and informed allyship from both peers and teachers (this was often demonstrated through their knowledge of the

various terms and definitions within the queer community and/or standing up against those who might hold stigmatizing beliefs); b) a recognition that each identity within the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community is different, and the differences are important; and c) affirmation that they have the space to explore without judgement.

Drawing back to the scene which focused on the asexual identity, it was important for Link that the character did not represent an aromantic experience, but rather, only an asexual experience. In early improvisations, the character identified as both. After rehearsing the scene a few times, I noticed that Link was feeling somewhat uncomfortable; I asked how she felt about it and if there was anything we should change. As a group, we then proceeded to have a conversation about the differences between the two identities. Afterwards, to better represent Link, the scene was changed so that the character specifically stated they felt more connected to the definition of asexuality rather than aromanticism. This scene, alongside a scene with a student coming out to their teacher as transgender, really seemed to elicit the feeling that these youth wanted their teachers to know the various identities within the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community, to pay attention to the nuances, and understand how to affirm their feelings.

In many improvised scenes throughout our workshops, youth would embody what they saw as homophobic and transphobic characters (some characters were teachers, general members of the public, or peers). Each time, the other characters in the scene would come together as active and vocal allies to challenge the stigmas and misunderstandings that were being perpetuated. This was an excellent example of theatre being used to rehearse new realities for the future (Gallagher, 2018; Santiago-Jirau, 2021; Vettraino et al., 2017). The students were also able to rehearse allyship in action through events that, if they haven't already, may very well take place in their lives. In this way, the students were using drama as a tool to deconstruct stigmatizing

beliefs about their own 2S/LGBTQIAP+ identities in the moment. It is worthwhile noting here that these scenes were created on the terms of the youth participants. The improvised prompts did not specifically ask students to create scenes that disrupted stigma, but rather, the scenes emerged based on their own interpretations of the prompts, and personal desires to take action in the fictional world they were creating.

Throughout the duration of the project, the participants clearly expressed their own boundaries and need for the creative work to be explored and expressed on their own terms. For example, while the youth participants did devise a twenty-minute play, they were also very aware of their personal vulnerabilities, which in turn, led them to decide they did not want to perform their play. For these youth, the process of drama was more important than a performance. The students expressed forming closer bonds with each other throughout our time together; they also discussed how they felt they could be their true selves in the scenes we created. For them, a safe space emerged through the dramatic process (Gembus, 2018), but opening up this process to others would have removed the feelings of safety the creative work had cultivated. It is difficult to say if this finding would have been different with more time together, however, time constraints were indeed prevalent in this project. The project would have been richer with more dedicated time together as a group.

During my time with the youth, I was open and honest with them about my own sexual orientation. After I had specifically stated I was lesbian, I immediately felt a greater connection with the youth; I felt as though they became more comfortable with me. While the youth did not outwardly ask me about my own experiences of life as a queer person, I openly shared interpersonal details with them when appropriate. My experience with coming out to my participants was similar to that of Tomczyk, who described a sense of ease emerge amongst his

own research participants when he shared his sexual orientation. His honesty opened up a space of trust between himself and his participants (2020). Santiago-Jirau speaks about the importance of queer youth collaborating alongside queer adult role models, so that they may see queer adults living happy, healthy, beautiful lives (Santiago-Jirau, 2021). While my presence may have been an additional contribution to this effort, a number of teachers at the school were open about their own queer identities. The teachers who led the QSA were also making conscious efforts to bring Indigenous queer artists to the community for Pride. These initiatives undoubtedly provide important representation and exposure for all students.

In reflection with the youth, I asked if they found the work useful and whether they thought similar activities might be applicable in other contexts. In this discussion, one participant mentioned how this type of programming would be helpful with the whole student body, rather than simply QSA club members. This point highlights a main limitation of the research, which will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Educator participatory workshop

Educators play a critical role in creating elements of the daily cultures that make up school environments, both in and out of classrooms. Therefore, to foster school cultures of inclusion, active participation is necessary from teachers and school administrators. This research attempted to engage individuals who might be in positions to create change as a deliberate attempt to step away from the tendency of Applied Theatre projects to focus only on individual experiences, which “inevitably distances the personal from the wider political questions of exclusion and the need for societal transformation” (Preston, 2011p. 253). While 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth participants were engaged in this project to give voice to their personal

self-determination, educators were also engaged as an effort to recognize “the danger of the inclusion/exclusion metaphor [that] evokes a dichotomous image of society, in which there are insiders and outsiders, and only the very marginal are a problem” (Preston, 2011, p. 253).

In this way, the intention of the workshop was to use interactive drama exercises to generate meaningful discussions so that educators had an opportunity to “practice engaging in and leading Courageous Conversations so that they are prepared to support their school communities towards a culture of conversation” (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018 p. 460). Engaging educators in the research was also an attempt to “contribute to long-term solutions” (Etherton & Prentki, 2006p. 143) that might have the potential to extend beyond the exploration of individual participants’ experiences. Applied Theatre practitioners have previously expressed how projects can become limiting when the creative work fails to move beyond the individual; instead, they argue that for a project to “create strategies of lasting change we need to include the systemic context in artistic conversations”(Baer et al., 2019, p. 428). For this reason, educators were engaged as a means to move beyond individual students, so that their experiences could be situated in a larger discourse about how teachers can affirm queer identities not just now, but in their teaching practise to come.

The workshop itself revealed positive results in the following ways: (a) drama pedagogy was a successful way to open a space of dialogic learning where many opinions could exist at once (b) critical pedagogy and queer theory were effective foundational tools that led educators to reveal intentions to take action in the future and (c) the site-specific focus of the workshop—where student voices were incorporated into workshop’s content—generated a high level of investment and engagement among the educators.

Prior to participating in the workshop, a number of educators discussed discomfort about working in a theatrical way. Despite their worry, there was a high level of engagement during almost every exercise. After the workshop was complete, I received positive feedback in relation to the participatory experience. The educators stated that the priming nature of the warm-ups, alongside the ‘step down’ approach to the exercises (that gradually asked for higher levels of engagement) made them feel comfortable and eager to participate. The educators expressed that they felt safe throughout the workshop because they were able to direct their own level of engagement (i.e., if they did not want to stand in a still image with their group, they could simply help in the creation process instead). One educator participant expressed how the workshop made him feel safe engaging in the material in relation to his own identity:

Having the opportunity to explore these themes through theatre-based activities allowed for an otherwise very heavy topic to become far more approachable. Especially coming from the branch of society that is most often guilty of stereotyping and demonizing 2S/LGBTQIAP+ people – straight, white, male – these theatre-based activities allowed me a way in that may have allowed others to drop their preconceived notions of me as well, creating a forum where they were more likely to share with me.

In addition to cultivating feelings of comfort and safety, the educators discussed how the dramatic approach was more meaningful to them than other methods of learning because they were able to explore the content through nuanced perspectives. Through the exercises, they expressed gratitude that all of their ways of understanding could co-exist at the same time; one opinion was not more valid than the other, but rather, provided more layers to their collective knowledge. While I entered into the research with intentions to create a third-space with the youth participants, I believe the space that emerged with the educator participants revealed itself

to be a more authentic third-space, where different ways of understanding led to a collaborative place of learning from each other, as well as learning from their students. Previous research studies have revealed that teacher learning increases when professional development opportunities allow for “collective participation” (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018 p. 451), which was a key element of this workshop.

Goldstein, Russell, and Daley describe the importance of safe, positive, and queering moments in teaching education (2007). In defining safe, positive and queering moments, they state: safe moments strive to “promote tolerance”; positive moments strive to “promote affirmation”; and queering moments strive to “disrupt heteronormativity” (p. 188). While they situate safe, positive, and queering moments in the context of teachers and students, their framework is a helpful tool in designing content for teacher learning as well. Because the workshop was designed in such a way that allowed teachers to take on characters that included teacher-student relationships, educators were able to actually rehearse safe, positive, and queering moments in action. In this way, both the youth and the educators were able to engage in drama as a rehearsal for the future.

The workshop was situated in the context of fostering safer environments for the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community, and therefore, an element of critical pedagogy was inherently embedded in the goals of the workshop. Both during and after the workshop, educators expressed a desire to move towards action for their queer students. One educator reflected on a desire to help alleviate stress their 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students might be experiencing in the future. For example, during the brainstorming exercise that involved the pressures students face at school, another of the educators posed a question to the group, stating: ‘we can see all of the issues our students are facing—but what are we doing about it?’ Later on, a group of educators performed a

scene of a transgender student who was asking their teacher to change the pronouns they were using to address them. In reflection, one teacher stated that because their students had created this scene, they felt that they need to be discussing pronouns more often with their students.

Within the workshop, educators had an opportunity to read scenes that had been improvised by their students, discuss the content, and perform for one another. Many of the educators expressed surprise by the work the students had created, finding the content both insightful and supportive. Given the scenes were created by students, the educators were more attuned to the content and willing to engage in conversation surrounding the characters. I believe this site-specific look into the thoughts of their students allowed the teachers to become disarmed. As noted earlier, there was evident discomfort around a scene that explored asexuality. However, because the scene could very well represent a student at their school, the educators were willing to engage in honest reflection. The content led to a fruitful discussion about how they might not feel fully equipped with the knowledge necessary to support a student in a similar situation, but still discussed a variety of possible options with each other. Based on the feedback received by the educators, the site-specific nature of the content allowed for a high-level of investment that might have otherwise not been present.

These findings reveal that participatory drama can indeed prompt meaningful discussions amongst educators, and has the potential to work as an effective training tool for initiatives that seek to promote inclusion for marginalized groups. Regarding the youth participants, the findings demonstrate that drama and theatre can have positive impacts in relation to feelings of safety, group cohesion, and self-expression. Furthermore, drama and theatre provide helpful ways for youth to rehearse activism, which has the potential to help the participants engage in active interventions for real world situations.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This study engaged both youth and educators to explore the ways in which theatre may create feelings of safety and inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth located in a remote community within the Northwest Territories. The research was comprised of two components. The first component included a series of participatory theatre workshops and devising sessions with youth participants. The goals of the youth participatory theatre workshops were to: a) explore feelings of inclusion and exclusion related to queer identities; b) use theatre and drama to create trusting environments for self-expression and exploration; and c) use theatre and drama to deconstruct stigma and explore desires for future worlds. The second component of the research included one participatory theatre workshop with educators from the school district. The goal of the educator workshop was to: explore the ways in which theatre might act as a professional development tool to prompt discussions related to an educator's role in fostering 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusion and safety at school.

The youth participatory workshops revealed that drama and theatre can be effective tools to create positive environments for self-expression and self-exploration for queer youth located in this remote community. Drama and theatre also worked as a tool for youth to practice homophobic and transphobic refusals, thus rehearsing allyship in motion. In relation to safe spaces, this study showed that while drama can indeed create a safe space to explore elements of identity, feelings of safety constantly ebb and flow and a theatre facilitator must be flexible in their tactics to maintain a safe environment. The study revealed the importance of youth autonomy in creative projects that wish to create 'safe spaces.'

The educator workshop revealed drama to be an effective catalyst for meaningful discussion related to 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusion. The educators frequently expressed surprise by

the work their students had created, and showed dedication to exploring the content based on its direct connection to students at their school. Some educators expressed a desire to further support their queer students in the future based on the scenes that were explored in the workshop. This demonstrates a possibility that participatory drama may have the potential to prompt tangible action and change in the future amongst educators, when the content is based on living experiences of students at their school. With that being said, the findings also revealed a need for more time to meaningfully engage educators in this effort.

Situating the research in a Northern context

This research took place in a particular remote community within the Northwest Territories, and hoped to uncover unique considerations related to fostering 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusion in a remote Northern context. This project only began to understand these considerations, which is a site that requires more research.

As described earlier, I, as the lead researcher, previously lived and worked in the community where the research took place for two years. I had my own experiences living as a queer person within the community, and so, to a very small extent, had a sense of what it may be like for some 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth.

During my initial conversations with the QSA teachers, they immediately alerted me to the barrier that some youth participants—particularly those outside of the community where the main collaborating secondary school was located— would face in receiving parent/guardian permission to participate in the project. Throughout the research licensing process, community organizations also alerted me to a risk the parent/guardian consent forms may pose to the safety and security of the youth participants. While I attempted to overcome this barrier, the sheer

requirement of parent/guardian consent was an issue in this project, and the signed permission form was a large reason why I believe I was not able to create the conditions necessary for youth in the outside communities to feel comfortable participating in the project. Future projects should anticipate this barrier, and ensure that students who may benefit from these interventions the most can feel safe to participate.

Another critical consideration in a remote area to understand are the difficulties related to ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, which becomes more challenging in a small remote community. Ensuring that 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth have a space they can trust to remain anonymous requires more effort in places where your peers and teachers likely know your extended family, and perhaps see them at the grocery store or post office every day.

Further to this point, conducting research in these remote locales—particularly amongst a group of young people who may be experiencing heightened levels of marginalization—requires a deep level of trust. This trust is not only required between the researcher and the youth, but also between the researcher and the teachers. It is a bond that is developed only through time, and with presence. In my case, I did not necessarily know these particular students and teachers prior to our initial conversations discussing the project, however, I did lean on my personal contacts at the school who knew me and could speak to my character. My experience living in the community was also a source of trust. When I first connected with the QSA leaders, I expressed how deeply I cared for the community, and respected its cultural vibrancy, way of life, and pace. These elements of trust, I believe, are one of the main reasons why the QSA teachers welcomed me into their school and felt comfortable allowing me to interact with their students.

In the case of the further remote communities, I did not have these same established sources of trust with the students and teachers, which may have also contributed to their lack of

engagement. The development of deep trust is a critical consideration for engagement in remote communities, and make take more time to develop than relationships in an urban area, for example.

Establishing the type of relationships that are so critical for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth who are located in remote areas to feel safe enough to benefit from theatrical interventions brings to the surface a key consideration, which is that of sustainability. Often in this region, individuals will visit the community (just as I did for this research), conduct a project or work for a short time, and quickly depart, leaving the community with little long-term benefit. This begs the question: how can theatrical interventions be structured in a way that the community continues to benefit, even after the practitioner leaves?

The notion of sustainability has been interrogated by Applied Theatre practitioners in the area of Theatre for Development (TfD) (Kandil, 2015; Prentki, 1998). TfD can be defined as “theatre used in the service of development aims” (Prentki, 1998, p. 419). Prentki describes the practice as most effective when “it enables communities to take control of the development on their own terms, transforming it into a process of self-development” (p. 427). In Kandil’s TfD work, she describes intentions to “incorporate a process of passing on skills to the community in order to eliminate reliance on facilitators” (Kandil, 2015, p. 238). In the context of this project, I’d hoped to achieve a level of sustainability by engaging educators at the school who were in a position to foster a change in their students’ daily environments. By attempting to increase understanding for the experiences of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students, I’d hoped to inspire educators to foster a deeper sense of inclusion within their school. However, the workshop that was facilitated with educators primarily focused on opening a dialogue related to 2S/LGBTQIAP+ student experiences, rather than imparting them with theatrical knowledge to bring into their classrooms.

In reflection, the educators expressed a desire for tangible activities and exercises they could facilitate with their students. With more time, perhaps this could have been possible.

Prentki writes that “the severest constraints upon the effective use of TFD is that of time” (p. 421). Similar to TFD, time became a crucial limitation in this project. It would be useful to develop a larger project in the region with adequate time dedicated to actualising sustainability. It is critical to note, however, that working alongside educators at the school may not necessarily guarantee long-term sustainability for theatrical interventions. The “high attrition rates among teachers in the NWT” (Wolki, 2020, p. 14) must also be considered in future project designs should they wish to accomplish true sustainability. Perhaps this could be achieved through community partnerships, support from regional Non-Governmental Organizations, or applying peer mentorship models (either between students, or senior youth in the community).

With the time constraints of this project, it was difficult to fully explore the root causes youth believed may be contributing to stigma towards 2S/LGBTQIAP+ people within their particular community. Instead, a large portion of our time focussed on uncovering the existence of stigma towards 2S/LGBTQIAP+ people, how the youth grappled with their queer identities despite the stigma, and how to combat stigma through a celebratory lens. We also spent time exploring the aspects of their identity that made them feel proud. For these youth specifically, they felt pride in their friendships, hobbies, sexualities, and cultures (for some, they felt pride specifically in their Indigenous culture). In the future, it may be beneficial for theatrical interventions to specifically highlight intersectional pride, and provide a theatrical space for youth to explore connections between their cultural pride, alongside the pride they feel in relation to their sexualities, gender identities, and gender expressions.

When asked how these particular youth feel safe, one of the responses included: ‘by the river.’ Given the community’s deep respect and cultural connection to land, practising theatre on the land may also help create a safe space for these youth in a rapid way. Some organizations, for example Foxy and Smash, are already combining on the land opportunities with arts-based practises to provide Northern youth with opportunities to learn about health and healthy relationships (Foxy, n.d.). This project simply began to scratch the surface of these discussions with the youth participants, and more time would be needed to form connections between their specific experiences and how the history of region has shaped current attitudes towards the queer community. Partnerships with organizations and community groups who are located in the North and understand the lives of youth would also be key to fostering safe spaces for these types of discussions.

With that said, throughout the educator workshop, the participants took time to brainstorm the many pressures their students face in this particular locale. Some of the pressures included: code switching, racism, discrimination, family responsibilities, domestic violence, grief, trauma, family presence/absence, fatigue, financial insecurity, hunger, housing, health, living in an intimate community, body image, and many more. Afterwards, the educators were asked to brainstorm the additional pressures 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students may be experiencing. In response, the educators wrote: traditional roles, gender roles, fear for life, fear of violence, non-acceptance, politics, performing to norms, identity, religion/religious groups, fear of being disowned at home, loss of expected teen experiences, etc. These responses provide undeniable insight into some of the experiences youth might face in this particular locale, and the factors that may be influencing these experiences.

One of the most important aspects of this study was the need for flexibility, and an emotional responsiveness to the youth participants each day. A facilitator must be capable of balancing process over product, adjusting goals in the moment, and allowing youth to come as they are. Given the heightened pressures some of the students in this region may be experiencing—as demonstrated in the responses from the educators—it is important that a drama space that is intended to feel ‘safe’ not add to these pressures. Throughout this project, I revisited goals for our group each session, and was prepared to fully accept and agree to any changes in our group goals that the youth desired. I was flexible in attendance, as well as flexible in participation and engagement in each activity. For example, when a student wished to sit aside and draw, I allowed that. Typically, theatre requires enhanced commitment and consistent engagement. However, in this particular project and in the region, I believe flexibility must be a priority to ensure the participants feel safe and welcomed into the space.

Throughout my time with the youth participants, they were helping to prepare for the arrival of the QSA groups from the further remote communities. There was evident excitement among the participants to meet and connect with like-minded peers from other Northern areas. This excitement led the youth to devise a play they would perform to the incoming group of youth. Although my participants chose not to perform the play because they felt their connections with the visiting youth were not developed enough for the vulnerability their performance displayed, their original excitement, process of devising, and intention to perform points to a promising site for expansion in future projects. That is, a larger project to connect Northern queer youth from different regions together through the theatrical artform has significant potential.

It was clear that these youth had a desire to meaningfully connect with other queer youth in the North, and the Pride week where they were able to meet in-person was a meaningful experience. Given 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth in the North are located in communities with small populations, they may have less chances to connect with queer peers than students would, for example, in urban areas. Further, it can be assumed that the small nature of the populations means youth are less likely to have opportunities to learn from queer adult role models compared to students in larger cities. Should a larger project take place regionally, adequate time would be needed for trust building amongst the youth.

In summary, some of the unique considerations for Northern specific programming focused on inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth include: paying careful attention to the barriers associated with confidentiality and anonymity, developing meaningful bonds with students and teachers so that students all students feel safe participating, designing projects with adequate time for explorations, highlighting intersectional pride and joy and finding ways to connect different aspects of identity together (e.g. connecting cultural pride with queer pride), allowing for extensive flexibility in engagement and product so that students can truly come as they are, and creating opportunities for sustainability in the form of long term benefit for the community. Future projects may wish to: develop partnerships in the community that increase representation from Northern Indigenous and queer role models, combine on the land activities with theatre, engage the entire student body in education and allyship (which was a gap in this research that will be further described below), provide educators with tangible theatrical knowledge they can take to their classrooms, and look for ways to connect Northern 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth regionally.

Limitations of the research

There were a variety of limitations in both the youth and educator components of this research. One of the primary limitations of the study involves the research participant groups. It is important to note that the youth participants who engaged in the workshops and devising sessions were active members of the Queer / Straight Alliance club, and therefore were fairly confident in their identities as part of the queer community or as an ally. From my understanding, these particular youth were also 'out' to their families, whom I believe were generally supportive. In this sense, their experiences likely differ significantly from students who might not feel comfortable participating in the QSA club, or students who might be struggling to open up about their queer identities altogether. Given this limitation, a fulsome understanding of the experience's students might be facing at this particular school could not be captured in this study alone.

Additionally, the research could have benefited from engagement with the larger student body, which would have provided greater opportunities to build allyship and foster meaningful inclusion on a larger scale. In conversations with the youth participants, they described a desire for all students to receive education about 2S/LGBTQIAP+ communities, not simply students who participate in the QSA. With that said, a project with the larger student body may have encountered barriers, such as: limited staff capacity, difficulties receiving permission from parents/guardians to participate, generating regular attendance, etc.

A similar limitation existed in the educator component of this research study. Given research must be conducted on a voluntary basis, it is likely that only educators who were already open and empathetic to the difficulties faced by the queer community were willing to participate in the workshop. In feedback after the workshop, a number of teachers stated that

they ‘wished all teachers could participate’ in similar learning opportunities. Although this study did not formally capture information related to the cultural identities, sexual orientations, and gender identities of the participants, two participants described themselves to be part of the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community, and therefore had a vested interest in the content. Formal information related to the identities of the participants would have provided a richer data set.

Another limitation of the research was time. With the youth participants in particular, more time would have allowed for greater trust building amongst the group, as well as more fruitful explorations in relation to their experiences, desires, and hopes for the future. In addition, the workshops took place during their lunch hours, which is a time allocated for decompression. Dedicated time during class hours would have led to more investment in the exercises, and would have allowed us to explore more fully the experiences of the queer community specifically based in their region. It was often difficult to harness focus during the hour-long lunch break, and the youth frequently entered the space with a giddy energy. Once we did reach a point of focus, our time was nearly gone. The devising sessions that took place during class time were much more focused, and led to fruitful moments of honesty and vulnerability among the group. Time was a critical factor during the educator component as well. In the end, we ran short on reflection time and could not fully debrief the content. While this may highlight my personal limitations as a facilitator, it also shows how generative our conversations became throughout the entirety of the workshop.

Recommendations for future research

It would be beneficial for future research studies involving the inclusion and safety of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth to explore different theatrical goals the group can work towards

collectively outside of a performance. For example, incorporating the findings from the DRACON project, which revealed significant positive results when peer teaching with younger students is incorporated into drama workshops (O'Toole & Burton, 2005). This type of approach may remove the deep vulnerability involved when performing on stage, but also give the group a meaningful goal that could potentially contribute more towards transformative inclusion and long-term solutions. A peer mentorship model would be even further meaningful if it could be expanded regionally, and connect queer youth together from across Northern regions. Such an approach would need to be crafted alongside the youth participants, directed on their own terms, and fueled by their personal desires. In addition, future research studies would benefit from designs that include optimal periods of time allocated for trust building, devising, and adequate reflection.

Another key consideration for future research studies includes the participant group. It would be helpful to understand the efficacy of drama activities in working as a catalyst for allyship amongst all students, not simply students who are part of the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community. This would be particularly effective in the form of a longitudinal study, where participants are engaged after their participation to determine if the experience generated a lasting impact. Finally, it is important to note that most studies involving inclusion for the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community in educational contexts primarily engage youth participants (Conway, 2011; Halverson, 2005; Tomczyk, 2021; Wernick et al., 2014, 2016; Williams, 2014; Yulan Gale, 2011). However, as discussed in Chapter 1, studies have found immense benefits when children are introduced to inclusive thinking at young ages (Taylor et al., 2015). A study to assess the benefits of theatrical interventions related to diverse family structures and gender expressions for young children would be an important site for research in the future.

Further research is also needed to understand the benefits of incorporating theatre and drama into professional development opportunities for working educators. Given this study revealed positive results using a drama-based approach to learning, further research is needed to understand if the model is effective in other contexts—particularly with participants who might carry significant biases in relation towards the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community. Future studies might benefit from finding ways to incorporate site-specific considerations into their research designs. For example, this study revealed there were benefits to incorporating student voices into the educator workshop content. It would be useful for a project to expand on this successful finding, without compromising student confidentiality and trust. Additionally, a future study in the region should further consider how to actualize a sustainable theatrical model within the community (should the community desire such an initiative).

Finally, one major gap in this study was the presence of a co-facilitator who was queer, Indigenous, and from the community. While this type of collaboration was not possible for this small study, future projects would benefit from devising a project with a large-scale creative team. Some possible partnerships others may wish to explore for larger creative projects could potentially include: Northern Mosaic Network, Foxy and Smash, or the Western Arctic Youth Collective (WAYC), to name a few. Although located outside of the NWT, Gwaandak Theatre, an Indigenous theatre company in the Yukon, would be a fruitful partnership to explore. Gwaandak Theatre carries enhanced knowledge of the theatrical artform, has experience working creatively in remote Northern communities, and is committed to honouring intersectional identities in their work (including 2S/LGBTQIAP+ identities) (Gwaandak Theatre, n.d.)

During initial conceptualizations of this study, it was of hope that the research could respond to some of the principles and promising practises noted in the Department of Education,

Culture, and Employment's (ECE) guidelines for ensuring the safety and equity of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students in Northwest Territories' schools. This included: "providing supports that respond to all students' needs"(Government of the Northwest Territories, 2018, p. 13), "using a whole school approach to promote healthy relationships and prevent and address bullying" (p. 13), and "providing staff with professional learning opportunities to understand, support, and eliminate underlying prejudices" (p. 13).

The findings revealed that drama and theatre can be effective tools for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students to expressive themselves, rehearse allyship, and form closer bonds. However, the research also highlighted the need for theatre-based interventions to engage the entire student body, rather than only QSA Club members. Therefore, a theatre-based initiative with all students during regular class hours may prove beneficial to better address bullying and promote positive peer relationships. The research revealed theatre-based activities to be effective in professional development initiatives surrounding 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusion amongst educators, and is a promising site for expansion. Further research is required to fully understand how theatre-based interventions can be designed with sustainability in mind, so that teachers are trained to use theatre for the purpose of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ inclusion within their classrooms. This effort may help contribute to eliminating underlying prejudices that may exist among both staff and students.

Conclusion

This research study confirmed that, when done with intention, drama and theatre are fruitful sites to foster group cohesion, trust, and feelings of safety (Gallagher & Kushnir, 2022; Santiago-Jirau, 2021; Vettraino et al., 2017). Further, the findings of this study align with previous

research studies that have demonstrated how drama and theatre can help youth with positive identity development (Halverson, 2005); the youth participants not only explored aspects of their own identities, but the drama space created opportunities for the youth to explore many identities. While it is not possible to measure the impact participating in this project may have on the future lives of these youth, the drama space we created together did allow the participants to rehearse confidence and pride, all through a queer lens. Throughout our time together, elements of our work revealed that some of these youth are not able to express confidence and pride in all spaces (e.g., at home). Thus, experiences such as these, where queer identities are celebrated, affirmed, and demonstrated with adult role models (Santiago-Jirau, 2021), have the potential to help youth down a path of leading joyful queer lives in the future, free of internalized oppression.

The findings also revealed that these particular youth participants had grappled with—or were grappling with—feelings of difference, confusion, struggle, and pressure in relation to their identities. However, engaging in experiences that focussed on resilience, affirmation, and hope for the future allowed them to express themselves in positive ways, and grow closer as a group. This finding aligns with the positive outcomes of Celebratory Theatre and desire-based research, which move away from theories of change that focus only on experiences of difficulty and trauma (Kandil & te Bokkel, 2019; Tuck, 2009b). Like other theatre studies, the youth used the creative medium of drama to rehearse strategies of allyship for the future (Santiago-Jirau, 2021).

While the findings revealed positive results in relation to the efficacy of theatre interventions working as a tool for empowerment, agency, and self-determination, they also revealed a distinct need for theatre research studies to be designed with adequate time for participants to explore dramatic processes in fulsome ways. In addition, the research study highlighted a critical difference between dramatic process and performance. For these youth, the dramatic process

they undertook as a group created a space of safety, whereas engaging in a performance would have removed those feelings of safety. This finding may be due to the limited timeline of the project. These youth participants were insightful of their own vulnerabilities, and showcased the importance that research must be mindful of participants needs and desires, and provide space for self-determination. This finding confirms the importance of robust ethics in Applied Theatre, echoing practitioners who have emphasized the need for the well-being of participants to be placed as a first priority (Owis et al., 2022; Tomczyk, 2020).

Finally, the findings of this study revealed significant positive results using drama pedagogy as a training tool amongst educators; the interactive drama workshop was an effective catalyst to begin conversations of support for the diverse needs of queer students, without relying on a pedagogy of exposure. Furthermore, the incorporation of student voices in the workshop revealed a heightened level of attunement by the educators to the content being explored. During and after the workshop, the educator participants described a desire to provide better support for their queer students moving forward.

Final thoughts

As I described in Chapter 1, this research was always a matter of the heart. In the future, I only hope to continue using the power of theatre to generate meaningful acceptance for the 2S/LGBTQIA+ community. As a queer person, I felt a true kinship to the youth participants who took part in my study. The confusion and identity struggles they revealed in their scene work felt all too real for me walking through this world as a lesbian woman. I am also acutely aware of my limitations in understanding how those difficulties multiply in the wake of racism, transphobia, ableism, and more.

With that said, my life as a queer person has also been filled with immense joy—joy I could have never experienced in stifling my queer identity. I have experienced love that is fearless, friendships that see every part of you, and support that is unconditional. I came into the project with the hope that this experience might add some small drops of queer joy into the bucket that will make up the beautiful lives of these youth participants. However, in witnessing the youth create environments of undeniable affirmation through their scenes, I left the community with *my* bucket filled instead. If only the world could catch up to these youth participants, we might begin to understand what makes up a collective loving society.

References:

- Abramovich, A., Pang, N., Moss, A., H. Logie, C., Chaiton, M., A. Kidd, S., & A. Hamilton, H. (2021). Investigating the impacts of COVID-19 among LGBTQ2S youth experiencing homelessness. *PLoS ONE*, 16(9).
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0257693>
- Adichie, C. N. (2009, October 7). *The danger of a single story*.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9Ihs241zeg>
- Ansloos, J. P., & Wager, A. C. (2020). Surviving in the cracks: a qualitative study with indigenous youth on homelessness and applied community theatre. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 33(1), 50–65.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2019.1678785>
- Aoki, T. T. (2004). Leadership and Identity. In T. T. Aoki, W. F. Pinar, & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a New Key: The Collected Works of Ted T. Aoki* (1st ed., pp. 357–365). Routledge. (Original work published 1987)
- Asakura, K., Lundy, J., Black, D., & Tierney, C. (2020). Art as a transformative practice: A participatory action research project with trans* youth. *Qualitative Social Work*, 19(5–6), 1061–1077.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325019881226>
- Aurora Research Institute. (2011a). *Gwich'in Settlement Area*.
<https://nwtresearch.com/licensing-research/scientific-research-license/supporting-information/gwichin-settlement-region>
- Aurora Research Institute. (2011b). *Inuvialuit Settlement Region*.
<https://nwtresearch.com/licensing-research/scientific-research-license/supporting-information/inuvialuit-settlement-region>
- Baer, P. (2020). Queer isn't a choice! Queer is my family! *Theatre Research in Canada*, 41(2), 313–317. <https://doi.org/10.3138/tric.41.2.f09>
- Baer, P., Salisbury, J., & Goldstein, T. (2019). Pairing verbatim theatre and theatre of the oppressed to provoke startling empathy. *The Educational Forum*, 83(4), 418–431.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2019.1626961>
- Baim, C. (2020). Praxis: The drama spiral. In *Staging the personal* (pp. 115–169). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-46555-1_4
- Boal, A. (2005). *Games for actors and non-actors*. Taylor and Francis.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203994818>
- Boal, A. (2013). *The Rainbow of desire*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203820230>
- Brown, A. (2020). A welcoming space for whom? Race and inclusion in suburban high school theater programs. *ArtsPraxis*, 7(2b), 132–148.
- Bryan, A. (2019). A sociological critique of youth strategies and educational policies that address LGBTQ youth issues. *International Journal of Bullying Prevention*, 1(4), 255–268.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s42380-019-00047-1>
- Buckreis, S. (2012). Education as a journey: Exploring the third space of Hongyu Wang's the call from the stranger on a journey home. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 28(1), 272–280.
- Conquergood, L. D., & Johnson, P. E. (2013). Performing as a moral act: Ethical dimensions of the ethnography of performance. In *Cultural struggles: performance, ethnography, praxis* (pp. 65–80). University of Michigan Press.

- Conrad, D. (2020). Youth participatory action research and applied theatre engagement: supporting indigenous youth survivance and resurgence. *Theatre Research in Canada*, 41(2), 258–277. <https://doi.org/10.3138/tric.41.2.a04>
- Conway, M. S. (2011). *Achieving catharsis: The impact of theatre on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered youth*. http://rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc_num=akron1302459493
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241–1299. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>
- Dawson, K., Cawthon, S. W., & Baker, S. (2011). *Drama for schools: teacher change in an applied theatre professional development model*. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 16(3), 313–335. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569783.2011.589993>
- Day, J. K., Ioverno, S., & Russell, S. T. (2019). Safe and supportive schools for LGBT youth: Addressing educational inequities through inclusive policies and practices. *Journal of School Psychology*, 74, 29–43. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2019.05.007>
- Djohari, N., Pyndiah, G., & Arnone, A. (2018). Rethinking “safe spaces” in children’s geographies. *Children’s Geographies*, 16(4), 351–355. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2018.1487032>
- Dubé, J. (2023, September 8). Gender-identity policies for kids are gaining attention in Canadian politics. Here’s what to know. *The Globe and Mail*. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-lgbtq-student-parental-consent-schools/>
- Egale Canada. (n.d.). *2SLGBTQI Terms and Concepts*. Retrieved February 7, 2023, from <https://egale.ca/awareness/terms-and-concepts-updated/>
- Etherton, M., & Prentki, T. (2006). Drama for change? Prove it! Impact assessment in applied theatre. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 11(2), 139–155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569780600670718>
- Fenaughty, J. (2019). Developing resources to address homophobic and transphobic bullying: a framework incorporating co-design, critical pedagogies, and bullying research. *Sex Education*, 19(6), 627–643. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2019.1579707>
- Fox, J., & Dauber, H. (Eds.). (1999). *A ritual for our time. Gathering voices: essays on playback theatre*.
- Foxy. (n.d.). *Retreat*. Retrieved February 29, 2024, from <https://arcticfoxy.com/retreat/>
- Foxy. (2023). *FOXY Fostering Open eXpression among Youth*. <https://arcticfoxy.com/about-us/>
- Fraser, C. G. (2019). *T’aih k’iighe’ tth’aih zhit diidich’uh (By Strength, We Are Still Here): Indigenous Northerners confronting hierarchies of power at Day and Residential Schools in Nanhkak Thak (the Inuvik Region, Northwest Territories), 1959 to 1982* [PhD]. University of Alberta. <https://era.library.ualberta.ca/items/e2cc2356-eb5e-4f10-8722-1dc2a1ae7996>
- Freire, P. (2005). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th Anniversary). The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc. (Original work published 1970)
- Gallagher, K. (2018). A reconsideration of social innovation: Drama pedagogies and youth perspectives on creative and social relations in canadian schooling. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 41, NA. <https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/apps/doc/A538858943/CPI?u=uvictoria&sid=summon&xid=3ab48fd8>

- Gallagher, K., & Service, I. (2010). Applied theatre at the heart of educational reform: an impact and sustainability analysis. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 15(2), 235–253. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569781003700144>
- Gallagher, Kathleen., & Kushnir, Andrew. (2022). *Hope in a collapsing world: Youth, theatre, and listening as a political alternative*. University of Toronto Press. <https://doi.org/10.3138/9781487541217>
- Gembus, M. P. (2018). The safe spaces ‘in-between’ – plays, performance and identity among young ‘second generation’ Somalis in London. *Children’s Geographies*, 16(4), 432–443. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2017.1362498>
- Goldstein, T. (2020). *Out at school: The 2021 audio play*. Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) families speak out about school. <https://www.lgbtqfamiliespeakout.ca/about.html>
- Goldstein, T. (2021). *LGBTQ families speak out: 2014-2020*. <https://www.lgbtqfamiliespeakout.ca/publications.html>
- Goldstein, T., lee hicks, benjamin, Salisbury, J., & Baer, P. (2018). *Teaching gender and sexuality at school*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429426421>
- Goldstein, T., Russell, V., & Daley, A. (2007). Safe, positive and queering moments in teaching education and schooling: A conceptual framework. *Teaching Education*, 18(3), 183–199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210701533035>
- Gordon, A. (1997). *Ghostly matters: Haunting and the sociological imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Government of Saskatchewan. (2023, August 22). *Education Minister announces new parental inclusion and consent policies*. <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2023/august/22/education-minister-announces-new-parental-inclusion-and-consent-policies>
- Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Education, Culture, and Employment. (2017). *LGBTQ2S+ equity, safety and inclusion*. <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/services/education-renewal/lgbtq2s-equity-safety-and-inclusion>
- Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Education, Culture, and Employment. (2018). *Guidelines for ensuring LGBTQ2S+ equity, safety and inclusion in Northwest Territories Schools*. https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/sites/ece/files/resources/final_eng_web_lgbtq2s_guidelines_2020.pdf
- Gwaandak Theatre. (n.d.). *About Gwaandak Theatre*. Retrieved February 28, 2024, from <https://www.gwaandaktheatre.ca/about>
- Gwich’in Tribal Council. (n.d.). *Land Claim*. Retrieved February 22, 2023, from <https://www.gwichintribal.ca/land-claim.html>
- Hackford-Peer, K. (2019). “That wasn’t very free thinker”: Queer critical pedagogy in the early grades. In C. Mayo & N. M. Rodriguez (Eds.), *Queer Pedagogies: Theory, Praxis, Politics* (pp. 75–92). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-27066-7_6
- Halverson, E. R. (2005). InsideOut: Facilitating gay youth identity development through a performance-based youth organization. *Identity*, 5(1), 67–90. https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532706xid0501_5

- Hatchel, T., Merrin, G. J., & Espelage, D. (2019). Peer victimization and suicidality among LGBTQ youth: the roles of school belonging, self-compassion, and parental support. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, 16(2), 134–156. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19361653.2018.1543036>
- Human Rights Campaign. (2023, February 13). Human rights campaign working to defeat 340 anti-LGBTQ+ bills at state level already, 150 of which target transgender people – highest number on record. *Human Rights Campaign*. <https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/human-rights-campaign-working-to-defeat-340-anti-lgbtq-bills-at-state-level-already-150-of-which-target-transgender-people-highest-number-on-record>
- Inuvialuit Regional Corporation. (n.d.). *Inuvialuit Final Agreement*. Retrieved February 22, 2023, from <https://www.irc.inuvialuit.com/index.php/about-irc/inuvialuit-final-agreement>
- Jagose, Annamarie. (1996). *Queer theory: an introduction*. New York University Press.
- Kandil, Y. (2014). Participatory theatre. In D. Coghlan & M. Brydon-Miller (Eds.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research* (Vol. 2). SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446294406>
- Kandil, Y. (2015). Theatre for Development in the slums of Cairo: The impact on a disempowered community. *Applied Theatre Research*, 3(3), 237–250. https://doi.org/10.1386/atr.3.3.237_1
- Kandil, Y., & te Bokkel, H. (2019). Return to the Nile: Celebratory theatre as cultural resistance. *Applied Theatre Research*, 7(2), 151–165. https://doi.org/10.1386/atr_00013_1
- Kosciw, J. G., Clark, C. M., Truong, N. L., & Zongrone, A. D. (2020). *The 2019 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth in our nation's schools*. https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/NSCS19-FullReport-032421-Web_0.pdf
- Kumar, M. B., & Tjepkema, M. (2019). *Suicide among First Nations people, Métis and Inuit (2011-2016): Findings from the 2011 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort (CanCHEC)*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/99-011-x/99-011-x2019001-eng.htm>
- Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. (2016). Indigenous resurgence and co-resistance. *Critical Ethnic Studies*, 2(2), 19. <https://doi.org/10.5749/jcritethnstud.2.2.0019>
- Logie, C. H., Dias, L. V., Jenkinson, J., Newman, P. A., MacKenzie, R. K., Mothopeng, T., Madau, V., Ranotsi, A., Nhlengethwa, W., & Baral, S. D. (2019). Exploring the potential of participatory theatre to reduce stigma and promote health equity for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) people in Swaziland and Lesotho. *Health Education & Behavior*, 46(1), 146–156. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198118760682>
- Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, & Angie Morrill. (2013). Decolonizing feminism: Challenging connections between settler colonialism and heteropatriarchy. *Feminist Formations*, 25(1), 8–34. <https://doi.org/doi:10.1353/ff.2013.0006>
- McGregor A., C., & McGregor E., H. (2017). Teacher education in and for the North. In T. M. Christou (Ed.), *The curriculum history of Canadian teacher education* (pp. 213–230). Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315411378-14/teacher-education-north-catherine-mcgregor-heather-mcgregor>
- Mcnamara, C. (2020). The TransActing project. In T. Prentki & N. Abraham (Eds.), *The Applied Theatre Reader* (2nd ed., pp. 252–260). Routledge.
- Meyer, E. J., & Leonardi, B. (2018). Teachers' professional learning to affirm transgender, non-binary, and gender-creative youth: experiences and recommendations from the field. *Sex Education*, 18(4), 449–463. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2017.1411254>
- Miller, C., & Saxton, J. (2016). *Into the story 2: More stories! More drama!* Intellect Books.

- Milner, H. R. (2007). Race, culture, and researcher positionality: Working through dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen. *Educational Researcher*, 36(7), 388–400.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X07309471>
- National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. (2022). *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. <https://nctr.ca/about/history-of-the-trc/truth-and-reconciliation-commission-of-canada/#:~:text=The%20TRC's%20mandate%20was%20to,by%20the%20residential%20school%20experience>.
- Neelands, J., & Goode, T. (2015). *Structuring drama work* (Third edition.). Cambridge University Press.
- Northern Mosaic Network. (n.d.). *Northern Mosaic Network*. About. Retrieved April 23, 2023, from <https://www.northernmosaic.net/whatwedo>
- O'Connor, P. (2013). Drama as critical pedagogy: Re-imagining terrorism. In M. Anderson & J. Dunn (Eds.), *How Drama activates learning: Contemporary research and practice* (1st ed., pp. 125–134). Bloomsbury.
- O'Connor, P., & Anderson, M. (2020). Applied theatre: research: radical departures. In *Research: radical departures*. Bloomsbury Methuen Drama.
<https://doi.org/10.5040/9781472513489>
- Olvera Moreno, L. (2018). *Fighting LGBTQ oppression through theater: A mixed methods study of the impacts of theatre of the oppressed with queer-spectrum and trans-spectrum individuals* [PhD, Widener University ProQuest Dissertations Publishing].
<https://www.proquest.com/openview/32dabf9a1c5269933d8d49092281cc88/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>
- O'Toole, J., & Burton, B. (2005). Acting against conflict and bullying. The Brisbane DRACON project 1996–2004—emergent findings and outcomes. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 10(3), 269–283.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13569780500275873>
- Owis, B., Baer, P., Salisbury, J., & Goldstein, T. (2022). Out at school: Imagining a slow ethic of care in research-based theater. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10778004221097632.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/10778004221097633>
- Partners for youth empowerment. (n.d.). *Activities*. Retrieved November 19, 2022, from <https://partnersforyouth.org/category/activities/>
- Peter, T., Campbell, C. P., & Taylor, C. (2021a). *Still in every class in every school: Final report on the second climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools*. https://indd.adobe.com/view/publication/3836f91b-2db1-405b-80cc-b683cc863907/2o98/publication-web-resources/pdf/Climate_Survey_-_Still_Every_Class_In_Every_School.pdf
- Peter, T., Campbell, C. P., & Taylor, C. (2021b). *Still in every class in every school: Final report on the second climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools. Key takeaways*. https://indd.adobe.com/view/publication/ae2700f6-c571-464f-ae9c-1b4e62212ce1/0dvp/publication-web-resources/pdf/Climate_Survey_-_Executive_Summary.pdf
- Pheterson, G. (1986). Alliances between women: Overcoming internalized oppression and internalized domination. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 12(1), 146–160.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/494302>
- Phillips, H. (2016). Heterophobia: subverting heterosexual hegemony through intermedial applied performance for young people. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of*

- Applied Theatre and Performance*, 21(3), 319–331.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13569783.2016.1194190>
- Prendergast, M., & Saxton, J. (2013). *Applied drama: a facilitator's handbook for working in community*. Intellect.
- Prendergast, M., & Saxton, J. (2009). *Applied theatre: international case studies and challenges for practice*. Intellect.
- Prentki, T. (1998). Must the show go on? The case for Theatre For Development (Le spectacle doit-il continuer? Les arguments en faveur du théâtre pour le développement / O show deve continuar? A questão do Teatro para o Desenvolvimento / ¿Debe continuar el espectáculo? el caso del Teatro para el Desarrollo). *Development in Practice*, 8(4), 419–429.
<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/stable/4028911>
- Preston, S. (2011). Back on whose track? Reframing ideologies of inclusion and misrecognition in a participatory theatre project with young people in London. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 16(2), 251–264.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13569783.2011.572370>
- Preston, S. (2016). Pedagogies: Critical facilitation. In *Applied Theatre: Facilitation*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781472576965.ch-001>
- Pufahl, J., Reina-Munoz, C., & Bayne, H. (2021). Theatre connect: Key strategies for facilitating LGBTQQ youth theatre programs. *Health Promotion Practice*, 22(1_suppl), 31S–34S.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839921996290>
- Root, T. (2021). *Voices of the LBGT community: a look at theatre as a potential way to reduce substance use and depression in queer youth* [PhD, Adler University ProQuest Dissertations Publishing].
<https://www.proquest.com/openview/4733aa6cd5e5a68f83b1a251823621d8/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>
- Sadeghi-Yekta, K., & Prendergast, M. (2022). Introduction: Being Together. In K. Sadeghi-Yekta & M. Prendergast (Eds.), *Applied Theatre: Ethics* (1st ed., pp. 3–15). Methuen Drama. <http://www.bloomsburycollections.com/book/applied-theatre-ethics/ch1-introduction-being-together/>
- Saldana, J., Leavy, P., & Beretvas, N. (2011). *Fundamentals of Qualitative Research*. Oxford University Press, Incorporated.
- Santiago-Jirau, A. (2021). Queering applied theatre. In L. S. Brenner, C. Ceraso, & E. Diaz Cruz (Eds.), *Applied Theatre with Youth: Education, Engagement, Activism* (1st ed., pp. 119–127). Routledge.
- SMASH. (2023). *SMASH Strength, Masculinities, and Sexual Health*.
<https://arcticsmash.ca/about-smash/>
- Statistics Canada. (2021, June 15). A statistical portrait of Canada's diverse LGBTQ2+ communities. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/210615/dq210615a-eng.htm>
- Statistics Canada. (2022, April 27). *Sex at birth and gender – 2021 Census promotional material*.
<https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/census/census-engagement/community-supporter/sex-birth-gender>
- Swartz, L. (2020). *TeachingTough topics: How do I use children's literature to build a deeper understanding of social justice, equity, and diversity?* Pembroke Publishers.
<https://canadacommons.ca/artifacts/1879349/teaching-tough-topics/>
- Taylor, A. B., Chan, A., Hall, S. L., Saewyc, E. M., & the Canadian Trans & Non-binary youth health survey research group. (2020). *Being safe, being me 2019: Results of the Canadian*

- trans and non-binary youth health survey*. <https://apsc-saravyc.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2020/12/Being-Safe-Being-Me-2019-SARAVYC-ENG-1.2.pdf>
- Peter, T., Campbell, C., Meyer, E., Ristock, J., & Short, D. (2015). *Every Teacher Project on LGBTQ-Inclusive Education in Canada's K-12 Schools*.
- Taylor, D. (2020). *Presente!* Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv14t48hf>
- Taylor, P., & Murphy, C. (2014). *Catch the fire: an art-full guide to unleashing the creative power of youth, adults and communities*. New Society Publishers.
- The Trevor Project. (2021). *National survey on LGBTQ youth mental health 2021*. <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/The-TrevorProject-National-Survey-Results-2021.pdf>
- Tomczyk, P. (2020). *Queering High School: An ethnodramatic inquiry on youth experiences of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic harassment and bullying* [PhD]. University of Alberta. <https://era.library.ualberta.ca/items/e071e85e-95c6-49b1-927a-4d8fd63c373a>
- Tomczyk, P. (2021). Ethnodramatic inquiry. In C. Burkholder, F. Aladejebi, & J. Schwab-Cartas (Eds.), *Facilitating Community Research for Social Change* (1st ed., pp. 208–220). Routledge.
- Toy, A. (2024, February 2). Alberta's new trans policies continue to raise issues of rights and harm: expert. *Global News*. <https://globalnews.ca/news/10269108/alberta-trans-policies-rights-harm-issues/>
- Tremblay, N., Malla, A., Tremblay, J., & Piepzna-Samarasinha, L. (2016). *Artful anti-oppression: a toolkit for critical and creative change makers*. <http://avnu.ca/resource-category/equity/>
- Tuck, E. (2009a). Re-visioning action: Participatory action research and indigenous theories of change. *The Urban Review*, 41(1), 47–65. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-008-0094-x>
- Tuck, E. (2009b). Suspending damage: A Letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(3), 409–428. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.79.3.n0016675661t3n15>
- Tuck, E., Allen, J., Bacha, M., Morales, A., Quinter, S., Thompson, J., & Tuck, M. (2008). PAR praxes for now and future change: The collective of researchers on educational disappointment and desire. In J. Cammarota & M. Fine (Eds.), *Revolutionizing Education: Youth Participatory Action Research in Motion* (1st ed., pp. 49–83). Routledge.
- Vettraino, E., Linds, W., & Jindal-Snape, D. (2017). Embodied voices: using applied theatre for co-creation with marginalised youth. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 22(1), 79–95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2017.1287348>
- Wagaman, M. A. (2015). Changing ourselves, changing the world: Assessing the value of participatory action research as an empowerment-based research and service approach with LGBTQ young people. *Child & Youth Services*, 36(2), 124–149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0145935X.2014.1001064>
- Weems, L. (2019). Thinking queer about the space of school safety: Violence and dis/placement of lgbtq youth of color. In C. Mayo & N. M. Rodriguez (Eds.), *Queer Pedagogies: Theory, Praxis, Politics* (pp. 93–108). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-27066-7_7
- Wernick, L. J., Kulick, A., Dessel, A. B., & Graham, L. F. (2016). Theater and dialogue to increase youth's intentions to advocate for LGBTQQ people. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 26(2), 189–202. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731514539417>

- Wernick, L. J., Woodford, M. R., & Kulick, A. (2014a). LGBTQ youth using participatory action research and theater to effect change: Moving adult decision-makers to create youth-centered change. *Journal of Community Practice*, 22(1–2), 47–66.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10705422.2014.901996>
- Williams, S. M. (2014). *Queer pedagogy: performing outside the lines* [MFA, The University of Texas at Austin]. <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/28515>
- Wolki, J. M. (2020). *Integrating Gwich'in and Inuvialuit perspectives in a community school in the Northwest Territories: A case study* [MEd]. The University of Western Ontario.
<https://www.proquest.com/openview/2d9b4b1db775de0afeba627f8d61b9b4/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>
- Wright, J., Zidenberg, A. M., Fraser, L., Peter, T., Jakubiec, B., & Cameron, L. (2021). *Speak out: Addressing 2SLGBTQ youth dating violence*.
- Yourex-West, H. (2023, March 16). Anti-LGBTQ2 protests are on the rise in Canada: What's going on? *Global News*. <https://globalnews.ca/news/9542496/anti-lgbtq2-protests-rise-canada-explainer/>
- Yulan Gale, J. (2011). *youthink in action: Transforming homophobic school culture through participatory action research and theatre of the oppressed* [MA, University of Southern California ProQuest Dissertations Publishing].
<https://www.proquest.com/openview/c3ef32b7fe4de4dac051d5023f074f45/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>

Appendix

Appendix A: Glossary of terms

2SLGBTQI Glossary of Terms

AGENDER

A person who identifies as either having no gender or a neutral gender identity.

ASEXUAL

A person who does not experience sexual attraction, or who has little to no interest in sexual activity.

ANDROGYNOUS

A word to describe a behaviour, trait, or style of expression that either blends both masculine and feminine forms of expression, or is culturally read as gender-neutral.

BISEXUAL

A person who experiences attraction to both people of their own gender and people of gender different from their own.

CISGENDER

A person whose gender identity corresponds with what is socially expected based on their sex assigned at birth (e.g. a person who was assigned male at birth and identifies as a man).

DEMISEXUAL

A person who experiences sexual attraction to someone only after having an emotional attraction to them.

DYADIC

A person whose chromosomal, hormonal, or anatomical sex characteristics fall within the conventional classifications of male or female.

FEMININE

A word to describe a behaviour, trait, or style of expression that has cultural associations with 'being a woman'. These associations change over time, between cultures, and from person to person.

GAY

A person who experiences attraction to people of the same gender as themselves. Gay may be used by individuals of a diversity of genders, or may refer specifically to men who are attracted to other men.

HETEROSEXUAL

A person who experiences attraction to people of a different gender. Also referred to as "straight".

INTERSEX

A person whose chromosomal, hormonal, or anatomical sex characteristics fall outside of the conventional classifications of male or female.

LESBIAN

A person who identifies as a woman and experiences attraction to people of the same gender.

MASCULINE

A word to describe a behaviour, trait, or style of expression that has cultural associations with 'being a man'. These associations change over time, between cultures, and from person to person.

NONBINARY

An umbrella term to reflect a variety of gender identities that are not exclusively man or woman. Identity terms which may fall within this category include: genderqueer, agender, bigender, genderfluid, or pangender.

PANSEXUAL

A person who experiences attraction regardless of gender.

QUEER

This term has been reclaimed by some 2SLGBTQI communities as a term of pride and affirmation of diversity. It can be used to encompass a broad spectrum of identities related to sex, gender, and attraction or by an individual to reflect the interrelatedness of these aspects of their identity.

QUESTIONING

An umbrella term for the process of reconciling:
1) All the feelings you have within yourself about how you experience your attraction and/or gender, 2) The language you have available to you to describe those feelings, and 3) Your sense of how this will impact your interactions with others in your social context.

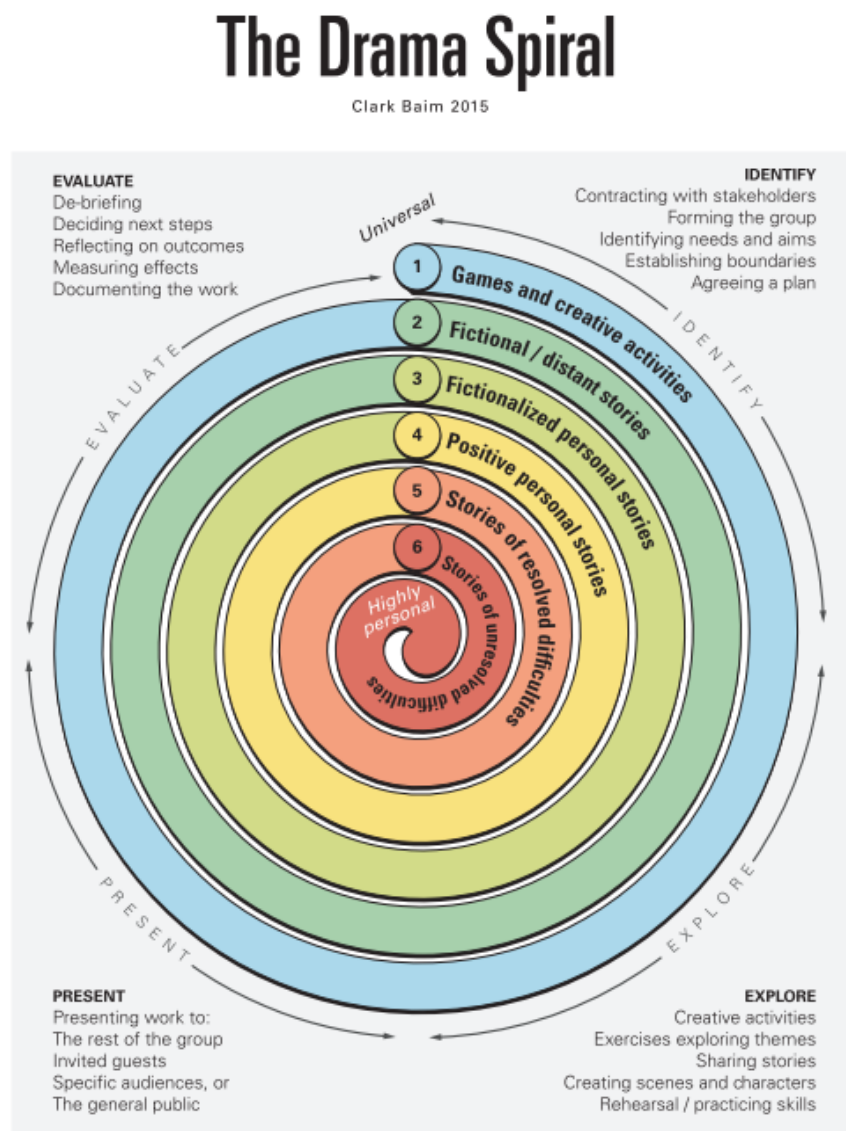
TWO SPIRIT (2S)

An English umbrella term to reflect and restore Indigenous traditions forcefully suppressed by colonization, honouring the fluid and diverse nature of gender and attraction and its connection to community and spirituality. It is used by some Indigenous People rather than, or in addition to identifying as LGBTQI.

TRANS

A person whose gender identity does not correspond with what is socially expected based on their sex assigned at birth. It can be used as an umbrella term to refer to a range of gender identities and experiences.

Appendix B: The Drama Spiral



The Drama Spiral is a decision-making tool intended to help theatre and arts practitioners to work safely and ethically along the continuum from the fictional to the highly personal. In the outer rings, participants are involved in creative activities and work at the metaphorical and fictional level. As one 'spirals in' towards the centre, the rings represent stories that are increasingly personal and sensitive for the participants. Each ring of the Spiral includes four important processes: *Identify, Explore, Present and Evaluate*.

(Baim, 2015, p. 120).

Appendix C: Sample workshop—youth participants

Applied Theatre Workshop Plan (note that elements from this template have been taken from Barb Hill's (n.d.) Applied Theatre Planning template)	
Facilitator Name(s)	Jena Mailloux
Workshop Title	'Starting with celebration'
Workshop Time	90 minutes in length (1.5 hrs) Exact date and time of day to be decided
Setting	The setting for this workshop will take place in a secondary school classroom This particular workshop is the first in-person session with the students following the digital component of the workshop series.
Participants	Highschool student participants (various grades and ages) who are members of the Aurora Gender and Sexuality Alliance Club.
Theme(s)	The themes explored in this workshop include: (a) Trust building (b) Celebration (c) Embodiment
Source	There are no main sources or material being used in this workshop, however, the content draws on work done by existing applied theatre practitioners in relation to the selected drama activities, theatre conventions, and use celebratory thematic elements (Kandil & te Bokkel, 2019; Neelands & Goode, 2015; Miller & Saxton, 2016; Partners for Youth Empowerment, n.d.; Taylor & Murphy, 2014; Boal, 2005).
Key Question(s) / Areas of exploration	The main areas of <i>exploring</i> surround concepts of: celebration, identity, embodiment, trust-building, and group collaboration. "What does it mean to be a queer youth in the North?" "What gives Northern queer youth pride and joy in their identities?"
Materials / To Do	To bring: -Large sheets of paper with questions pre-written -Markers of various colours -Pre-determined group values for working together written on a large piece of paper - Phone or laptop from which to play songs, and speakers To do: -Create playlist with four upbeat songs
Before the Drama	Before the drama, facilitator must ensure that all participant consent forms have been signed by a parent or guardian. Students should also be made aware of all data collection processes the researcher intends to utilize over the course

	of the workshop. For transparency and safety, students must attend an orientation session with the researcher prior to participating in the session.	
Workshop Outline		
Section	Content /Activity	Activity Purpose
Participant Check-In (5 mins)	Activity: 1 – 10 Check-in OR another check-in method preferred and voiced by the student participants. Facilitator: “First I want to start off by thanking everyone for being here today. I am really excited to work with you all in-person, and I hope you enjoy the activities that we are about to do together. Some of the ways that we will be working together might be completely new to you, and some might be familiar. If at any point you feel uncomfortable, or want to take a step back from the activities, you are welcome to do so. However, when you challenge yourself to participate in these activities, they often lead to really meaningful and fun moments. Over the course of our digital sessions, I asked you all how you might like to start each day. This is a time where everyone can check-in with each other. Would you like to continue doing our check-in’s using the same activity during our digital workshop, or is there another way you might like to start? <i>Allow time for students to respond.</i> <i>Facilitator may also give students an option to do a gesture rather than provide a number.</i> <i>If students like the 1-10 check in:</i> Great! So, to review our group check in: everyone can share how they are feeling on a scale of 1 to 10. 1 means you are really tired, have low energy, etc. 10 means you’re really excited and full of as much energy as possible! If you’re feeling good, at your normal base level, that might be around a 7. This number might change throughout the session, but it’s nice for everyone in the group to know what you have to offer each time we meet so that we can all be receptive of each other’s numbers throughout the process. If there is anything else you think we should know, this is also a time where you can share it. Is there anyone who might like to start?”	The purpose of this activity is to begin fostering an open space of collaboration, where everyone is able to meet each other where they are ‘at’ on each given day. This practice will begin a group ritual for all sessions (meaning an exercise we will repeat), providing the students with stability. This exercise will be something the students can expect and rely on each time we meet. Should the students have another way they would like the start the sessions, this will be determined and agreed upon by the group.

	<i>Each person has an opportunity to share their number.</i>	
Group Values	Activity: Review and Adjustments Facilitator: “Here are the group values that we all came up with when we were working together digitally. I wanted to bring these here today so that we can take another look at the values and see if they still feel good to us, or if there might be some other values or ways of working together that we might want to add now that we are working together in person. Does anybody have thoughts about the values on the paper?” <i>Allow time for students to discuss the group values.</i> “Are there any of these values that have been particularly helpful for anyone so far?” <i>Allow time for response.</i> “Great. Thank you all for your thoughts on this. Sometimes embodied work can be fun and exciting, and at other times it can make us think about things we had forgotten about or would rather not think about. If you feel you have gone to a place where you are thinking about things you don’t want to think about. If at any point you feel like you want to leave the room to take a breath, you are welcome to do so. One of us will give you a moment, and then come and check to see if you are ok. You are also welcome to tell me if there is an activity you wish not to participate in. If after this, you are still feeling uncomfortable, you can always talk to your teacher or the counsellor (<i>provide contact information again</i>). If there is anything at all that you need, you can always pull me aside and we can have a chat. How does this sound for everyone?” <i>Allow time for students to discuss.</i> Great! Thank you all for your responses. Now that we have this process established for our in-person work, we can begin! Let’s all stand up!”	The purpose of this activity is to remind the group of their own needs when working together creatively, which will be pre-established during the digital sessions. The opportunity to review the values will refresh their minds for the work ahead. The opportunity to make any changes will be a time to add values that might be important now that we are meeting together in-person.
Warm-Up Activities (20 mins)	Activity: Rhythm Circle Facilitator: Let’s all form a circle. This activity is called rhythm circle. I am going to start us off by creating a short clapping rhythm, and then everyone repeats	These activities serve two functions: (a) to prime the students for the type of work we will be doing, specifically

	it as a group. Let's try. (<i>Facilitator makes a rhythm</i>). Now the next person in the circle will create a rhythm and the group will repeat. We will continue to that everyone in the circle has a chance to create a rhythm (<i>Facilitator passes it off to the next person in the circle</i>). We are going to go around the circle again, but this time, you can add any sounds you'd like, you can use your feet and stomp, you can snap, or do anything else you'd like! (<i>Facilitator starts off with a more complex rhythm</i>). Nice job everyone! Activity: Paced walking, Stop-Start, and forming group shapes Facilitator: Now we are going to spread out and walk around the room. I am going to call out numbers, and you will try to match your pace to that number. If I call out 5, that means you are walking at a normal natural pace, if I call out 6 or 7, you can walk a bit faster. If I say 1, you will walk at the slowest pace you possibly can! (<i>Call out certain numbers</i>). Now we are going to continue walking at about a 5. When you walk, try to put a little bounce in your step. Now try and come as close as you possibly can to one another without touching each other! Good job. Now when one person in the group decides to freeze, everyone in the group will freeze. When someone in the group starts walking again, everyone in the group will start walking again. Anyone can decide to freeze, or start walking. Now let's walk around the space again normally. I am going to count down from five. As I start to count down from 5, you will try to form a circle with the group, standing shoulder to shoulder. When I get to the number 1, the shape should be formed (<i>repeat with a triangle, a square, and a circle again</i>). What did everyone think about this game? Was it hard, or easy to form the shapes? This game is a good way to start working together in a way that doesn't rely on talking. By forming shapes, you are	focused on listening, feeling comfortable in their bodies, and feeling safe working together as a group and (b) to begin fostering a space of fun and community.
--	---	---

	actually negotiating and working together through your bodies. Activity: Name torpedo / silent torpedo Facilitator: “I know that you all know one another’s names already, but we are going to play something called name torpedo. To play, one person will call out someone’s name who is in the circle, but not standing directly beside them. Once they’ve called the name, they will move towards that person in the circle. As this person approaches the individual they called, this individual will have to call out another name and move towards them (<i>repeat again, encouraging students to become calmer and more certain of themselves as the process continues. Repeat again by not calling names, but making eye contact with someone else in the circle. Explain to the students that they do not have to move unless both people who make eye contact want to move</i>). Activity: Counting to 21 Facilitator: Now we are going to play a game called ‘twenty-one.’ All you have to do in this game is count. Doesn’t sound very hard does it? But sometimes it can be tricky, because you’ll have to work together. Without coming up with any patterns, we are all going to try and count to ten as a group. Only one person can speak at a time. If two people call out the number, we have to start again at one. Shall we try? <i>Play the game.</i> This game starts to become easier the more you work together as a group, and can sense each other’s energy. As we go through processes like this, you’ll start to become more attuned to each other and function as a unit. Good work!”	
Into the Action (20 mins)	Activity: Sketching/ Small Group Brainstorm Brief Description: The facilitator will place large pieces of paper at different locations in the room. Each piece of paper will have a question on it. Students will choose a sheet of paper to start at. When they arrive, they will be asked to write down any words, phrases, or themes that come to mind when they read the question. They can also respond	This activity is meant to be a low-pressure way to begin discussing positive personal experiences that celebrate the participants’ identities. This activity will lead into the next, where

	with a drawing, poem, or any other way they'd like. The questions on the paper include: (a) What do you love about your culture or community? (b) What do you love about your identity? <i>(note that during the digital workshops, the facilitator will ensure that the word 'queer' is OK with everyone.</i> (c) What do you believe 2S/LGBTQIAP+ people can teach the world? (d) Where or when do you feel most yourself? OR When do you feel/have felt most proud of yourself? Everyone will have three-five minutes to respond to the questions on each paper. After five minutes, they will rotate to another. Students will be encouraged to work in whichever way they'd like (i.e. brainstorming with other members at the paper, or working individually) Facilitator: "I am going to place four large pieces of paper in different areas of room. Each piece of paper has a question on it. I will ask you to choose one piece of paper to start at, and then I will let you know when to rotate to the next one. When you read the question, brainstorm any words, phrases, or thoughts that come to mind. To respond you can use words, drawings, poems, or whatever else you'd like. You're welcome to brainstorm with other people at your paper, or work individually. Whatever feels comfortable for you in the moment. Does anyone have any questions?" <i>Allow students to choose the paper they will start at. After three-five minutes at each paper, the students will rotate to a new question.</i> <i>Once the students have visited each paper, facilitator will bring them back for a large discussion.</i> How did answering these questions feel for everyone? Was there a question that you particularly enjoyed responding to? Was there a question that was difficult?	students will begin to physicalize their responses.
--	--	--

Development / Deepening (20 mins)	Activity: Tableaux Brief Description: The students will be broken into two groups. Once in their groups, they will be asked to discuss the questions and choose one that resonated the most amongst everyone in their group. They will have to agree as a unit. Once they've chosen a question, they will choose one word, theme, or feeling that stands out to them in the responses. After narrowing down on one word, theme, or feeling in the responses, they will create a frozen image that represents this word, theme, or feeling. Each group will then have a chance to show their frozen image to the rest of the participants. The participants who are not in the photo will then have an opportunity to share what they see in the image. After students have shared, the facilitator will tap the shoulder of particular individuals in the photo. Once their shoulder has been tapped, they will be asked to share a word or phrase that they are thinking/feeling in the photo. The process will be repeated for each group. Facilitator: “At this point, we are going to break out into two separate groups. One group will be group A, the other will be group B (<i>student will number themselves off</i>). When you gather with your group, discuss the questions more in detail in terms of which ones you connected with most. See if you can find things in common with one another. Once you've discussed the questions, try and narrow down on one question that stuck with you most as group (<i>provide students with time to discuss</i>). Now that you've decided on a question, take a look at some of the responses on the paper. Choose one theme or feeling that stands out most to you as a group. Once you've chosen a theme or feeling, work with your group to create a frozen picture that represents this theme or feeling. Ask yourself: if you could represent this word or feeling visually, what would it look like? You'll have about five minutes to create your image. Try to rely on your instincts when creating your image. The easiest	This activity will introduce students to concepts surrounding embodiment, where they will begin communicating themes by standing up on their feet. In addition, this exercise will allow students to begin working together as a group towards something that they care about. The students will explore how thoughts can be explored visually. This will introduce the students to image work, which we will build upon in later sessions.
---	--	--

	way is to actually just get up on your feet and try things out together! <i>(provide students time to create their image)</i>. Okay, good work everyone. Now we are going to show each other what we've created. Which group would like to go first? <i>(group 1 will show their picture)</i>. For those of you not in the image, what do you see or feel when you look at this? <i>(allow time for students to respond)</i>. Thank you everyone for sharing. Now I am going to come around and tap someone in the image on the shoulder. When I tap you on the shoulder, see if you can share one word or phrase related to what you're thinking or feeling right now <i>(facilitator taps one or two people on the shoulder)</i>. Great. Thank you all for your sharing. Now you can relax, and we will invite group 2 to show their photo <i>(repeat process)</i>.	
Reflection / Take Away (10 mins)	Activity: Group reflection questions Facilitator: "Thank you everyone for your image work today. Let's all come and sit down in a circle. I am curious if anyone might want to talk about how this activity felt for you? What was it like to create still images with your group? What was it like to answer the questions on the papers? What was your favourite part of today? Is there anything else anyone would like to share?"	Reflection questions are an important way to understand the process we've just gone through. These questions will allow students to reflect on this experience in a meaningful way. The questions in this section will also give the facilitator a better idea as to what the students responded/did not respond to in the dramatic process.
Wrap-up energizer (5 mins)	Activity: Dance lines Brief Description: The facilitator will group the students into two groups. The groups will each form their own line, standing behind each other. The facilitator will play a song. The person standing at the front of the line will do a little dance to the song, and the rest of the students standing behind them will follow. When the song changes, the leader goes to the back and the next person	The purpose of this activity is to leave the group on an energized, joyful note. This activity will also allow the facilitator to connect with the youth <i>(in the digital sessions their favourite songs will be elicited for this activity)</i>.

	begins to dance. At the final song, the group dances together. Facilitator: To finish the day, let's do one more activity. Gather with your groups you worked with today and form a line, standing behind one another. I am going to play a song, and when it starts, the person standing at the front of the line will do a little dance. Everyone standing behind the leader will follow what they do. When the song changes, the person in the front of the line will move to the back and the next individual will begin their own little dance. Does anyone have questions? Ok great! <i>(Facilitator plays a series of songs).</i>	
--	--	--

Appendix D: Sample workshop—educator participants

Applied Theatre Workshop Plan (note that elements from this template have been taken from Barb Hill's (n.d.) Applied Theatre Planning template)	
Facilitator Name(s)	Jena Mailloux
Workshop Title	'Tilling the Soil'
Workshop Time	3 hours in length Exact date and time of day to be decided
Setting	The setting for this workshop will take place in a classroom with staff members (teachers and educators) at an NWT secondary school. This particular workshop is meant to take place during Pride week, as one of the professional development offers on hand for staff members throughout the celebrations.
Participants	Teachers and educators.
Theme(s)	The areas of facilitation to explore include: (d) Trust building (e) Embodiment (f) Metaphor (image work and drama activities) The thematic areas of exploration include: (g) Understanding the experiences of 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students at school (h) The role of educators in creating school cultures of inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students
Source	There are no main sources or material being used in this workshop, however, the content draws on work done by existing applied theatre practitioners in relation to the drama activities and theatre conventions that have been included in the outline. Sources: (Boal, 2005; Neelands & Goode, 2015; Partners for Youth Empowerment, n.d.; Prendergast & Saxton, 2013; P. Taylor & Murphy, 2014)
Key Question(s) / Areas of exploration	1) In what ways can drama enable school teachers to develop empathy towards the struggles that 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth living in the North encounter 2) What are the ways/barriers that can be understood by teachers to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ youth?
Materials / To Do	To bring: -Large sheets of paper (enough for multiple activities) -Markers of various colors -Ball of yarn -Cue cards, pens, and box

Before the Drama	Before the workshop, facilitator must ensure that all participant consent forms have been signed. The facilitator will hold an information session for the teachers/educators who might be interested in the project prior to this session. The information session will serve as a time to recruit teachers and inform them about the research. However, their attendance at the information session is not mandatory to participate in the workshop. At the start of the workshop, there will be a few minutes set aside for a short introduction to the research (including the data collection processes) should new participants decide to join the day of.
Workshop Outline	
Section	Content /Activity
Participant Check-In (15 mins)	Activity: Research Introduction Brief Description: This is an opportunity to connect with the educators participating in the session. There will be a short introduction to the research, including the work that has been conducted so far (brief introduction to the youth participant component), and the data collection processes that will take place during the workshop itself. There will also be a few moments for the participants to sign the consent forms (if they are new and did not attend the earlier information session). Following this, everyone will have a few quick moments to introduce themselves, as well as do a brief check in. Facilitator: Hi everyone, thank you for joining me here today, and for your interest in participating in this research. My name is Jena, and I am a student at the University of Victoria. I am the individual conducting this research as part of my MA. Earlier this week, I hosted an information session to discuss the research processes and protocols of this study. There are some new faces in the room, so prior to our introductions, I will provide a very brief overview of the process so that everyone knows what to expect and can decide if they'd like to participate in the workshop that will follow. In total, the workshop will be about 3 hours, with a 10-minute break about half way through. This particular workshop is meant to explore how theatre can be used as an effective training tool for
	Activity Purpose
	This section will provide an opportunity for new participants (that have not attended the information session) to join the workshop on the day of. It will briefly introduce the participants to the study, and the data collection methods they can expect during the session. This will also serve as a refresher for those who attended the information session. The brief introduction will begin to form rapport amongst the group, as some participants may not know each other well. The gest check-in portion is meant to help get the participants ready to work in their bodies, and have them begin communicating without using words.

	educators to understand how they might help foster school cultures of inclusion for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students. This will be done through theatre exercises, image work, group brainstorming, and a bit of scene work. It has been designed for educators who may or may not have any experience with theatre. For the past few months, I have been working with youth participants in the school, to better understand their wants and needs. Out of respect for these students, their identities will remain anonymous. However, it is really important to emphasize that much of the content we discuss today in this workshop is informed by themes that these youth participants brought forward during our time together. Throughout this workshop, I will be collecting data. This might be through observing your interactions with particular exercises and recording some reflections you might have after activities. These recordings will stay anonymous, and kept on my private locked computer for research purposes only. At the end, I will hand out cue cards to everyone so that they may write down any final reflections they have about the workshops; you do not have to write your names on these reflections. The data will be analyzed by myself, and used to write a final research thesis. I may also write some articles about our experiences together. If you'd like to participate, you will need to sign a consent form here. If you are comfortable with me taking photos and using them in future presentations or articles, please sign these as well. Does anyone have any questions? Activity: Participant Introductions Facilitator: Before we jump into the workshop, let's take a quick moment to introduce ourselves. Some of you may know each other, and some of you may not. We will go around the circle, where you can share your name, and one quick sentence about why you were interested in participating in this workshop today. I will start: you already know my name is Jena. I lived and worked in this community for two years prior to starting graduate school. I also identify as part of the queer	
--	--	--

	community. This research is really close to my heart, and I care about this place a lot, which is why I wanted to conduct this research. Would you like to go next? <i>(allow for everyone seated in the circle to introduce themselves)</i> Thank you everyone for sharing. Activity: Gest Check-in Facilitator: Before beginning any drama workshops, it is typical to do a quick check-in with everyone, just to briefly gauge the energy levels of the room and see how we are coming into this space today. Although we are only here together for a short time, we will be working together in more intimate ways than usual. For that reason, it's always important to check-in. So, for this activity, let's push our chairs away, and form a circle. Great! Now, if you could put the way you are feeling today into one single movement, motion, or gesture, what might that be? We will go around the circle and let everyone have a chance to show us their gest or movement. I will start. <i>(Facilitator does a gest, and then motions for the next person to do their own)</i>. Thank you everyone for sharing! How did it feel to show something by only using your bodies? <i>(Allow for reflection)</i>. The reason why I wanted to do this activity, was so that we might start to feel a bit more comfortable communicating with our bodies alone, as later on today we will be working a lot with using our bodies to tell a story.	
Warm-Up Activities (21 mins)	Activity: Name Torpedo Facilitator: So that we might start to feel a bit more comfortable with each other's names, we are going to try something called the name torpedo. To play this, one person will start by calling out a name. When they do so, they will walk to where that person is in the circle. By the time this person reaches who they've called out, that person should have called out another name, and started to move to their place in the circle. <i>(Facilitator shows and example, and then starts the game)</i>. Nicely done everyone. Activity: Enemy / Defender Facilitator: For this next activity, I'll ask everyone to find their own space in the room <i>(allow everyone</i>	Name Torpedo is an energizing activity that will allow the group to become familiar with each other's names. This is important given the group will be together for three hours. Building off the energy in the room from Name Torpedo, Enemy Defender will allow the participants to begin connecting with one another. This warm-up

	<i>to do so</i>). Soon I will say ‘go,’ at which time, everyone can begin to move around the space. Without letting anyone know or making them aware, choose one person in the room who will be your ‘enemy.’ Now choose one person in the room who will be your ‘defender.’ When it is time to move around the space, you must try everything in your power to keep your defender in between you and your enemy. The boundaries for your movement are between ____ and _____. Ok, has everyone decided on who will be their enemy and their protector? Great. And go! (<i>Allow the movement to continue for a few minutes</i>). Alright, and now let’s freeze. What did this feel like for everyone? (<i>Allow time for responses</i>). This game can have a lot of parallels to real life, and the tension that we feel in our bodies when we are avoiding something. As we can see by what just happened in the room, that avoidance can create chaos. I brought forward this activity today to try and demonstrate what a queer student might sometimes be feeling when they come to school, and by nature of the environment, might feel like they have to avoid certain parts of themselves to fit in or be accepted. Activity: The Great Game of Power Facilitator: For this next activity, I will need a group of four volunteers (<i>choose the volunteers</i>). Great! Thank you. You can stand over here for now. Everyone else can stand over here. Now, for the volunteers, can you help me grab six chairs, and place them here? Great! With these six chairs, work together as a group, without saying anything, to try and arrange the chairs in a way that one clearly has the most power. Once you feel that you’re finished as a group, you can step away from the chairs (<i>allow the three volunteers to arrange the chairs and step away</i>). Nicely done. For those of you observing, what do you notice about the formation this group created? (<i>wait for responses</i>). Would anyone like to change anything about this formation? (<i>allow for the group to change the image</i>). Now what do we see? Through these chair formations, we start to understand how an image can really tell a story, and how the smallest change	builds energy and rapport in the room, so that the participants begin to feel more comfortable and playful with one another. The metaphor of tension sets the rest of the workshop up nicely, and demonstrates that each activity has a purpose. The Great Game of Power is meant to begin bringing the energy of the group into a more introspective and calm space. It is also meant to prime the group for the image work that will follow. This game is a low stake introduction into image work, as the participants are only required to manipulate objects. Once they have done this, they will feel more comfortable to begin creating images with their bodies. In addition, this game will show just how much can be communicated without words. Complete the Image is meant to prime the group for the tableaux series that will follow. This tableaux series will require the participants to put feelings (i.e. anxiety) into an image, therefore, they will need some experience
--	--	---

	can tell an entirely different story. We can also start to see how everyone understands and interprets things differently. Now we are going to try and do the same thing, in terms of communicating without using words, but this time with our bodies. Let's all get back in our circle. Activity: Complete the Image Facilitator: This is called complete the image. Can I have two volunteers step into the circle? Great. Let's start with a simple handshake. Well done. Now freeze there. This might tell the story of a handshake, but what else might be happening here? <i>(Elicit responses from the group- facilitator will also say things like: 'I see the formation of a promise')</i>. Great! Now I am going to come and tap one of you on the shoulder, and when I do, you can step out of the image and take your spot in the circle. <i>(Facilitator taps one person on the shoulder, leaving one by themselves in the circle)</i>. Okay, now, someone else from the circle can step into this image to complete it with something different than what it was before <i>(facilitator allows someone to step into the image)</i>. What do we see now? <i>(Facilitator continues with this for five or six images)</i>. Now we can see how our bodies have the power to communicate in many different ways. Working in this way forces you to rely on instincts, and think more abstractly. It can also allow you to communicate something you might not be able to put into words. Later in the workshop, we are going to work a little bit more with frozen images.	working with tableaux beforehand.
Into the Action (20 mins)	Activity: Student on the Wall Brief Description: The facilitator will post a large sheet of paper on the wall. In the center of the paper there will be a big circle. The facilitator will ask the group to imagine that the circle represents a student at their school. The participants will then be asked to brainstorm some of the internal and external (one at a time) pressures a student might face when they come to school each day. Each participant will be encouraged to write their ideas on the paper. In the center of the circle, the facilitator will draw a heart, which will be a place where any ideas that are 'feelings' will go i.e.	The purpose of this activity is to begin conversation surrounding the pressures and feelings students may be experiencing at school. Given the staged in approach to eliciting ideas, the structure should show how these pressures begin to pile up when a student is also grappling with their

	anxiety, sadness, overwhelm. Once there is a sufficient amount of pressures written down, the facilitator will then ask the group to imagine that the student is part of the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community. With this new information, the participants will be asked to brainstorm further internal and external pressures that this student may face each day they come to school. Throughout the process, the facilitator will feed in some of the pressures that were discussed in the youth workshop portion of the research. Facilitator: On the wall you will see a large paper with a circle in the middle. For the purpose of this exercise, imagine that the circle represents a student at your school. The outside of the circle will represent the external world of the student and the daily environments that they interact with. The inside of the circle will represent the inner self of the student. Let's begin with the external world of the student. Thinking to when they wake up in the morning, to spending the day at school, and going home in the evening, what might be some things that create pressure for this student? For example, assignments and deadlines might be one. Does anyone else have ideas? <i>(Allow time for the group to comment and write down their ideas)</i>. Thank you for your contributions. Let's now move onto some of the internal pressures that this student may be facing. Does anyone have an idea? <i>(Allow time for the group to respond. If any feelings come up, the facilitator will draw a heart and write the ideas inside)</i>. Thank you for your contributions everyone. Now, I'd like you to imagine that this student is also part of the 2S/LGBTQIAP+ community. What might be some additional factors that create pressure for this student in light of the new information? <i>(Allow time for the participants to respond. Facilitator will add in content that was discussed in the youth workshops, as well as things such as: gendered sports teams and expectations surrounding them, permission slips home, fashion trends in relation to boy's clothes/ girl's clothes, sexuality expectations and questions such as: do you have a boyfriend?)</i>	gender identity and sexuality on top of other pressures they may be experiencing. The purpose of this portion is to try and show an added accumulation of pressure for 2S/LGBTQIAP+ students. Throughout this process, the facilitator will add in specific pressures expressed by the youth during the previous research component. This will better represent what is actually happening for students at school.
--	--	--

Development (25 mins)	Activity: ‘Pressures at School’ Tableau Image Sequence Brief Description: The participants will be broken up into groups, which will remain consistent throughout the whole session. They will be asked to choose one word in the ‘heart’ from the last activity that speaks to them all as a whole. After they have chosen a word, they will work together as a group to create a still image that represents their choice. Each person in the group should be in the still image. After they have created they still image, they will each present to one another. During the presentation, the viewers will be asked to describe what they see in the image. Afterwards, they will be asked if they’d like to do anything to change the image, or have the option to step in it themselves. Facilitator: We are now going to separate into three groups. We will have Group A, B and C. Let’s go around the circle and letter ourselves off (<i>allow participants to do so</i>). Great! Everyone can gather with their groups, and then I will provide more direction (<i>allow everyone to gather with their groups</i>). Thanks everyone. With your group, take some time to discuss the words that we noted in ‘the heart’ from the last activity—these are the words that describe feelings a student might have when they are at school. As a unit, choose one word that resonates for everyone. (<i>Provide time for groups to discuss</i>). Now that every group has selected their word, work together to create a still image that represents the feeling you’ve chosen. As we saw earlier, images can tell a story, but they can also be used to help communicate something that can’t always be put into words. This activity will require that you think more abstractly. Try and ask yourselves, what would this feeling look like? You’ll have about 10 minutes to create your image. (<i>Allow time for everyone to work on their images</i>). Alright, good work everyone. Now we are going to show each other the images that we have created. Who would like to go first? Great! Everyone else can gather around this group. I will count down	This section is meant to provoke empathy within the teachers in regards to some of the feelings that students have at school. By embodying these feelings, the teachers might begin to better understand particular emotions students might be experiencing at school. If the teachers are not part of the queer community, this might be a time for them to begin understanding the depth of what their students might be feeling. They may also start to relate to the students through shared feelings in their own lives.
---	--	---

	from five, and when I reach the number five, the group who is presenting will have formed their image. Those who are watching, feel free to walk around the image and see it from different angles. <i>(Facilitator counts down from five)</i>. Great. For those of you not in the image, what do you see when you look at this? <i>(Allow time for elicitations)</i>. Is there anything that you might want to change about the image? Go ahead and sculpt the group in the way you'd like. <i>(Facilitator allows time for the group to interact with the image. This process will be repeated for all three groups. Once each group is done with their image, they will reveal their word to the rest of the participants)</i>. Thanks so much everyone for your work in this activity. Let's all gather around the circle. Reflection Questions: How did this activity feel for you? What was it like to put words or feelings into an actual image? Were you surprised by anything in this process? I hope that in doing this activity, it sheds some extra light towards what might be happening inside of your students on any given day. Thanks everyone! Now we are going to take a short 10-minute break.	
BREAK	10 MINUTES	BREAK
Development (20 mins)	Activity: Brainstorm / Group Sketching / Reflection Facilitator: Thanks everyone for joining me back here. Now we are going to spend another small amount of time doing some brainstorming and sketching with your groups. So, let's gather with our groups again, and I will come around and give you each a large sheet of paper and some markers. <i>(Groups gather and facilitator hands out markers)</i>. For this brainstorming session, you can respond in any way you like. That might be by throwing out specific words that resonate with you, creating a poem, creating a drawing, or whatever else feels	This activity is meant to begin "tilling the soil," in the sense of trying to move teachers beyond feelings of acceptance, and more towards notions of normalization and celebration.

	right. There are no wrong answers. The question to brainstorm with your group is: <i>What does acceptance mean?</i> This will mean different things to different people. I will give you about ten minutes to discuss the question with your group. <i>(Facilitator allows time for the groups to brainstorm and respond to the question).</i> Alright, thanks everyone. Now we are going to share our thoughts as a large group. Group A, what things came up in your discussions of the word acceptance? <i>(Allow time for the group to share, and repeat with Group B and Group C).</i>	
Deepening (60 mins)	Activity: Student Scene Sequence Brief Description: Throughout the youth workshop series, the facilitator will ask if the youth would like to write scenes for their educators related to their experiences or the experiences of their friends at school. The researcher will explain to the students that these scenes will be used as an interactive training tool amongst their educators. The youth writers of these scenes will stay anonymous. If the youth do not want to write scenes for their educators, the facilitator will write short scenes related to some of the overarching themes or issues that were discussed during the youth workshops (which the youth participants have already agreed to). Each educator group in this workshop will be given a scene. They will be asked to read it out loud with their group, and discuss the content. Once they've had time to discuss, they will be asked to choose one or two people in the group who are willing to act out the written scene for the rest of the group. After the scenes have been presented, each group will be asked to share a little bit about their process. Other members in the workshop will also be able to ask them questions. Facilitator: As I mentioned before the workshop, for the last few months I have been working closely with youth participants at the school to discuss some of the themes we've been touching on today. Throughout this process, the youth took time to	The student scene sequence will be a critical element in the research that allows for students voices and needs to be heard by their educators in a safe manner. This section is meant to provoke empathy amongst teachers. The re-writing component is meant to stir them into action and begin understanding what normalization and celebration might actually look like in real life. This will hopefully prompt the teacher to move forward into action, by including these values in their day to day lives at school and beyond (while this can't necessarily be measured, this is a hope).

	write scenes for you, as their educators, highlighting issues they want you to know about. This might be based on experiences they've had, their friends have had, or maybe just how they wish things might be. Today, I am going to give each group one of these scenes. <i>(Facilitator hands each group a scene)</i>. With your group, read the scene aloud. You can either go around in a circle and each read a line, or you can assign characters to a few members of the group and have them read aloud. Once you've read the scene, discuss the content together. What did you think of the scene? What are your initial reactions to the characters? You will have about 20 minutes to read the scenes and discuss together as a group. <i>(Facilitator allows time for groups to read and discuss)</i>. Great. Thanks everyone. Now that you've discussed the scenes with your group, I'd like you to decide to actually bring this scene to life. Choose a few people in your group who might be comfortable acting this scene out for the larger group. Don't worry, you don't have to memorize anything and you can read the lines off of your paper. Take some time to figure out how you will start the scene, where the characters will stand, and how the scene will end. Everyone in your group can be involved in this 'staging' process, and I will come around and help you. The purpose here isn't to create a performance, but simply to allow everyone to understand what is happening in your scene. You will have about 10 minutes to do this task. <i>(Facilitator allows time for this process to take place, and helps groups along the way)</i>. Amazing! Now we are ready to present our scenes. This will be the playing area, and everyone else can sit over here to watch. Who would like to go first? <i>(Facilitator allows time for each group to present. After each presentation, the facilitator will ask some reflection questions)</i>. Nice work. Can you tell us a little bit about your initial thoughts when you first read the scene?	
--	--	--

	Was there anything in the scenes that stuck out to you during your group discussion? How did the process feel for you as a group? Does anyone else have questions for this group?	
Reflection / Take Away (10 mins)	Activity: Group Reflection (Key Questions) Facilitator: How did participating in this process feel? Were there any moments that resonated with you? Were there any moments that particularly surprised you? Let's all go around the group popcorn style, and stay one thing you are feeling right now, or one thing you will take away from today. (<i>Facilitator allows time for everyone to share</i>). Thank you everyone for your generous participation today. I hope that you found the session useful and I am so grateful to have shared the space with you for the last three hours!	Group reflections are necessary to begin digesting the work and relating the experience to real life.
Wrap-up (5 mins)	Activity: Written Reflection Facilitator: If I could ask of everyone one final reflection on today's process: I would love if, before you left the room for today, you fill in this cue card with any reflections you have on the process. This might be things that worked particularly well for you, or moments that maybe you wished could have been better. Whatever it is you'd like to say, you can write it on here. This will help me in analyzing the efficacy of this workshop and type of approach, to see if it was useful for you. I will just hand out the cue cards and pens to everyone, and when you are done, you can place your reflection in the box here. You do not have to write your name, but you are welcome to if you're comfortable.	This particular activity is for research purposes, and will allow educators the opportunity to provide and constructive comments they might not want to share in the larger group. These written reflections will be used as an additional means to collect qualitative data throughout the teacher workshop.

Appendix E: Summary of devised performance play

‘What it’s like to be a queer student’

Scene 1: Three ‘queer fairies’ accidentally crash into one another. They are all holding pride gear in preparation for an upcoming parade. Each fairy quickly tries to pick up their gear, which quickly becomes mixed up. They realize they are all queer fairies, and form a bond. Upon discussion, they realize they are each responsible for travelling to earth to check on a respective human grappling with their queer identity. They form an alliance and decide to travel to earth together.

Scene 2: We encounter Sammy, a young girl who is bi-sexual. The fairies say: ‘let’s see what is happening inside of Sammy’s head.’ There is a scene change, and two boxes appear on the ground: one to represent the queer experience, and the other a straight experience. Two characters enter who are associated with each box. The two characters begin a mission to convince Sammy to stand in their respective boxes. An argument ensues as they physically pull Sammy between the boxes, telling her she has to choose one. In the end, Sammy stands up for herself, stating that she doesn’t need to choose a box, and she can like both genders.

Scene 3: The queer fairies quickly rush in and let the audience know they are going to go and check on the next human, Link.

Scene 4: A student enters the scene while being bombarded with references to romantic relationships at every turn through: social media posts, a couple passing her repeatedly on piggy back in the hallway, and a Romeo and Juliet assignment at school. She enters into an empty classroom in frustration, where a teacher notices her discomfort. She expresses her confusion about the constant focus around romantic/sexual relationships. She explains that she doesn’t believe she could ever feel that way towards someone. Her teachers listen, affirms her feelings, and begins to talk about asexuality and aromance. The teacher asks if she’d like to do some more research about it together and the pair exit.

Scene 5: The queer fairies quickly rush in and let the audience know they are going to go and check on the next human, Micah.

Scene 6: A group of three friends are hanging out together after school. One looks very down, and so their friends come to check in and see if they are okay. They describe feeling immense confusion and pressure to pick a label for themselves, but that none of them feel right. They talk about a relationship with a boy last year, and their friends remind them that they’re allowed to change their mind and keep exploring. The friends offer some definitions: bi-sexual, pan-sexual, etc. Micah states that none of them feel right and they don’t want to choose. Their friends validate Micah’s experience and remind them that they don’t have to choose, and can just be themselves.

Scene 7: The queer fairies unite and celebrate, confirming that their humans are on the right path to discovering themselves. They rush off together; they are just in time to catch the Pride parade.

Appendix F: Summary of educator workshop scenes

- A student feeling confused over their bisexual identity with pressure from a peer to ‘choose’ being a lesbian or being straight. In the end, another friend steps in to explain that people don’t need to choose and can like both genders.
- At home, a student is spending time with their friends. They can tell they are not feeling themselves. The student expresses that they feel confused and pressured to conform to a specific label. They explain that nothing feels right. Their friends affirm that they don’t have to choose, and that they can just be themselves.
- A student confides in a teacher that they don’t feel they can experience sexual attraction to people like their peers do. The teacher offers some definitions of asexuality and aromanticism and asks if the student would like some help in researching more.
- A student comes out as transgender to a friend and confides that they want to change their pronouns. Their friend encourages them to ask their teacher to begin using he/him pronouns instead of she/her. The teacher agrees, but the student feels anxiety about coming out to all of his peers. In the end, the friend encourages and supports the student, and the scene finishes with the person feeling proud of their gender identity and expression.

Appendix G: Still in Every Class in Every School—Recommendations

by Tracey Peter, Christopher P. Campbell, and Catherine Taylor (2021)

School Districts and School Boards:

- ▶ Adopt anti-2SLGBTQ discrimination and harassment policies that explicitly include and define sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and that provide clear language prohibiting discrimination and harassment on these grounds.
- ▶ Ensure that schools promptly and effectively respond to 2SLGBTQ harassment and discrimination and implement clear reporting systems.
- ▶ Implement policies and practices to ensure all students, especially 2SLGBTQ students and trans students, have access to inclusive facilities (e.g., gender neutral washrooms, single-user change rooms, signage on multiuser spaces).
- ▶ Provide resource support in order to assist schools in the implementation of 2SLGBTQ-inclusive curricula.
- ▶ Actively promote the integration of 2SLGBTQ diversity within regular professional development opportunities.
(Peter et al., 2021, p. 137)

School Administrators:

- ▶ Provide professional development and training opportunities designed to improve intervention strategies and build skills to enhance the number of supportive educators on 2SLGBTQ issues—including interventions that are grounded in intersectional and anti-oppressive frameworks to meaningfully address the experiences of multiple marginalizations faced by many 2SLGBTQ students and explicitly connect with other equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives.
- ▶ Make explicit anti-discriminatory school-based policies and practices that protect and support 2SLGBTQ students (e.g., school dances and events, and dress codes), and ensure that teachers know how to implement them and respond effectively to incidents of HBTP harassment.
- ▶ Provide student-centred interventions for those who experience harassment and discrimination to ensure that students' needs and safety are addressed.
- ▶ Issue proclamations of support for 2SLGBTQ people and visible indicators of 2SLGBTQ inclusion that welcome and affirm 2SLGBTQ people.
- ▶ Support student groups and clubs, such as GSAs or similar 2SLGBTQ-inclusive student-led clubs, by providing material resources and staff supports; in schools where students have not

come forward to start such clubs, take initiative by working with teachers to offer support for students to establish them.

- ▶ Take steps to recruit and retain 2SLGBTQ educators and school staff, including 2SLGBTQ BIPOC educators and school staff. These staffing efforts may be supported within schools through professional development on 2SLGBTQ inclusive schools, developing strategies on creating safer and affirming workplaces, and examining the barriers 2SLGBTQ educators or staff face.
- ▶ Create teacher-based support groups where they can collectively collaborate on how to address HBTP language, discrimination, and harassment in addition to ill treatment of other marginalized and stigmatized groups.
- ▶ Ensure that washrooms and change rooms are accessible and inclusive regardless of gender identity or gender expression.
- ▶ Provide 2SLGBTQ-inclusive sexual health and family life education.
(Peter et al., 2021, pp. 137-139)

Teachers, Educators, and Other School Staff:

- ▶ Educate students on all anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies protecting 2SLGBTQ students and students with 2SLGBTQ families, and communicate clear support for 2SLGBTQ students and encourage them to talk to you about any harassment or discrimination they experience.
- ▶ Ensure that there is 2SLGBTQ visibility in classrooms (e.g., positive or affirming space stickers, posters, 2SLGBTQ-inclusive curriculum, etc.).
- ▶ Provide students access to accurate information regarding 2SLGBTQ individuals through inclusive curricula and resources, and work to ensure representation and inclusion of 2SLGBTQ people from a multitude of marginalized identities (e.g., racialized, SES, ability, etc.).
- ▶ Ensure 2SLGBTQ curricular content is a regular feature of classroom teaching (e.g., regularly use gender neutral pronouns, include same-sex relationships in examples, etc.). Ensure curricula across content areas meaningfully includes and reflects a wide range of 2SLGBTQ identities, experiences, and perspectives at the intersection of topics and identities.
- ▶ Demonstrate allyship through your actions by doing any or all of the following, especially teachers who identify as CH:
- ▶ Educate yourself by deepening your understanding of 2SLGBTQ related issues, including basic terms and concepts, as it will go a long way in supporting 2SLGBTQ students and students with 2SLGBTQ family members.

▶ Actively and visibly enact your allyship as you may not always know which members of your school community are 2SLGBTQ or have 2SLGBTQ loved ones.

▶ Engage in active listening with 2SLGBTQ students and recognize that they are the experts of their own experiences; a good ally understands that they have a vital, active role to play but do not have all the answers, that they are “in, but out.”

▶ Get involved in school initiatives that promote 2SLGBTQ issues.
(2021, pp. 139-140)

Appendix G: Certificate of approval



**University
of Victoria**

Office of Research Services | Human Research Ethics Board
Michael Williams Building Rm B202 PO Box 1700 STN CSC Victoria BC V8W 2Y2 Canada
T 250-472-4545 | F 250-721-8960 | uvic.ca/research | ethics@uvic.ca

Certificate of Approval

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Yasmine Kandil (Supervisor)	ETHICS PROTOCOL NUMBER 22-0788 Expedited review - delegated
PRINCIPAL APPLICANT: Jena Mailloux Master's student	ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE: 07-Feb-2023
UVIC DEPARTMENT: Theatre THEA	APPROVED ON: 07-Feb-2023
	APPROVAL EXPIRY DATE: 06-Feb-2024

PROJECT TITLE: Fostering inclusion for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth in Northern Canada through Applied Theatre research

RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS:
Monica Prendergast - Co-Supervisor, University of Victoria

DECLARED PROJECT FUNDING:
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Government of Canada
Polar Knowledge Canada (POLARKNOWLEDGE), Northern Scientific Training Program

DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:
tcps2_core_certificate.pdf - 08-Jan-2023
Correspondence with Teachers at Beaufort Delta.rtf - 15-Jan-2023
Correspondence with Principal.rtf - 15-Jan-2023
Relationship Building Ethics Approval Correspondence.rtf - 15-Jan-2023
ARI Research Permit Application #.png - 15-Jan-2023
Correspondence with ARI.rtf.zip - 15-Jan-2023
Information Session Script - Youth Participants.docx - 15-Jan-2023
Information Session Script - Educator Participants.docx - 15-Jan-2023
Recruitment Email to Educators.docx - 15-Jan-2023
Youth Participant Sample Workshop.docx - 15-Jan-2023
Possible Youth Workshop Themes.docx - 15-Jan-2023
Educator Participant Sample Workshop.docx - 15-Jan-2023
Appendix A - The Drama Spiral.docx - 15-Jan-2023
List of Mental Health Resources.docx - 15-Jan-2023
Appendix B - List of References.docx - 15-Jan-2023
COVID-19 Processes.docx - 03-Feb-2023
Youth Participant Consent Form. v2.doc - 04-Feb-2023
Parent_Guardian Consent Form.doc - 04-Feb-2023
Parent_Guardian Consent Form Notes.docx - 04-Feb-2023
Educator Participant Consent Form_v2.doc - 04-Feb-2023

Conditions of approval

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the protocol.

Amendments
To make changes to the approved research procedure in your study, please submit "Amendments" or "Annual renewal with amendments" form. You must receive research ethics approval before proceeding with your amended protocol.

Renewals
Your ethics approval must be current for the period during which you are recruiting participants or collecting data. To renew your protocol, please submit a "Request for Renewal" form before the expiry date on your certificate. You will be sent an emailed reminder prompting you to renew your protocol about six weeks before your expiry date.

Project Closures
When you have completed all data collection activities and will have no further contact with participants, please notify the Human Research Ethics Board by submitting a "Notice of Project Completion" form.

Appendix H: Northwest Territories research licence

2023

*License No. 17249
File Number: 12 410 1235
May 01, 2023*

Northwest Territories Scientific Research Licence

Issued by: Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE)
Inuvik, Northwest Territories

Issued to: Jena Brianne Mailloux
University of Victoria
969 Gillespie Place
Mill Bay, BC
V0R 2P1
Phone: (778) 677-9560
Email: jena.b.mailloux@gmail.com

Affiliation: University of Victoria

Funding: University of Victoria

Team Members:

Title: Fostering inclusion for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth in Northern Canada through Applied Theatre research

Objectives: To explore the ways in which Applied Theatre can be used in educational settings to create safer environments for Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual (2SLGBTQIA+) youth located in remote and rural communities.

Dates of data collection: May 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023

Locations: Aklavik, Ulukhaktok, Inuvik, Sachs Harbour, Tuktoyaktuk, Paulatuk.

Licence No. 17249 expires on December 31, 2023
Issued in the Town of Inuvik on May 01, 2023

Andrea Giesbrecht
Science Administration Officer
Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE)